

The Free Press Short Story

A FORTUNATE MASQUERADE

BY HARRIET LUMMIS SMITH

I F Aunt Lavinia was hard of hearing she was sharp-eyed enough. "What's gone wrong with you?" she asked, looking at Roger.

"Everything's all right," Roger Young muttered. "What's that?" "I said everything was all right. This time he shouted.

"It's more'n a week since you went to see her. And a girl as good-looking as Olive isn't going to be left to sit alone on her front porch."

Roger did not answer but a devastating blush burned its way to the roots of his hair and made his ears feel hot and swollen. He hoped that if he kept silent, Aunt Lavinia's catechism would come to an end, but he was destined to be disappointed.

"Not somebody else on the thing, already, has she?" Aunt Lavinia remarked casually after a moment. "She had a way of jumping at conclusions that irritated Roger, all the more because her conclusions were almost invariably correct. He took a long drink of water and made no attempt to relieve her curiosity.

"Is it Lester Brooks?" "Yes," he roared, and added under his breath, "if you must know." The last remark was impossible for her to hear, but she had an uncanny faculty of understanding anything she would rather keep a secret.

"Of course I must know. You're my nephew's son, aren't you, and all the kin I've got. If Olive Pendleton puts Lester Brooks off of you, her brains aren't up to her complexion."

The only answer for that was a laugh, but Roger felt his heart warm by the old woman's uncompromising loyalty. "Maybe you're prejudiced," he shouted, but by now he was grinning.

Apparently Lester peered through the door, saw an old woman waddling dither at the kitchen sink and at once formed his conclusions. "Oh, I see. You can't make Miss Young hear and your friend Roger isn't around so you can tattle to him."

"You're welcome to think what you please." "I don't think I know. When I told you last night that I was going to get that job at the bank, you said right away that it had been promised to Roger Young."

"You didn't tell me it was confidential." "I drove over to your house this morning to tell you to be sure not to say anything to anybody about old Dickson's retiring, and your mother said you'd driven out to the Youngs."

"Well—" "That was a mean trick, Olive. I tell you something in confidence and you rush off to put another fellow wise."

"You mean you wanted him to get the job instead of me?" "The needs it more than you do, Olive said, and her tone was not reproachful.

"He's not fit for a job in a bank. Roger's a regular lunk. The kind of work he's doing now is what he's cut out for."

"I'm going home if that's what you mean. I can't make Miss Young hear, and even if I could, it probably wouldn't do any good. The horse and buggy aren't here, so I suppose Roger has driven off somewhere. By the time I could get in touch with him, it would be too late."

"I hope," said Lester wistfully, "that the next time I tell you something, you won't start off bright and early next morning to spread it all around."

"Never mind," Olive said, "if you're not through with me, I am with you." She walked over to her car and Lester followed expostulating. His voice came clearly back to Roger. "I'll see you tonight, Olive. You're just a little worked up now. After you've thought it over, he did not finish for Olive was already on her way.

"Roger was not much behind the two of them. He changed his clothes, in record time, brought out his bicycle and took the short cut to town. He reached the bank five minutes before time and five minutes after it opened, he was explaining to Mr. Webb, the president of the board.

"Mr. Webb looked astonished. "Why, yes, Roger, I remember promising you the position. But I understand in fact I was told in so many words by a friend of yours that you were already fixed and didn't care to change."

"I've been working on my grand aunt's place, her farm, she calls it. Of course I wasn't going to sit around and do nothing. But I guess I'm better qualified than Lester Brooks to say whether I want to change or not."

"That's right, Roger," Mr. Webb agreed, "and if you want the job it's yours, as you start."

"Let's say Monday, Roger. I certainly am glad you came around today. There was a little misunderstanding," said Mr. Webb, running his fingers through his hair and looking very much perplexed. "I wouldn't have liked to disappoint you after having promised you the job."

Roger left the bank and pedaled over to Olive's Boulevard house. He knew when she opened the door that she had been crying, but with his wanted her he was as heartless as the fact.

"Well, Roger Young," she exclaimed with pretended gaiety, "you certainly are a stranger."

"I won't keep you but a minute, Olive. I know it's no hour for cars. But I wanted to ask if you'd go with me to the postal a week from next Saturday night."

"Now, Roger, Olive said looking very determined, "you know I'd enjoy the concert and I'd enjoy going with you, but well, concerts cost money, and you know you haven't any to spare. Spend the evening here with me and we'll turn on the radio."

"I'm not going to embark on a career of reckless extravagance, Olive. But I think I can stand a fifty-cent concert. I'll have my first week's salary in my pocket."

"You have a position?" Olive cried. "Not at the bank?" "Yes."

"Then you heard about Mr. Dickson's retiring. Who told you?" "Lester Brooks," said Roger.

Find Other Uses Than Foodstuffs For Grain Yield

Canada's Experts Deep In Research to Get Paying Products from Surplus Wheat and Barley

BY MARSHALL BATEMAN Canadian Press Staff Writer

WINNIPEG, Feb. 26 (C.P.)—Exportation work that may lead to profitable industrial uses for wheat and other surplus crops of new grain varieties that are resistant to insects other than rust will be reviewed when leading Canadian grain research scientists meet here March 3-5.

Dean Robert Newton of the agricultural department, University of Alberta and chairman of the Association Committee on Grain Research, said the committee's main purpose is to reorganize its program to make the maximum use of possible industrial uses for wheat and surplus crops "our main project in the immediate future."

Prior to the meeting, Dean Newton visited laboratories in Saskatchewan, Winnipeg and Ottawa, probing the possibility of commercial application of the theory that gluten concentrates from wheat can be mixed with European native wheat to bring it to the high standard of hard particle wheat.

Dr. J. A. Anderson, chief chemist of the Dominion Grain Research Laboratory, Winnipeg, will report on commercial preparation of gluten concentrates.

Use With Profit—Dean Newton said a number of industrial uses for wheat are technically possible, but the difficulty has been in making them economically profitable. "This is notably true in the manufacture of power alcohol from wheat or other grains."

He said his plan of new use has been proposed which might use such substantial quantities of grain as power alcohol, used to increase the octane rating of gasoline.

"We may have no content ourselves with exploring a number of comparatively minor uses in the hope that their sum total will reach an appreciable quantity."

It was just as important to find an expanded market for barley, flax and other grains.

All the work except power alcohol is still in the laboratory stage, Dean Newton said. "We must not look for immediate new commercial applications. About 10 years is required for a new scientific idea to reach the stage of commercial exploitation."

Discussion of new grain varieties, including some rust-resistant wheat that matures early and which might be suitable for northern climates. Another, a new durum variety, has reached a semi-commercial testing stage and its performance will be reviewed.

Opportunities for wheat substitutes will be dealt with by Dr. V. J. Harrison, assistant commissioner of the board of grain commissioners, Dr. H. E. Sallans, biochemist-in-charge of the seed laboratory, University of Saskatchewan, and W. O. S. Meredith, biochemist-in-charge of the Experimental Milling Laboratory, University of Manitoba.

Dr. H. E. Goddard, biochemist in charge of the food storage investigations, National Research Council, Ottawa, will report on uses of starch residue from wheat.

The world's clearing house for precious metals will be one of the most conspicuous buildings to rise up in London when the war is over.

Empire Air Fighters First Year's Number One-Third Above Estimate

The number of pilot officers and sergeants trained under Britain's Empire Air Training Scheme is now over one-third more than the total originally aimed at. The first contingents of them have been posted for active service in the United Kingdom from the Empire Training schools which have been set up in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Southern Rhodesia.

When the scheme, which had just completed its first twelve-month work, is in full operation, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are expected to produce from their own resources alone, no fewer than 20,000 pilots and 30,000 air crew each year, all fully trained to meet the enemy.

Canada is, in addition, our "finishing school" for aircrew from the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand.

Potential air crews come from their recruiting centre to manning depots and are then drafted to the initial training schools. From there each branch takes its appropriate course of instruction and all of them then go on to the bombing and gunnery schools.

After a further four weeks at Air Navigation schools for the observers, all the men go on to a six-month practical training.

The fact that the first contingent of them are already bringing down the Luftwaffe is its own testimony to the swift success of the scheme.

MONTEAL, C.P.—Bowling authorities estimate that more than 3,000,000 women of Canada and the United States are bowling this winter. The question of fashion was bound to come up. And it did, recently, in a controversy over skirts as against slacks. The Women's International Bowling Congress finally banned slacks.

Pledge for War Savings

"SALADA" TEA

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CARROLL'S MARCH SALE



Carroll's Own SOAP FLAKES 4-lb. box 24c

Kellogg's CORN FLAKES 3 5-oz. pgs. 23c

Aylmer Choice Tomatoes 3 15-oz. tins 23c

BEANS 3 lbs. 10c

Best for Frying Crisco tin 19c, 49c

Surprise Laundry SOAP 2 bars 9c

Five Roses FLOUR 24-lb. bag 88c

Advertisement for Firm Fresh produce including Head Lettuce, Grapefruit, Tomatoes, and Cabbage.

World Bullion Headquarters

Great New Building in Hatton Garden, London

The world's clearing house for precious metals will be one of the most conspicuous buildings to rise up in London when the war is over.