There COMES a MOMENT

By ELINOR MAXWELL

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SYNOPSIS

Mary Loring and her father, Jim, an ineffectual attorney, meet a train which brings his wealthy sister-in-law, unmarried Linnie Cotswell and her friend, Lelia Ormsby, divorcee, for a Christmas visit. Waiting at home for them are Mary's mother, her younger sister, Ellen; her father's nagging maiden sister, Aunt Mamie, and Peter, the baby of the family. At the depot Dr. Christopher Cragg helps the guests with their luggage. Mary is secretly in love with Doctor Cragg. In leaving, her Aunt Linnie urges Mary to visit her in New York, but Mary refuses. Mary works in a rental library, where she spends her spare time writing short stories. Mary's father is let out as railroad attorney, the fees of which were almost the sole support of his family. To earn money she decides to begin writing in earnest. Mary feels sure that her newest story, "At Sea," would please the editors of National Weekly. After finishing it she calls Doctor Cragg, who comes to the book store for a current novel. Falling from a ladder while getting his book, she regains consciousness to find his arms around her. He tells her he loves her, and then tells her he is to be married the coming month to a girl he has known all his life. Despondent, Mary decides to accept her Aunt Linnie's invitation. In New York her aunt laughs at her for her plans to write, and insists that she meet as many eligible men as possible. The new week brings two letters. One, from the National Weekly, with a $100 check for her story, makes her deliriously happy. The other, from her sister, tells her that financial conditions at home are getting worse. The next day, at a party given by her aunt, Mary meets distinguished Jerome Taylor, wealthy middle aged man-about-town, and effusive Count Umberto Balianci. The count's oily manner nauseates her. A note from her father the following day pleads with her not to mention the family's financial plight to her aunt. After reading it she forces herself to begin work on her next short story, which is more difficult to write than the first. She labors on until her aunt informs her that Count Umberto, whom Lelia terms a sponger and fortune hunter, is to take them to dinner that evening. He takes them to a garish restaurant in Greenwich Village. That evening Mary sends her story, "Their Son," to the National Weekly. She goes to see Phillip Buchanan, editor of the National Weekly, to whom she has given her last story.

CHAPTER VI—Continued

—6—

She smiled at Mr. Buchanan. "Yes, I am Mary Loring."

"You took me rather by surprise."

"Oh! But I thought Miss Hickenlooper announced me!"

"She did, of course. I mean that I was hardly prepared for a debutante. 'At Sea' has the wisdom of years in its theme."

"I'm twenty-two," Mary replied, as if that explained everything.

Phillip Buchanan smiled, and his teeth seemed very white because of the contrast they made with the tan of his face. "All of that? Do sit down, Miss Loring. I'm so glad you dropped in. I've wanted to tell you how very much we liked 'At Sea.' It's scheduled for publication April fifteenth."

Mary seated herself in a chair which faced him across the desk, the envelope containing her manuscript held tightly beneath her right arm. "Oh! Not until April?"

"Not until April?" Mr. Buchanan repeated. "Why, that's giving your story an early publication! Don't you know that our material—at least as far as fiction is concerned—is planned months in advance? In fact, we shelved a story we had arranged to publish on that date in order to make room for yours. By the way, have you written anything since you sent us 'At Sea'?"

Mary produced the envelope containing her precious script, and placed it on the desk before him. "Indeed I have, Mr. Buchanan, and here it is. Another short short."

Phillip Buchanan glanced at it, put it on a pile of papers at his left, and then casually lit his cigarette. "That's fine. I'll turn it over to Mr. Johnstone today."

Mary's eyes clouded with disappointment. She had supposed that Mr. Buchanan, himself, would read the story—perhaps this morning while she sat there in his office. "Mr. Johnstone?" she repeated numbly.

"Yes, one of our readers." Then, evidently sensing her disappointment, he explained, "You see, all material submitted to The National Weekly goes through a regular routine. Mr. Johnstone reads it first, separates the wheat from the chaff; hands on the possibilities to Mr. Arbuckle, who in turn does a bit more weeding. After which, whatever is left goes on to Mr. Van Winkle. He then okays what he considers best suited to our needs and sends it on to me. A sort of survival of the fittest, as it were!"

"Heavens, what a test!" Mary replied, that elusive dimple playing at one corner of her mouth. "I'm surprised that anything ever reaches your desk! I had supposed . . ."

"That I read everything that comes to the office? Lord, no! I couldn't wander through all that trash! However, you may rest assured that your story—what's the title, by the way?"

"Their Son," Mary replied.

"You may rest assured that 'Their Son' will be given a sympathetic reading. We like your style, and the realistic manner in which you handled the situations in 'At Sea.' Once an author has appeared within our pages, he's given, as far as we're concerned, a place in the sun. In fact, on second thought, I'll probably just turn this over to Mr. Van Winkle—not put it through the mill." He glanced abruptly at the dull gold watch strapped to his wrist. "Lord! It's nearly one o'clock, and I have an engagement with Ford Hansen at two. How about having a spot of lunch with me, Miss Loring?"

Mary's hands clutched convulsively beneath the protection of the coat which lay across her lap, and, to her embarrassment, her face flushed scarlet. Phillip Buchanan, the editor-in-chief of the most popular magazine in the United States was asking her to have a "spot of lunch" with him! "Why, thank you," she managed to reply. "That will be fun."

Buchanan leaped from his chair, and went towards a cupboard at the far end of the room. "All right," he said. "Let's go." And opening the door, he dragged out a camel's hair top-coat, and slid into it. "I want to talk to you about a series of shorts, and this is a swell opportunity."

Mary felt dizzy with excitement as she and Phillip Buchanan, closeted in one of the silent elevators of the building which housed The National Weekly, descended twenty floors to the lobby. Mr. Buchanan was taking her to lunch! Mr. Buchanan wanted to talk to her about a series of "shorts" for his magazine. She mentally estimated how many words she could write a day; how many hours it would take to revise and polish what she had written. She must not be hasty or careless. She should, she figured, allow herself two mornings for the original composition, two additional mornings for revision, and a fifth sitting, perhaps, for perfect retyping of the script.

They had reached the lobby, now, and were heading for the street door. "I say," Mr. Buchanan began, "you don't mind barging all the way down to the Lafayette, do you? My appointment with Hansen's in that neighborhood."

Mind! Mary would have gone to Chinatown, or Great Neck, or Timbuktu with him, had he suggested one of those spots as a lunching place! "I don't mind at all," she returned. "I've wanted to see the Lafayette ever since Greta Garbo appeared in 'Romance.'"

Mr. Buchanan looked puzzled. "'Romance'? Oh, yes, I remember now. All about a young minister who fell in love with an actress! That's right. Some of the scenes were supposed to be laid at the Lafayette. Well, I don't know that you'll find a great deal of the atmosphere of the sixties remaining, but it's a good place to eat. Come on, we'll hop a taxi."

Once in the cab, he settled himself comfortably back against the leather cushions, as if to snatch a

Mary felt dizzy with excitement.

bit of rest while the opportunity offered, lit a cigarette, and said, "Well, tell me something about yourself, Miss Loring. You're from some small town in the West, aren't you?"

Mary glanced shyly at the clear-cut lines of the man's profile. He looked rather bored. No doubt his taking her out to lunch was only a necessary evil as far as he was concerned—the courteous gesture made by a publisher to one of his contributors. Perhaps he was asking her to talk about herself merely in order to avoid the trouble of making conversation. "My home's in Hawkinsville, Iowa," she began obediently, feeling that at heart he wouldn't care if she hailed from the Fiji Islands. "I'm just visiting my aunt in New York for a while."

"Oh, so your aunt lives here?"

"Yes, my mother's sister. But she's going South sometime in March, and I'll probably return to Hawkinsville. I—I really would like to stay in New York indefinitely."

"Why would you like to stay in New York?" Mr. Buchanan asked. "I should think it would be easier to write in a country town, away from all the hurrah. Besides, you're right in touch with a certain type of life which, judging from 'At Sea,' you're particularly capable of handling. Hawkinsville is a country town, isn't it?"

"I suppose that's what you'd call it, Mr. Buchanan," Mary replied, hating herself for the resentment that had crept into her voice. "The population's almost ten thousand." Then, with a chuckle, "In fact, it's been almost ten thousand for the past fifty years! Most of the boys leave for Saint Louis or Chicago to get positions as soon as they're finished with high school or college. Some of the girls marry and go away. A few new families dribble into town every year, and the men get employment at the leather factory. People die, babies are born, but the population remains the same."

The man finally looked at her. "That's interesting," he commented, and the faint lines around his mouth crinkled with amusement. "Tell me. What are the—ah—entertainments? What do people do all the time?"

"Well," Mary replied, warming under his half smile, "there's the little country club, three miles from town, and set high up on the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi. The men, and some of the women, play golf there during the summer, and every Saturday night there's a dinner dance with Swanson's orchestra from Burlington to furnish the music; and even though Art Swanson could never, in anyone's wildest moments, be termed a second Paul Whiteman, the music is good. Really, it is! Then, there are two movie houses, and often we get pictures that haven't even been released in Saint Louis yet. And, of course, the churches are very active, and there are any number of church dinners during the winter, with the women of the guild cooking and serving the food themselves."

"And darned good food, I bet it is!"

"Oh, is it! Fried chicken and cream gravy, and corn on the cob, in the summer, with great slabs of chocolate cake and home-made ice-cream. And in the winter, luscious ham, all coated with crisp, brown sugar and baked in wine, Boston baked beans, and loads and loads of tiny biscuits, fresh from the oven."

"Stop! You're making my mouth water! Lord! The people in those small towns know how to live!"

"In—more ways than one," Mary said tensely, her thoughts flashing back to her father and mother; a sudden wave of homesickness and pity assailing her. "At least, they know what Life is all about. They're closer to it, somehow, than people in the cities. Closer to Life—and Death—closer to each other. Sometimes, you get annoyed because everybody in town seems to know your innermost secrets—yet, on the other hand, you know that those very same people care—and care terribly when you're sick or dying, or in trouble."

Their cab was drawing up before the Lafayette, and Phillip Buchanan turned abruptly and faced her. "That is the kind of people you must write about!" he said. "That's the life you know. You were born to it. You were raised in it. You've been steeped in that atmosphere. Now, write about it!" And with an energetic jerk, he tugged open the door of the taxi.

The Lafayette was seething with activity. Smartly groomed women were lunching at "tables for two" with smartly groomed men. Larger tables, surrounded by males only, buzzed with laughter and conversation. At first, Mary thought perhaps she and Mr. Buchanan would have to find another place for their "spot of lunch," but the captain miraculously located a small table for them, decorated by three yellow jonquils in a bud vase, and plumped against a window.

"What sort of cocktail would you like, Miss Loring?" Phillip Buchanan asked, almost before he had succeeded in getting his long legs beneath the snowy cloth.

"None, thank you," Mary returned. "You see . . ."

"Fine!" the man replied. "Well, you don't mind watching me drink, do you? Have you decided what you'd like to eat?"

Mary glanced at the menu in her hand. "An Egg Benedict, I think, and endive salad."

"Egg Benedict and endive salad, Alphonse, for Miss Loring, and I'll have fillet mignon with sauce menuiere. Coffee, later." He glanced at his watch again. His life, thought Mary, seemed to be run on schedule. He had consulted that timepiece exactly five times in the past hour. "It's a quarter after one," he announced. "I'd better tell you what we have in mind for you, Miss Loring. Both Mr. Van Winkle and I are enthusiastic about 'At Sea.' The plot, of course, is not particularly new, but then, after all, no plot is. You attacked it from a fresh viewpoint, however, and we liked the manner in which you handled it. Now, we feel that a series of shorts, done in the same style, might be used by The National Weekly over a period of several months. Say, one every other week. And, in time, if they prove satisfactory, and click with our public, we will, of course, gradually increase the pay."

"I'll do my best, Mr. Buchanan," she said breathlessly. "I'll start in tomorrow. I—I think I have a plot in mind right now. And then, of course, you have 'Their Son.'"

"Yes. Van Winkle will give that a reading within a few days, if possible. We're practically deluged with scripts right now, but many of them are unsolicited, and I'm sure he'll give 'Their Son' some preference as far as the time element is concerned."

"Is there any particular treatment you . . . ?"

"Simply stick to writing about the type of life you know," Buchanan replied, cutting short her question.

He then attacked his steak and, for the next few minutes, completely ignored her existence Still resentful, she adhered to her vow of silence. Buchanan, however, didn't seem to notice the deficiency, and luncheon would probably have gone on indefinitely without further exchange of words, had it not been interrupted presently by a young man with an engaging smile, who spied them from an adjacent table, and came over to speak to Buchanan.

He was short and dark, with gray eyes that were serious yet friendly. "Hello, Phil," he said cordially, coming towards Buchanan with outstretched hand. "You're the very person I hoped to see today."

"Hello, Jim! Glad to see you! Miss Loring, this is Jim Ormsby."

Jim Ormsby! Could this stranger be Lelia's former husband, or were there any number of Jim Ormsbys in New York? "How do you do?" she returned.

"What's on your mind, Jim?" Phil Buchanan was asking. "Won't you sit down?"

"Thanks, no. I'm dashing off to keep an appointment. It's this, Phil—Paul Waring and Lorry Wood and I are running up to my place in Connecticut over the week-end, and we want you to make a fourth. Badminton at the club, you know, and plenty of Contract between drinks. How about it?"

"I think it's a swell idea, Jim. Count me in."

"Fine! I'll give you a ring tomorrow, and inform you on all the finer points of the situation! Good-by, Miss Loring"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

New Wash Materials Remind It's Time for Spring Sewing

By CHERIE NICHOLAS

AS A proper approach to the perennial spring sewing program that soon will be staged in countless households, we know of no gesture that will so inspire to hurry and get going as to take a day off and go fabric sight-seeing. We make the prediction that at just a mere glimpse of the new textiles with their refreshing departure from the old, in the way of texture, patternings and colorings, you will feel an urge stirring to cut and to baste and to sew.

In this day and age when wonders are being performed in the way of textures and weaves, it becomes absolutely imperative that the woman who would sew successfully must know materials. This is especially true in regard to wash fabrics that are a revelation as to what science is achieving in the way of non-shrinkage, color-fast-boil-proof tones and tints and in the way of weaves of entirely new origin. Consider for example the new spun rayon fabrics that are as lovely and exquisite in texture as imagination can conceive.

When you ask to see these fascinating new spun rayons take note of their marvelous colorings that are so refreshingly different from the usual run. Many of the beautiful hues and motifs for design are traced to fine Chinese porcelains that excel in subtle soft blues and canary yellows, lime greens, peach-bloom pinks and cherry blossom reds. You'll love these new wash fabrics that are so handsome they really do not look like washables, but they are and what's more they are treated to an anticrease process that greatly enhances them from the practical standpoint. Some of the smartest washable crepes combine the newest fabric (spun rayon) with one of the oldest (pure linen).

You can get these winsome spun rayon crepes in delectable monotones or in prints that are so lovely mere word pictures fail to describe them. On your fabric sight-seeing tour be on the lookout for prints that stylize a flight of snow white birds against a sky of peachbloom pink or a seashell motif on a lime green background and you will thus sense the charm and beauty of the new spun rayon crepes.

Softer to the touch than all wool, yet cozier than cotton by far is an imported material that looks like and feels like a million, yet it can be sent to wash with a carefree mind for the fabric has been sanforized-shrunk. See to the left in the picture a housecoat made of this new flannel (half wool, half cotton) which is lightweight as thistledown. This particular smart plaid fabric tailors to perfection.

To the right in the illustration unusual charm is expressed in a quaint dirndl dress of flowered cotton poplin—one of the dependable modern cottons in that it does not shrink out of fit when washed. It is trimmed with Czechoslovakian embroidery and buttons in authentic Czech design. Wear it over shorts and cummerbund when en route to active sports, or as a full-time daytime dress. Either way, it is perfect with its matching bonnet.

You will find a bolero costume made of gingham (faithful standby) much to your liking. Why not enter it on your sewing list, for this two-piece is easy to make, so why not look up a reliable pattern and have it in readiness to wear this spring with dainty blouses? The model centered in the group is in blue and white check. The skirt is flared for fullness. The long-sleeved bolero jacket has wide revers and exposes cuffs of white pique caught with large mother-of-pearl links. Matching gingham trims the rough straw sailor hat she has in her hand.

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Rebirth of Amber

It's amber jewelry you will be wearing if you are up to the moment in style. The revival of this familiar gem is important fashion news. The new amber jewelry reveals untold beauties. The colors range from golden yellow to rich antique mahogany tones. The lovely transparent quality of the stone is especially effective in the new floral designs. The leaves and foliage of many flowers are formed of delicately shaded or veined amber. In the picture a very up-to-date young woman enhances her gown with amber flower jewelry.

Petticoat, Tiered Frocks Real News

If you see a glimpse of lacy froufrou peeping from under her neat little afternoon dress of silk crepe, do not make the mistake of saying "Pardon me lady, your petticoat is showing." If you do milady is apt to airily reply, "Sure, that's the intention." Yes'm it's only too true, petticoats are in fashion and furthermore the so-termed petticoat dress that is causing so much excitement in fashion's realm is actually styled so as to reveal a tantalizing glimpse of its frill.

Another sensation on the dress program is the new flounced silhouette. Fashion is flouncing everything that will gracefully yield to flouncing. Daytime skirts rise tier upon tier done in a restrained way while soft afternoon and evening frocks are widely flounced in the good old-fashioned now very new-fashioned way.

Open Toes, Heels In New Footwear

The vogue of open toes and open heels has reached such a state that it will be difficult before many weeks to find even an Oxford which supplies good foot coverage. Shoe styles for spring have been placed on exhibition and indicate that pumps and Oxfords as well as sandals expose the toes and the back of the heels.

Protect Feet

Robust weather calls for rugged footwear.

Tips Picked Up in World Fashion Centers

Crowns of some of the newest hats are on the square.

Yellows are well worth watching, for they are much worn in sports accessories.

After the elaborate first hats of the season there is a demand for a simpler bonnet.

The new vogue for brown for both day and evening has been well received by smart women.

Slacks are slated for a big place in any wardrobe this coming season.

Attention is still very much centered on gloves, and the lengths vary from the very briefest to elbow lengths.

Suits for spring keep on coming in two colors, and in combination of plain and striped, checked, or plaid materials.

Floyd Gibbons'

ADVENTURERS' CLUB

HEADLINES FROM THE LIVES OF PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELF!

"The Iron Serpent"

HELLO EVERYBODY:

Well sir, we've had two or three yarns in this column about strong men who have been in danger of being crushed to death by huge snakes twenty or thirty feet long, but Jim Evrard of Brooklyn, N. Y., went up against the great-granddaddy of all the reptiles. Jim's snake was three hundred and sixty feet long. It was made of solid steel links ten and a half inches long and five inches wide. It was the great anchor chain of an ocean-going steamer—and when you get one of those babies wrapped around your neck, they're worse than any python or boa constrictor that ever lived.

It was on February 5, 1918, on the army cargo transport U. S. S. Hatteras that it happened. Jim Evrard had joined the navy as a radio operator in 1917, and here he was on the Hatteras, somewhere out in the Atlantic ocean.

The Hatteras had sailed a week or so before, from Hampton Roads, Va. A few days out of port she had run into a bad storm that had wrecked her steering gear and left her wallowing helplessly in mid-ocean. The captain had dropped both of the ship's three-ton anchors. They helped very little—but that's beside the point. The point is that those anchors were down. If they hadn't been, Jim would have had no adventure. He'd have won no ten-dollar bill. And we'd have had no story.

When Morning Came the Storm Subsided.

Once the anchors were down, they had to stay down until the storm was over. While the gale was raging, the ship pitched and rolled so violently that it would have been dangerous to try to pull them up. But

To our horror the chain was running wild.

on the morning that the storm subsided, the crew rigged an emergency gear and began to hoist them aboard.

That's where Jim Evrard comes into the story. Jim was a radio operator, but in a pinch, aboard ship, everybody turns to and lends a hand. And Jim was sent down into the chain lockers with a lad named Piercy and another lad named White, to lay anchor chain.

I guess that sort of calls for a word of explanation. The chain lockers on the Hatteras were a couple of rooms eight feet square, just below deck, up at the bow of the ship. They were used, of course, to stow the anchor chains in while they were not in use. Up on the deck, a big winch was hauling in the starboard anchor, and as the chain came in, it was passed through a hole in the deck, down into the chain locker.

Well, sir, if that chain were just allowed to lie in the locker any way it landed, it would tangle and snarl next time the anchor was dropped. It had to be laid in a neat coil as it came down, and that's what Jim, and Piercy, and White were doing down there that fateful February day that Old Lady Adventure had picked out to give three sailors the scare of their lives.

A Choppy Sea Made Footing Insecure.

By that time, all three of them were pretty tired. The chain, with its big ten and a half inch links, was heavy. The sea was still choppy, making their footing none too sure. But they worked away at the port chain until the coil rose high in the locker. Finally the chain stopped coming in. They could tell by the size of their coil that the anchor was up and out of the water and ready to be heaved on deck.

The three lads had stopped work, and leaning, each in a different corner of the cramped locker, bracing themselves against the pitching and tossing of the ship.

"We were waiting for orders to go back up on deck," says Jim, "but the order was slow in coming. Imagine our surprise when we saw the anchor chain begin to pay out again. It moved slowly at first, and then quite rapidly. After several seconds of watching it increased its speed, we realized to our horror that the chain was running wild!"

And those lads had good reason to be horrified. Great loops of heavy chain began whipping in long swings, striking the sides of the locker. Faster and faster it went, and wider and wider were the loops that lashed out on all sides.

"It was swinging with terrific force," says Jim. "If it hit us, it would break our bones like cardboard, or crush our skulls as if they were egg shells. And there we stood, not daring to move out of our corners—wondering when the flying mesh of steel was going to whip in after us—wondering when a chance lurch of the ship was going to throw us off balance out into the path of that whirling mass of metal.

The Noise of the Links Was Like a Death Knell.

"The din was terrific. Our prison was small, and we could feel the wind on our faces as the chain flew by. In wider and wider arcs it swung. The links, as they hit the walls, sounded like the beats of a death knell to all of us. I wanted to faint, but I didn't dare. Powerless to do anything at all, I kept my mind on the one thing that might save me—standing right where I was in the scant protection the corner of the room afforded me."

Loop after loop whipped its way around the little locker and spun on up through the hole in the top. Only a few more of those loops to go now. Then they'd all be safe. Jim watched those last few loops go, and breathed a prayer of thanksgiving. They WERE safe. Over in their own corners stood White and Piercy, chalky-faced, but unhurt. Then they called to the officers up on deck, who by that time, doubted if any of them were alive.

The cause of the trouble, they had found, had been Old Man Neptune himself. A roll of the ship had thrown over the anchor chock, and another roll had caused the engineer to slip and throw the anchor winch out of gear.

"The anchor had to be raised again," says Jim, "but we weren't sent down to lay the chain. The next three men had better luck than we did."

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Coming of the Punch Bowl

The punch bowl succeeded the bowl of wassail which was the nightly ritual of the Saxon warriors in early England. It was their custom to drink from a brimming bowl passed from hand to hand with the salutation, "Wes hal" (Your health). Later the wassail bowl was used at great feasts only: All Saint's day, Twelfth night, and especially at Yuletide, when, filled to the brim, it was passed from the lord at the head of the table to the wandering minstrels at the foot.

Breadfruit Guarded

In Samoa, where the breadfruit is so important, a native would plait some coconut leaflets in the form of a sea-pike and hang one or more such effigies from the trees. No native would dare steal from a tree so guarded, for if he did, a sea-pike would mortally wound him the next time he went fishing.

Montreal Largest Inland Port

Montreal is the largest city in Canada and the largest inland port in the world.

Sixty Days to Make Hat

In Jamaica, British West Indies, it takes about 60 days to produce one native hat. The palm, from which these rakish-looking headpieces are made, flourishes on Jamaica's north shore. The tree grows wild and in great abundance, is about eight feet tall, and has broad, fan-like leaves. Young leaves, fine in texture and almost white when dried, are selected for the best hats. Cut when green, they are spread out to dry and bleach, as linen is laid in the sun.

Bears Good Fishermen

Bears feed chiefly on small rodents, fruits, berries, bulbous roots, grubs, ants and fish. They are expert fishermen who take up their positions at the side of a rippling mountain stream, spot their prey and swipe it out of the water with their paws.

Warmth Speeds Up Nerves

It has been found that nerve currents are speeded by warmth. Chemicals also affect body electricity.