

THEIR MADE-OVER MOTHER

(By D. J. Walsh.)

JESSY BAIN clipped her eyeglasses to her nose and read the letter slowly, twice. Color rose to her full, fair cheeks and she caught her breath sharply. Mrs. Darrin had invited them all to spend the following day with her at the Rexmere, where she was stopping for the summer. She would send the car after them at noon. That meant lunch, a delightful afternoon, dinner, an evening on the porch while the young folks were dancing. The girls, of course, would be wild to go. As for herself—but she must see what they said.

They came in presently, tennis rackets in their hands, eighteen and seventeen, respectively, slim, French bobbed, their charming faces touched up a bit with rouge, clad in delightful sports togs. Jessy's two daughters were attractive and popular. They were also expensive. In order to feed, clothe, educate them as they demanded Jessy found it necessary to economize strictly in other ways. The income which had seemed abundant when the girls were small shrank now with every succeeding year. Sometimes Jessy wondered if it would not be better to sell her pretty home and go to live in an apartment. With the girls constantly at school or visiting and likely to be married soon she would not need so much room.

They read the letter, Peggy hanging upon Betty's shoulder.

"Great!" they both cried. "That's fine in Mrs. Darrin. Must be she's asked us on Hal's account, huh, Bet?" Peg asked.

"That's it, of course—but, mother! I see she's asked you, too."

"I have known Mrs. Darrin for a long time, dears. When your father and Mr. Darrin were both living they used to be intimate friends," Jessy said, with a little quiver of the lips.

"Well! Shall we go, Betty?"

"Sure! I wouldn't miss it for anything," returned Betty. "Call up the Rexmere at once, mother."

"No," Jessy said with unusual firmness for her. "As she has written I prefer to reply in the same manner." She went to her desk and sat down. The girls left the room. She heard the porch hammock squeak. They were there—just outside the window.

To Jessy it promised more than merely being a treat to spend the day with her old friend. What a lot they would have to talk over! The girls would have a good time, too. Perhaps Hal Darrin might—She smiled happily as she dipped her pen. At that instant Peggy's voice came to her coldly, distinct.

"I wish mother wouldn't go. If she wears that old made-over black charmeuse I shall die."

Betty answered: "You'll have to make the best of it, Peg. You can't tell her to stay at home when the invitation is really hers. We're just thrown in on Hal's account. But that old black charmeuse is the limit. She's getting so fat, too! But we must be careful not to hurt the old dear's feelings."

"I'd rather stay home," grumbled Peggy. "Can't we back out at the last minute? Think now! Isn't there some way we won't have to appear at that princely hotel chaperoned by that old charmeuse?" They began to whisper.

Jessy dropped her pale face in her hands. She had received a shock. For the first time she had heard her daughter's opinions of her expressed in words. She did not blame them. She was herself at fault. She had brought them up to demand all, give little. If they were selfish she had made them so. If they were ashamed of her and her made-over clothes she deserved it. Her sacrifice, her immolation of self, had produced ungratifying results, but—She should have seen that they would.

Jessy, sitting there at her desk, had a very bad ten minutes—the worst perhaps she had ever known—and she had known many—since Tom died. At the end of that time she lifted her head, took up her pen and wrote with firm purpose, although with a slightly unsteady hand, an acceptance for herself and her daughters of Mrs. Darrin's invitation.

At the breakfast table next morning she said quietly that she was going downtown. When the Darrin car arrived the girls could direct the chauffeur to find her at Madam Louise's hat shop.

"Oh! You are going to get a new hat," Peggy cried. "Might I come with you, too, mother? I do so want a new hat myself."

"No," Jessy replied with unwavering firmness. "You can't have a new hat, Peggy. You have already had three this season and so has Betty. I have not had a new hat in two years." She tried not to see the cloud

of pout that descended on her daughter's face.

An hour later she stood at the bank window drawing out money. It was money she had saved, bit by bit, against some unexpected need. Twice before she had been tempted to use it, once when the girls wanted to go with the Jensions for an outing at the seashore, once when she had been ill and the doctor had urged a short sea trip as a cure. Now actually she was going to use the money. It seemed a pity. Even when it was in her hands her purpose nearly failed. Then she remembered that she was wearing the made-over charmeuse and what Peggy had said about it.

Just before noon when the street was crowded Mrs. Darrin's monogrammed limousine drew up before the small, Frenchy looking little shop whose windows bore one word only, "Louise." Peggy and Betty, fresh and expectant, looked out for mother in her new hat. "I wish she'd let us help her pick it out," sighed Peggy.

Coming toward them down the street was a lovely young woman stepping gracefully in the daintiest of shoes. Gray from head to foot, such gray, with a bunch of violets pinned in the correct place. Peggy gave a gasp, Betty gave a start, for the woman stopped at the chauffeur held open the door of the limousine and the smiling, yet wistful, eyes that looked out from under the charming hat brim were—mother's.

Not a word was said before the liveried chauffeur of Mrs. Darrin, Peggy and Betty were too well trained for that. But how they looked! Under other circumstances Jessy might have enjoyed their astonishment. Her purse was empty, she must begin to save again, and it was going to take a long, long time to replace what she had expended so lavishly, she could not say foolishly yet, for in some ways she had never felt so contented in her life.

Her progress across the broad veranda and through the crowded lobby of the Rexmere might have thrilled a vain woman. But it only embarrassed Jessy, and she was glad when at last she was safe in Mrs. Darrin's suite.

"Girls, your mother looks like you sister," Mrs. Darrin said. "How have you done it, Jessy, with all your cares and anxieties?" Then as Jessy smiled tremulously Mrs. Darrin hurried on: "My brother, Major Scott, is to lunch with us today. You remember him, Jessy? He married Helen Soule—she died a couple of years ago."

A wonderful luncheon. Hal was not there and Major Scott was the only man in the party. For the first time Peggy and Betty saw themselves set aside for another. And this other their mother!

"I bet she marries him," Peggy said to Betty as later they joined a gay boating party of young people. "Well—I don't blame her. We've been awful pills. And the major is nice—but he's got a strong jaw, Bet. He won't let anybody sass him. We'll have to watch our steps—and do you know I'm glad? Mother is a queen. I never realized it before. What a shame that she had to wear made-overs when she might have looked like that. I feel like a pig. I do really. Don't you, Bet?"

And Betty murmured sober assent.

Turn the Limelight on Presidents' Wives

Presidents' wives, who now receive almost as much attention in the newspapers as their husbands, were almost completely ignored until a few years ago, it has been discovered by the force preparing for the coming national campaign.

"The women of the White House were the least important, certainly the least reported of any individuals in the President's entourage," says the Woman's Home Companion. "Abigail Adams stands out for such homely practices as drying her clothes in the East room on rainy Monday afternoons. Dolly Madison shone by the splendor of her personality rather than the prestige of her position. The marriage of Maria Monroe, the first daughter of a President to be married in the White House, was good for only four lines in the Washington papers."

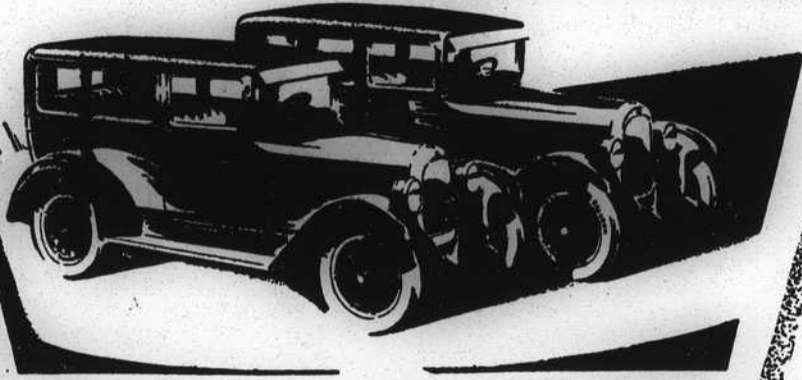
"With the coming of the young and beautiful Frances Folsom as the White House bride of Grover Cleveland, public indifference began to give way to sharp curiosity, and by the time Alice Roosevelt was married to Nicholas Longworth, every detail of the ceremony was eagerly sought and widely printed. Mrs. Taft, who declared that she was not going to be a slave, escaped a good deal of the spotlight, but both the Wilson brides, youthful and mature, were expected to live in the front window of the public gaze. The glare which has beaten steadily on Mrs. Coolidge's head has disclosed in minutest detail the personality and character of the First Lady of the Land.

"This public curiosity has been gradually translating itself into serious responsible interest until possible First Ladies are studied with almost as great interest as the Presidential candidates," the article concludes.

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New York Jews Move

Manhattan has had to yield to Brooklyn as the chief center of the Jewish population of the metropolis. A survey just completed under the auspices of the Bureau of Jewish Social Research shows Brooklyn now has 45.6 per cent of the 1,720,000 Jews in the entire city.

The Brooklyn movement has all been into one-family, two-family and apartment house sections, the survey showed. Coney Island, with 96.7 per cent, comes nearest to being all Jewish of any section.

Get Orang-utans

In a shipment of 60 orang-utans recently received at the zoo at Cannes, France, were several mothers with their young and some of the largest specimens of their kind ever seen in Europe, 15 having arms with a span of more than nine feet.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Ship's Bells

The striking of bells on board ship dates from the time of the half-hour sand-glass. The bell was struck each time the glass was turned.

Altogether Too Often

There is this thing that can be said in favor of the hornet. He always has an aim and generally he hits the mark.—Capper's Weekly.

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