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Her Little Boy
 By **IZOLA FORRESTER**

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The major endeavored to change the subject, but Mrs. Lathrop continued in the low southern tone he had grown to like more than any other voice at the Grand View hotel. They were walking on the wide veranda that looked seaward, and a midsummer, honey-colored moon was throwing a path of gold out over the waters of the bay. The last two evenings, while they took this same promenade at moonrise, the major had wondered whether he would be able to escape the penalty of sentiment before the moon slipped back into her first quarter.

"He's such a dear little lad, big blue eyes and that crimsy curly hair, don't you know, that gives a boy such a manly look? I've kept him at the military academy ever since he was ten. I felt I ought to make the sacrifice for his sake, even while I dreaded the separation. And I wanted him in a western school. I do think the ideals are more democratic, don't you, Major Chalmers?" She caught his nod contentedly, and went on. "His letters have been so tender and well-sorted of big in their outlook, for such a little chap, I thought. Did I read the last one to you? I meant to. They have just been everything to me in the years of separation."

"I trust his coming will not cut short your stay here, Mrs. Lathrop." The major threw an extra note of solicitude in his voice, as he slipped her silk scarf over her shoulders. "We could hardly spare you now."
 "Still, I think, Irene wishes you would go on to Newport," she spoke thoughtfully and delicately. "It is rather slow here for a young, attractive girl like her."
 They had reached a turn on the veranda, and the dancing floor of the



Showered Behind a Red Parasol.

big double music room came in view. It was brilliantly lighted for the nightly "hop," and even from where they stood they could see the court of Irene, her dark hair and white, slim shoulders, turned to them, and surrounding her all the available, best looking men in the hotel. The major frowned and laughed at the same time.
 "Slow? She's kept me busy refusing suitors ever since she got out of school three weeks ago. She's just seventeen and—" he paused, the next words that would commit him to future matrimony trembling on his tongue. Mrs. Lathrop lifted her head and looked at him attentively, earnestly, her gray eyes filled with understanding sympathy. They had shadows beneath them, and her skin was dusky like a peach blow vase, the lips a beautiful rose touch, and a deep dimple in her pointed chin. And suddenly the major was stumbling like a boy, telling her how the one hope of his life was to win her as his wife.
 "But what about Irene? She has been everything to you ever since your sister died."
 "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," quoted the major, lifting her hand close to his lips.
 The next morning before her breakfast tray had been sent up, Mrs. Lathrop had a caller. There came a heavy, imperative rap on the outer door of her suite, and then the door opened and a strange man entered. Surely, it was a strange man. Mrs. Lathrop gave a frightened little cry and sat up in bed, her silk negligee drawn close about her shoulders, as she stared at him. He was five foot ten, and broad of shoulder, tanned and jubilant, a husky, healthy youngster of nineteen.
 "Mother, you grand old darling, how are you?" He wrapped her about in a swift, hungry embrace that left her crushed and aghast. "I came sooner than I expected to, because a bunch of the fellows were bound this way and I wanted to make the races with them at New London. Gee, the ocean smells good, I'm hungry, too."

"Ralph," she put him from her gently, almost feebly. "How did you ever grow so tall and enormous?"
 "Sight, am I? I was afraid I'd shock

you." He kissed her laughingly, without remorse. "It's funny to have such a pretty little mother. I'll bet a cooky you're a heart smasher yet."

Mrs. Lathrop winced at the last word. Yet? Her forty-eight years had never faced her so uncompromisingly before. Later on, as they walked along the board walk to the beach, she felt her heart beat fast at the thought of the impending meeting with the major. Her little boy she had called him, and he had really seemed that. It had been three years since she had seen him and he had been a little, awkward, half-grown cub of a boy, and now he was a man. She wondered if it would mean the end of her own midsummer romance. Would the major stand the shock? Suddenly Ralph gave a low whistle and looked ahead of them, his eyes keen with quick joy.
 "Say, mother dear, excuse me just a minute, won't you? There's a girl I met out West."

She sat down to wait for him under one of the sunshade shelters, and here the major joined her. He was delightfully proprietary and tender with her, and then he sighed and motioned to her to look down on the beach.

Two figures showed behind a cherry red parasol.
 "I told Irene this morning, and she laughed at me and 'fessed up. It seems that she's been engaged for four months, and didn't dare tell me because it seemed just a boy and girl affair. Have you any sympathy with them at all? I mean do you think they know their own minds?"
 "I sympathize with romance always, and it is never so ideally beautiful as in youth," she answered.

Then the cherry parasol twirled in their direction, just as she wondered how she could break the shock of Ralph, and coming leisurely and happily toward them were the two—Irene and Ralph. There was no mistaking their attitude toward each other, and the major smiled proudly.

"Nice sort of chap, isn't he? I like that military cut he has. First name's Ralph. Didn't catch the last."
 Mrs. Lathrop leaned forward, her eyes filled with sudden tears. "Why, why—she faltered before she thought, "it's my little boy!"
 The major's hand closed over hers, and they waited.

"I knew all along that you were Ralph's mother, but I didn't dare say a word until he came," Irene said, blushing. "But I was so glad when Uncle Everard thought you were so dear and wonderful, for of course I suppose we'll be one family now, won't we?"
 It was the major's cue and he rose to it with all the grace and ease he could have used in making a five-hour address before the state legislature down home in Georgia.

"I cannot conceive of anything that would add more to your mother's happiness and mine at this moment than that you should find life's answer in the love of Irene, my boy, because," and here the major's eyes gleamed with a touch of mischief, "because this same contagion of romance that by some grace of God has come to a war weary world has lighted the path ahead for us also. I think possibly the months abroad the past two years have made us realize the uncertainty of human life, and that there are very few really essential things after all. Love and faith and comradeship and honor. What do you say, Ralph? Your mother and I will be married before fall. I trust that—you and Irene will be with us."
 Ralph bent to kiss his mother.
 "Did I guess it the first time I looked at you?" he said tenderly. "I told her, major, she was a heart smasher."

WHY BRABANT IS HONORED
 Belgian Province Has Figured Long and Gloriously in the History of the Nation.

The title of duke of Brabant is given the crown prince of Belgium to perpetuate the name of the most populous province of the nation. It is only about the size of Rhode Island, but has thrice the population. It was conquered by Caesar, settled by Sallie Franks, parceled out to Germany and made a part of Lower Lorraine. It then included North Brabant, now the largest province in Holland. For a time it was the paven of its ruling dukes, but in 1354 the people wrested the "Joyeuse Entree," which was akin to the British Magna Charta, from Duke John III. Brabant passed to the house of Burgundy and then fell into Spanish dominion, until the treaty of Utrecht gave it to the Hapsburgs of Austria. It was at Brussels that the uprising against Spanish tyranny was begun, which resulted in the 80 years' war of independence. The nation bore the Hapsburg yoke no more willingly, and when Joseph II tried to interfere with the "Joy Entree," he precipitated the revolt of 1789. At Brussels, too, was fomented the revolution of 1830 against the Dutch rule, which resulted in the independence of Belgium. One of the first acts of the new nation was to adopt the Brabant colors for the national flag, and the lion of Brabant as the national coat-of-arms.

Takes Auto With Him.
 Whenever Premier Clemenceau travels in a special train his automobile is always carried on a flat car at the end. If a railroad wreck delays his train he resorts to the automobile. This happened the other day when, on returning from his vacation in Vendee, a wrecked freight train blocked the track.

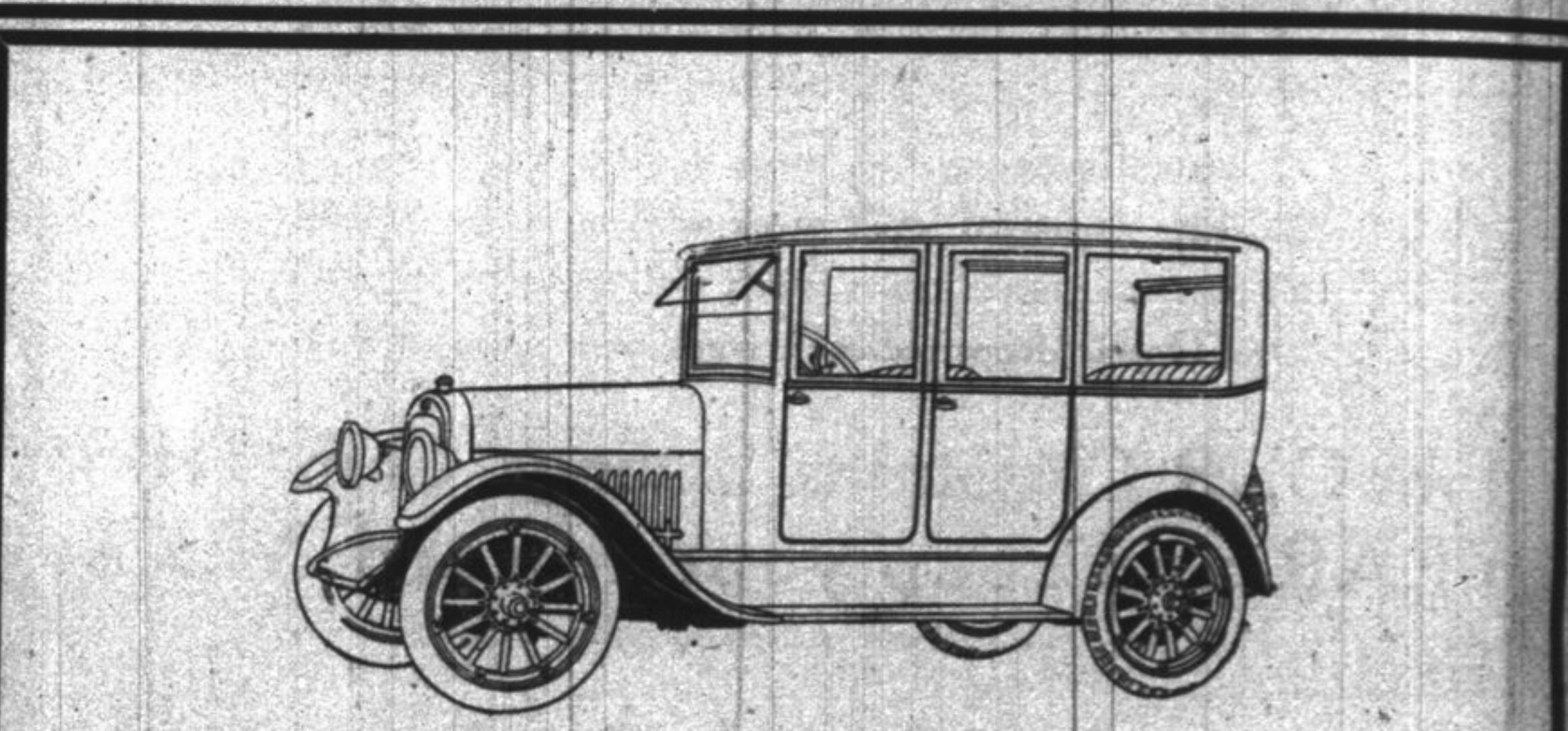
Bungalow.
 Bungalow is derived from the Hindi word "bungalow," which means a thatched hut.

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Where Seagulls Roost.
 Seagulls do not always roost on the water, as persons familiar with the places say that thousands of gulls roost in trees on Big Duck, Little Duck and Old Man islands in Maine, and not only roost in trees, but nest in them as well. The same is true of many other islands along the Maine coast. The gulls of Boston harbor and thereabouts have particular roosting places on the water.

By a Certain Blind Foot.
 The little girl who inquired at a library for "The Four Horses in the Eucalyptus" had lots of company in that sort of blunder. A letter of Mrs. Thrale's, recently sold at auction, tells of her neighbor's maid coming with a request from her mistress for a loan of "Milk and Asparagus Lost."—Boston Transcript.

Kindness in Business.
 It is a great privilege to have an opportunity many times a day, in the course of your business, to do a kindness which is not to be paid for. Graciousness of demeanor or a large part of the duty of any official person who comes in contact with the world. Where a man's business is, there is the place for his religion to manifest itself.—Helps.

Traveling Fingers.
 Typists' fingers are the most amazing travelers in creation, and are capable of going tremendous distances without the fatigue that would come to the feet and legs in performing a similar journey. In ordinary typewriting the hand may travel, according to an expert, 10,000 miles a year and not indicate any impairment in efficiency. This refers, of course to the average typist in an office.

Hearn's Dislikes.
 According to his Japanese widow, the erratic but brilliant American writer, Lafcadio Hearn, "disliked liars, abuse of the weak, Prince Albert coats, the city of New York, and many other things." He was fond of the sea and swimming, "lonely cemeteries," ghost stories, Martinique and of beefsteak and plum pudding.

Christian Era.
 The Christian era was not adopted as a means of reckoning time until several centuries after Christ's time. An error was made in the reckoning then and it is now agreed that the time assigned for the birth of Christ was at least four years out of the way; that is, according to the accepted reckoning, Jesus was born in the year 4 B. C.

South China's Administrative City.
 Canton is the chief Chinese administrative and commercial city of South China. It is situated inland from Hongkong, 95 miles by water and 112 miles by rail, and is located in the fertile Canton delta country, in which converge the West, North and East rivers. In foreign trade Canton ranks third among Chinese ports, being exceeded in volume by Shanghai and Dairen.

Habit of Decision.
 Most people who have succeeded in any direction of activity can trace the measure of their success to the habit of deciding things for themselves. One of the greatest temptations we have is to confide in others. By yielding to it we not only become a nuisance to our friends but keep on lowering our own powers of resistance.

Famous American Patriot.
 In 1832, on the 14th of November, Charles Carroll, the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence, died at the age of ninety-six. He studied law in France and England and returned to America at the age of twenty-seven, where he soon became known as an able political writer and a strong advocate of liberty. Twenty-two years before his death he retired to private life.