THIS HAS HAPPENED Helen Page feels hopelessly in love with her guardian, Leonard Brent. A chance meeting with a dying beggar, Charles Nellin, causes Brent to change his plans for Helen's future. Soon after he tells the girl that she is the only grandchild of a million-

aire, Cyril K. Cunningham. Brent takes her to Cunningham and offers proois which the lonely old man accepts. Hoping to make up for the injustice done her mother, Cunningham showers the girl with affection and gifts.

Among Helen's new friends are Eva Ennis and her brother Robert, who falls in love with her. Brent finds another locket like the one he had taken from Nellin to establish Helen as the heiress. He also becomes jealous of Bob and plots to secure the girl for himself quickly.

Hearing the doctor say that a sudden shock would kill the old man, Brent gets the servants out of the way and rushes into the sick room shouting wildly that Helen has been killed. His plan works and when the attendant returns Cunningham is Then Brent appears as friend and formes guardian Helen and takes charge of arrange

Brent had amused himself by making love to Eva and now he tries to break off the affair without making Helen suspicious. Meanwhile, Bob is too proud to speak hi love until a chance meeting breaks his reserve and they both acknowledge their love. But Helen tells him it is hopeless, as she is promised to

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NEA SERVICE INC NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY had never encountered before.

"I can't break my engagement." to be released. Bob drew back from her, white to but bit doep into the heart.

CHAPTER XXVIII

prehensible to him except from one was unknown to her. angle-she did not truly love him. either was not very deeply in love with terrific force. or who was caught up in fallacies.

lisaster threatened the outcome? think of it. Wondered that she ould not see as he did, that the pursued by a demon. surse she was taking was sordid rather than idealistic.

A moment of anger flared up in his heart against her-the resentment of clean youth for evil compromise. It wiped from his mind he question he wanted to ask her. The name of the man she was going

-going to marry," The words choed in Bob's mind as a sentence o lifelong unhappiness. No man would let her go. Rot! A decent

man-but not while he thought she Bob felt himself slipping into a maze of doubt and fear. But he could not argue, could not plead his

own case further. What appeared to be uncertainty on her part drove him to cruelty. He would not recognize quixotism as her prompter, he was too modern for that, and he knew nothing of her sense of obligation. To him she was unsure of her heart, and he had no tolerance for her.

"Then," he said quietly, coldly,

ou're a bit of a rotter.' All that he knew of needless, even criminal, self-sacrifice; all that he knew of lives wasted for false precepts of honor; all that he realized of right and wrong was behind his words. What seemed her stupidity, that denied her brain, her apparent lack of courage to change her course when, to anyone but a fool, canger signals all were set against it—these too had helped to call forth his scathing remark.

and fearless—never a juggler with the tender passion. Love, he had believed, would come to her as true is lovely. and untrampled as it had come to How it could involve two men answered quietly. at the same time was an impenerable mystery to him.

For Bob had never known puppy ove. Helen's passing from love of undersanding

His youthful hardness, steeled by the thought that she would go

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nomical to operate!

Brent had been cruel on occasion, when Helen told her she was going

true, but his was the suave cruelty on a morning train. Helen said stiffly. "I can only ask of a hidden menace-the sheathed

She did not flinch before the son. Argument, his naturaly logical blow. Perhaps she was too shocked

Without another word Bob turned be told that only a fool would and strode out of the room. Mrs. air; won't you wear a fur?" the keep to a mere engagement when Wethering, uneasily waiting in the library, saw him fling himself out Bob wondered that Helen could of the house, leaving the front door open behind him, as though he were

Helen had fled, up the rear stairs to white tweed ensemble, ner room

Mrs. Wethering gathered up the things that were to have gone into the preparation of their midnight supper and put them away. Later she went to Helen's door and lisened. She thought she detected down Helen's reserve. the sound of muffled sobs but when she tried the door and found it eked she hesitated to demand admittance.

The sounds gradually grew fainter nd finally the housekeeper decided that it would be better for Helen if she left her alone.

The next morning the girl was pale and worn, with shadowed eyes in which there was an unhealed

wound. Mrs. Wethering was very genfle and remained with Helen while she breakfasted or rather while she ent through the motions of par aking of her fruit and coffee. Sho hoped Helen would confide in her and went so far as to mention havng witnessed Mr. Ennis' hasty departure the night before.

Still Helen said nothing, but there as on her face a set, cold expreson that warned Mrs. Wethering that the incident, whatever it was had a serious aspect.

Mrs. We hering sighed over her nability to administer comfort and aggested that Helen ought to get out into the open. "You haven't driven your car very much lately," "Why don't you let me He had thought of her as brave fix you a picnic lunch and you can delephone for someone to go for a long drive with you? The weather

"I'm going to New York," Helen

Mrs. Wethering was greatly disturbed but she did not dare offer any oposition. There was about Helen an air of determination that ove to love itself was beyond his plainly indicated she was set upon course from which she could not be swerved.

"Are you taking an early train?" hrough with a loveless match, was Mrs. Wethering asked, hoping the Reliable Merchandise since 1853 a phase of masculinity that Helen girl did not in end to drive her car

to the city. She was much relieved

by Ruth Dewey Groves
AUTHOR OF "RICH GIRL - POOR GIRL" ETC.

In Helen's mind, too, was fear of claw, that cal lightly on the surface driving her car. She knew that she was likely to become forgetful of the lips. Her attitude was incom- | The frankness of Bob's generation danger on the road and she did not want to risk injury to another per-

Mrs. Wethering found an excuse brain told him, would be useless. to show by so much as a flicker of to go to her room with her when What could it mean to a girl who her eyelids that it had struck her Helen went up to get her hat and

> "There's just a little tang in the housekeeper urged. Helen accepted a silver fox and

threw it carelessly about her shoulders. It made her costume perfect and Mrs. Wethering wondered it She hurried to the kitchen but she had selected the black and smart black and silk blouse, with any particular care.

"What could be the object of her visit to the city? It worried the older woman almost to the point of causing her to attempt to break

But that reserve had acted as a shield upon many occarions and it remained effective now. Helen was permitted to leave without revealing her destination.

On the train she consulted a card to make certain that she had the zine orrect address. Two or three times she said it over to memorize the street and number, then put it away The name that was engraved upon it vas a silent reproach How often had she fancied it a

her own! Mrs. Leonard Brent. An now-now she dared not think behen she would beg to be released from her mad promise. Surely, arely he would not hold her to it But the voice of fear deep in her heart answered that he would. She realized that, aside from the keepstandingly creditable to his account. On the contrary there were many nany wemen; his strange, unden ably selfish desire to shape a your

Helen could see now that her chool friend, Shallimar, had been ght in much she had said about

Helen mourned. "Then the ould not have happened. Len wouldn't have cared for me if I had been more independent.

She was wrong, of course, for h will frequently h f aberration in regard to en it turns to worship of an un

But Helen felt that she was th ily foolish girl in the world—the an older man, and she was drinking deep of regret.

Yonkers seemed interminable-an the interview ahead of her prom

tain to find Brent in. The though of talking with him by wire ha been impossible. She wanted to see him now, tell him, and have an end to her suspense.

At Brent's apartment house sh e her name at the desk and was told to come up. The girl who are nunced her turned a curious long on her but Helen missed it.

She stepped hurriedly into evator and gave her floor to the

operator.
"Mr. Brent's apartment?" she quired when he again opened the glance when she named Brent. But his voice was correctly modulated when he gave the direc-

tions she asked for.
"To your right, Miss, the third

door beyond the turn."
"Thank you." Helen replied and walked rapidly down the hall, quite unaware that her pale face and and the hint of tragedy that hung about her was like a standard that she might have carried; and that the building attaches had read it to mean trouble. Particularly as they knew that a visitor had arrived ahead of her; a tall, slim, elegant visitor in fashionable attire and the unmistakible atmosphere of being at home in her surroundings. Helen hurrled on, expecting to

find only Brent.

CHAPTER XXIX Helen was admitted into the foyer of Brent's apartment by a Japanese servant. She stepped quickly over the threshold and glanced beyond to the living room that could be

glimpsed through an open doorway. "Miss Nellin,' she said as though it did not matter, and moved, on, paying no attention to the man's words. He was saying that Mr.

Someone had drawn the heavy draperies against the brillian' sunshine of the early autumn day in the living room and turned on a soft

light near a divan. Helen's eyes went to the light instinctively but instead of seeing, as she expected, Leonard sitting under it, she found herself staring into the bemused countenance of "one

The phrase flashed through has ind unsummoned, perhaps as a ho of thoughts she had entertained on the train. She recognized Carmel at onceas the woman she had seen with Brent when she and Shallimar had

of his women."

gone to the Ritz. what she was, but she felt an enfore the woman spoke. Another ime she'd have mistaken it for jealousy; now she believed it to be annoyance over a third person's when she derired a private

talk with Leonard. "I took the liberty of asking you name is, doesn't seem to know what mind obeying her. Helen's loveliness convinced her Leonard," Carme! indicating by moving over that here was a formidable rival.

Leonard invited me to lunch,

she remarked offhandedly, ending in

a laugh. "Were you included?" she

Helen saw no reason to lie to her,

evenly, "I am trying to catch Mr.

Brent on the wing-on business that

pleasantly, "but no doubt he will

wish you to stay to lunch. Gener-

there is something to eat." She

reached up and took off her hat,

Helen began then to wonder as

been wondering about her. Why

should this woman take other

women so casually in regard to

Helen discarded the thought as

unworthy of herself and an injus-

tice to Brent. She knew, she told

herself, that the women of his ac-

quaintance were colorful individuals,

not at all concerned with conven-

ionality. But Leonard had pro-

fessed to love only her; he could

However, when Carmel proceeded

he tiny kitchen, where Helen could

hear her humming and making a

great to do with pots and pans, she

could not remain blind to the sig-

nificance of the woman's conduct

Certainly she was no stranger to the

But what of that? Leonard was

take off her wrap and went into

not be interested in anyone else.

to him that gave her security?

you suggested," she said

course," Carmel agreed

let her think what she would.

is very important to him."

"As

beside her on the divan. Helen stood, thinking swiftly rather furlous over it as the mia-Have you an engagement with utes went by and Helen sat calmly him?" she asked pointblank, decid- turning the pages of the magazine ing that if such were the case she (though she was anything but cain) would go and come back later. beneath her exterior).

"The girl looks a decent sort," "My dear, one never has engagements with Leonard," Carmel an- she told herself as the nucleus of a wered patronizingly "One catches scheme to thwart Brent began to him on the wing. But, of course, form in her mind. "She won't possibly in your case..." Her voice stand for much dirt." She put down her cigaret and rose on a mockingly interrogatory holder and looked at a clock on the

Helen returned her glance with mantel. It was very close to 12 the steadiness of steel but inwardly o'clock. she was quaking lest the irritation she felt should show in her face.

She turned and took a seat in an added, compelling herself to speak armchair near a reading table, and graciously. quite nonchalantly turned on a secad lamp. She would not go now and appear to this insolent woman be running away from her jibes. "Smoke?" Carmel asked, taking out a platinum case and extending it to Helen.

The latter shook her head. With considerable ostentation Carmel put the case aside, rose and walked over to a desk and dug a long ally he leaves it to me to see that amber eigaret holder out of a

adding carclessly, "when we don't go Helen perceived that Carmel ished her to know that she was familiar with the apartment, but much about Carmel as Carmel had he appeared not to notice.

They sat in silence for several minutes Carmel lazily pulling at her chocolate-papered cigaret and Helen flipping the pages of a maga- Leonard? Had she some secret right

Secretly Carmel was studying her. weighing her youth and beauty with savage resentment of it. For though she knew that her own exotic charm had held Leonard Brent partly under a spell for many years she knew also that he wanted her out of his life now. And she did not know why. Was this girl the

She knew about Helen Page but he had never been permitted to meet her. She did not know that Helen's name was now Nellin. And then Helen had ben announced tarmel had been seized with a deire to pry into Brent's affairs. For hat reason she had instructed the place. ananese servant, when she heard hings against him. His past; 50 him repeat Helen's name, to say that a Bohemian in many ways. And she was to come up. He had taken she knew—she'd heard—that many orders from Carmel before, high-smart women got a thrill in playing handed ones too, but his indifference around in a bachelor's kitchen

Poco or Soto, or whatever his man's was so complete that he did not when wild horses couldn't drag them near their own.

from the kitchen.

Helen recognized it as she herself had made for Leonar Presently Carmel came out to at a time when she hoped to keet the living room and opened up a house for him. She viewed it with lightly that she expected Helen to Perhaps Leonard wanted to marry, small table, over which she spread a mixed feelings as Carmel smoothed she thought sneeringly. She grew luncheon cloth that she had brought it in place and laid the napkins rather furious over it as the min- from the kitchen. (Continued on Page Six)

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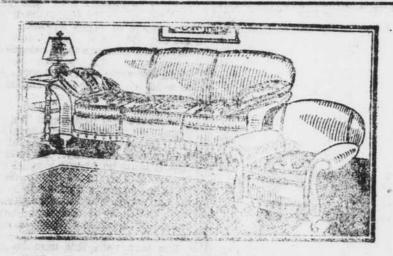
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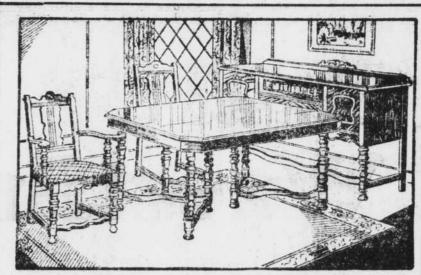
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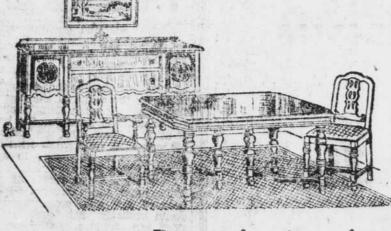


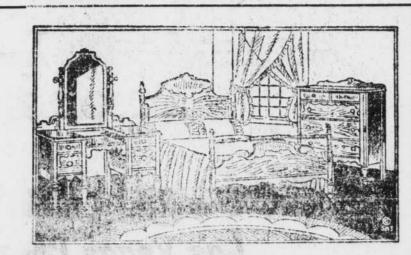


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