

A Matter of Tradition

By DORA MOLLAN

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Alicia jammed her wide-brimmed shade hat an inch farther down on her well-shaped head and totted on through the blistering sun, up the grass-grown lane and through the knee-deep sorrel and daisies. It was with a sigh of grateful relief that she gained the shade of the pillared porch of the old Caverly house. The door stood ajar.

Opening it, she peeped into the deserted mansion and was lured by its cool shadows. Picking her way carefully over the uneven flooring, she passed through the stately colonial entrance into a wide hall, thence up the somewhat rickety but beautiful staircase and into a great empty front chamber.

Here, on a built-in seat by one of the many-paned windows, from which the glass had long ago fallen, Alicia seated herself, removed the wide shade hat and laid it on the window sill. A cool breeze from the water ruffled her fine brown hair. There was no sound but the drowsy hum of an occasional bee and the soft swish-swash of tiny wavelets on the beach below.

There is a certain sleep-inducing quality in the early afternoon air of a midsummer day that is difficult to resist when one is alone and fairy breezes caress one's eyes. Alicia didn't try very hard.

Presently she was thinking in a confused, half-conscious way of the things that must have happened in this old house, abandoned now, she had been told, for twenty-five years. This old front chamber—how many lives had it welcomed into the world; how many ushered out? How many young brides had looked out of this very window down onto the sparkling ocean?

Alicia's eyes were closed now; she didn't trouble to open them to see just how that sparkling ocean must have looked to the young brides. The hot midday air was an easy victor.

The soft purring of the waves on the pebbly beach became more insistent; the tide was rising. With it came a stronger breeze.

It lifted Alicia's shade hat and wafted it gently down to a resting place amid the sorrel and daisies. Several bees investigated its wreath of gay-colored flowers with disappointing results—and flew away, muzzling, no doubt, on their particular version of the aphorism "All is not gold," etc. Alicia slept on.

Somewhere in the direction of the very rough road from which branched the grassy lane a new sound originated. It was an alien, mechanical sound. If the sleeper had awakened she would have identified it and wondered a little, perhaps.

A powerful car was passing over—or, rather, through—the abandoned thoroughfare. A quarter of a mile from the house it gave up the undertaking and the driver picked his way up the lane like one unfamiliar with its surroundings yet not unprepared for them.

Gaining the level plateau where an unobstructed view of the old mansion could be had the young man paused, and with folded arms stood deep in the sorrel and daisies. Through wide-set, humorous gray eyes he took in the scene before him. "Poor Dad!" he sighed at last, and made his way toward the house.

"Why, even some of the poppies still growing in front of the house!" he exclaimed. Alicia's hat played its practical joke for the second time. But not with such disappointing results this time to the be-fooled. For Pliny Caverly the fourth decided instantly that he would like a girl who wore a hat like that—and there might be reason for it.



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sons why it was important that he should.

Holding the hat gingerly in his hand Pliny stood still and studied his ancestral home at close range. The windows over the porch would be in that front chamber where he was born and where—but somebody was sitting near one of them. Just a glimpse of fine brown hair and a broad forehead, that was all; but it was rather tantalizing to Pliny—for the reason.

Could it be the girl of the poppy hat, sitting up there in that historic front chamber where dad had first seen his mother, when she had come from boarding school with dad's sister for a vacation, the chamber that had been a sort of upstairs sitting room in those days? He'd see, would Pliny, right away; it was important he should know. He thought he liked the soft brown hair and it certainly was a well-modeled forehead, but he knew he liked the hat and what the hat whispered of its owner.

It was very still, that well-shaped head of which he could get but a glimpse. Evidently that owner hadn't noticed his approach. Would it be possible to gain that room unheard? he wondered.

Surely it would be no trespass—it was his house, at all events. Pliny tried it, and succeeded. He reached the doorway on tiptoe, the shade hat still in his hand. There the intruder stood motionless, drinking in the picture before him, the slender girl in a frock of delicate green, the girl with fine brown hair blown lightly about by the ocean zephyrs.

The girl of the poppy hat, indubitably. The right girl, the right girl of all girls. And sleeping quietly on the window seat.

So moveless she seemed, so very still, that suddenly a panic fear smote Pliny. He took a hurried step forward, and Alicia opened her eyes. They looked, first, straight into Pliny's, and then dazedly about the old, dismantled room. "I was thinking of the people who must have lived and died here; and at the brides—why, I must have fallen asleep! You?"

"Yes," interrupted Caverly, "I found your hat on the grass. And I was thinking of brides, too. Brides—and this room. You see"—Pliny went on like a race horse, giving the girl of the poppy hat no chance to speak—"there is a tradition in the Caverly family that the eldest son always meets his bride for the first time in this room. It held true for three generations."

The girl raised her right hand to her cheek and deliberately pinched it so hard that the red mark, staining the fair skin, was visible to the young man across the room.

Quickly he crossed and sat down beside her. Boldly he did the presumptuous thing of grasping, quite gently, the hand responsible for the blush. "Why did you do that?" he demanded sternly.

"To make sure I was not dreaming," answered Alicia, drawing away her hand. "Who, pray, are you—who walk into the Caverly mansion, spying on sleeping girls and talking about the traditions of the place?"

Pliny arose and bowed low before Alicia. "I am Pliny Caverly the fourth," he said, "and at your service, fair lady, forever. I was born in this room and on the same day my young mother died. The next week my dad took me away and I've never seen the place till now. Poor dad! He never could bear to come back.

"But I'm here at last, and just in time to find you here. So the tradition is fulfilled for the fourth time. Let's put the house in order and live happily ever after. What do you say?"

Alicia gave the fourth Caverly just one instant's glance, and there was the faintest, faintest, remotest suggestion of the shadow of a smile at one corner of her mouth. But she looked hurriedly at her watch, jumped to her feet and replied:

"I say that I'm due at a garden party at five and it's half after four now. It's very interesting nonsense you talk, but I can't stay to listen."

"Oh, you don't have to," briskly answered Pliny. "I'll just go along with you. You see I'm going to always go along with you, through life. The Caverly traditions, you know, always come true."

Just taking things by and large, what, think you, were Pliny's chances?

Had Fallen Down.

When the Los Angeles boys got in the other day, the papers said Jay was unconfined, but they were wrong. At least there was one doughboy whose face was not wreathed in smiles.

Yes, the folks were there, and so was the one and only girl, but, especially with the girl, the doughboy seemed embarrassed.

"Gee whiz," whispered a buddy in his ear, "why the shyness? She's crazy for you to kiss her."

"Nix," wailed our hero, "she'll be off me for life in a minute. When I went away I promised her the sailor's helmet, and I ain't got it, see?"—Los Angeles Times.

Valuations.

"Why does a woman raise pearls and diamonds so highly?"

"I dunno," replied Farmer Corns. "I guess maybe it's for something of the same reason these summer girls think more of a four-leaf clover than they do of a whole load of hay."

Stephen Vancott, Salem, sold his farm stock and implements on Wednesday, moved to Tweed on Tuesday. They are taking up their residence in the old Bowel property on Victoria street, which they have purchased.

Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Howell, of Montreal, moved to Tweed on Tuesday. They are taking up their residence in the old Bowel property on Victoria street, which they have purchased.

Fred Norton and family have moved to Ross Hall on the Pettigall farm which he has taken to work on shares.

LINDSAY'S facts advertisement featuring a portrait of the Prince of Wales, a facsimile of a letter, and two piano illustrations. Text includes: 'In an announcement which appeared in the Montreal Daily Star, Oct. 27th, it was pointed out that a Heintzman & Co. Grand Piano had been placed in the Vice-Regal Parlor in the Ritz-Carlton Hotel for the personal use of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales.' and 'Canada's Premier Piano House LINDSAY'S C.W. LINDSAY LIMITED 121 PRINCESS STREET, KINGSTON. Montreal, Ottawa, Quebec, Brockville, Belleville and Three Rivers.'

DESTROYED BY FIRE. Thought That Incendiarists Have Been at Work. Battersea, Nov. 15.—Two fires took place this week in the village, both being barns and the cause unknown. On Wednesday, Nov. 13th, the barn belonging to W. B. Anglin was burned to the ground. His two houses were saved. On Friday, Nov. 14th, the barn belonging to William Holder was burned and his cow and other stock were not scotched out in

time to save them. As there was a high wind at the time it was necessary to keep constant watch on the neighboring houses. The village is in need of adequate fire protection, as the water supply is limited to pumps, some of these dry, owing to lowness of water in the lakes. A light fall of snow took place yesterday and the road being slightly covered with it, was partly responsible for saving the dwellings. Leonard Vanuxem is building a central dock near his boat houses for

the convenience of next summer's tourists. When completed it will add to the many conveniences of the Venlven House and make it the hotel of choice for summer residents. Mrs. John Miller had the misfortune to fall and break her arm near the shoulder. She is under medical care and doing nicely. Rev. William Merrilees, Blakeney, has received a call to become minister of the Presbyterian congregation of Iroquois.

On Oct. 31st about one hundred friends and neighbors of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Murphy, Napawa, gathered at their home to bid them farewell before leaving for Watertown, N.Y. During the evening Mr. and Mrs. Murphy and family were presented with a cabinet of silver, and Mr. and Mrs. Timothy P. Hunt with a mantle clock. W. G. Collier has sold his fine store, Wellington, to Coxall and Son, Tweed. The property is the oldest and most favorably known in this vi-

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