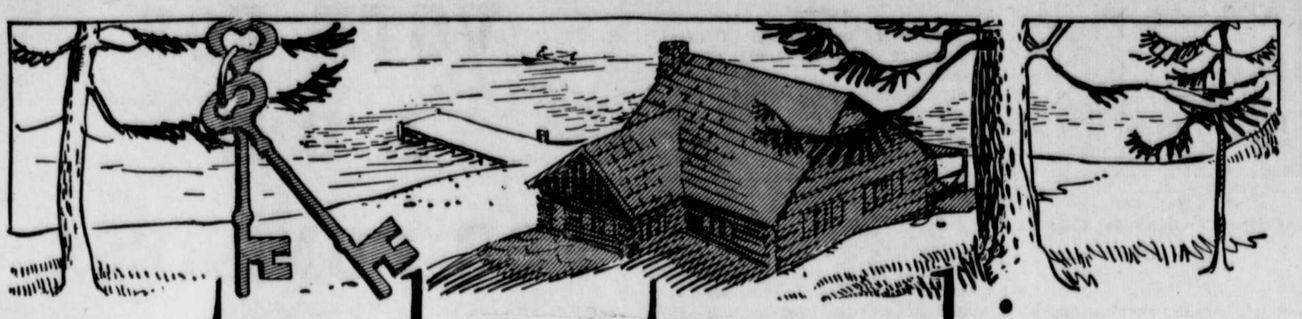

two keys to a cabin

BY LIDA LARRIMORE

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THE STORY THUS FAR

Charming, wealthy Gabriella (Gay for short) Graham, engaged to Todd Janeway, returns to a cabin in the Maine woods accompanied by a friend, Kate Oliver. The idea of a stay in the cabin occurred to her when she received a key to it following the death of her godfather, Uncle John Lawrence. The two girls notice that someone is living in the cabin. Kate suspects that Gay knows the identity of the mysterious occupant. The mystery man returns. He is John Houghton, a young doctor whom Gay had known in previous years. Immediately aggressive, Gay asks him by what right he is in the cabin. His right, she finds, is greater than her own. He, too, possesses a key, but more than that, is heir to it from his Uncle John, Gay's godfather. Gay is high handed with him, and he states courteously that he will leave. Looking at him in the doorway, her old feelings return. She knows that he is more necessary to her than is Todd Janeway, the man she is to marry. Gay asks John to reconsider his decision to leave. The next morning brings a different feeling, and John decides to remain for his vacation—one more week. The night before Gay and Kate are to return home to New York John gets an urgent request to call at a nearby farm. Gay accompanies him while he cares for the patient. Returning to the cabin at a late hour, John stops the car. He tells Gay that he loves her, and she admits that he is necessary to her happiness. Meanwhile, worried by their absence, Kate has called Todd Janeway in New York. She knows that Gay and John feel a strong attachment for each other, and wants Todd to come to Maine where he can talk to Gay.

CHAPTER V—Continued

—8—

Sympathies were treacherous. John and Gay looked at Kate as though she had given them a reprieve from death. Seeing the gratitude and affection for her shining in Gay's face, in John's, she felt with uncomfortable sharpness that unjustified sense of guilt. She walked to the icebox, stooped, jerked open the door. She had been right to call Todd last night. But knowing that he was now, at this moment, on his way to the lake, was no longer the sustaining relief it had been. She felt like a traitor. She felt as though she should be taken out to the clearing behind the cabin, stood up against the woodshed, and shot.

The long low roadster sped down a hill, across a bridge in a swampy hollow, up a gently rising grade. Todd Janeway, his blond head bare, his body slumped with fatigue against the leather upholstery, his eyes smarting from the sting of the wind, glanced at the speedometer. Better take it easy, he thought, slackening the rushing speed of the car.

Lucky he'd left word at home where he was going last night. He'd expected to hear from her. He wouldn't have been surprised if she'd walked in on Tory Wales' party. A week, she'd said, and Gay kept her promises. But it had been Kate who called. She'd said Gay didn't know she was calling. The telephone connection was bad. He hadn't been able to hear very well. When he'd learned that Kate wanted him to come, he'd concentrated on getting the directions she gave him fairly clear in his mind.

Gay—! Steady, Janeway. The thing to do was to concentrate on getting there. He'd know soon enough what the trouble was. Or maybe there was no trouble. Kate hadn't made her reason for his coming very clear. Maybe Gay wanted him to drive them back to New York. The trip up in Kate's coupe couldn't have been too comfortable. That was something to tie to. But Kate had told him Gay didn't know she was calling—

He was too weary, now, to think clearly. Perhaps she'd just been tired, as she said, worn out with preparations for the wedding, exhausted by all the demands upon her vitality and patience. She'd wanted it, though. He'd been a little surprised, last June when the engagement had been announced, that she had agreed to the hue and cry both families raised for a wedding. She'd told him she wanted everything to be right and proper and in accordance with tribal traditions. He'd been surprised but touched and pleased, though he hated the fuss. He hadn't realized, then, that she was substituting the symbols of marriage for something that was lacking, the one thing that made it right. That was before he had watched her grow more and more remote, not sharing her thoughts with him, making excuses for not being alone with him, shutting him off behind a wall of light mockery through which he could see her but could not touch her, not actually, not the Gay herself, whom he loved.

This must be Northfield. Better ask directions from here. He pulled in at a filling-station at the side of the road. A gangling boy with buck teeth and a shock of sunburned hair appeared in response to the bleat of his horn.

"Can you tell me how to get to the Lawrence camp?" Todd asked.

The boy was lost in admiration for the car.

"How far do I follow this road?" Todd asked brusquely.

"Oh, eyah. 'Bout a mile and a half. You'll see the name on the mail-box."

"Thanks."

Todd tossed a coin to the boy, released the brake and pressed the accelerator.

A mail-box. Todd slackened the speed of the car. A figure detached itself from the vines and underbrush at the side of the road. A long arm waved in greeting. Kate!

"Hello!" he called and brought the car to a stop. No other figure to greet him. He felt his heart thud painfully. "Where's Gay?"

Kate stood in the road beside him. "Out on the lake," she said. Kate's expression was composed. She looked quite natural, a little tired, perhaps, but serene. "Fishing," she added. "You took a time getting here."

"I was arrested." His spirits lifted. Kate looked as he was accustomed to see her, lanky and rakish in a tweed skirt and green wool blouse, her expression a characteristic blending of wry humor and casual friendliness. He opened the door. "Get in, Kate. You look like a slightly sardonic wood-nymph. How's your generator, my friend?"

"My what?" she sat beside him and he turned the car into the lane.

He laughed. "I heard, a few minutes ago, that you'd had trouble with it."

"That boy with the teeth!" Watching her in a side-long glance, he saw her expression change. She looked, though he could scarcely credit it, as if she was about to burst into tears.

"It isn't that bad, is it?" he asked but the laughter had gone out of her voice.

"It's as bad as can be," Kate said with difficulty.

"Is Gay ill? Has she been hurt?"

"Worse than that."

He stopped the car in the lane.

"What is it? What has happened?"

She turned to him, her face working queerly. "I meant to break it to you gently," she burst out. "I've been sitting out there by that mail-box for hours thinking of what I should say. There isn't any way to say it except to tell you the truth and I'd rather be chopped up and thrown to the wolves. I shouldn't have called you last night."

"Why shouldn't you have called me?"

"Because it's none of my business. Yes, it is. I love her and I know it's all wrong."

"What's all wrong?"

"Gay has fallen in love," Kate said wildly. "He was here when we came."

"Who was here?"

"John Houghton, Dr. Lawrence's nephew. Do you remember him at Gay's debutante party? Nice looking. Dark and rangy."

"I remember." He slumped back behind the wheel. "Did she come here to meet him?" he asked.

"No. He just happened to be here. The long arm of coincidence." She gave a crack of nervous laughter. "Don't ever say anything is impossible. But she came here because she's been in love with him since the summer they spent here with Dr. Lawrence six years ago. Would you have thought Gay was romantic? She's fairly wallowing in it. Little fool!"

"You aren't very convincing, Kate." He smiled wearily. "Do you like him?"

"I do. That's the trouble. He is attractive. And so in love with her. But it's all wrong."

"Why is it—wrong?" he asked quietly.

She glanced at him in relief and admiration.

"Did you expect me to go melodramatic?" he said. "I'm afraid that's a little out of my line. Why did you call me?"

"I hoped we might get her away from here—in time."

"And there isn't—time? It's too late, now?"

"I'm afraid so. Last night—" She hesitated for a moment then plunged on. "They haven't told me anything. But the way they act is enough. I've tried all day to tell them you were coming. I couldn't. I feel like a traitor until I think of—Todd, what do they think of all this at home?"

"It's been pretty awful. Funny, though—None of that seems important—now."

CHAPTER VI

—

In the hidden inlet the sunset dimmed to a honey-colored dusk. The canoe, moored beneath low hanging branches, was motionless. The wind in the pine trees made a whispering sound.

"It's like listening to a sea-shell," Gay said. Her head, resting against John's shoulder, lifted so that their eyes met and held.

"You're crying," he said.

"Am I?"

"Why do you cry?"

"Because I'm so blissful. Because sometime you may die or I may." She laughed softly. "I don't know."

"Darling! Sweet! Are you sure?"

"Oh John, yes!"

"It might be because we're here. The lake, the cabin—This is the setting that's most—" He broke off with a diffident laugh, then continued. "The setting that's most—becoming to me. Will you love me in—"

"—September as I do in May."

"I meant if—when we're together in New York?"

"Oh darling, yes! In Venice or Shanghai or—Baltimore."

"Why Baltimore?"

"We're going to live there."

"Oh, are we?"

"You've been telling me for a week that you want to do research at Johns Hopkins. Well—?"

"You're a practical young lady, aren't you? I haven't been able to

She'd told him she wanted everything to be right.

think beyond this moment, now. I may not be able to get in at Hopkins."

"I think you will. My grandfather gave the hospital an endowment. He had an operation there. It can be arranged."

His arms relaxed. His head turned. She gave a little cry.

"I know what you're thinking. Oh, John, don't! Why shouldn't I help you? I love you. Everything will be not for you nor for me but for us."

He turned to her. "I'm sorry," he said. "It's just that—I can't believe any of it—you, us, being here. I can't realize that there's no need to fight against loving you. I have for so long."

"It doesn't matter, does it? There aren't any words. Just being here with you—I feel—"

"How do you feel?"

"Safe and peaceful."

"Peaceful?"

The honey-colored dusk paled, deepened to the mauve of twilight. Darkness fell. One by one the stars pricked a brightened pattern across the sky. Gay stirred in John's arms.

"What?" he asked.

"We should go back, I suppose. Kate has probably gotten supper."

"Supper?"

She laughed. "I'm not hungry either." Her face, as he watched, became grave. "We'll have to tell Kate."

"I don't think Kate needs to be told."

"She has something on her mind, certainly. She's been cross all day."

"Kate doesn't like me."

"Oh, no, John. It isn't that. She's thinking of the fuss there'll be at home."

"Aren't you?"

"I haven't been."

"I am. Do you want me to go with you? I should be in Portland day after tomorrow. But if it would help—"

"It wouldn't. You aren't used to cataclysms. I am." She sighed, then smiled and pressed closer to him. "Don't think of it now. Let's keep this time for ourselves. It's going to be all right. Don't think. Just love me."

"Gay—" he said barely audibly.

"Yes—?"

"I wanted to hear your voice. I felt as though you had gone."

"I'm here."

"Don't leave me." He dropped his hand gently upon her head.

"I can't leave you." She caught his hand, pressed it against her cheek. "I'm part of you."

Darkness lay over the landing. He stepped out and fastened the tie-rope. Bending, he took her hands to pull her up to the planking beside him. His arms went around her, held her there close against his breast.

"I can't let you go."

"Let's stay here."

"Oh, Gay, if we could—!"

"It's going to be all right. Nothing can spoil it, except ourselves. We must be very careful."

"You're so lovely. I can't think when I'm with you like this. What you say—That's not very flattering. I meant, I just hear your voice. I've loved you so long, so hopelessly—"

"Not hopelessly now."

"I can't believe it."

"We'll go in and tell Kate." Her voice was gay and confident. "That will help you to believe."

"I'm afraid of Kate. I'm afraid to go in."

"Silly. I'll hold your hand tightly. Like this."

They walked, hands joined, up the path from the landing to the cabin. As he opened the porch door for her, she halted.

"Someone is here!" She dropped his hand.

The windows were raised. Through the screening came a murmur of voices inside the cabin. Gay took a few steps away from him, glanced in, then turned. In the light flooding through the window he saw that her face was grave and startled.

"Who—" The question caught in his throat. He took a step.

"Todd is here," she said and was silent.

He caught her arm, drew her close to him.

"Gay," he asked, "you're all mine?"

Her face relaxed. She smiled up at him.

"All yours," she said.

Gay took a cigarette from a box on the table. Todd, seated in a chair beside the hearth, snapped a lighter. John, standing, half leaning against the chimney, struck a match Both made a movement toward her.

"Thank you, but never mind." Her bright strained glance went from one to the other. She rose from the couch. "I'll do it my way. They taste better." She held the cigarette over the lamp chimney until its tip glowed red. "Do you remember, Todd? I learned that trick at Tory Wales' camp, the week-end we were there and a storm cut off the electricity."

"Tory knows plenty of tricks." Todd sat back in his chair. "By the way, she's going to marry her Englishman."

"Do you hunt here?" Todd asked John, breaking a lengthening silence.

"Not often, now," John replied civilly. "I used to when I was in school. That head there on the wall was my first trophy."

"It's a good one." Todd rose, walked across the room to examine the deer head on the wall. John joined him. They talked of hunting, diffidently at first and then with increasing interest.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Economist Forecasts Age Vs. Youth Struggle

Dr. Frank S. Dickinson, University of Illinois economist, foresees the approach of a class struggle between age and youth.

He said in an address recently that the "war of the pensionnaires" would unfold as a problem "far more demanding" than the oft-discussed conflict between capital and labor.

Dr. Dickinson said the decreasing birth rate and the increasing life span were causes behind the "struggle of classes in America." But he said he does not expect the struggle to become critical until 1980, when, he estimated, there will be 25,000,000 persons in the United States more than 65 years of age.

He visioned possible results of what he predicted would be "the greatest cultural and social change since the fall of Rome" as follows:

Pension-taxation claiming one-fourth the income of workers and employers.

Destruction of the two major political parties.

Control by the "hand that rocks the rocking-chair."

Substitution of "votocracy" for democracy, with one of every four voters over the 65-year mark.

Sportlight

by GRANTLAND RICE

NOW that a new baseball season is blooming again, there are possibly a number of clients who would like to be carried from the present into the closing days of September. The main purpose of this quick voyage will be to see the standings of the clubs on closing day—not opening day.

Here is your correspondent's surge into the future, as the future looks:

AMERICAN LEAGUE

No. 1—New York Yankees, by a much closer margin.

No. 2—Boston Red Sox, with a fighting chance.

No. 3—Cleveland Indians, with Bob Feller.

No. 4—Detroit Tigers, the power-house tribe.

No. 5—Chicago White Sox, may finish fourth.

No. 6—Washington Senators, slightly improved.

No. 7—Philadelphia Athletics, still on green side.

No. 8—St. Louis Browns, in the old homestead.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

No. 1—St. Louis Cardinals, by an eyelash.

No. 2—Cincinnati Reds, just about as good.

No. 3—Brooklyn Dodgers, improved over last year.

No. 4—Chicago Cubs, due for better luck.

No. 5—Pittsburgh Pirates, may finish higher.

No. 6—New York Giants, hardly ready for long route.

No. 7—Boston Bees, not enough punch.

No. 8—Philadelphia Phillies, the day's best bet.

How It Figures

The Yankees have been good enough to win going away, by killing margins year after year, and if they are slipping so are the Rockies. They have the pitching and the punch, are a great defensive team, have all needed replacements, have youth and experience.

The Red Sox will be stouter challengers. Give them Dickey and you'd see more trouble. But who is going to give them Dickey?

Bill Dickey

Cleveland should finish third with Bob Feller facing probably his greatest year.

Sheer power should carry Detroit into fourth place. It will be a rough outfit for any set of pitchers to face. Quite a bit here will depend on Gehringer's condition, one of the great ball players of all time.

Jimmy Dykes may swing his White Sox into the first division, but it will take a gallant thrust to accomplish this.

Mr. Mack's Athletics are still an uncertain quantity. He has some good young talent, but it still needs more seasoning. His team may move up a notch, but I can't see them much higher than the seventh notch.

The Browns will be a better ball club. But they still have a long way to go.

The Older League

Conditions in the National are much looser, much more tangled and uncertain than they are in the American.

The Cardinals and Reds are close to a tossup. Bill McKechnie needs much more help for his two star pitchers than he got last year. Derringer and Walters are two of the best in baseball, but Thompson, Whitey Moore and Vander Meer, plus some rookie, must come to their aid.

The Cardinals, a young team last year, came from 14 games back after a slow start to make a pennant bid in late September. You must admit they have been none too hot this spring. But a big league race is something different.

If they all pile in and give the best they have, the net result should be enough to win. They have a strong combination of youth and experience in their pitching staff—and they have Mize and Medwick.

I can't figure any other pennant possibilities from the other six clubs. Brooklyn, Chicago and Pittsburgh should be well bunched.

There is little to choose here. Frisch will make the Pirates dangerous. I still like the rating I suggested above.

I can't figure the Giant infield getting any too far. Nor the Giant outfield. The Giants may get away nicely. They are quite apt to do so. But I don't believe they can hold any hot pace after June or July. There are too many weak spots on Terry's club—too many fading veterans.

Anything can happen in this league for the first few weeks. After that I expect to see the Reds and Cardinals gradually pull away—not too far, but far enough to carry one of these teams into another World Series.

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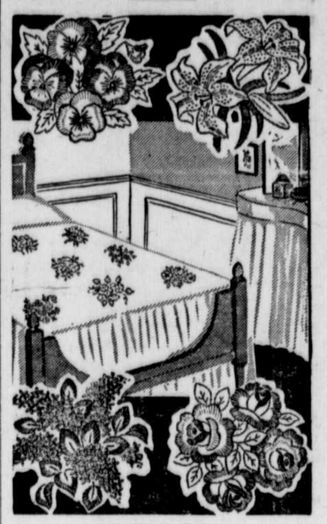

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Flaw Remains

He who is false to present duty breaks a thread in the loom, and will find the flaw when he may have forgotten its cause.—Henry Ward Beecher.

WHY SHOULDN'T I STEAL HIM FROM YOU IF I CAN?

I gave her my best, but—*my sister hated me.*

Maybe it was because we were only half-sisters. Our mothers were different; as different as we were ourselves. But, I had promised our father on his deathbed that I would see that Gladys got everything until she was old enough to look out for herself.

I was faithful to that promise. Gladys was beautiful, popular—and in spite of my efforts—wild. And she envied me the man I loved. Yet she might have found real happiness, but— ★ ★ ★

Maybe you, yourself, are in the position of Jane Kent, or maybe you know some one who is. How would you work out this human problem?

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True Story

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