Kathleen Norris Says:

The Stepmother's Duty Is to—Wait

(Bell Syndicate—WNU Service.)

The little thing seems to have an uncanny instinct for making trouble; if her father starts to talk to me, she must go around the table and climb into his lap.

By KATHLEEN NORRIS

STEPMOTHER

A newly married girl comes to Kathleen Norris for advice on a vital problem: her husband had a daughter by his first wife from whom he was separated by death. The little girl is almost unmanageable, putting a continual strain on a normally happy relationship between the young woman and her husband. Kathleen Norris analyzes this problem and tells the young wife how it can be solved.

EVERY marriage is a separate problem and a separate lifework. June brides might as well get that truth through their exquisitely waved young heads right here and now.

If wedding vows were for six months or one year nothing in the new life would seem so serious. Jean would remind her dear old friends in a laughing aside that "after Christmas" she would be free for bridge and lunches and long evenings of gossip again! John would be more lover-like than even in engagement days because so soon he must lose this dear little affectionate companion.

But both know that marriage is a long-term contract. Unless things really go wrong Jean and John will be together when Jean is a wrinkled little old lady, and John's teeth and hair and eyes have all been artificially reinforced. Fifty years! At any age that seems a long, long time, and at 27 and 22 it sounds like the clang of a jail door.

Right Start Important.

That's why it is so important to start right, with a good heroic mixture of unselfishness, silence, self-control, humor. That's why it pays to sacrifice a good many things, to put the family into second place, to give up intimate chattering old friends, and girlhood's habits of reading books until the dinner is actually announced, or nibbling candy so that one doesn't want dinner, or coming in late of an afternoon, or yawning at breakfast, or forgetting toast until it burns, or making mild jokes at John's expense. These things don't sound important, but like every other business, marriage has got to be built upon a sound foundation of mutual respect and consideration, as well as upon young love, and like every other trifle in the beginning, these trifles have a horrifying fashion of growing strong and menacing if they are let grow.

Jean Davis, married last Christmas, writes me of her special problem, and spatters the beautifully written and expressed letter with tears.

A Five-Year-Old Problem.

"I'm 24 and Rod's 37," says the letter. "He's stunning, and I'm not pretty. He's rich, and I was his office secretary. His people all have homes on the lake, in summer; my father has an agency for a patent oven device. 'She did pretty well for herself,' everyone said, when I married Rod.

"And so I did, in everything that affects him and myself. We are ideally mated, ideally happy. Or we would be, except for Doris. Doris is his daughter, five years old. Her mother died when she was born, and two aunts and a grandmother have had her since. Rod wants her with us now, and for his sake I am glad to have her.

"I've always liked children, always gotten along with them. But I never saw a child like this one. She is a pale, determined little girl, completely spoiled. Everything causes a fight, everything causes a scene. She will wear a blue dress; she won't wear her white shoes; she won't take a bath, or when she's in the tub she won't get out.

A Constant Battle.

"The little thing seems to have an uncanny instinct for making trouble; if her father starts to talk to me, she must go around the table and climb into his lap. She isn't affectionate, but she can stir him so with wistful references to 'my own Mummy' that his heart melts toward her. Every week-end she spends with her grandmother and aunts, and every Monday she comes back completely demoralized, with some good reason for not going to school.

"My own hope has always been for a houseful of children. But yesterday Rod said that it hurt him to think of anyone ever making Doris feel second. If ours could be a boy, he said, it might be different. But if it was a little sister it might upset her psychologically. At least, he said, that's what one of his sisters told him.

"I honestly think Rod would be happier if we left the child with his mother. But he hates to admit it. And so the screaming and crying go on. If I dress her, 'Jean hurt me!' If I fix her lunch 'it tastes horrid!' When the aunts come she flies to them and clings panting, and of course Rod and casual visitors draw their own conclusions. I want to do my duty by her, and see that she's decently dressed for school, does her homework, eats at least a part of what she should, gets to bed at some reasonable hour. Can you help me see the right way?"

Jean, perhaps I can. For you're not the first stepmother who contradicts all the old fairy-stories by being a gentle and well-disposed human being who wants to give a beloved husband's children a break.

Go Indifferent.

And first of all, I think you must abandon any idea of controlling or influencing Doris at present. Just suddenly go good-natured and completely indifferent. If she asks you for help dressing, make no comment. If she refuses her normal food and demands specialties, leave it to her father and the cook. If her nurse—supposing her to have one, you don't say,—appeals to you, pass the appeal straight on to father, grandmother, aunts. If she's rude, smile. If she demands her father's attention, concede it amiably. If he questions you about her, say leniently that she's only a small girl after all, and she'll grow wiser.

This course cannot fail. It removes you entirely from the scene of combat and places responsibility where it belongs. Once you adopt it, the more outrageously Doris acts the better for you. Her best clothes will be speedily destroyed, her grandmother and aunts will grow tired of a more-spoiled-than-ever child who visits them at odd hours with all sorts of demands. And of the whole distracted circle you will be the only one still smiling and remote.

Order Out of Chaos.

By all means have children. Go straight ahead and fill your nursery with girls and boys. With every one of them you strengthen your own position and rationalize hers.

At 10 Doris will be an orderly little creature, perhaps silent and jealous and embittered in her small soul, but grown out of her baby nonsense. If you can wait for that hour, and befriend her in the meanwhile in steady, gentle, patient ways, you will reap a rich reward.

It seems too bad for grown-ups to have to scheme against a small girl in this fashion. But the mischief is not of your choosing, and little Doris must learn common sense sooner or later.

As a matter of fact, she will. Spoiled children may grow into discontented and twisted childhood, but they sooner or later stop the teasing, tantrums, spoiling of clothes and scorning of food. They must, if they are to live at all. I've known a great many tyrants of five who like Doris have been spoiled by a series of circumstances.

Sportlight

by GRANTLAND RICE

FOR four years the New York Yankees dominated baseball to such an extent they left a cock-eyed slant on the double corral. They left too definite an impression that the American league was the whole show, including the pink lemonade, the big tent, the elephants, the hard blue seats and the side-show after the main act.

It was never quite that way. It wasn't the American league which dominated the diamond. It was merely the New York Yankees. They won something like 28 out of 31 World Series games, dating from 1927. So, naturally, the National league must have been a flock of sand lotters.

Grantland Rice

But don't forget that during that four year spell the Yankees were also annihilating, assassinating, murdering, manhandling and mauling the Boston Red Sox, the Detroit Tigers, the Cleveland Indians and the remainder of their league.

I recall a certain Yankee slump in the Midwest a year or two ago. They lost six out of eight games. I asked one of the Yankees about this cave in.

"No," he said, "we were not exactly loafing. But why run for a car you've caught. We knew we were from 12 to 15 games better than the rest of the league. We knew we could loaf and still gallop in."

But Not Today

But it's all different today. The Yankees of 1940 are far and away from the Yankees of 1936, 1937, 1938 and 1939. And with the dizzy descent of the Yankees from their old heights, so the dominance of the American league has ended.

I saw the National league win its all-star game in Tampa last March. I saw National league pitchers tie American league sluggers into an assortment of true lovers' knots.

The same thing happened in St. Louis recently. Once again National league pitchers put silencers on American league bats.

In the last 18 innings of all-star play, from March to July, American league sluggers have hammered, exploded, thundered and mauled one flabby run across the plate.

There was a time when the A. L. had most of the dynamite. It may have the jump in long-range shooting today, but not against the pick of National league pitching. No set of home-run sluggers are going to make any headway against Paul Derringer, Bucky Walters, Carl Hubbell (that's right) or many others I could name.

Paul Derringer

The Yankees from 1935 through 1939 were an exception. They had practically everything—the hitting, the fielding, the pitching, the confidence and the poise. They had amazing balance, which is something that time works on in its leisurely way.

The Two Leagues

American leaguers will tell you that Detroit, Cleveland, Boston and New York all could win the National league pennant, with something to spare.

National leaguers, now lifted from the gloomy abyss of the years that knew defeat, are telling you the Reds and Dodgers would run away with an American league pennant.

"What do you suppose," one veteran National leaguer asked me, "would happen to that American league if their hitters had to move out against Paul Derringer, Bucky Walters, Junior Thompson, Jim Turner, Whitey Moore and others day after day? There wouldn't be a team in that league hitting .240 against Red pitching."

This is moving a trifle fast the other way.

The two leagues now are better balanced than they have been in some years. Again this is largely due to the Yankee drop.

"Where are my Ruffings and Dickeys and Gehrigs and Gomezes and Gordons and Rolfes and Crosettis?" Joe McCarthy also might be asking today.

Baseball, in losing the four-year Yankees — losing them so far, at least—has built up additional interest through both leagues, especially the American league.

'Ill Wind,' Etc.

The present campaign may be an ill wind for the Yankees, but it has been a soothing summer breeze for the other clubs which have been shivering in the Barren Lands since 1935.

Now we have two great pennant races, two well-matched leagues, and two great stretch runs on ahead.

Who can ask for more? Barring, of course, the Yankees, who still can't understand who swung the lead pipe and just what has happened.

The Once Over

by H. I. Phillips

IMAGINARY INTERVIEWS: UNCLE SAM AND JOHN Q. CITIZEN

John Q.—Sam, you look different all of a sudden.

Uncle Sam—I feel different. In fact, I haven't felt better in years.

John Q.—You mean to say you feel the best in years, with this war crisis and everything!

Uncle Sam—That's just it. I've suddenly shed the hypocrisy, torn off the blinders and gotten rid of the Little Lord Fauntleroy suit. I'm even beginning to look at facts and not wince. It's wonderful!

* * *

John Q.—But don't you think there are tough days ahead of you?

Uncle Sam—Sure. But I'm never at my best except in tough days. I don't want to seem boastful, but in all these years of coddling, comparative ease and comfort I haven't felt right. There were times when I hated to see myself in a mirror.

John Q.—It's strange, but I feel the same way. I've been squawking and making demands all over the lot; I've been getting sore because I had to keep the old car three seasons; I've been yelling murder because there were worms on the third green at the country club, and I've been working up a terrific peeve because of the lack of free gasoline. And now, suddenly, they all seem unimportant and trivial.

Uncle Sam—It's a swell break for us both.

John Q.—But it means plenty of trouble, I suppose. Do you feel in condition for it?

Uncle Sam—No, darn it! I've grown so soft it's going to be a terrific battle to get into shape.

John Q.—I feel pretty flabby, too. Say, why did you let me get this way?

Uncle Sam (indignantly)—How did I let YOU get this way! What I wanna know is how YOU let ME get this way.

John Q.—You're the boss; I just do as I'm told.

Uncle Sam—That's your story, and we're both stuck with it. You're the real boss.

John Q.—Who? Me?

Uncle Sam.—I only reflect your wishes and opinions. And for years I got the idea all you wanted was plenty of white meat.

John Q.—Don't blame it all on me, Sam. Every time I looked at you you were busy on plans for the more abundant life. Instead of a tough, wiry old guy with his fists clenched and his sleeves rolled up, you were like a fat spendthrift, yelling that life was just a bowl of cherries and asking everybody to step up and help himself.

Uncle Sam—That was your fault. You got so you thought I was a SLOT MACHINE. And you were always looking for the jackpot.

John Q.—Why, listen, when you you should have been down to brass tacks, developing your muscles and hardening yourself for any contingency, you were behaving as if all anybody had to worry about in this world was a bigger recreation program.

Uncle Sam — There you've got yourself mixed up with me again. You were the fellow who demanded tile bathrooms, an orchid bed in every back yard, three days a week for auto trips and a guaranty against slippery roads, cold nights and sand in your lettuce.

John Q.—You babied me so much I got to like it, I admit.

Uncle Sam.—All you wanted was the brass ring, caviar with the free lunch, government distribution of strawberries and cream.

John Q.—Why did you cater to me so much?

Uncle Sam—I wish I knew. Every time I thought of letting you shift for yourself you'd start wiring me for aid in every crisis, from falling hair to a leak in the radiator.

John Q.—Well, I guess it's all over now. I guess we've got to cut out the petting party and get on our own.

Uncle Sam.—Waddaya mean you "GUESS"!

* * *

THE NAME'S FAMILIAR, BUT—

The head of the French-German armistice enforcement board is a colonel named Stuepnagle. The Germans think of everything, don't they?

* * *

"Brazil Will Co-operate With Us, Says Hull."—Headline.

Wanna bet?

* * *

As a baseball club owner Mr. Farley will at least never be in doubt about a third run being strictly okay.

It's Easy to Make And Easy to Wear

MAKE it in a few hours, and wear it day after day after day! You can see, from the small diagram sketch, how easy this dress is to put together—merely five pieces, including the sleeves, and the only detailing consists of a few simple darts at the waistline. But you can't really tell until you get it on, how easy it is to wear and work in, how unhampering and becoming. The waistline looks slim but is completely unrestraining.

The front fastening makes it easy to get into. This is an easily tubbable dress, too. Make up design No. 1966-B in seersucker, linen, percale or gingham.

Barbara Bell Pattern No. 1966-B is designed for sizes 12, 14, 16, 18, 20 and 40. Corresponding bust measurements 30, 32, 34, 36, 38 and 40. Size 14 (32) requires 3½ yards of 35-inch material without nap. Send order to:

SEWING CIRCLE PATTERN DEPT.
247 W. Forty-Third St. New York
Enclose 15 cents in coins for
Pattern No..... Size.....
Name .....
Address .....

NO MORE CANNING WORRIES!

Approved by Good Housekeeping Institute and the Household Searchlight.

IF YOUR DEALER CANNOT SUPPLY YOU, SEND 20c WITH YOUR DEALER'S NAME FOR A TRIAL PACKAGE OF 48 GENUINE PE-KO JAR RINGS, SENT PREPAID.

PE-KO EDGE JAR RUBBERS
United States Rubber Company
Rockefeller Center, New York, N. Y.

Life's Way

Life isn't cruel. It hurts, but it heals the hurt. If you let it have its way with you it brings peace and happiness in the end.

FREE TICKET TO N. Y. WORLD'S FAIR
When you register as a guest at the
HOTEL
BELVEDERE
319 WEST 48th STREET
Just West of 8th Avenue, New York
450 Rooms with Bath, Shower and Serving Pantry
$2.50
At Subway Entrance to World's Fair, 5c Fare. 1 block from Broadway
Write for All Expense Tour Folder
AIR CONDITIONED BAR AND RESTAURANT

As a Child

Is she a child? then treat her with reverence and politeness.

The nation's favorite hot-weather breakfast

Delicious with fresh, frozen, cooked or canned fruits

Copr. 1940 by Kellogg Company

SWITCH TO SOMETHING YOU'LL LIKE!

MADE BY KELLOGG'S IN BATTLE CREEK

HIGH PRICES
Do Not Go WITH ADVERTISING

Advertising and high prices do not go together at all. They are extremely incompatible to each other. It is only the product which is unadvertised, which has no established market, that costs more than you can afford to pay.

Whenever you go into a store and buy an item of advertised merchandise, it doesn't make any difference what, you are getting more for your money—more in quality and service—than you would get if you spent the same amount for something which was not advertised