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**THE CONFESSIONS OF ROXANE**

(By Frances Walter)

**A DOUBLE RENUNCIATION**

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A swimmer who goes leisurely out toward midstream may not notice for some time how swift the current is. When he does it is possible that he may be carried even farther from shore before his muscles are able to bear him out of danger. A little observation might have saved him much exertion of more serious consequences.

Some such conclusion as this came to me after I had meditated very seriously for a whole afternoon over my affairs. The snubbing which Eva and Amelia had given me had made me think. At first I was nonplused. Then I became angry. Afterward mortification seized me.

It did not dawn upon me at first why they should pass me by without recognition. But when I began to turn various things over in my mind I realized that an explanation was not very difficult to arrive at. The plain truth was that Eva and Amelia did not consider it proper for a married woman to flirt. The situation was aggravated by the fact that the man with whom I was flirting was the best "catch" in town. There wasn't a girl of marriageable age in the entire burg who hadn't vainly hoped that "Billy" might some day take a fancy to her. Some of them had openly set their caps for him, while many a snother had attempted to lure him into their webs. All of these he had escaped or avoided only to fall into my clutches.

How disgusting such a situation must have seemed to that score or more of maidens can readily be imagined. All of their carefully laid plans and golden dreams had been smashed or scattered by the entrance of a legally married woman who, without the aid of the Grim Reaper or the divorce court, could not become eligible. No wonder they thought it improper for me to flirt with Billy. No wonder they snubbed me.

But this was only one side of the situation. There was another which could not be dismissed with sarcasm and the shrugging of shoulders. While it might be true that jealousy was back of the attitude of these girls toward me, I could not be blind to the fact that their position was the conventional one. The customs of society undoubtedly supported them. It was not considered the best form for a married woman to accept the attentions of a man other than her husband.

Thus I was face to face with conventions. When this realization first came to me it startled me. Like the swimmer, I had moved aimlessly ahead, with no thought either of my surroundings or destination. Now that the swift current was upon me it was necessary for me either to exert myself and return to shore, or to be borne out upon the stream.

What if I did abandon myself to my desires? What would be my fate? Would Billy prove all-sufficient for the sacrifice? What would my future be? I have no doubt that these questions have come to many a woman situated as I was. In these days one has only to look to the right or to the left to find women whose husbands for one reason or another have left them. To almost all such women a time like the one I faced must come. They are called upon to decide between a rigid adherence to the mandates of society and abandonment to their own inclinations. It is not necessary to point out what may happen in the latter case. The streets are full of such women.

I must do myself the justice to say that never for one moment did I consider any course except the proper one; once I was awake to the real situation. Providence has given me the power to discern between the right and the wrong paths, and thus far in my life I have not been permitted to wander from the narrow way. I knew instantly that the truth had dawned upon me, that I would give up Billy Bent, but at the same time I permitted myself certain dreams. To these I utterly abandoned myself for a time. How happy I could be with him! I pictured myself going through life with him—he the leader and I the companion and comforter. What a pleasant picture it was.

But it was to be denied me. It was plain that I must think no more of him as a lover. And how would

he take it?

My heart sank within me when I thought of telling him. He had been so ardent in his devotion; so irresistible in his impetuosity, that I felt he would be plunged into the depths of disappointment when I compelled him to say farewell. But it must be done and done quickly.

Chance saw to it that I did not have long to wait. While I was on the porch, lost in these reflections, Billy was coming to me. I looked up and saw him turn his roadster into our street and guide it skillfully to the curb. He did not wave his hand to me as usual, and although he moved with his accustomed nervous energy, there was a cloud on his face as he came up the walk. I knew as soon as I looked at him that something was radically wrong, but I said nothing at that time.

There was the usual warmth in his greeting, although I tried to exercise some self-control. A woman cannot always coldly regulate her manner in the presence of the man who has won her heart. Some women appear as cool as icebergs, but this is not for the men of their choice. Under other circumstances these same women appear flames of passion.

But all thought of self was immediately overshadowed by concern, for Billy's manner soon became almost distant. I was compelled to ask him if anything had gone wrong.

"Everything has gone wrong!" he burst out. "Why the County Committee, upon which I had depended for solid support, has turned against me. They are backing Shepard. Only yesterday I could have sworn that I had 'I thought they had promised their support," I told him in astonishment. "So they had, the last one of them. I canvassed the entire committee, and every man on it promised to be my friend."

"It is inconceivable! What explanation have they?"

Billy flinched in his chair. "Oh, I know what excites you give, but it is no excuse at all," he exploded. "They declare it is improper for you and me to be together as we are. They are saying that nothing good can come of it; that gossip is sweeping all over the district, and that unless I do something I shall be defeated."

"Do something?" I asked. "Do what?"

"Break with you. That's what they advise."

"How ridiculous!" I exclaimed. "What influence, one way or the other, could poor little I have on the situation?"

"But they declare we are being talked about everywhere," said Billy, impatiently. "That voters are asking themselves if I am the right sort of man to represent them; if, in short, there won't be some sort of scandal sooner or later involving me?"

"And me—?"

"Billy looked at me for a moment and nodded his head. "That's what they are saying. Suddenly my face flamed and my head whirled. I was on my feet. "And you came here to tell me this?" I cried. "Why did you come? Did you expect sympathy from me or was it a renunciation you wanted?"

"Neither, Roxane," declared Billy. "I did not really intend to tell you anything, but it came out before I knew it. Forgive me; I was worried. This election will mean so much to me. I cannot afford to lose."

"Even if you have to give me up?"

"Billy was silent."

"I understand," I said steadily, "and you are right. I am not worth the sacrifice. No, do not interrupt me. It may comfort you somewhat to know that there would have been a renunciation on my part had you not forestalled me. Now there is all the more reason for it. We will forget the past few weeks and take up our lives where they were when we met yonder in the wood. You will forget that you ever met a married woman who could so far disregard the conventions of civilized life. I shall forget that I ever met a man who placed an office before the woman he professed to love. Each of us has learned a lesson. It is a bitter one, but it may do us both good."

"But, Roxane," he began.

"Go," I told him. "Let us part this way, without further recrimination. Go!"

He rose without another word. As I watched him I realized how greatly I had been mistaken in thinking him a strong man. In the emergency it was I who took the leadership and he who was obeying.

(To be continued)

**"Low Cost of Living" Menu**

**Menu for Saturday**

**BREAKFAST**  
Fruit of Choice  
Milk Toast  
Soft-Baked Eggs  
Crisp Rolls  
Marmalade  
Coffee or Cocoa

**LUNCHEON OR SUPPER**  
Fried Eggplant  
Sweet potatoes, boiled with the skin on.  
Pickled Beets  
French Toast  
Iced Milk or Tea

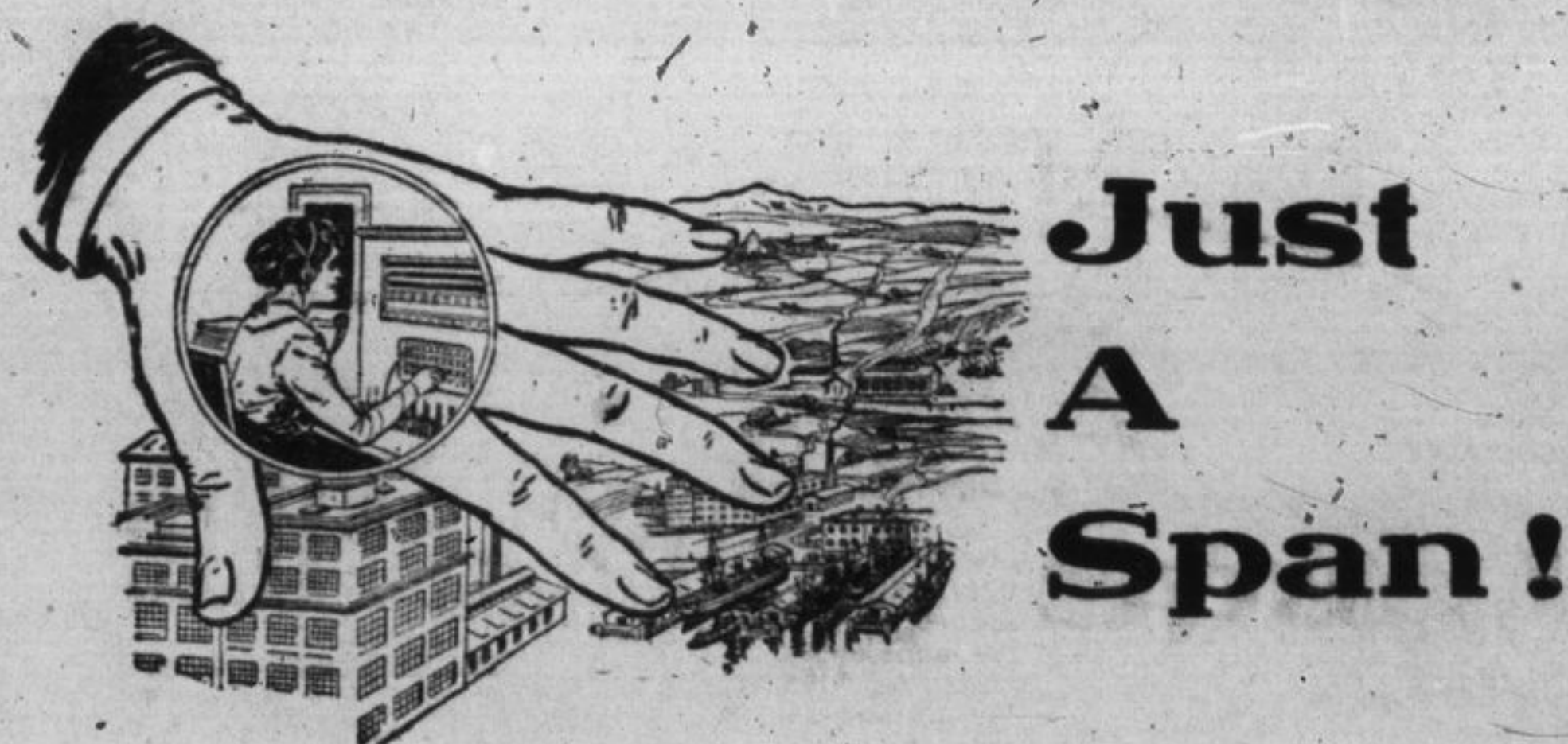
**DINNER**  
Ham and Cabbage  
Potatoes  
Stewed Cucumbers  
Peas-Pudding  
Coffee

**Peach Pudding**  
Materials—Four peaches, 2 cups milk, 1/2 cup sugar, 1 egg, 1 table spoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon grated nutmeg.

Utensils—Double boiler, two measuring cups, teaspoon, tablespoon, small bowl, knife, eggbeater, soup plate to beat eggs in, shallow dish that can be placed in oven.

Directions—Put the milk on to boil; mix the cornstarch with a little cold milk and half the sugar; add the yolk of egg, salt and nutmeg and mix all well; then add the boiling milk; boil five minutes; pour into shallow dish. Have the peaches washed, pared and halved; lay on cornstarch side up; sprinkle with a little sugar; beat the white of egg until dry and add the remainder of sugar; put a teaspoon of the meringue on each piece of peach in place of the pit; dust with sugar and place in oven to dry. This must be served cold and used the same day it is made.

Be sure the white of egg is very cold, and beat it with wire beater or silver forks; otherwise it will not get light.



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A  
Span!**

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after every  
meal

Two  
flavors



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Canada

Sealed  
against all  
impurities

**SEED GRAN LIENS.**  
Alberta Farmers Are Not Paying Up  
Readily.  
Calgary, Alta., Sept. 14.—At a  
conference here to deal with seed  
grain liens, it was arranged that  
western farmers who have not dis-  
charged their indebtedness to the  
Dominion Government shall be given

until June 30th, next year to pay. The Wellington Mutual Fire In-  
After that date the holder of any insurance Company of Guelph receiv-  
mortgage on property may pay the ed through a priest in Buffalo a pas-  
and add the amount to the mort- ed containing \$1,530, restitution  
gage. W. W. Cory, deputy minister made by a man who confessed to  
of agriculture, represented the Gov- him. The affair remains a mystery.  
ernment. Only two million dollars  
have been repaid of fourteen mil-  
lions advanced during the winter  
white are usually of our own crea-  
tion.