

Two Husbands Wanted *by Hazel Deyo Batchelor*



SYNOPSIS

Lola Halliday and her husband, Ralph, do not get along together. Lola has her clothes made in the establishment of a fashionable modiste, Madame Therese, where Polly Long is a mannequin. Lola suspects that there is something between the two. Ralph persuades Polly to leave Jersey City and move to New York. Both Mrs. Long and Polly agree, but after Polly leaves her mannequin job Annette, one of the models, follows her home. There is something threatening in the girl's attitude and Mrs. Long takes a dislike to her. 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. But because there is a tragedy in his life, he dare not push Ralph too far. The winter passes and Lola returns from Florida. In the meantime, Polly and John are lunching one day when they pass Lola in the lobby of the hotel. John has 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 and accuses him of his friendship with Polly, and demands that he give up his friendship with the girl. He asks for her love in return. She replied by going to the Bradley camp in Maine. Old Mr. Halliday tries to get Ralph to join Lola there, and although he refuses at first, he grows so tired that he is forced out of the office. The Hallidays expect to go to Maine later, and, in the meantime, Ralph prepares to take Polly and Mrs. Long to the country. During this period, however, Polly's sprained ankle makes it necessary for Mrs. Long to take many extra steps. She is soaked in a thunderstorm one day getting books from the library for Polly. That night she has a fearful attack and has to be helped back from the bathroom, where the medicine is kept. Polly is terrified. She consults Dr. Waite, who tells her the attacks are asthmatic and that what her mother needs is rest. The real trouble is the heart, and after Polly has left the nurse and the doctor discuss the case, Miss Norris defends Polly, but Dr. Waite feels the girl's intelligence should tell her the truth. With their luggage, Ralph and Polly and Mrs. Long set out for the shore, but they are caught in a terrible shower and Polly is soaked to the skin. Ralph and Mrs. Long are wet, too, as Ralph has to change a

tire; but they finally reach the cabin, where, after several drinks of whiskey, Ralph prepares a delicious meal. Polly and her mother sleep upstairs, Ralph downstairs, as there is only one cabin below. They all sleep well, unconscious of what Fate is to precipitate on the morrow.

INSTALLMENT TWENTY. ANNETTE AGAIN.

And Polly and the little mother did not dream. They fell asleep instantly to the tune of the waves. And their sleep was filled with true rest, and tomorrow would be a new day, their first one! There would be the place to explore. There would be the arrival of the maid. There would be a hearty breakfast of bacon and eggs and hot coffee, and little tea biscuits. Then it would be hot enough to go bathing after the housework had been finished and Ralph would spread out the umbrella for them to enjoy. Polly would be leaping in the surf, gasping for breath just at first and then feeling the confidence of young blood in her veins. It was going to be a wonderful vacation for Ralph, Polly and the little mother!

Perhaps!

Because the next day after the housework had been done, and they were arrayed in their suits they saw some one that neither Ralph, Polly nor Mrs. Long expected to see. It was Annette! She was seated under a beach umbrella with a tanned older man, a group of other people were in their crowd. All were smoking. The girls recognized one another and Polly nodded. Annette talked for a time to the man with her and then rose and came over to Polly. She wore a satin bathing suit in purple. She looked lovely in it.

"Hello, all you people!"

"Hello, Annette!"

"Fancy seeing you down here!"

"We're just behind the dunes."

"I know," she said with a laugh.

"We're back in the stucco houses. Come and see us, won't you? We have a maid and some good liquor and there will be plenty of food."

Mrs. Long relented. Perhaps she had been misjudging the girl.

"We'll come," she promised. "We're expecting a maid today so you must come and see us, too."

After Annette had wended her way back to her friends, the three talked.

"We'll have them all to dinner," said Ralph.

"But no liquor," pleaded Mrs. Long.

"No liquor for Polly and me, although the rest will expect it and they shall have it. In the meantime, let's get back to the bungalow unless you want another dip."

Polly had been in twice and had tired, Ralph had taxed his muscles with three attempts at swimming. Mrs. Long was content, however, to splash the water up on her, and they all rose and went back to the cabin, Ralph carrying the umbrella. They stamped up

the steps into the ship's cabin, but the place was empty. The maid had not arrived. Ralph had planned to go fishing that afternoon and he was irritated. Besides, where was his order for other food?

That arrived very shortly, however, with some soft-shell clams for bait, and that afternoon in his powerful little launch, Ralph took Polly and Mrs. Long fishing. They caught five white-fish in the back waters—beauties! And when they returned home, their order for fresh vegetables and lobster had arrived—also the maid.

She was smiling and friendly, this girl, who said her name was Lottie.

"Yes'm, my train was late, 'cause of the storm. I had to sleep downtown."

"That's all right," Ralph returned. "You get busy on the supper while we are dressing. You say it's all in the kitchen?"

Lottie nodded.

So while the three were dressing, Lottie broiled lobster in the oven and when they were ready to eat, there were fresh vegetables, and fruit for dessert.

Royal Hamilton's stucco bungalow, where Annette was staying, had been filled with excited talk.

"Shall we go?"

"Of course, we'll go."

"It will be fun."

"All right, that's settled, then. Now then, who wants to go fishing?"

Annette knew that Royal liked to take her fishing and she consented grudgingly. The other woman pleaded naps and it was in the backwaters that afternoon that Annette saw Polly again. They exchanged waves.

Ralph was irritated at once.

"Why do we see that girl everywhere to go?"

"That's natural, dear, if she's staying in the same place."

"I know, but how did she know we were coming here?"

"She didn't."

"Oh, she must have."

Polly, her brow wrinkled, was not quite as sure as she pretended to be. Annette had followed her once before. Why hadn't she followed her here then as Ralph said? He was always right!

And if they were going to bump into her during their month's vacation, all of the pleasure would be gone. Why must there be visiting back and forth? Polly had no desire to meet the people in the stucco houses. They would have one dinner for them and perhaps accept an invitation in return but that would be all.

And that was just what happened. The following Saturday night the three walked down to the stucco bungalow and entered one of the doll's houses, where they met Royal Hamilton's friends and were treated royally. After dinner, preceded by high balls, they went to the dance at the one hotel.

Mrs. Long sat on the sidelines and watched her darling drift back and forth in Ralph's arms. She was wear-

BACHELOR PREMIER OF CANADA IN RECEIPT OF LEAP YEAR PROPOSALS SAYS GADSBY

According to Mr. H. F. Gadsby of Ottawa, Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, the bachelor premier of Canada lately received in his mail the following leap year epistles:

Dear Mr. Premier:

I am a widow of long enough standing to be lonesome. You too are lonesome, Mr. Premier. I see it in your face but you do not feel it as much as I do. As the poet says 'tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all. And, may I add, better to have loved and lost than never to be able to love again. Thank God I am not that numb!

My heart is still sore, but as dear Tom died six years ago leaving a bundle of letters in his safety deposit box which more than explained the pink ribbon they were tied with, I cannot say that I sorrow without hope of making a better guess next time. I miss the dear boy, of course, but the sting of regret is not as keen as it once was. Sometimes I forget the sting altogether and then I am lively company. I make a point never to let my heart ache when I am at a party. No use overdoing it, I say.

Dear Tom left me with a small life insurance and two pledges of affection, Dora now aged ten, and Cecil aged twelve. But that must not alarm you, Mr. Premier. If we make a match of it we'd keep the life insurance at home for my pin money and send the kids to boarding school.

But I am getting ahead of my cu-

ing a ruffled dress of gray chiffon with a bright orange flower at one shoulder. The dress was high at the throat, but her dimpled arms were bare. How the music sang and Polly danced with all of them, and Annette danced with Ralph who looked gloomy during the process.

After it was all over, they walked back, and that night Mrs. Long had her second attack of heart trouble. Trembling she awoke with the old pain gripping her. In the darkness she groped for the handkerchief under her pillow. It contained one of the precious crystals to be crushed.

She drew in her breath in great straining gasps fearful that Polly would hear her, but the girl, happily, tired, was oblivious and Mrs. Long had instantaneous relief and went immediately to sleep.

Tomorrow would be another day, only that there would be only the three of them after this, excepting for that one dinner at the cabin. Polly would get that over with as quickly as possible. Then they could laze through the long days until the long month was over.

In the meantime, Lola was having much the same time at Bar Harbor as Polly was having at the shore. Perhaps there were more gaiety, more dancing, as the place was larger and boasted tennis courts. But the Bradleys knew every one in the place and there was always some excitement.

But news of Ralph's arrival made her angry. She had planned to be away from his love-making all summer. Why did he insist upon coming here when she had met all the nicest men and was having such a beautiful time? His father had written that Ralph had already left in the car and that he and Mrs. Halliday would motor up later. It was too bad!

Tomorrow—Louise and Lola.

Her Three Boys Had Terrible Colds That Hung On

Mrs. G. Ames, 35 St. George Street, Chatham, Ont., writes:—"Last winter my three boys had terrible colds and a cough that hung on so long that it began to worry me."

"I went to my druggist and he asked me if I had tried

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cumbers. What I want to say, Mr. Premier, is that you need a widow in your business. A widow is the perfect mate for a statesman because she understands most men and suspects all women. Which, you will admit as a politician, is something more than the beginning of wisdom. Between us we should be able to handle 'em. Your seasoned judgment, not too much advice from the Cabinet, and my womanly intuition—it'd be a wonderful combination. As for your high ideals if I can't just reach 'em I can make a pretty good jump. We'll never quarrel about that. I believe in ideals—they're beautiful to look at—but as life is largely a matter of brass tacks it might be well to lug me along as your tack hammer. I have a practical nature and would serve as a useful foil to your lofty purposes. At the same time I can be romantic enough if I'm provoked.

It's too bad, Mr. Premier, your being a bachelor. It encourages Jonny Elliott to stay that way and Johnny Elliott is some girl's good egg if she ever gets a chance. Besides there's Mr. Bennett. For shame, Mr. Premier! Three strong men! What are you afraid of? What each of you needs is a widow—somebody that will put you over the jumps and make you like it. If I cared for riches I would set my cap at Mr. Bennett, who is said to be rotten with it but I have a soul above mere wealth and I believe it is my duty to grab off the first Premier since Confederation who has tried to play this tough game alone. I am going to save you from yourself, Mr. Premier, I give you fair warning. Sit tight. Grip the chair. Here I come. Did I kiss you on the ear? Well, what of it?

As I was saying, it's a widow you need, Mr. Premier. Dickens makes Sammy Weller say "beware of the widders" but if rumor speaks true it's advice Dickens didn't take himself. There was some scandal about it. Widows know what they want and as a general rule they take it. You can't say, Mr. Premier, that I didn't let you know. What does Dryden say?

Let widows marry often as they can. And each time for the better change their man.

That man Dryden knew his onions. I'm telling you, Mr. Premier, that when I change my man it's going to be all to the mustard. To make a long story short, you're it. I've had my eye on you for six years and you wear well. As I said before, Mr. Bennett at first glance looks like a real temptation but when I reflect that he may have ten years to wait and that meanwhile yours is the Kingdom the power and the glory, my heart beats fondly on your side. I understand that while you are not rich you have enough to keep a wolf from every door in Laurier House. That should be enough for both of us. Well, t-t-ta. Shorty! Look out for me!

Another Appeal.

My Dear Mr. King:

Leap year means that you are in grave danger from designing females of one sort and another. I am writing this note to tell you to stand firm. Do not yield to this all too human weakness of marriage. We respect you, aloof, godlike, wedded to your star. If you married we might catch your wife's opinion of you.

I am a married woman myself. I do not speak out of bitterness because I am repenting at leisure, nor am I a misunderstood wife seeking a genuine affinity. On the contrary I am quite happy and I love my husband, my home, and my children, but I content, Mr. Premier, that you are above and beyond these ordinary human affairs and that your country is your wife. I have often heard you say so. Stick to it.

What you need is not marriage but friendship. Platonic friendship—the glow, as it were, without the fire—preferably with a married woman. I understand that these friendships are quite all right and that the only difficulty is in keeping them platonic. One never knows when the ashes are going to blaze up. Still I would be willing to take the risk at the call of duty with no thought of turning in a number three fire alarm.

Such a friendship would be an austere association of intellect and moral purpose. It would shed a pure white

light on our path—a serene light, beautiful but not too warm, something in the nature of the Aurora Borealis. Such a friendship had Numa for his Egeria, Dante for his Beatrice, who was married, and had thirteen children. Why should not such an innocent arrangement be ours? I would inspire your work and when care and anguish wrung your brow I might even read you little bed time stories to send you to sleep. Think it over, Mr. Premier. The one sure thing is that you need a guardian angel of some sort or other if you are to get through the year 1928 unscathed.

VERA SHYBOLD.

BAREHEADED HABIT AND WHAT IT LEADS TO

(New York Sun)

The two women on their way to church Sunday morning met at intervals a dozen or more boys and young men they knew. They smiled and bowed and received pleasant greetings in reply. But after every young man had gone on the women looked at each other somewhat surprised, aghast and confused.

"It must be because we are getting old," said one.

"All the more reason why they should not forget," replied the other. "Really, I don't see what the youth of this country is coming to when its young men are so lacking in good manners."

They reached the church and it was when their heads were bowed in prayer that a bright thought came to one of them. Excitedly, she whispered in her friend's ear:

"I know why it happened. They are so accustomed to going without hats on week days that on Sundays they don't remember they have them on, and that's why not one of them took his hat off to us."

Stanley Train Service

Commencing Monday, February 6th, the Canadian National Railways have arranged to operate a steam train service between Cross Creek and Stanley on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, to replace the highway service that has proven unsatisfactory. The service will be provided by Fredericton and Newcastle trains No. 237 and 238, which will operate in and out of Stanley on these days.

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