



SPRING

The last snow disappears from the hollows... the streams rise, sink, run clear again... buds sprout and burst... the land dries... field work starts again... spring plowing, harrowing, seeding...

Spring work calls for labour and money which will not yield returns until harvest. In the meantime the Royal Bank is ready with seasonal loans to pay for labour, seed, fertilizer, equipment and improvements to land and buildings. Your local manager is always glad to see you.

GEORGETOWN BRANCH - - - F. P. BENNER, Manager

SHORT STORY

The Rainbow Special

By T. M. RIDER

WHEN the woman who had been gazing wistfully at Madame Bluce's window display, finally entered and asked—of all things—to try on the Rainbow Special, Mady Clark's pleasant smile widened. That gaudy, multi-colored dress with its golden sash had been displayed because party time was near and Madame Bluce felt some girl might like it for a gay affair. Of course, the woman was small and thin enough to slip into it. But she had a sweet face, the kind that made you think of a mother-in-law and lace.

Mutely, Mady showed her to the dressing room, then walked over to the sweater counter. A minute later the customer shyly opened the dressing room door.

"It's beautiful!" she cried. "I know Tom will remember me as I used to look. You know how he looks at me. They just don't realize a woman doesn't grow any younger with time."

So that was the wrinkle. She was trying to become a spring chicken for her husband's sake. Somehow it didn't seem right for a nice old lady. Mady couldn't help thinking that some day she might get married, and she'd grow old, too. Then, would she have to suffer the experience this woman was suffering?

Mady walked over to the woman and said, "I've just thought of a special dress for madam. A pale blue creation that would be chic with costume pearls and matching earrings."

"Pale blue? Oh, no! My husband loves colors that are bright and alive. You see, he's an artist, and a brilliant one, too."

SHE spoke in a proud voice and smoothed the Rainbow Special with work-worn hands. Mady asked hesitantly, "I don't mean to pry, but is your husband ill? Perhaps a floral dress—"

"Tom ill? You wouldn't ask that if you saw him. He's big and husky, and he always says my cooking's making him fat." She beamed until she noticed Mady staring wonderingly at her hands. Then she said quietly, "I've worked at washing fishes in a restaurant for the past 10 years, and I'm proud of it because—well, because I'm doing it for my husband. But I guess you're too young to understand that love means more than roses and kisses."

"My Tom's worth anything, any sacrifice," the lady continued softly and brushed her cheeks with sudden remembrance. "And I must hurry. He's waiting outside in the car, and I know he's growing impatient."

That was the last straw! Mady shook her head despairingly.

"Erma, is that you?" a deep voice suddenly boomed from the doorway. "I got tired of waiting and crossed the street."

The woman gasped and hurried over to a tall dark-haired man. "Oh,



That was the last straw! Mady shook her head despairingly.

"You shouldn't have, Tom. I was coming right out."

WHY the lady was actually quivering as though she had committed some heinous crime by making him wait a few minutes, Mady glared at him. So this was the brilliant artist! He was husky enough to swing a pick and shovel. "Well, why didn't he, instead of making his pitifully small wife slave for him?" If this was love she'd steer clear of it!

"That new dress does things to you, Erma." He pined his huge hands on her shoulders and held her off at arm's length. "Ah, those eyes my dear! They're soft, yet warm and alive. I can't wait to get out of some paints and brushes."

"Now Tom, you shouldn't work so soon after the operation. You know what the doctor said."

He nodded thoughtfully and sighed. "Guess I can wait a little longer at that. But say, my vision's improving every minute. I just crossed the street myself. And only this morning you looked so—so colorless. But now, I swear you look just—just like you did before I went blind ten years ago, Erma."

Erma's answering smile was as bright as the sun. Mady felt her heart begin to pound furiously. The artist was recovering from an eye operation and probably would never see colors normally again!

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