The House of Mystery

When Jealousy Casts Its Ugly Shadow Across the Path of True Love, Only the Unexpected Can Avert a Tragedy. To Philippa and Ned, the Jealous Young People of This Thrilling Story, There Came Suddenly a Peril Which They Had to Face Together or Perish.

By Richard Atwood.

Philippa Exeter, the handsome, well-built girl riding in the second rank of the cycling club on its way to Riverdown, flushed crimson at a fresh witticism. It was lucky, she thought angrily, that it was too dark for her sudden color to be noticed

As quietly as she could she let herself drop back to the tail of the team.

It was too bad, she told herself bitterly, of Kitty Claire. Just because Philippa and Ned Keither had been good friends, Kitty had been suddenly moved to make them the subject of her jokes all day.

Amusing to Kitty, perhaps. When she had suggested to the rest that Ned Keither, rather shy and nervous as he was, and the reserved Philippa were in love, things had become trying for them at once.

The two had grown awkward straightaway, and half way through the day's run had openly quarrelled, much to the joy of the mischievous Kitty.

"Kitty Claire's a jealous little cat, and Ned is an awkward fool," Philippa told herself.

Just then she heard a sudden pop. A puncture? "I'll catch the rest of you up in a moment," she told the boy in front. A minute later, alone in the dusty road, with the red reflectors of the team growing dim, Philippa dismounted, and examined her tyre. In her present mood she didn't want help —from anyone.

Nevertheless, it was a nasty job. A quarter of an hour passed, and found her still patching a nasty tear, by the light of her lamp propped up on a bank.

She was making headway with the job when she was interrupted. A cyclist came spinning down the road, and dismounted by her.

"Hallo, Philippa! What's keeping you?"

She looked up.

"I don't see that it's any business of yours, Ned Keither," she told him coldly. "I'm not so anxious for your company as you seemed to think this afternoon, anyway."

"The rest sent me back for you," lied Ned, awkwardly. "Let's give a hand, anyway."

He mended the puncture in silence, except for an icy "Thanks" from the girl. They mounted and rode off after the team.

"Have to catch them up," ventured Ned, breaking the silence suddenly.

"Obviously," Philippa told him more freezingly than ever. In the distance a growl like thunder was heard, and rain began to fall. The two put on speed. The team were stopping at Riverdown that night.

"I say," said Philippa suddenly. Necessity forced her to speak. "Look at that signpost! We're off our road! We must have taken the wrong turning."

The pair halted. It was the fact, and things looked nasty. Charming as was the countryside the club had chosen for ts week-end spin, it was desolate. They had not passed a soul. They took what seemed the most hopeful route, but another half-hour found them still far from anywhere. and very wet.

"The first house we come to, we put up for the night!" suggested Ned.

Philippa was going to answer sarcastically, but mutual misfortune had blunted the edge of the quarrel.

"And the sooner we get to one the better. I say, it was decent of you to come back to me. But I wish I hadn't got you into this mess, too."

"A good thing I am here," Ned told her. "Look, there's a light."

They slowed down. Across the fields, a good way off in the dark, a dim yellow light flickered. Ned dismounted, and made for a gap in the hedge.

"Shelter at last," he suggested.

Philippa laughed ,and the wet pair pushed their machines up a muddy track towards the guiding light.

Farther off then had expected, a big house rose up against the night. The only light was from the back. They pushed on up the drive to the steps before the front door, and Ned knocked heavily.

There was no reply to his repeated knocks. As he turned puzzled to Philippa, who was at the foot of the steps holding their machines, she exclaimed:

"Look! the light's gone out!"

"P'raps they've just gone to bed," suggested Ned. "Well, round to the back we go. They can't refuse us."

They made their way to the outlying wing at the back from where the light had come.

They found the door. Ned knocked, and, getting no answer, tried the handle. After a moment's hesitation, they stepped into a stone kitchen.

Ned detached his lamp and put it on a table.

"Come on in," he said. "I'll go and find the people here, and tell them we want shelter."

Philippa brought in the machines, while Ned, taking a lamp, went off into the passage beyond.

"Something funny, Philippa," he told her. "I've been over the house, and it's empty. No people—I called out on every floor—practically no furniture. Been everywhere except the cellars; the door leading down is locked."

"But there was a light!" protested Philippa. And there have been people here lately. Look!"

They inspected the stone kitchen in which they were standing.

On a table were some dirty cups. In a cupboard were wood and paper, and in a pail before the empty hearth was a good supply of coal. A kettle stood in the grate.

"Might almost say we've wandered into a house of ghosts," suggested Ned, cheerfully.

Philippa shuddered. Intuition told her something was wrong about this mysterious house of vanishing lights and unseen inhabitants. She didn't say anything to Ned, however.

"Well," she remarked, "the best thing we can do is to make a fire. We shall be warm and dry then for the night. I don't believe in ghosts, anyway."

I few minuter later found Philippa, with Ned's assistance, persuading a rather reluctant fire to light up.

Half-way through the task Philippa spoke suddenly.

"I say, Ned, I've been an awful pig to-day, and I'm sorry. It was really Kitty Claire's fault, suggesting we were in love and trying to make us both look fools. . . . So that we tried to show we weren't, and quarrelled.

Philippa's rich, dark complexion grew crimson as she spoke. Perhaps, though, it was just the reflection from the burning wood.

"It wouldn't be such a bad idea if we were," suppested Ned, hopefully.

An amused light sparkled in Philippa's dark eyes as she carefully laid on another piece of coal.

"It would make Kitty mad, anyway," she laughed. The fire was now burning cheerfully.

"And now," suggested Ned, rising, "I've got an idea. I saw some rugs in one of the rooms upstairs. They'd be something to sleep on—better than stone, anyway. I'll go for them."

A little later he returned with a few rugs. There was hardly a luxurious supply of them, but Philippa, who always took her troubles cheerfully, laughed as Ned regarded his meagre findings ruefully.

"Better than nothing at all events. I think I'll take my shoes off, anyway!!" remarked Philippa.

"P'raps there are more," suggested Ned, optimistically. "I'll go for another prowl."

He picked up his lamp, and went off once more. A few minutes later, returning, he looked round the room in amazement.

Philappa was gone!

He flashed his lamp round the kitchen, and called her name. There was no answer.

Ned could hardly believe his eyes. What had happened to her? Her shoes were on the floor, still warm—but the girl had vanished as completely as if the floor had opened up beneath her.

He stood for a moment puzzled. An eerie sensation crept over him. This forsaken house of lights that disappeared like ghosts—what strange and terrible things might not happen here?

He pulled himself together, though, and set off, lamp in hand, to search the house. It was as empty as ever, and no Philippa answered his anxious calls. After wandering through the dark passages of the rambling old mansion, he found his way back to the kitchen.

Then, with a sudden idea, he moved to the door. Might she be outside? It was locked! Ned went pale for a moment. Whoever was responsible for Philippa's disappearance was determined that he too should not leave the house. They were both trapped —far from help.

At any rate, Ned decided, there was a human agency at work! Someone, unseen, was loose—perhaps dogging his footsteps!

He glanced round for a weapon. On the cupboard door was a soiled towel on a roller. Ned detached the roller and felt it critically. It would be of some use against the mysterious marauders!

Then Ned thought rapidly. There was only one place where they could have been hidden when the cyclists came in—in the cellars, below the barred door, and one, one of them was loose in the house, waiting to catch him unawares. For, while he was touring the house, someone had returned to lock the kitchen door.

Ned made his plans. He took off his shoes and stole noiselessly to a corner by the barred door. There, with uplifted roller, he waited for the raider to return.

His plans were well lad. Five minutes' suspense; then quiet footsteps were heard, and Ned in his corner caught sight of a man coming down the passage.

Just as the man put his key to the door, Ned brought his roller down. It did its work effectively; the man fell stunned. Ned dragged his prostrate enemy into the shadows, opened the door and went down a flight of stone steps. There was a patch of light at the foot of them

Then, roller uplifted, Ned emerged cautiously into a big cellar. The enemy was not there. But in a corner sprawled Philippa. She had been tied up with rope and gagged by her captors.

Ned ran across the cellar and untied the gag. While he undid the ropes, Philippa explained in a rapid whisper.

"There are three of them in the house. We've stumbled upon some secret, and they don't mean us to get out alive. I was taken by surprise from the back, gagged, and carried down here. Then, after giving me a few kicks, the beasts went off to get you too."

"Well, there's one out of action," said Ned cheerfully. The crisis found him buoyant, his nervousness gone. "We'll get the others now."

Philippa rose to her feet a little cramped, but ready for action. She tossed her black hair out of her eyes and glanced round for weapons.

The cellar, lit by an oil-lamp, was practically vacant. A heap of loam lay in a corner, and some strange tools. As she was glancing round, a sound of footsteps was heard above. The other two were coming down!

Ned and Philippa, tense with excitement, crouched in the shadows, waiting to make a sudden spring. Unluckily, Ned's roller was on the other side of the cellar. But, as it was, the two intruders were taken suddenly by surprise.

Ned flung himself on one with a sudden jolt to the jaw that sent the man rolling, while Philippa collared the other and brought him to the ground.

Taken unawares, the two raiders nevertheless fought desperately. They were both beefy, beery individuals in very bad training; their opponents were both athletic young people. Ned was thin but wiry, and as his man staggered up he sent him reeling again with another uppercut to point. Philippa had scrambled on top of her fallen enemy, who was still makng frantic efforts to rise.

against the wall, the cyclist's keen eyes noticed the man's hand go to his pocket. Like a flash he was on him, his sinewy hand on the other's wrist.

Ned dragged out a revolver—and the fight was up. Ned didn't know how the revolver worked, but that didn't matter, for his enemy was unaware of it. His hands went up like clockwork.

He stepped back, and by Ned's direction moved alongside his partner While the cyclist covered them with the revolver, Philippa tied up their hands and feet with the cords they had used for her.

Ned and Philippa dragged down the other man, who was still unconscious, and ranged him against the wall with the rest.

Ned surveyed his three dejected and ruffianly prisoners.

"Well," he told them cheerily, "the game's up now, you know. I'm going to get the police to take charge of you all. I rather fancy, since you were so anxious to keep some secret, that they will be very interested.

"Now, one of you can tell me the best way to the nearest police-station. It had better be the right way, too, or you'll get hurt when I come back."

After a few minutes, one of them sullenly gave him the necessary directions. While Ned mounted guard over the captives with his revolver, Philippa cycled off to the station.

About forty minutes later, she returned with four policemen from Riverdown, telling them the tale on the way. They handcuffed the prisoners.

"Well, sir," a constable told Ned, "it's no wonder they were anxious about you finding the house. They're forgers—these are some of their things on the floor. They fixed on this empty house to use, and like fools gave themselves away by showing that light. If you two young people hadn't come across them like that, they might be free men still.

"I suppose you two will come along with us to the village. A bit more comfortable than here, for the rest of the night. By the way, there's an item of news, sir, that'll be of interest to you and your young lady. There's quite a biggish reward out for these men. Come in handy for getting married on."

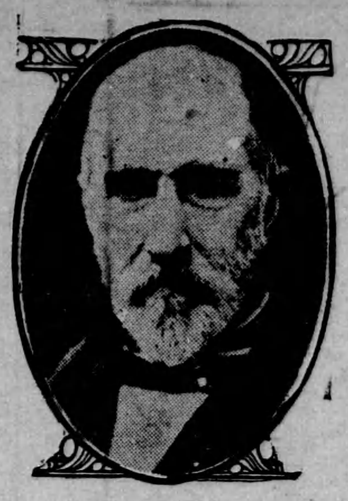
He winked at Ned.

"I think you're about right," said Ned. But he said it as a question, and he looked at Philippa as he spoke.

"So do I," answered the girl, glancing downwards as she spoke.

Hostess—"Yes, a lovely old clock, but always fast."

Guest—"Ah, early American!'



Bishop of Ripon

Who advocates closing of scientific laboratories for the period of a decade.

Sour Cream

Some New and Attractive Ways to Add Zest to the Menu by the Use of Sour Cream

To keep sour cream, pour into a clean glass bottle, cover and set in a cool place. In this way several days' remnants can be combined and used when needed.

Bake slices of halibut in sour cream, for a delicious variation of the usual baked fish dish. Or use sour cream in place of milk in preparing white sauce for codfish.

Potatoes mashed in hot sour cream have a fine texture and excellent flavor. Sour cream poured over to almost cover scalloped potatoes while baking makes a delectable dish. But do not cook sour cream too long or it will curdle.

In many countries the best cooks stir two or three tablespoons of freshly soured cream into soups just before serving them. Beef, chicken, tomato and beet soups are especially improved by it. Hot sour cream seasoned with salt and a little celery seed and then poured over chicken fricassee gives an indescribably good flavor. Grated horseradish used with sour cream is a favorite salad dressing in many households.

Veal With Sour Cream

Bone and cut short as many veal chops as are needed. Lard on one side. Have ready four tablespoons of butter, one cup of sour cream, one well-beaten egg yolk, salt, pepper and flour. Season the chops lightly with salt and pepper and dip the unlarded side in flour. Put the butter in the frying pan and when hot add the chops. Fry slowly, turning to brown evenly; this will take about twenty minutes. Place them in a pan, pour sour cream over them and bake slowly twenty minutes more. Just before serving, pour the sauce from the pan onto the beaten egg yolk, mixed with a little cream and serve on the chops.

Sour Cream Johnny Cake

One cup of sour cream, one teaspoon of soda, one teaspoon of salt, one-third cup of sugar, one egg, three-fourths cup flour and three-fourths cup of cornmeal.

Beat the egg well. Add salt, sugar and flour and mix until very smooth. Add the sour cream and cornmeal. Dissolve the soda in a little boiling water and stir in the last thing before baking. Bake in a moderate oven twenty minutes. Serves six.

This bread is delicious served with a luncheon of salad and cold meat, tea and Johnny cake being the only hot dishes.

Faquin Gras

Grate five small, cold, boiled potatoes finely. Mix with them five heaping tablespoons of flour, a saltspoon of salt and two beaten eggs. Mix well together, add one-fourth cup of thick sour cream, in which has been stirred a half teaspoon of baking soda. Drop by spoonful into deep, hot fat.

These are particularly appropriate to serve with smelts or with any kind of small fish. Enough for four.

"John, I wish you'd bring me home one of those tobloids." "The kind you take with a glass of water?" "No; the kind you take with a grain of salt."

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Apple Recipes

In September and October one can often pick up apples for nothing or for so little that it seems a shame not to add them to the winter's supply of appetizing food. Just a few minutes spent in the kitchen in the autumn will mean many pleasurable meals a little later.

Sweet Pickled Apples

Break into pieces a two-inch stick of cinnaman and tie it in a cheesecloth bag with 1 teaspoonful each of whole cloves and the whole allspice. Add 3 pounds of light brown sugar to 1 quart of vinegar; drop it in the spice bag and boil it for 15 minutes. Peel, core and cut into quarters rather tart, well flavored apples, and simmer them, a few at a time, in the sydup, until they are almost done. If the fruit is not delicate pink in color, add a little beet juice to the syrup. Pack the apples carefully in hot, sterilized jars and leave them in a hot oven while the sydup is being boiled down rapidly for about 10 minutes. Fill the hot jars with the syrup and seal. These are delicious served with pork.

Apples for Pies and Sauce

Fruit that cooks up into a mushy consistency is fine for apple sauce and pies. Thoroughly cooked without sugar and sealed securely in sterilized jars, the apples keep well. Sugar may be added as needed, when it will probably be cheaper than during the canning season.

Canning of this kind is easily done in the oven while other baking is going on. The rack from the broiler may be set on the bottom of the oven to keep the jars from getting too hot. The sauce may be partly cooked over the flame and finished by baking in the jars in the oven, or the apples may be put into the cans as they are prepared, covered with hot water and set into the oven. The juices boil up from beneath and cook the fruit. When done, fill each jar with either more boiling apple sauce or hot water, and seal as usual.

Apples for Salads and Dumplings

Apples that hold their shape when cooked are best for dumplings, salads or garnishing for roast pork. When to be used for the two latter purposes, unpeeled, red-skinned apples cut into halves give the prettiest effect, but care must be taken thoroughly to cook the skins. Baking is the surest means of keeping the pieces unbroken. As the fruit is prepared, drop each piece into scalding hot water and when there is enough for a pint can, pack the apples into the hot sterilized jar, pour over them enough thin boiling sugar syrup to cover, lay the sterilized cap on top and set the can in the hot oven. A little red vegetable coloring added to the syrup will make the fruit very attractive in a salad or as a garnish. When the apples may be pierced with a straw, fill the jars, adjust the rubbers and covers, and seal. Test for leaks and store in a dark place to preserve the color. Such apple cups on beds of lettuce, filled with chopped nuts or celery, with a dash of mayonnaise and a bit of currant jelly as a garnish, make a combination as delightful to the taste as to the eye.

Apple Butter

Wash apples, core without peeling, cut into pieces and cook with as little water as possible until the fruit is very soft. This may best be done in the oven. Put the fruit through a sieve, and to each 3 cupfuls of pulp allow 1 cupful of sugar, ½ teaspoonful of ground cinnamon and a pinch of ginger. Simmer down to the desired consistency, adding more or other spices to suit the taste, if necessary. By taking every chance possible to cook hot pulp in the oven instead of over a direct flame one can prevent the waste of considerable material and time. If a flame must be used, put an asbestos sheet under the kettle. Pour the apple butter into sterilized glasses or a stone crock and seal with melted paraffin.

Apple Honey

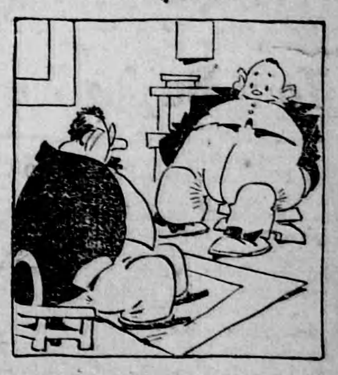
For variety, add to 2 quarts of the apple butter 1 cupful of honey. Heat slowly but do not boil after the honey is added. Seal with paraffin.

Apple Catsup

Wipe, core and quarter 16 large cooking apples, cover them with water and simmer until they are well done. Rub through a sieve and to each 4 cupfuls of pulp allow 2 teaspoonfuls of white pepper, 1¼ cupfuls of sugar, 1 teaspoonful each of mustard and allspice, 1 1/3 teaspoonfuls of cinnamon, 1 tablespoonful of salt, 1 large onion, grated, and 2½ cupfuls of cider vinegar. Add to the apple pulp, bring slowly to a boil and simmer until of the right consistency, about 1¼ hours. Seal while hot.

Sweet Apple Pickle

Syrup from pickled peaches and pickled watermelon rind may be used to make delicious apple pickle. Steam sweet apples until they can be pierced with a straw, add to the reheated syrup, bring to a boil and seal in small sterilized jars.



The Helpful Lemon.

Patient—"So you think, doctor, a lemon a day will help?"

Doctor—"I think you can count on the lemon aid."

Electric.

A man was arrested and brought before the magistrates.

Magistrate (to prisoner)—"What is your name, occupation, and what are you charged with?"

Prisoner—"My name is Sparks. I am an electrician, and I am charged with assault and battery."

Magistrate—"Officer, put this man in a dry cell."

Health visitor (who, on a previous visit, had given a thermometer to an old couple in a stuffy cottage)—"I hope you're not letting the red line go up above the 60 mark" Old John —"Oh, no, miss, as soon as I finds it climbing up too high I takes it out in the garden and cools it down!"

Widow (to daughter)—"When you are my age it will be time enough to dream of a husband." Daughter—"Yes, mamma, for the second time."

A Scene at Meadowbrook

"A SAVE"

A view of the International Polo challenge cup match between the four finest horsemen of the British Army in India and the four best in the United States.