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Courting of Cap'n Hornepayne

By JAMES PAUX

(© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.) (WNU Service)

CAP'N HORNEPAYNE was worried. He was on his way to see Clarissy Martin, the schoolma'am, and for a horny-handed seaman he was facing a delicate situation. He intended to pop the fatal question that would probably take her away from her duties as school teacher to an obscure fishing village.

For more times than he cared to remember, Cap'n Hornepayne had intended to pop the question, but everytime he tried to do so, something inside of him seemed to reach up and get a strangle hold on his voice. This time, he vowed, was going to be different. He was carrying a talisman that had proved itself lucky on other occasions. It was a small silver horseshoe that he had won in some long-forgotten contest.

There are a great many people who believe in the lucky properties attributed to horseshoes. Clarissy Martin belonged to that class. She had a worn horseshoe nailed over her kitchen door.

Dusk was setting in rapidly and a light glowed from a front window of the schoolma'am's cottage, as Cap'n Hornepayne come abreast of it.

Drawing a deep breath, he knocked firmly on the door, believing all the while that his heart was making a louder echo with its rapid thumping. A short pause, then the door was opened wide.

"Evenin', Cap'n Hornepayne."

"Evenin', Miss Martin," replied the captain, fumbling with his cap.

Giving him a quick, sincere smile of greeting, the schoolma'am led him into the tiny parlor. She was, as the captain would have expressed it, "all primped up."

Conversation was desultory. The scanty news concerning the village was soon exhausted. The weather came in for its share of comment. Fishing operations were discussed, but that, too, soon languished. It was then that Clarissy Martin suggested that they sit on the veranda for awhile. The captain agreed with alacrity.

They found the two chairs placed in convenient position. The night was mild, shadows were deepening and the atmosphere was conducive to amatory conversation.

Surreptitiously, he slipped a hand into his coat pocket and like Aladdin with his magic lantern, rubbed his fingers over the horseshoe, fervently praying for some loop hole that would offer him a chance to swing the conversation into the channel he desired.

Perhaps not altogether innocent of his intentions, Clarissy Martin gave him the long-awaited chance as she casually inquired: "How is your house comin' along, Cap'n? I remember you sayin' that you only had to put a few more touches to finish it off."

Cap'n Hornepayne gave a gusty sigh of relief as those blessed words bridged the gulf that had been gradually widening between them. The horseshoe was not failing him. He knew he was on the right course now. He edged his chair closer to the schoolma'am's.

"The little house is comin' along fine," he told her, with renewed confidence. "When I brought the schooner in this last trip, I come in with the finest catch o' the season. I got nice pay for it, too. O' course I salted most o' the money away with the rest I had, but I kep' enough out to put the last touches to the house. Now she's finished and standin' ship-shape, ready to weather any storm."

"Don't you find it a bit lonesome livin' alone like you do, Cap'n Hornepayne?"

"Aye, it does get a bit lonely at times," the captain agreed. Drawing a deep breath he plunged into the opening offered by the schoolma'am's question. "O' course, it ain't my intention to live alone all the time. I been thinkin' lately that a man sooner or later ought to find himself a wife an' settle down some. I been wonderin', too . . . well . . . ye see it's this way. Ye seemed interested in the house an' I thought that . . . that ye might sort o' like to take over the tiller . . .?"

The question was out at last. The captain was on tenterhooks as he waited for the fateful answer. Then, as sweetly as the tolling of a church bell, the schoolma'am's words fell upon the still air: "Captain, that would make me the happiest person alive."

"Chrissy, gal!" the captain cried hoarsely.

In the most convenient way imaginable the captain found her head resting on his arm, and in the same instant he was imprinting a kiss upon her willing lips, with a tenderness that one would never expect to find in a bluff, sea-faring captain.

If anyone had been watching Clarissy Martin early the next morning, they would have seen a peculiar sight. She was standing directly in front of two chairs she and Cap'n Hornepayne had occupied the previous evening. Her hands were clasped together and there was an enraptured light.

If anyone had been close enough, they would have seen that what she was looking at was a horseshoe nailed to the cottage wall under the cottage roof . . . a worn horseshoe that formerly had hung over the kitchen door.



Iceberg

By JANNIS PARKER

(© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.) (WNU Service)

LOU and Harrison were engaged; and Lou's heart was heavy for Conchita, the dancer, was doing what Lou herself had longed to do: break up the i[illegible]

Even before Conchita had undulated into the picture Lou had been anxious. For instance, at seven on Valentine's evening Harrison, tall, lean, and with a frigid demeanor, had arrived to escort her to a friend's party. He had stooped, his kiss the quick, detached sort of caress that filled her with anxiety.

"You look woe-be-gone. Have I overlooked something fearfully important, little sentimentalist?" he had asked.

On the correct finger of Lou's left hand a gorgeous emerald twinkled. Harrison had asked her to marry him.

"I'm just being silly," Lou had smiled wanly.

He had pinched her cheek. This was not the attitude Lou wanted. She didn't want him to chuckle. She wanted him to feel stirred, intent. She wanted his clear eyes to glow. But they were two frozen pools.

"Harrison, why can't you be a little more . . . oh, I don't know." Her hands had fallen limply to her sides.

He had sought to seal her lips with another calm, undemonstrative kiss. "I'm not a movie actor, you know, Lou."

"Who asked you to act?" Lou had demanded. "I want you to mean it." The color had come tinging into her cheeks.

"I'm a frigid cuss, I know. Yet you and my law practice are my world."

Adoring every fair crispy curling hair in his head, she rebuked herself. He was marvelous and she loved him. She mustn't expect a typically legal mind to express poignant romance.

Midge, whose party they attended, wanted to charter a cab and see how the rest of the world lived.

Never will Lou forget that night. At first she was an inwardly seething torrent of excitement. Then her heart was being eaten out for she had seen Conchita's burning Latin eyes were bringing out fascinated lights from impenetrable Harrison's.

The cafe was dingy. There had been a raucous clamor, but apparently the regular patrons felt chagrined for they surveyed the beautifully attired visitors, snorted, and lapsed into a sullen silence. The proprietor, however, rubbed his pudgy hands delightedly and whispered excitedly to his star performer.

"Conchita, we have ver' swell customers tonight. You will dance your best."

"Conchita always dances superbly, peeg!" That lady snapped her lacquered fingers. "Are not our regular customers more than these pork who come only to jeer?"

The Mexican orchestra throbbed in a low, pulsing rhythm. With a clack of her castanets Conchita, a living flame, stood poised in the middle of the floor. Professional that she was, her long sloe eyes wandered heavy-lidded over her audience, picking a worthy one to whom to dedicate her dance. The drowsiness of her eyes vanished as they lighted on the cool, flawless features of Harrison.

Lou's devoted little heart sank. The rhumba rhythms beat inflictingly on her conservative ears. With a catch in her throat she had to admit she had never seen Harrison so stimulated.

The whirling, insinuating dance halted abruptly. The dancer pressed a long sweet kiss on her vivid fingertips, blew it straight to Harrison, and tossed to him the rose which had nestled in her inky hair.

"Harrison feels shaken," observed Midge. "He's trembling like a leaf."

Lou was trembling, too. She dared not lift her hurt, bewildered eyes.

Nightly Harrison frequented the cafe. Lou, shaken almost beyond endurance, lay between cool sheets and prayed, not for her own forlorn heart, but that splendid man and brilliant attorney that he was, he might not be horribly uprooted.

Then she summoned her frail courage and went to the place herself. She left, pale, trembling, but contentedly wiping her red-rimmed eyes while Conchita's gay laugh bounded after her.

That night, steadfast love seeping from his eyes, Harrison took Lou gently in his arms, then kissed her quivering mouth almost roughly in his fervency.

"Lou darling, let's get married right away!"

In his sturdy embrace Lou felt exalted. Her happiness welled over. Why should she tell him Conchita had admitted she was only playing with him? It would make him feel tainted, cheapened.

"He one big ice-berg," Conchita had flaunted. "Conchita have no place for ice-bergs."

"But you've melted him!" Lou had insisted.

Conchita had stood, her fists dug into her shapely hips. "When ice-berg is melted, what is it? Big puddle. Conchita have no use for puddles either."

So Lou thanked her; for she assigned to Conchita what she felt she had not been able to do for herself, since ice cannot melt ice.

As the sweetness of her clinging to him, and the clean scent of her hair filled him, Harrison decided not to tell her of Conchita. How he had recognized the woman as a missing witness in one of his cases. This lovely, dainty Lou he adored. Why fill her innocent mind with a sordid case of a cabaret dancer?

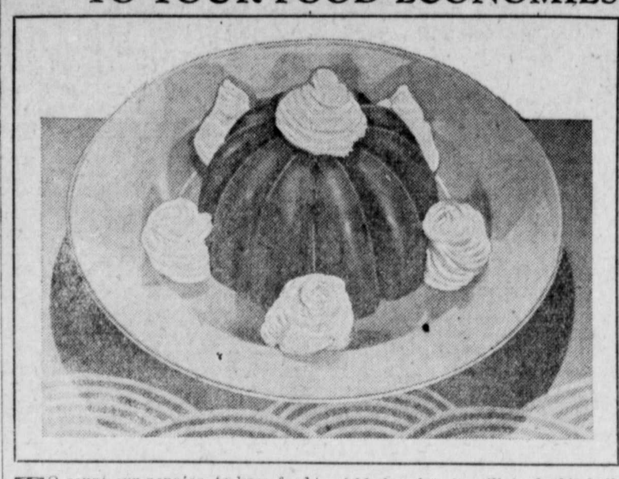
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Chocolate Bread Pudding

1½ squares unsweetened chocolate, cut in pieces
3 cups milk
1 cup sugar
½ teaspoon salt
3 eggs, slightly beaten
1 teaspoon vanilla
1½ cups ¼-inch cubes stale bread

Add chocolate to milk in double boiler; heat. When chocolate is melted, beat with rotary egg beater until blended. Combine sugar, salt, eggs. Add chocolate mixture gradually, stirring vigorously. Add vanilla. Place bread in greased baking dish. Pour mixture over it. Place dish in pan of hot water. Bake in moderate oven (350° F.) 50 to 60 minutes, or until pudding is firm. Serve hot with hard sauce, or cold with cream. Serves 6.

Berkshire Pudding

3 squares unsweetened chocolate, cut in pieces
2 cups milk
¾ cup sugar
6 tablespoons flour
¼ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla

Add chocolate to milk in double boiler and heat. When chocolate is melted, beat with rotary egg beater until blended. Combine sugar, flour, salt. Add small amount of chocolate mixture, stirring vigorously. Return to double boiler. Cook until thickened, stirring constantly. Cook 20 to 25 minutes longer, stirring occasionally. Add vanilla. Chill. Serve with cream. Serves 6.

Chocolate Fruit Pudding

3 squares unsweetened chocolate, cut in pieces
2 cups milk
1½ tablespoons granulated gelatin
½ cup cold water
1 cup sugar
⅛ teaspoon salt
½ cup seedless raisins
½ cup dates, seeded and finely cut
¼ cup walnut meats, broken
1 teaspoon vanilla

Add chocolate to milk; heat in double boiler. When chocolate is melted, beat with rotary egg beater until blended. Soak gelatin in cold water, add sugar and salt; mix well. Add to chocolate mixture; stir until gelatin is thoroughly dissolved. Strain. Chill until slightly thickened, stirring occasionally. Add fruit, nuts, vanilla. Beat well; turn into mold. Chill until firm. Unmold. Garnish with sweetened whipped cream. Serves 8.

Serve these desserts the next time you have company—they will win compliments from your guests.

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If this bile is not flowing freely, your food doesn't digest. It just decays in the bowels. Gas bloats up your stomach. You have a thick, bad taste and your breath is foul, skin often breaks out in blemishes. Your head aches and you feel down and out. Your whole system is poisoned.

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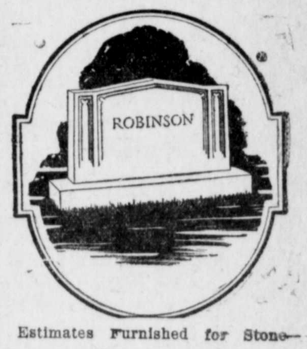
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