

Husbands Wanted

by Hazel Deyo Batchelor



SYNOPSIS

Lola and her husband, Ralph Halliday, have drifted apart. Lola has her clothes made in the establishment of a fashionable modiste where Polly Long is a mannequin. Lola suspects that there is something between Polly and Ralph, but Madame warns the girls against talking. Ralph persuades Polly to leave Jersey City and move to New York. They move into the dream city and a wonderful furnished apartment. All is well until one of the mannequins, Annette, follows Polly home one night and shows a threatening attitude. Mrs. Long takes a dislike to the girl. Christmas night John Blake enters the story. John is shocked because Ralph has not told Polly he is married and because he is allowing her to go on the stage. Ralph insists that she must have friends. There is a tragedy in John's life and he can go only so far. The winter passes and Lola returns from Florida. In the meantime, Polly and John are lurching one day when they pass Lola in the lobby of the hotel. John has some kind of an attack in the taxi. Lola gets seats for "Brighter and Brighter," the show in which Polly is appearing, and there is mutual recognition. Polly sprains an ankle. Lola tries to see her but the girl has been taken home. Lola stays in town to have dinner with Ralph. She demands that he give up his so-called friendship with a cheap little actress. Ralph pleads for her love, but she replies to this by going to Maine with the Bradleys, where she has a gorgeous time. Ralph is supposed to join her there later. In the meantime, it is hot in the city and Ralph is not sleeping. His father finally persuades him to join Lola, and he is forced to leave his desk. He takes Polly and the little mother to the shore but not before Mrs. Long has had several mysterious attacks of heart trouble when she cannot breathe. She has to keep medicine beside her. Polly is terrified of these attacks and frets because it is necessary for her mother to take so many steps. The attack always comes on after being caught in the rain or being out in the heat of the day. Dr. Waite tells her that her mother has asthma and the sea air will restore her to health. He gives the girl a new prescription, but after she has gone he and his nurse discuss the case and admit it is the heart. Polly and the little mother and Ralph drive to the shore. Ralph cooks dinner and they eat it beside a blazing fire. Afterward they all sleep well, and then the next day things begin to happen. Annette appears in the back waters of the bay, fishing with her male escorts—Annette appears at the

hotel where the dances are held. Polly and Mrs. Long and Ralph are no longer alone. The older man invites the three to dinner, although he extends his invitation through Annette and does not come over. Polly is the belle of the dance at the dingy old hotel, with its squeaky orchestra, and after they walk home she falls happily asleep. Mrs. Long has a heart attack in the night and tries one of the new crystals. It brings her instant relief, and Polly hears nothing. Their maid, Lottie, has arrived and is nicely installed. Now we turn to Lola at Bar Harbor.

INSTALLMENT TWENTY-ONE LOUISE AND LOLA.

Lola wrote Ralph, hoping to catch him in time.

"You're foolish to motor up here for such a short time. Besides, the Bradleys haven't room for you in the cottage. You'll have to stay at the hotel."

But Ralph was quick to reassure her.

"I think you are right. Lovely down here at Short Beach, and so I am snatching a much-needed rest nearer home. I'll drive up to motor back with you, darling. Mother and father will join you later, and in the meantime God bless you and keep you until I see you again."

Lola tossed the letter carelessly on the table, where any one could see it. So that was where he had taken Polly, and the girl's so-called chaperon. Short Beach! It sounded romantic. It brought back days of long ago, days that might have been! Days that might have been spent with another man, a man she had loved more than Ralph! She didn't care how long Ralph stayed away from her, but she didn't want him spending the time with Polly. Did her father know anything about the facts? She doubted it.

And so she wrote her father.

In the meantime she talked the matter over with Louise Bradley, who insisted that Ralph must be on his way.

"Why, we have plenty of room, Lola, dear. There's that room opposite yours that Bob Phelps has just vacated."

Lola shook her head. "It's silly, Louise, and it's too far; besides, I have a letter from him from a place called Short Beach. He has taken this girl there."

"Who, the little mannequin?" Louise asked curiously.

"Mannequin, model, whatever you want to call her. Also her chaperon. I doubt very much if the woman happens to be the girl's mother."

"She's old enough to be."

"How do you know?"

"Oh, now, Lola, you don't mean to say that you think she's wearing a disguise and is in reality another pretty girl under her white wig?"

"Certainly not. Oh, I don't care, but I don't want Ralph here just as we

are in the swing of things. He'd spoil everything. You'll see him when he comes to drive me back. That will give him a few days in Maine."

Now, Louise was irritated with Lola. A nice flirtation with the handsome Ralph would have been rather pleasant this summer while Ted or some other man was squiring Lola about, but she said nothing to Lola.

In the privacy of her bedroom she talked to Ted, and he agreed with her, but only because he wanted the privilege of taking care of Lola while Ralph took Louise. So far the men had been greedy and women few. Maine was cold and many of the cottages not taken.

But he said nothing and neither did Louise, although they hadn't been married long enough to be keeping secrets from each other. Ted knew that Louise wouldn't think it quite nice for him to have such ideas. After all, there was Junior!

Toward the end of September new guests arrived at the cottage and old Richard Halliday and his wife, Martha, motored up to stay at the big hotel. They brought up no news from Ralph, other than the fact that he was staying at a place called Short Beach. Down on Long Island somewhere.

"Short Beach," said Martha softly. "I suppose he thought it was nearer home." Dear boy! Short Beach brought back memories of her own married life. That was before the girls had died. Marie and little Dorothy. She and Richard had been poor then, but they had enjoyed themselves far more in those days than they did now. Saving money had been a nuisance, but Martha had loved building toward a future with the man she loved and hardships were nothing. The children were well and thrived until Marie had pneumonia, and later Dorothy developed a cancer. The doctor had said that it was remarkable in one so young. But Mrs. Halliday knew Dorothy drank too much with the wild younger set.

Old Mr. Halliday, however, was furious with Ralph. Why had the boy lied to him? And who was this cheap little actress every one was talking about? He and Martha never saw the revues, but when they returned in the fall they would have to go. Perhaps this chorus girl could be bought off. Lots of them were. He wanted grandchildren—Ralph's and Lola's grandchildren—for his old age. Whatever was between them must be patched up soon. Lola must be brought to her senses, although old Richard blamed Ralph more than he did Lola for Polly's drifting into the picture. Such things were bound to happen when the younger set lived so immoderately, staying up half the night and drinking bad liquor, and seeking excitement everywhere. Such things brought trouble. Then, too, the young married set seemed unwilling to have children. It was amazing the way they drifted through life as though it

were one long roadway created just for them.

Old Richard didn't like it. There was danger ahead.

It flamed in the accidents that were constantly occurring in the increasing divorces! Young people didn't seem to think anything of divorces these days. Easy come, easy go, was the motto for all.

But Old Richard was determined to keep Lola safely married to Ralph. He was sure he could, too, if that girl were out of the way. This fall he would meet the girl and her mother. Such a ridiculous name, Polly Long! Although he had used to call his own child "Dottie," and had dangled her upon his knee, Marie had been short for Marian. But that was long ago.

In the meantime Lola continued to dash about the country in cars driven by half the male population of Bar Harbor. She drifted from dance to dance with the other half.

Louise had partners enough, but she coveted a nice little flirtation with Ralph before another baby tied her down to the hospital. Besides, Ted was restless. He was paying too much attention to that Langham girl. He was quite open in his attentions and was seen everywhere. Well, if he cared nothing for the speech of people she didn't either. The order of the day was to have as good a time as possible.

Old Richard and Martha, wrapped in steamer chairs on the wide veranda of the Winchley Hotel, talked over the freedom of young people and shook their heads and sighed, and later were helped inside and taken up to bed in their luxurious bedroom.

Richard had grown used to a valet, but Martha managed herself, as she always had. But they slept side by side in the big double bed of their luxurious suite.

To them it was just another day nearer eternity!

To Ralph and Lola, and Louise and Ted, and all the young people like them, it was just another day, and that would last for eternities.

Bathing, swimming, dancing, fishing, boating, drinking!

It was a bad generation!

Lola wore her peacock dress that summer, and again Louise mentioned the old-fashioned superstition.

"Nonsense," Lola returned shortly. "It's the most becoming dress I have."

"I know it is," returned Louise.

"Above all, when you wear that green fan and little green slippers."

"You needn't worry, darling, I won't take Ted away from Beth Langham."

Louise was indignant first, then she laughed.

How silly! They were all playing. It seemed to be the thing to do.

"It's all just play," she said lightly. "Don't quarrel with me, dear."

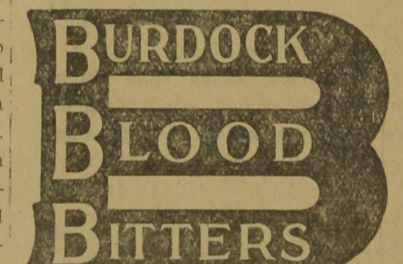
"I'm not quarreling," Lola returned. "But I don't think it's just play, either. There's something feverish and unhealthy in this generation! I don't like it. We're riding for a downfall."

To be Continued.

The abrupt change in the weather of late from the bitter cold spell of a temperature of 10 below zero to the mild spell of the last two days which the mercury registered as about 40 above zero is another sign of a breakup in the general run of cold winter weather and a sign of the intermittent spells of cold and warm weather which we are bound to have from now on until spring. Today it is a great deal warmer and the thermometer is away above the cipher.

For Six Years PIMPLES Covered Her Face

Mrs. Albert Stubbs, Newbury, Ont., writes:—"My face was covered with pimples and was so bad I was ashamed to be seen. I suffered in this way for six years, until one day a friend told me to use



and after I had used two bottles the pimples were all gone and my skin was as clean and smooth as ever."

Put up only by The T. Milburn Co., Limited, Toronto, Ont.

FEMALES HAVE NOW INVADED THE RANKS OF FIRE BUGS; PLAY STAR PARTS IN SOME CASES

(New York Sun)

"Yes, sir," said the insurance company investigator who had just returned to New York from a case in the West, "a 'man's crime' is what most persons would call arson or burning property to defraud the insurance corporations. But, as the police of this city and many others well know, there are many women who play leading parts in staging fraudulent fire dramas."

"I remember one girl, for example a lone-hand player, who operated in the Pacific Coast States. She was an actress in traveling companies and a striking brunette—perhaps she should be called a match-striking brunette. At any rate, in a surprising number of the hotels where she stopped her garments were 'accidentally' burned while she was cleaning them or giving them a pressing."

"Sometimes she would say her electric flatiron had inadvertently been left with the current on and had in that way damaged her dresses; an other time she reported that the match she used to light her cigarette had dropped into her trunk, with disastrous results."

Fails as a Vamp

"Her mother, who traveled with her, always corroborated these statements and there were no other witnesses at hand. On this account the actress managed to make a number of collections on her insurance policies before the company adjusters realized that fire with her had become a bad habit—that she couldn't take it or leave it."

"In one city she tried unsuccessfully to 'vamp' a young adjuster who asked her pointed questions when he visited her in her hotel room. Finding him unresponsive to the advertising of her physical charms—she wore a flimsy kimono—she made a scene in her best histrionic manner, and said he had insulted her."

"Another case involved a vivacious French countess, young and petite, who lived with her American husband in a New England town. She was convicted of burning a small cottage which she occupied for the purpose of collecting insurance on the furnishings that she had surreptitiously removed to another city just prior to the occurrence of her personally supervised fire."

"Her downfall was the outcome of a clever piece of detective work in tracing her supposedly incinerated belongings to a public warehouse. It happened to snow lightly the night that the furnishings were carted away, and a resident of the village chanced to notice the tracks in the snow leading into the yard of the countess's home. On this slight clue a successful case was built. When the countess found herself behind the bars, however, she so charmed her jailer that he obtained a pardon for her and her term of imprisonment was brief."

Wife a Big Help

"Then there was a woman who assisted her husband in setting fire to the contents of the dry cleaning and tailoring establishments they conducted in several cities."

"The couple's favorite 'plant,' as the fire-setting and spreading layous are called, was an electric flat-iron placed on a pile of clothing, plus a few cans of gasoline and kerosene distributed here and there to speed up the flames as soon as they were under way."

"They would get everything ready, the husband would go out of town for alibi purposes, and then the wife would turn the key leading to the iron and make an exit. By the time ignition occurred she would be at home practicing an expression of innocence."

The job that led to their arrest was arranged in Massachusetts, whether the couple had fled from New Jersey after jumping bail pending an appeal from a verdict in that State. In fixing their tails of fuel they had carelessly used one that leaked. Its contents seeped through the floor of the shop into the cellar, which also did duty for the store next door. The proprietor of the latter place happened to go into the cellar, where he noticed a strong aroma of gasoline which he thought was escaping illuminating gas. A plumber was called and soon

discovered the real cause of the odor. He notified the police, who broke into the place just in time to prevent the start of the fire. The plant furnished its own evidence and conviction followed.

"A few years ago two young women living in the suburbs of a Western city were concerned with a fire that had several unusual features. They occupied a dwelling some distance from the nearest fire house, and in the small hours of a winter's night, the fire fiend paid them a scheduled visit."

No Dead Bird

"The girls escaped fully dressed, with their hands full of bundles, and aroused a neighbor who took them in. Definite suspicions were aroused by several indications, including signs of kerosene having been spilled about, and the evidence pointed clearly toward the girls when it was discovered that the cage of their pet canary was badly scorched, although there was no sign of a dead bird."

"At the neighbor's residence, however, there was found in the possession of the fire sufferers (?) a perforated paper bag containing the missing pet in a badly scared condition. It was ascertained also that clothing and other belongings had been removed prior to the fire, and since people aroused unceremoniously by the flames do not usually have time for such thoughtfulness, an explanation was demanded."

"The girls insisted upon their innocence, but nevertheless were convicted and imprisoned. Later it was discovered that they were merely tools of sinister, master criminal to whom they were fearfully loyal. Their case supplies evidence that at least occasionally there is 'honor among thieves.'"

R. J. Prof. Eng'r N. B. ... R.A.I.C.,
Associate Mem. Eng'r Inst. Canada

Mem. American Ass'n Eng'rs.

**WEATHERHEAD
& WALL**

ARCHITECTS and STRUCTURAL
ENGINEERS

60 Prince William St. Phone M.5980.
Saint John, - - N. B.

Fresh Eggs
— at —
FERGUSON'S
Laid Tomorrow
"Nuff Sed"

Try our
SOFT DRINKS

F. H. FERGUSON
COR. NORTHUMBERLAND and
BRUNSWICK STREETS

Cre Clothes
may not make
the man but they
improve his
appearance

A wise man realizes that his clothes do not help him in business if they lack quality and correctness. So he comes to us to be outfitted. And we told his confidence by rearing the finest clothes or him.

"Tailors Of Quality"
Walker Bros., Ltd.
Phone 276-41.
TAILORS
15 QUEEN STREET