The Free Press Short Story

WIRES THAT WERE CROSSED

PLORENCE KERIGAN

LARA MORGAN deftly wrapped a names had been mentioned, and voices around a flowerpot and tied it It would be a shame for this girl to wait with a perky bow. The lily nodded gracefully from its tall stem and sent out a slight fragrance as she set it down on the floor with the others. Hundreds of lilies were in the big store, all wrapped and tagged feedy for shipment.

many, many tasks were left to do, and partly because she had to keep busy so she would not think too much. Tomorrow would be Easter. It would be hands her first Easter in the city, and the first Easter after her father's death. It would she asked in a frightened little voice be the first time in all her life that she she felt that she could not stand a re would not be sitting in the little white buffchurch on the hill, with the sunlight streaming through the stained glass windows-the first Easter that she would not hear her father's beloved voice closing the service with the lines he had always quoted: "Let not your heart be troubled If it were not so, I would have told you."

Easter had always meant so much to Ded. "Life is a magic tapestry." he so often said. "Behind us we leave a wovan carpet of memorics—before us we can weave just as shining a one. Life is an adventure-death is an adventure-and the greatest adventure of all will be the passing over and meeting again those we have loved." Dad had met his greatest adventure, and passed over with a smile on his lips. Clara could have no doubt that he had joined the girl who had it's unconventional-maybe it seems mad blue eyes. helped to make so many of the golden memories in his life.

Memories, Clara was finding out, could be painful-even beautiful once. She did not like to recall right now those hours spent with Dad in the cheery living room of the old manse. No doubt many years stretched before her to be colored with even more golden memories. but right now she saw both the past and the future in a mist of tears.

Her slim fingers were folding in the green tissue paper about a sheaf of pink roses in an oblong box. A man was sending those to his sweetheart. - He often ordered flowers sent to that adcress. She buried her face among the satiny petals before finally covering them up with the white pasteboard lid. "Clara!" the junior partner called from the front of the store. "Telephone for

"For me?" The girl hastened toward

be calling her at the store? "Hello?" said a pleasant voice. "This

you, Claru! This is Grace." Grace? Her mind swiftly produced Grace, a girl who boarded at the same house she did-a shy, awkward girl, considerably older than Clara, and not very calling her. "Oh-yes

"I wondered if you would like to have er with me this evening?" "Why, yes, Grace, I'd like to."

"Where shall I meet you, then? Will you be home about five?"

'I'm afraid not. Could you meet me place, don't you? The florist shop on the corner?"

The florist shop at Fiftcenth and -Green. And what time?"

"About seven.".

see you then. By-by.

Clara hung up and a little glow enveloped her. Who would have imagined that Grace would have such a charming telephone voice and personality? Clara to-morrow, though, I'm afraid. He be came back to her wrapping. She paused loved Easter so, you see. I don't think after the knot was tied in the purple and I could quite stand it-to-morrow." silver ribbon about a square silver box of pansies, and her hands lingered on the bow. Perhaps Grace was lonely. I don't believe in anything. The day Clara had lived in that house for three the notice of-of-it-appeared in the months and did not know a single one papers, I had a letter from a person sayof the people there. She knew them by ing he had had a message from Betty." name: Grace who lived in the room be- she broke off and gave a hard little low her; Mrs. Brooks, who lived across the hall; Miss Stilson, who had the room lived with people for three months and knew nothing about them except their

self against her own accusing conscience. Clara." For awhile it looked as though she! might not get away by seven, but prompt- ward in her eagerness. "I'm sure that's ly on the hour the junior partner told not true. I know that Dad's spirit still her to run along home. He and his lives! It must! I can feel him so close the business.

spring dusk and waited for Grace. The "know!" twilight street was a symphony of hyacinth blue and daffodil yellow: People passed her carrying blue hydrangeas, in the room with you even thought the Easter lilies, rosebushes in bloom,

cloth cloak with a purple orchid on the | plain it. And believing that God knows black fur collar came past and stopped best." before the florist's shop. She looked "I don't believe in God any more into the window; then she glanced at either," said Grace, in a flat, matter-ofher watch. She had passed before. Clara fact tone. Things just, happen by remembered the orchid pinned to the chance." Grace dismissed the subject

Suddenly a thought struck her. Clara was a common name and so was Grace. what to say to help. Grace had delib-Probably everyone in the world knew erately cut herself off from all solace. both a Clara and a Grace! No last!

piece of woven green matting did sound different over the telephone.

"You never know what you can do-.." day! She stepped nearer to the black-Clara worked fast, partly because so costume, to catch the breath of an exfeatures. She took her courage in both to her heaving bosom. "Ah, ye poor

"I-did you call Clara this morning?"

Clara-why, yes, I did. But-"It must have been a wrong number. said Clara. "I'm sorry. You see I know a Grace, too, and-I was too busy to think, I suppose-"

"I called Larch 3866," said Grace: "And our number is Larch 3066. You -ven could call her again." -

"No. I don't think so .- She'll be away for the evening now-" The girl half turned away, and then turned back imulsively, "What are you doing to thing to say about such things.

wistful-or was it tragedy in their blue depths? "I thought I had something.

-but I can't bear to be alone to-night! Easter is as bad as Christmas for memories-" her voice broke.

"Of course I'd be glad to." The gloved dunno-" hand that Clara laid impulsively on the other's sleeve was shabby but neither

Grace took Clara to an exclusive restaurant where a radio played soft music and the candles on the tables cast a which fell apart as by magic when the rosy glow over everything. They kin- officer in charge learned that the lady self thinking that Grace would be levely certain formalities could be arranged. when she smiled and that she must at light caught a million points of fire from through this section of the city." She

Harley Abbot. And you-?" There they stopped. She found she could station. Well, come down right away not talk with a perfect stranger.

Grace made polite conversation. Sudattractive. She wondered why Grace was utterly mad? I couldn't stand it at explanation. Grace gave it to him, with home alone-to-night. Last year there laughter, and with the little girl clinging were things to do-plans for an egg hunt tightly to her immagulately gloved hand -a real live bunny. And now-Harley and eyeing the big man with misgiving 15 working late to-night. He often works late now. He wants me to do things just while Harley drove her and Clara home the same and he doesn't see why I can't. "Do you still think that was chance?" But men don't care about things like asked Clara, a little mischievously at the women do. He grieved for awhile about end of it. "Quite a lot of coincidences at Pifteenth and Green? You know the Betty and then-he wanted to-go on growing out of crossed wires, don't you just the same-told me I was doing think?" wrong to-to care so much."

softly. "This time last year I was lis- those wires! Clara, I'll see you in that tening to my father read the sermon he church," as, they passed an illuminated

"Seven? Aren't you dissipating? I'll had just finished for Easter." "Your father is was a minister?"

> · Clara nodded. "And can you go to church-now?" "Yes." Clara seemed surprised. "Not

"I haven't gone to church-since, can't, you see. I don't believe any more.

"Those things are heartless!" cried next to hers. What kind of people were Clara, hotly. "Anyone who would try they? What were they like inside? What to capitalize some one's grief! But, would Dad say if he knew that she had Grace, you do believe that Betty still

lives, don't you?" Grace shook her head. "No. She is names? People did not speak to each gone. Snuffed out even before she had other in cities, she tried to defend her- really begun to live. She was only four,

"But I'm sure-" Clara leaned forbrother would take care of the rest of to me sometimes even closer than we ever were when we lived No one could Clars stood on the corner in the sweet convince me that he doesn't live.

"Spiritualism?"

"No. Just like knowing some one is room is dark-I don't mean in any A tall, alim young woman in a black ghostly sense-just knowing. I can't ex-

> then and Clara, although she wanted to comfort her companion, did not know "What shall we do now?" asked Grace

as they stood at the door of the restaurant. "Are you too tired to walk?" Clars was tired, but she assented to the proposition and linked her arm in Grace's. Grace talked about-sundry things that interested her, or had been of interest before the tragedy of her dife had robbed everything of charm, and Clara listened. They discovered a mutual fondness for a number of things-for music and for a certain type of literature. Neither noticed that their footatens were leading them down into the poorer section of the city, into darker

Suddenly the quiet spring night was split by an excited babbling of many voices and many languages. An excited crowd of people stood on the street cornor, where there had been an accident . Grace and Clara pushed forward, and Funny how close Dad had seemed all then drew back. A man lay on the sidewalk, and two policemen bent over him. clad figure, close enough to see the ex- A tiny girl with golden curls stood and quisitely expensive appointment of her looked down at him with frightened eyes, her face horror stricken.

and narrower and less clean streets.

"Daddy!" she called to him. "Daddy!" A stout Irish woman clasped the child lamb," she sobbed. "What's goin' to

One of the policemen was asking ques tions of the bystanders. They had the number of the car that hit him. Yes, this was his child. No, there was just the two of them at all. No, he no hadda no folks, hadda only the bambino.

"I'll be kapin' her the while," offered an Irish woman. "Pat has no wurrk but sure the little she'll ate-an' she can slape wid Rose and Marie and Celie. 'Tis all alone she'll be. Mike Brannigan, and youse cons'll niver be sendin' her to the home while I'm able to take in washin'." "Well-" Mike scratched his head,

"Let me take her." The crowd turned "I-" the girl's eyes were pleadiding, as one man as much surprised as Grace

thoughtfully. The law did have some-

Mike Brannigan's humorous Irish eyes took in the expensive coat, the orchid, "Then come with me? Oh, I know and most of all, the eager light in the

"Ye'll have to come to the station don't know can we let ve kape her-"Come with me?" Grace asked Clara,

and Clara nodded. Clara made up her mind not to refuse anything which happened that night. Some red tane had to be cut-red tape

died little lights in Grace's eyes and was Mrs. Harley Abbot, The name which brought out the glints in her perfectly had not meant anything at all to Clara waved hair, and cast a rosy reflection meant a lot to the police. They turned into her pale cheeks. Clara found her- over the child to her, temporarily, until "I'm going to telephone for Harley," one time have smiled a lot. The candle said Grace. "It's too late to walk back

a diamond on Grace's left hand, a dia- put through the call and then began mond with a platinum band back of it. eagerly. "Listen Harley! On the way Let's pretend we know each other well down stop and get some colored Easter enough to call ourselves Grace and eggs-and a big doft. Some of the drug Clara," said Grace, after she had order- stores will be open. I've adopted a little the telephone on the desk. Who could ed. 'My last name is Abbot-Mrs. girl. I said I've adopted a little girl. Yes. I'm down at the-where am I "Plain Clara Morgan," nodded Clara. officer? I'm at the Tenth precinct police

> and I'll exolain it to you." Harley arrived in record time with denly in the middle of the soup she the eggs and a big doll. He stood there leaned forward. "Do you think I'm in the police station and demanded an

She finished the details of the story

"Not-" Grace's voice rang out trium-"It's sad for me, too;" said Clafa, phantly. "Not when God's hand crossed signboard with the words which even a ACTON

Weekly Garden-Graph DEAN HALLIDAY

for Central Press Canadian



Tents for tomato plants

Young tomato plants, like small boys. like to live in tents. And gardeners have found that paper tents protect tomato plants from insects, birds, rodents, half

As illustrated in the above Garden- Snow Geese, Canada Geese, Black Ducks, Graph, tomato tents are made of a thin Pintail Ducks, Green-winged Teal, and but strong waxed paper. They resemble inverted baskets, being 11 inches broad at the base and some nine inches high.

Tents can be placed over the seedlings or the seeds. When the plants grow to the height of the tents, the paper tops the famed Blue Geese. During their exare slit two ways, to provide openings through which the growing plants cart emerge. These paper tents are inexpensive and can be obtained at almost any the great marshes and flats around the

speeding motorist could have read: He is Risen. "Clara, I'll see you in that church to-morrow morning!" "I'll be there," promised Clara.

The boarding house was just around the corner from the church. The car stopped before it. Orace leaned forward that the Blue Geese and other waterand kissed Clara as she was stepping out fowl were much harried and disturbed to the curb. Then Grace nestled back in certain areas. against Harley's shoulder.

don't mind, do you?"

you--both!" huskily. Clara heard the words and understood

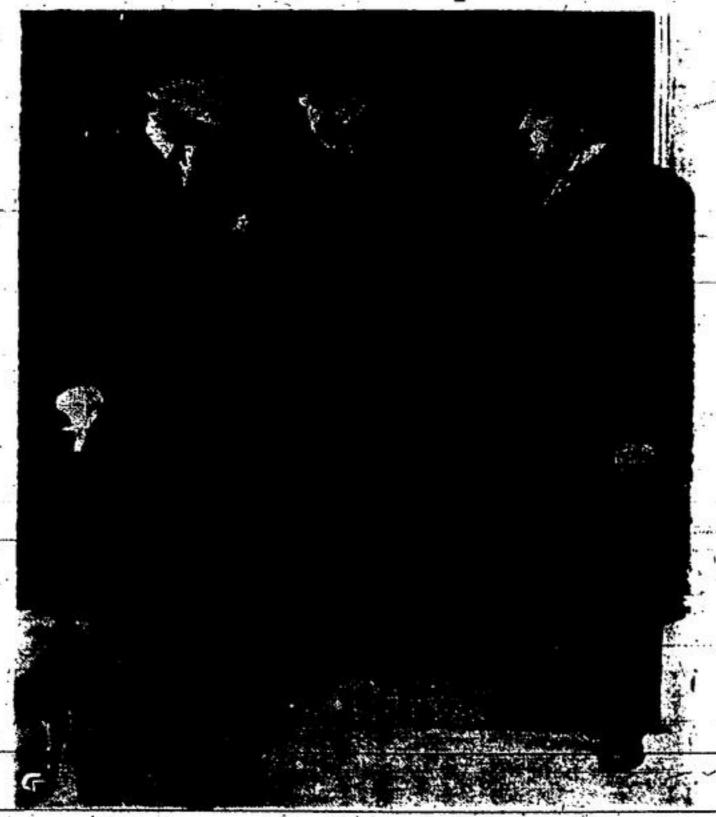
the tone. She looked up at the stars and "You know, Dad, don't you?" her heart whispered. A thought flashed through her mind. "If it were not so . . . I would



Lashbrook

Mill Street ONTARIO

Cabinet Confers on European Situation



Leaving No. 10 Downing Street after a lengthy Cabinet session during. which central European affairs were discussed, are three members of 'Prime Minister Chamberlam's Cabinet. Left to Right are, Leslie Hore-Belishs, Minister of War; Malcolm MacDonald, Colonial Secretary; and Ernest Brown, Minister of Labor.

HANNAH BAY BIRD SANCTUARY

The establishment of a bird sanctuary area at the southern end of James Bay of the James Bay marshes, the new sanoby the Ontario and Dominion Govern- tuary is so limited in size that it will tion measure in the interests of water- hunting customs of the resident Indiana. fowl... The new sanctuary embraces an On-the other hand the advantages and area of approximately ten miles square in a region regarded as one of the greatest gathering-places for waterfowl on the fowl population in its vicinity and thus North American continent, It includes a portion of the mainland and adjacent tidal waters on the east side of Hannah Bay, which is the southernmost extension be of benefit to hunters in many places of James Bay.

The site of the sanctuary was selected during the fall of 1938 by officials of the area. Ontario Department of Game and Fisheries and the Dominion Department of Mines and Resources. The Ontario Goveinment established the mainland portion of the sanctuary by Order in Council on October 21st, 1938, and the Dominion Government, by an Order in Council passed on February 25th, 1939, included a broad strip of the adjacent tidal waters in a federal bird sanctuary, established by the authority of the Migratory Birds Convention Act. The dual sanctuary area contains excellent feeding and resting and wind storms. Similar tents can also grounds for Blue Geese, and is visited be used to protect young melon and pen- regularly at migration time by thousands of these birds, as well as by many Lesser

While various kinds of wild geese and willd ducks will be given protection by the establishment of this new sanctuary. the birds that will benefit most will be tended migration flights between Arctic areas in Canada and the Gulf of Mexico these birds assemble in thousands or south end of James Bay. Although hunted each year by the Indians and fur-traders, who took only such birds as they needed for food, the Blue Geese rested and fed in comparative security. With the completion, in 1931, of a railway to the James Bay region, this area was opened up to hunters from various parts of North America' with the result

There was then a strong demand to: "Why-Harley! Harley, darling! You additional conservation of waterfowl in the James Bay region and investigation "Mind? Oh, honey, I thought I'd lost, revealed that the establishment of ar absolute sanctuary would improve con servation by providing a refuge where

these birds could find food and safety, even in the hunting season.

In comparison with the vast expanse ments marks another timely conserva- result in no extensive in diffication of the attractions of the sanctuary should provide a steadying influence on the watermaintain good hunting outside its boundaries for both Indians and white: Sanctuary conditions in this area will also farther south, which draw a part of their waterfowl supply from the James Bay

-A-DIVOT EXPERT

"Going golfing? I thought you sale Yes, but I require a few A BUSY FELLOW

"Well, you know the chap that the train comes in?"

"I know," agreed the interested travel-

"Well; I help him listen."

THE TOWN AND THE NEWSPAPES

The newspaper is not merely a record of a community, but also its voice, by which it communicates with the world. If a town lacks a good newspaper, it is hard for it to impress its views on neighbors or the public of the country Its leading people may do their best to express the feelings of the town, but they lack the medium through which their

Give a town a good modern newspaper and it takes its place with the most influential communities of the country That newspaper is read in many newscaper offices, its opinions and the ideas expressed by correspondents are quoted and the results attained by its organisations are told to a wide area. A town gets great returns from every dollar it sends in backing up the home town pap

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

A costermonger who was ill was visited "What do I' do?" said the railway by the Bishop of Southwell. In discusswheels with a hammer when hig his illness the coster's wife said to

> "The trouble is that 'e 'as lorst L 'oller. Y'see to trade to like yours-it's all 'ollerin'

WHEN YOU TRAVEL by MOTOR COACH

CONTINENT WIDE DAILY SERVICE AT LOW FARES ROUND TRIP

DETROIT

\$16.50 CHICAGO LOS ANGELES

OUR TRAVEL BUREAU WILL PLAN TOURS TO ANYWHERE

ANYTIME

FOR TRAVEL INFORMATION HOTEL MATES, ETC. CONSULT YOUR LOCAL AGENT

TICKETS AND INFORMATION AT HAROLD WILES

PHONE 58 GRAY COACH LINES

Fares Subject to Change Without Notice

JARROHAS

BACON Carrell's

Easter

EGGS Grade A Large doz. 23c

Special-Laing's Peppermint Old Colony Pure Maple

Elizabeth Cream Sandwich BISCUITS Lipton's

FISH Good Friday Dound 14°

1/2-16. pkg. 33c, 31c

CODFISH 1-16. pkg. 15c MAGIC Brunswick

Popular Baking Powder Maple Leaf Pure

16-oz. tin 28c

(CASH AND CARRY)

SARDINES 2 tins 9c LARD PICKLES

Queensland

Lux Facial

2 1-lb. pkgs. 19c

CLEANSER SOAP med. bar 6c Is. bar 9c FLAKES

tin 9c S O A P lg. pkg... 190 RASPBERRY or STRAWBERRY

Golden Ribbon Dessert

Old Dutch

Evaporated 4

MILL

STREET

Eagle Brand 3 No. 2 tins 25 3 15-oz. tins 25c BLUEBERRIES

Good Value in 16-oz. tin 8c PRUNES RICEREAL BUY

CABBAGE Iceberg

220 Navel 16.60 ORANGES Seedless head 6c GRAPEFRUIT 9 for 25c

Store Closed Wednesday Afternoon - 1.00 O'clock

Free Delivery