

Runaway Julietta

By Arthur Henry Gooden

CHAPTER III.—(Cont'd.)

"Yes. Curious, isn't it?" He rattled on, and quickly regained his confidence. "Say, a fellow never knows just how to take you, Miss Dare. I've been buying here for the past year, and—well, of course we've seen a great deal of each other, haven't we?"

"Yes," the girl spoke almost regretfully. Parkis hitched his chair closer.

"Not so much as I'd like, just the same. No dinner parties, no shows—nothing! If a guy wants to see you it's right here. Well, here I am. You know me, Al; you know how I stand, you know my rating, you know pretty much all about me, and since you'll only see me here I'll call the bluff. I want you to do something for me, if you will."

"Yes?" Julietta's smile belied her thoughts. "Something in the credit department?"

"Mr. Parkis barley repressed an exclamation. "No. Something personal. I'm a business man, and I'll be brief and to the point. I want you to marry me, Miss Dare—"

"I'm a business woman, so while I thank you for the honor, I must decline."

Parkis stared blankly.

"I said, marry me," he repeated. The words and air brought a steely spark into Julietta's blue eyes.

"I heard you," she returned coldly. "I said no."

Parkis hesitated, rose, and stared down at her. A slow, dull red flooded his face.

"Huh! Been leading me on for my trade, eh?"

"Good morning, Mr. Parkis." Julietta turned to her letters and rang for the stenographer. Parkis moved toward the door.

"Because you're old Marrow's pet, huh?" he flung back over his shoulder. "Got him pretty strong on you—ain't it true? Soft old gink, yeh!"

The door slammed. The stenographer entered, and was amazed to see Miss Dare seizing an ink bottle as if about to fling it. Julietta set the bottle down, her cheeks flushed.

"Please have a sample case made up for me immediately. It must be ready by to-morrow, because I'm taking the Satsu Maru for Japan next Saturday."

The door closed behind the stenographer. Julietta turned again to her letters, staring at them with unseeing eyes. A disturbing incident was Mr. Parkis; a cruel, torturing incident—but only an incident after all. Another woman might allow his blunt words to dwell in mind, might argue from them wild theories, might unconsciously allow the seed to bear unhappy fruit, but not so Julietta Dare. Resolutely she would sweep from her mind all thoughts of that petty man—forget his words absolutely. Yet—

"The nasty thing," she murmured, "hinting at such a thing about Paul Morrow." Her cheeks burned, she bit her lip. And suddenly again flashed upon memory's screen Clay Thorpe and his half-shy, half-defiant declaration of "young ago"—and then I'll marry you, ago—

Julietta sat for a moment tense, resentful, wistful, then, with an impatient, half-angry shrug, she turned her attention to the day's work.

CHAPTER IV.

She Learns Some Hard Facts About Big Business

Julietta had been sure that Paul Morrow would meet them in San Francisco upon their disembarkation. Both she and Mrs. Drake had expected to spend a few days shopping in the Golden Gate city, but when no Morrow showed up and no word from him took his place, they boarded the night train for Los Angeles.

A great urge drove Julietta—another to be at her desk in the old brick building in San Pedro Street, to hear Morrow's jovial "Pon my soul!"

in, to get back to the business which she loved.

That had been a gorgeous moment when she had stepped into the cable car to send Paul the news.

Second to it was her moment when she again heard his consoling words. She had bound the Soe Company to deliver one pair of shoes, and it was a relief to contemplate Julietta's great "made good" beyond dispute.

But why had there been no word from Paul Morrow?

A freight wreck detained their train at Mojave for an interminable four hours. Toward the end the impatient Julietta sent Morrow a telegram, but they had started south again before any reply came.

It was nearly noon before a taxicab deposited Julietta in front of the big brick building in San Pedro Street. She paid the chauffeur, throwing in a smile as additional gratuity, tripped briskly up the steps, and entered the general office. She found therein a strange air of lassitude, and it

brought her to an astonished standstill.

"Something amiss! Everything in sight spelled it. No typewriters clicked. The clerks were gathered in a little knot, or lazing idly in their chairs. One or two looked at Julietta and said something below their breath; the girl went cold.

At sight of her, Mr. Dolby, the office manager, came forward. He was a stoop-shouldered man with a wisp of gray hair falling over his green eye shade.

"Good morning, Miss Dare. You've surprised us." His voice was colorless.

"What's wrong?" Julietta demanded quickly.

"Mr. Morrow will doubtless explain, Miss Dare."

"Then there is something wrong!" Julietta swept past him and entered the elevator.

She found Paul Morrow seated in his creaky chair, one big hand lying listlessly on the desk, his eyes fastened on the window unseeing. At sight of Julietta in the doorway he sprang to his feet.

"Pon my soul! You!"

"Yes, me!" cried the girl joyfully, her hands in his. "Why didn't you meet us in 'Frisco? Did you get my wire from Mojave?"

"I—that is—" He colored, and she made haste to break in.

"Oh, I know something has gone wrong! What is it, Uncle Paul? Why didn't you have time to think about me?"

"I did think a lot about you," he said with a sudden laugh.

Julietta sat down and began to remove her gloves. She was conscious of a nasty, uncomfortable sensation.

"What is it?" she demanded calmly. "Not that contract? It's not cancelled?"

His eyes twinkled.

"I offered them five thousand dollars cash to cancel it. They refused."

Julietta stared at him in wondering incredulity.

"What do you mean, Uncle Paul? You're not joking?"

"Girl, you're a human wonder, 'pon my soul you are! How ever did you get that contract?"

"Never mind that," she retorted impatiently. "Tell me what's happened—won't you?"

He laughed in the old hearty way, and Julietta began to feel that it was nothing so terrible after all.

"Those Japs are the trickiest little beggars on earth," he made answer. "That contract was signed the evening before you sailed?"

"Yes," Julietta took a paper from her bag. "Here it is."

Morrow disregarded it.

"Well, they slipped the word to the shoe combine that we were to get the contract—understand? Before it was signed, before I knew about it. Of course, the minute I got your cable I went after the leather for that million pair of shoes. Well, there was, no leather."

"Eh?" She frowned, her brain shrinking from the realization. "You mean—"

"The trust was tipped off in advance. The contract was signed. The trust controls the tanneries—and we cannot get enough leather to fill that contract."

Julietta's cheeks whitened.

"But, Uncle Paul! I'll cable my friend the baron, and he'll have the contract cancelled. You know, I wrote you from Tokio about him—"

"Poor little girl!" Morrow leaned forward suddenly and patted her hand. "You may know our kind, Julietta, but you don't know Japs. I thought of that when the trap pinched, and I cabled the baron at once. Here's his reply."

He took a cablegram from the desk, Julietta held it to the light, saw that it was signed by the baron, and addressed to Paul. Its message was brutally curt.

"Unable to cancel contract or extend time. Must be filled."

"You see," went on Morrow, a world of sympathy in his voice as he saw Julietta's lips tighten, "it was a slick game from the very start. They never wanted the shoes, but this baron fellow was in cahoots with our trust. If I had received the contract to sign I would naturally have arranged for the leather first. I should have done this anyway, but I did not think you'd land the business."

"Then what—what does it mean, Uncle Paul?"

Morrow spread out his hands resignedly.

"It means, my dear, that we are sued for huge damages, or else we sell out to the trust, at their own price. We'll sell out of course, and at least escape with honor."

That meant ruin for Paul Morrow. Julietta's face worked; the final word stung her with remembrance.

"It's all my own fault," she said lifelessly, staring before her with tear-wet eyes.

Her restraint gave way. With her arms about Morrow's shoulders she wept as she had not done in years, while he clumsily attempted to comfort her and quell her tears.

"Oh!" she cried out sharply, bitterly. "Swear at me—don't be kind, don't! Say something! Swear! Tell me what an ungrateful, silly little fool I am—I've ruined you!"

Morrow placed his hands on her slim shoulders and looked into her eyes.

"You've not ruined me, dear Julietta," he said, his voice deep and soft. "We'll hang together, my dear, and you can't ruin me so long as your eyes hold the old love for your Uncle Paul. And now tell me—do you want to go back to the San Joaquin and see your real folks, and Clay Thorpe?"

"Never!" cried Julietta vibrantly. "I'll stay with you, Uncle Paul, and some day I'll make up to you for this—this awful thing—"

Morrow laughed, and cursed the leather trust with a more cheerful heart.



PLANT A WAR-TIME GARDEN.

Europe is short about 500,000,000 bushels of wheat. The United States and Canada are 34,000,000 bushels behind in their schedule of shipments from this continent to relieve the shortage. The surplus was used up long ago. Every bushel that we now use is snatched directly from people who are infinitely more needy than we. This year we must substitute vegetables for bread. We can do it. Canada's war gardens last year added to the wealth of the state upwards of \$30,000,000. It is hoped that the production will be doubled this year. Even the soldiers are making gardens behind the lines. Why shouldn't we line up, too, whether we live in city or in the country? It is our plain duty.

The best workman must have good tools if he is going to make a success of things. The spade, hoe, garden rake, trowel and digging fork are the chief tools needed in gardening. Narrow hoes and rakes are best for small gardens. Have a place to keep your tools and when you are through with them see that you put them away in the proper place. Provide a soft rag and a box of soft grease like axle grease for rubbing over the blades of

the spade and the hoe, and the working parts of the tools most frequently used. Rust wears out more tools than use and makes work more laborious.

One of the first considerations of the gardener is fertilizer. The common mistake of the amateur gardener is to place his sole faith in the commercial commodity. Wherever possible he should procure farmyard manure. This is used at the Experimental Farm, Ottawa, with the best results.

In planning the 1918 garden the first thing to take into consideration is the fact that it is a war-time garden and that the vegetables which must receive primary attention are those which are going to be genuine substitutes for wheat. The logical substitute is the potato. Therefore, everyone should grow potatoes this year. They repay themselves over and over again. Coune on giving them the major part of the garden.

Every seed should be made to count this year because seed is scarce. Every plant in its place is as gold—but every surplus plant is a weed. The amateur gardener has a weakness for using more seed than is absolutely necessary.

Less-Wheat Bread.

The patriotic duty of every Canadian woman is to help save wheat. This every one can do if we will substitute in whole or in part such cereals as oats, corn or buckwheat as well as potatoes or rice in all receipts using wheat.

Oatmeal Muffins.—1½ cupfuls milk, 2 cupfuls rolled oats, 1 egg, 2 tablespoonfuls molasses, 1 tablespoonful melted fat, 1 cupful flour, 4 teaspoonfuls baking powder, ½ teaspoonful salt. Pour hot milk over the rolled oats, let soak one-half hour. Add the beaten egg, molasses and melted fat. Sift the dry ingredients and add to the wet. Beat hard and bake in well-greased muffin tins one half hour in a moderate oven. This makes about one dozen muffins.

Super Corn Cake.—1½ cupfuls corn meal, 2 cupfuls sour milk, 1 teaspoonful soda, ½ teaspoonful baking powder, 1 teaspoonful salt, 1 egg, 2 teaspoonfuls melted fat. Mix together the soda, baking powder, corn meal and salt. Beat the egg and add to the sour milk. Then add the wet materials to the dry. Heat a frying pan over the first and grease thoroughly. Turn in the well-beaten batter, set in a hot oven and bake twenty minutes.

Cereal Griddle Cakes.—1 cupful milk, 1 egg, 1 tablespoonful melted fat, 1½ cupfuls cooked cereal, potatoes or rice, ½ cupful flour, ¼ teaspoonful salt, 4 teaspoonfuls baking powder. Beat the egg and add the milk and melted fat. Beat this into the cooked cereal, then add the flour, salt and baking powder which have been sifted together. Beat thoroughly and bake on a hot, well-greased griddle.

Preparing For Canning Season.

Regulations have been put into force which are expected to effect an annual saving, in Canada's sugar consumption, of about 100,000 tons. These restrictions are absolutely necessary if we are to have the sugar with which to conserve our fruit crop during the summer period.

There is sugar in Cuba but the ships to carry it are required elsewhere. We have been using far more sugar than we need, and while the restrictions have been imposed primarily in order to prepare for the requirements of the preserving season, a curtailment of sugar consumption will involve little hardship but will be conducive to individual health and, at the same time, will help to reduce our expenditure abroad, thus assisting in financing our participation in the war.

Poppies are difficult to transplant. Sow the seed where the plants are to flower.

Shepherd's Pie.

Brown an onion, sliced, in two tablespoons butter substitute, add two tablespoons flour, and cook until frothy; add salt and pepper, and one pint of stock made from the bones and trimmings of whatever meat is at hand; after boiling a few minutes add three cups meat cut in very small pieces. When tender turn in a baking dish, and cover with hot mashed potatoes. Brush over the potatoes with yolk of an egg diluted with a little milk—brown in oven. Serve at once.

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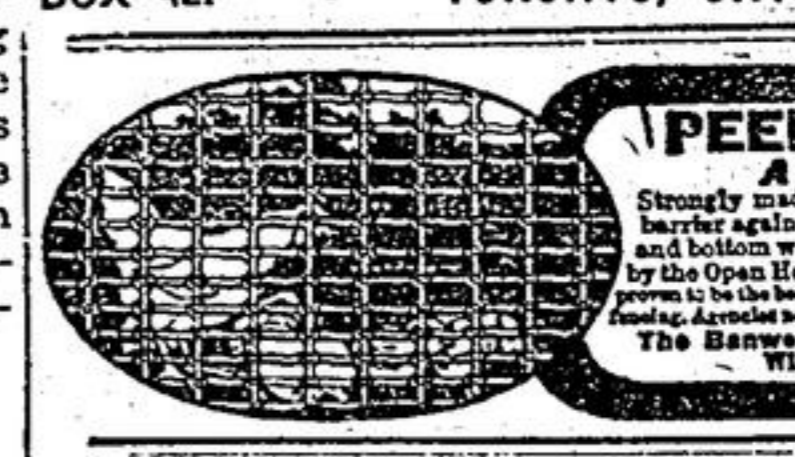
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