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MRS. HARRY PUGH SMITH

CHAPTER XI

Clamp Fields, managing editor of the Westhaven Clarion, fires Tony Blake but Barbara West, his secretary, intercedes. Tony saves himself by scoring a news beat and gets a raise in pay. Taking Barbara to dinner and a dance Tony proposes and is accepted. They get married and are very happy for a time, and build great hopes on a play Tony is writing. When the producer agrees to produce the play if subsequent acts live up to Act I, Tony cuts his job. Barbara—now an expectant mother—gets out of patience with him for gadding about instead of working on his play. She is forced to support him. When the theatrical producer decides not to produce Tony's play he begins to realize his folly. The two make up. Tony hustles around looking for a job and eventually lands one, at a very small salary. They move to the small town of Dwight, and after awhile Anthony Jr. is born. They nickname him "Skeeter." Skeeter contracts scarlet fever and Barbara and Tony are greatly alarmed.

body who met Tony was charmed with him. By the time the play was two months old, the movie rights had been sold for what seemed a fortune to Barbara, and Tony was being besieged with invitations to this literary tea and that dinner party in New York.

"We'll have to move to town," he told Barbara. They went to an apartment hotel in New York until they could find the sort of place they wanted. It would have to be large enough to entertain, Tony said.

Barbara was never quite at ease in the circle which reached out greedily for Tony that winter. Barbara was fundamentally a wife and mother. She went everywhere with Tony, because he refused to go without her, but she was never actively part of the scene.

The house which Tony bought down on Long Island was not precisely what he would have chosen had money been no object. He compromised on a pleasant, white brick colonial house in a small village of moderately priced homes, each with well-kept lawns and large landscaped back yards within a few blocks of the Sound.

Barbara from the very beginning took to suburban life, and the local bridge and garden clubs. For an anniversary present Tony gave Barbara a small ocean of her own.

Barbara loved driving her own car. They joined the country club. It was more a family affair than anything, but Barbara liked the informality. She enjoyed sitting on the veranda with the other women, knitting and talking, while Skeeter and the rest of the children played around on the lawn under the big elm trees and Tony and the various husbands indulged in a leisurely game of golf.

"I'm just hopelessly middle class," Barbara told Tony once. "I like all the lowbrow things, such as having supper in the kitchen or the maid's night out, and talking to the neighbors over the back fence, and wearing comfortable clothes whether they're the last word or not."

"Me too," said Tony with a grin.

Tony was working on a new play. He shut himself up in his study every morning at eight and did not emerge until time for luncheon at one, but both before and afterward he had time to "comp" with Skeeter. The other fathers were away all day at business except on Saturdays and Sundays. It was Tony who took the children to the neighborhood swimming pool, and taught them to swim and drive, and showed them how to make soldiers out of matches. They adored him.

There was absolutely no flaw in Barbara's happiness. She had money, her own kind of people, and she was getting brown and well and plump. Skeeter was growing up of all his rompers and Tony's new play was coming along without a hitch.

Barbara had even arrived at a compromise with her conscience about Tony's need for a livelier social life. She urged him to go to town at least one night a week to the kind of brilliant party which he was such a success at and which he enjoyed. At first he demurred violently at going without her.

"But you must go," she declared. "It isn't fair to your career not to. Certain things are expected of you. I couldn't bear, Tony, to feel that I was holding you back."

Although she did not realize it, Barbara was growing a shade complacent. She was also slightly overweight. She could not get into the expensive evening dresses she had bought the preceding fall. She washed her hair herself and dried it in the sun because it was too simple to go to a beauty parlor in the hot weather. She did not bother with much make-up. Her friends did not try to look like fashion plates.

"Don't you ever feel a little uneasy about Tony, practically surrounded by strong, every time he goes to town?" asked Bertha Niles once, staring at a picture in the morning paper which showed Tony in the center of a bevy of beautiful women at the annual Beaux Arts Ball the night before.

Barbara grinned. "No," she said. "I've learned anything, it is that Tony will stand hitched."

"I don't know how he keeps his head," remarked her mother. "It seems to me it's rather risky your abandoning Tony to the whims of the kind of women he constantly meets in New York."

Barbara laughed gaily. "They just go in one ear and out the other, so far as Tony's concerned," she said.

Yes, without realizing it Barbara was resting her ears. She did not believe any other woman could touch Tony's heart. She had seen too many of them try it without making an impression one way or the other. She had grown accustomed to Tony's unwavering loyalty and devotion.

Then gradually, so gradually he was not aware of it, she began to take Tony for granted. She never thought of the possibility of losing him. She relaxed all her guards and drifted lazily on the current of his pleasant life not bothering to buy new clothes because the old ones were good enough for where she went, not

thinking a lot about her appearance because she was happy and contented and there was no apparent reason that she should take a great deal of trouble to make herself attractive.

"Isn't it wonderful to be so congenial, Tony?" she asked one night.

"Sure," he said now, turning away from the window where he had been staring out at the moonlight.

"Remember on our honeymoon how we swore not to get bored and crosswise like other married couples?" murmured Barbara.

Tony gave her an odd look. "Yep, I remember."

Barbara smothered a yawn. "Well, we might as well go up to bed, I suppose. There's nothing else to do."

"No," said Tony with a faint sigh. "There's nothing else to do." Barbara fell asleep as soon as her head hit the pillow. But she woke up some time later to find Tony again staring out the window. "Got the willies or something, honey?" she inquired drowsily.

"Sort of," confessed Tony. Barbara was almost asleep again when he went on. "Listen, Skeetzie, do me a favor, will you?"

"You bet," said Barbara, smothering another yawn.

"Come up to town with me tomorrow night."

"Tomorrow night, Tony?" protested Barbara. "But that's the Akers' dinner party. I couldn't go in at the last minute. It would upset everything."

Barbara had not met Glendon Akers and his daughter Rosemary who had recently returned from two years in an exclusive Swiss finishing school, but Tony had told her a great deal about them. Of all the friends he had made in New York, Tony likes Glendon Akers the best. He was the real thing, Tony said, a genuine aristocrat, not a cheap imitation.

Mr. Akers owned a penthouse apartment in New York, an estate at Southampton, a place at Palm Beach, and a yacht. Yet, according to Tony, the multimillionaire was plain and unassuming. Tony had not met the daughter until she returned to New York that fall but he said she was a chip of the old block.

Barbara paid a hurried visit to a beauty shop after they reached New York that afternoon, but as the operator told her, it is impossible to undo months of neglect in a couple of hours. Barbara was dismayed when she took time to observe herself carefully in the mirror. She had slumped physically, there was no doubt of it. She had gone slack and it showed all over her.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Two pulpwood cutting demonstrations were held this past week for the purpose of discussing the needs for thinning thick stands of pines for pulpwood and demonstrating the use of the one-man bow saw and the use of a power saw in cutting trees for pulpwood.

Two meetings were held—one at Lester and Willie Kendrick's farm, Route 3, Gastonia, in the morning and another in the afternoon at W. D. Plonk's farm, Rt. 1, Dallas. Some 40 farmers took part in these meetings, discussing the need for thinnings to increase the growth of remaining trees, the need for pulpwood that finally goes into more than 1000 finished products used on the fighting fronts and other war uses. These meetings were held in cooperation with various pulpwood companies and the agricultural agencies in the county.

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Successful Parenthood

SHALL CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENTS

Do you approve of permanent waves for children? Since there are things to be said both for and against youthful permanents, we decided to find out what mothers thought of them.

Among those whose children were all boys or whose daughters were still very young the answers were almost uniformly in the negative, ranging from a mild "no" to an exclamation-pointed "ridiculous!" But from the mothers whose daughters had had permanents in childhood there were only a few dissenters from the opinion that end curls were a help in dressing unruly hair, provided they were given by an experienced operator and the curls were well taken care of afterwards.

Since many of the objectors had based their dislike on the kinky look of unset curls we might as well say at the start that it is useless to have a permanent put in a child's hair unless you are prepared to have it set, or do it yourself, after shampoos. But who ever said curls were no trouble!

First we want to record our delight in the frequently well-stated preference for naturalness in children's looks. Their belief that clean, shining, well brushed hair is just as beautiful as braids or hanging straight as it is in curls, echoed our own. But we also liked the open-mindedness which made many a writer add, "When a child with straight, stringy hair which doesn't look well in braids wants a permanent above all else because her playmates have them, gratifying this wish may give her self-confidence and cause her to take pride in her appearance." The above is a complete statement but I must include one mother's engagingly honest confession, "I disapprove of permanents but my daughters are young yet and I find one does weaken where one least expects to." And another put her reason for giving in as, "Rather harm their hair than their ego." The interesting thing about these capitulations was that they were all based on the child's longing for curls—no one felt that a mother's desire for a curly-haired child was sufficient reason for a permanent.

The age most frequently approved for the first permanent was 12-13. Most mothers who disliked artificial curls for children agreed that they were often a boon to sensitive and not-so-pretty adolescents. One writer reported that she had seen very few gawky-looking young girls during the last ten years and credited this to their attractive hair arrangements.

One fairly general exception in favor of an end curl for the younger child was to use it for a

stop-gap if the hair proved difficult during the time it was growing long enough for braids.

Some mothers based their objections on the undesirability of encouraging children's vanity and bringing beauty-shop experience into their lives too soon. These seem valid criticisms, for first of all childhood is meant for care-free play and if consideration for how the child looks gets in the way of this, it is certainly being over-emphasized. Again, though, there are exceptions, for many little girls seem born with an interest in their appearance and to deny this would be as unnatural as to force curls on an active child who loathes sitting still long enough to procure them. This, by the way, was a stipulation almost everyone made, that a permanent should not be given until the child was able to accept stoically the length and possible discomfort of the process.

LINCOLN MAN RHINE BRIDGE HERO

WITH THE AMERICAN ARMY EAST OF THE RHINE, Mar. 16.—(Delayed)—Sgt. John Reynolds of Lincolnton, N. C., is revealed as one of the three soldiers who pushed hundreds of pounds of TNT into the Rhine river on March 7 after they hauled it out of the stone piers at each end of the Remagen bridge.

Lt. Hugh Mott of Nashville, Tenn., under whom Reynolds and Sgt. Eugene Boran of Manhattan, Kansas, performed the task, insisted that credit for the feat go to the two sergeants.

"They were there on the bridge all the time," he said. "I was running back and forth."

Reynolds was glad Doran brought the pliers with which they cut the wires. He said, "He always thinks of everything. We figured at first we were just going to make a reconnaissance to see if tanks could get across the bridge."

Reynolds worked in the Massapoeg mill at Lincolnton with his father and was the only one of the three with previous experience in handling dynamite.

"I fooled with it some when I was in a CCC camp in the western part of the state," he said.

Terrace lines were staked recently on the following farms: County Home Farm, Dallas; G.G. Howell, R-1, Bessemer City; C.B. Dixon, R-3, Gastonia; and C. L. Stone, R-1, Clover, S. C.

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