The JOY of LIVING

By SIDNEY GOWING

Illustrations by Ellsworth Young

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"I wonder what he'll do," she said to herself. She reflected on the situation. The difficulty concerning Amy Snooks, the new parlor maid, was uppermost in her mind.

A flash came into Aimee's eyes; it announced the birth of a brilliant idea. She laughed impishly, and then sighed.

"Can't be worked, I'm afraid," she murmured. "Too far away, and

Aimee Started to Her Feet in Sheer Panic.

there isn't time. But what a pity! I—"

Suddenly Aimee started to her feet in sheer panic.

"Oh, great heavens, what an idiot I am! Dad! I quite forgot—!"

The stress of the past ten hours had utterly driven from her mind one vital fact that now came back poignantly. Lord Scroope was coming to Jervaulx at 5 p. m. Georgina had said so. The burglary, intervening, swamped all memory of it. But, after all, Lord Scroope's arrival would be worse than the burglary.

"It absolutely tears everything!" said Aimee desperately. "What am I to do? If only I'd told Billy! But even he wouldn't be able to do anything here."

She paced the floor of the cave. The bottom had dropped out of the entire scheme of things. Then her face lit up with a gleam of hope, and she stopped short, thinking swiftly.

"There might be time. It's frightfully risky. But if I don't try it I'm done for."

She buttoned up the dust-cloak with nimble fingers.

"As well be hung for a sheep as a lamb," said Aimee.

She left the cave, ran up to the crest of the crag-pit, and looked round cautiously. Then she picked up the skirts of the dust-cloak and scudded across the common like a hare.

* * * * * * *

The Panhard luggage-car from Jervaulx wound its way through the lanes, with Mr. William Spencer at the steering-wheel, clad in a dark green uniform overcoat with brass buttons. The time was 5:15 p. m.

The Panhard was running badly. In spite of Billy's overhaul, two of the cylinders misfired; presently the car stopped with a cough and splutter. Billy, using blood-curdling language anent the profligate Mr. Boxall, late chauffeur of Jervaulx abbey, got down and opened the bonnet. It took him several minutes to start the Panhard again, and when finally he arrived at Stanhoe railway station, the train from Burnt Ash was alongside the platform.

A painfully obvious policeman in plain clothes was lounging in the station approach. He did not waste a second glance on Billy; the driver of the Jervaulx abbey car had no interest for him. Billy, anxious to pick up his passenger, the disastrous parlor maid, hurried onto the platform.

He sighted his quarry at once. A young woman in a cheap black tight-fitting coat was standing by the luggage-van. Baggage checks are unknown in England. A tin trunk was hurled out of the van by a blind, invisible force, and Billy, approaching the passenger, raised his peaked cap politely.

"Are you for Jervaulx abbey?" he asked.

The young woman turned round.

"I'm the new parlor maid," she said primly in broad Eastshire dialect. "You might carry my box for me, if that ain't too heavy."

Billy's head swam. His fingers opened, and feebly closed again. His eyes bulged.

It was Aimee. Aimee in a black coat over a print dress, and sensible boots. Her bronze hair was drawn straight back and plaited into a respectable knob, her eyes were preternaturally solemn.

They passed out. Billy took his place at the wheel, Aimee seated herself beside him.

"I'll sit here," she said serenely, "and you can tell me about the place as we go. What's it like? They say her ladyship is something chronic."

Billy glanced at her dazedly, and let in the clutch. The transit of Stanhoe was made at something over the speed limit. When clear of the town, Billy gave the coughing Panhard a full throttle and roared along the Jervaulx road. He did not look at Aimee, who was staring straight in front of her. Billy switched the car down a narrow lane, covered by overarching trees, and stopped the engine. He turned to face Aimee.

"Partner," he said, "what in thunder does this mean?"

Aimee looked at him, and dissolved into spasms of laughter.

"What do you think of it, Billy?" she said. "Aren't I the complete Amy Snooks?"

"It don't go!" said Billy, almost fiercely. "Let me in on this. What have you been doing?"

"When you left me this morning, I remembered something positively awful. Dad was coming here this afternoon—at five o'clock."

Billy whistled with dismay.

"The police business had driven it right out of my head. And I couldn't consult you. I thought the only thing was to get to Scroope Towers and try to put it right. I knew there was a train about ten at Stanhoe, and I started for the station. But I never got there."

"Thank the powers you didn't!" said Billy fervently. "All the stations are watched. You'd never have passed through alone without getting pulled by the cops."

"Well, the train wasn't necessary. A car overtook me on the road—driven by a young man. He pulled up and offered me a lift."

"Oh!" said Billy.

"He was quite a good sort. Inclined to be a bit sentimental; but it was a fast car, and he was rather new to driving. What's the matter with you?"

There was an expression on Billy's face that she had not seen there before. He was looking sour.

"Get on with the song and dance," he said shortly.

"Well, I was dropped near Scroope, and I got across to the Towers; creeping about like a Red Indian, so nobody saw me. I had a look in through the morning room window and saw Dad reading his letters. I had a mind to go in and kiss him, but, of course, that wouldn't do. He was looking pleased—I think he was reading Aunt Erythea's letter approving of me. Of course he hadn't heard about the burglary. There's no telephone at Scroope—Dad won't have one.

"Then I stalked the garage, where old Grundle, our shover, had got the head off one of the cylinders, and I heard him grumbling to the gardener about having to drive Dad to Jervaulx and back the same evening. I hid in the laurels till Grundle went to his dinner, and then I attended to the car—especially the magneto. I did it artistically. You can take it from me, the old 'bus will never leave Scroope today. Dad's visit is a washout. He's no time to get here except by car—I know he has to catch the ten o'clock mail train from Seabridge. He'll have to take the carriage there—and start early, too."

Billy emitted a stifled noise.

"It's all to save Dad pain and worry," said Aimee complacently. "One must consider one's parents. Never do to have him coming here just now."

"Great Christopher!" said Billy. "But that doesn't explain how—"

"I'm coming to that. I made a circuit through the Home wood to the cottage where Amy Snooks lives with her old grandmother. I tacked up and down in the offing till I saw grandmamma toddle away on her usual after-dinner visit to the woodcutter's wife, and I nipped indoors to have it out with my dear old Snooks. I found her packing for Jervaulx, and I told her what I wanted her to do.

"Amy Snooks is what you call stolid, and I've broken her in very well—but I'm bound to say she was absolutely paralyzed this time. But she surrendered, before I'd done with her. She just came to heel. It may surprise you, Billy, but she simply adores me. Amy never refused me anything in her life.

"Having melted her into flexible condition, I borrowed one of her print dresses (she hadn't another black one) and her second-best coat, and did my hair like hers. I'm jolly good at doing hair.

"To cut it short, I cleared out and tramped across country to Pilbrook station and took the afternoon train. Amy joined it with her two tin boxes at Burnt Ash, and I got into her carriage at the next stop. I gave her all the money I had, and made her go on to Seabridge with one of the boxes. She'll get herself lodgings there and have a good time till further orders—she can last a week, anyhow. I took the other box and came on here. And now, partner—what about it? Wasn't it a brain-wave?"

Billy took off his cap and made disorder of his honey-colored hair.

"You mean to tell me," he said dizzily, "that girl fell for it—just because you told her to?"

"Ah, you don't understand the feudal spirit," said Aimee complacently. "There have been Snooks in the Home wood ever since there were Scroopes in Scroope Towers. They help each other. When Amy and I were kids and went birds-nesting, she was always underneath when I fell out of the tree. She has irregular features, but a heart of gold. And, by the way, of course Aunt Erythea has never seen Amy—she engaged her on Dad's recommendation."

"But she's seen you!" exclaimed Billy, "when you crashed the Sphinx into her carriage."

'Only for half a second. She's blind as a bat. She'll never know me. Isn't it great, Billy?"

He looked at her thoughtfully.

"Great Caesar's ghost!" he said, explosively, "it is! You're right. The last place on earth those fool police would ever find you or look for you, is the house where the burglary happened. It's better than the cave, anyway. You'll be right under my eye; and among your own folk in case real trouble came. But—"

"But what?"

"Why, you can't do it! You, parlormaid to Lady Erythea? It's the acid test! Partner, you could never get away with it."

Aimee regarded him pityingly.

"Billy, I may not know anything about men," she said, "but you know less than nothing about women. There isn't the woman living, from six years old upwards, that isn't a born actress, when she has

"The Young Person, My Lady," Said Mr. Tarbeaux Softly.

to be. Most of us are acting all day and every day—whether you guess it or not. I don't do that myself—that's why you and I get on. But I can! I can get away with it, Billy!"

He put on his cap with a bang.

"Then let's get on!" he gasped. "There's nothing else for it now. The boats are burned. Away for Jervaulx!" He leaned over and opened the rear door of the car. "Jump down, partner, and get in behind."

"I sha'n't! What for?"

"Get down, I tell you," said Billy, sternly. "I've been warned about this. If I'm seen talking to parlor maids I get fired. In with you!"

Aimee obeyed like a lamb.

"This has got my nerve," groaned Billy, as he let in the clutch. "Here's where we get ours."

He drove at a furious pace till, turning into the park he approached the abbey and drew up at the side entrance. The door stood open, and Mr. Tarbeaux, seeing the car, came out as Amy descended.

"Miss Snooks?" he asked patronizingly.

"Yes," said Aimee shyly.

Mr. Tarbeaux stared. In spite of the screwed hair and the print skirt, he had never seen such a vision of beauty at Jervaulx.

"Her ladyship wished to see you immediately you arrived. This way."

He strode before her through the corridor into the great hall, past the suit of armor with which he had collided in the gloom of the past dreadful night. Now, however, Mr. Tarbeaux was himself again. There was a gleam of appreciation in his somber eyes.

He opened the door of the wide South room, where Lady Erythea sat erect before the fire, knitting. She did not turn her head.

"The young person, my lady," said Mr. Tarbeaux softly.

CHAPTER XV

Exposed.

Lady Erythea laid aside her knitting, and picking up a lorgnette, inspected the new parlor maid with icy deliberation. Aimee, though presenting an unmoved front, trembled inwardly. There was a faint chance that her aunt might recognize the female cyclist. Lady Erythea's lips tightened to a thin line.

"I was given to understand," she said in the voice of counsel for the prosecution, "that you were considerably less prepossessing in appearance than I find you."

"Yes, m' lady," said Aimee meekly.

"H'm!" said Lady Erythea.

The lorgnette continued to direct itself at the parlormaid's face.

"Really, Anthony should wear stronger glasses," muttered Lady Erythea. The neatness of the girl, however, her demure air, and the hideous manner in which her hair was dressed, diluted her ladyship's disapproval a little.

"I need not examine you as to your capacity for your duties, or your character. These have been vouched for by Lord Scroope. My housekeeper will instruct you in the rules of the establishment, which all my domestics are required to keep rigidly. There is, however, one warning that I must give you."

She was interrupted by the arrival of the butler with a telegram. Lady Erythea opened it; its message was not unwelcome to her.

"Car broken down. Regret impossible arrive Jervaulx. No time. Must leave for Closeminster tonight.

"ANTHONY."

"There is no answer," she said to the butler. "Lord Scroope is prevented from coming. Cancel the orders I gave you regarding his arrival."

"Very good, my lady."

Aimee's heart leaped with joy. But her face remained unmoved. She continued to look demurely at the carpet.

"I was about to warn you," said Lady Erythea, "that your predecessor was discharged at a moment's notice for allowing one of my menservants to make advances to her of an amatory nature."

"I don't understand, my lady," said Aimee faintly.

"She permitted," said Lady Erythea grimly, "my chauffeur to kiss her."

The startled look of horror and disgust which Aimee's features respectfully expressed, carried conviction even to Lady Erythea's mind.

"It is an unpleasant subject," said her ladyship, "which I should have wished to spare myself mentioning to you. It was necessary, however, to clear the ground. I hope to hear good reports of you. You may go to the servants' hall."

Aimee bobbed to her mistress, and left the room quietly. Outside she found Mr. Tarbeaux waiting for her. Everything depends on the angle from which one regards so supreme a person as the butler. The new parlor maid looked at him timidly. Mr. Tarbeaux, with an air of mingled satisfaction and apprehension, conducted her to the women-servants' hall. The housekeeper was absent.

At Jervaulx the male and female servants were segregated in separate apartments for meals. Mr. Tarbeaux took his charge to a room next the vast kitchens, where a meat tea was in progress, presided over by a cook of vast adiposity. The pageboy was the only male in the room. Mr. Tarbeaux presented the newcomer in form.

"Ladies," he said gravely, "Miss Amy Snooks. Late of Scroope Towers." And took his leave.

Aimee said "good-evening" shyly, and seated herself. It occurred to her that she had never seen so many plain women gathered at one table. With the exception of the cook, they were all angular and scraggy. Pulling herself together with an effort, Aimee took a generous mouthful from a slice of thick bread and butter. The fewer words the better, until she knew her ground. She seemed to detect an air of faint hostility in the others.

"What's the feedin' like at Scroope?" asked an elderly housemaid opposite her, in a hollow voice.

"They fare pretty good," said Aimee, with her mouth full of bread and butter, "but the place is dull. I been at home some time."

"You won't be 'ere long," said the pageboy regretfully, neglecting his tea to stare at her.

"Why not?" said Aimee with some pertness.

"You're a sight too good-lookin'," replied the page gloomily.

"Albert!" said the cook with austerity, "pass this cup o' tea an' don't talk rubbish!"

Aimee took refuge behind her stoneware teacup. She was aware of a crossfire of glances, so sour and sidelong, that the very milk seemed to curdle in sympathy.

* * * * * * *

The morning sun, full of the promise of a fair day, shone through the windows of the long drawing room. Aimee, in a snow-white cap and apron, was wielding a feather brush among priceless knick-knacks. Her manner of dusting was desultory.

"I wonder how long I can stick it?" she murmured in despondent tones. A Watteau shepherdess escaped destruction by a miracle.

"In all my life I never saw such a lot of frumps. And the taste it leaves in one's mouth—it's awful. It's all very well sitting tight and saying nothing. I shall break out—I know I shall, unless I can see Billy soon."

She observed a large photograph of the Rev. and Hon. Alexander Lambe, in an ornate silver frame, standing on a table. Aimee recognized the portrait, and flicked at it viciously with the feather brush. She miscalculated, the portrait crashed on to the floor. When she picked it up the glass was shattered.

"That's torn it. All breakages come off my wages. I wish it had been his silly face!"

At that moment Miss Georgina Berners entered by one of the French windows. She was aware of a slimmer and more youthful figure than any she had yet seen in the household. Georgina made a point of always being civil to her hostess' servants.

"Are you the new parlor maid?" she said amiably.

Aimee turned and faced her.

"Hullo, Georgie!" she exclaimed.

Georgina, during the last three days, had suffered more than any placid soul should be called upon to endure. She stared wildly for a moment at the slim form in the cap and apron. Georgina had arrived at the breaking-point. She collapsed backwards into an armchair; a series of shrill whoops came from her; her hands beat the air.

"Georgina!" cried her cousin in a panic. "For pity's sake don't do that. You'll give the whole show away!"

"Honk! Honk! Honk!" said Georgina.

Aimee had once heard a physician declare that sympathy and kindness merely made hysterics worse. It was time to change the treatment. She grabbed her cousin by the shoulders.

"Shut up that beastly row!" said Aimee fiercely, shaking her till her teeth rattled. "Stop it! Do you want to get me handcuffed and put in the cells? Idiot!"

Georgina gasped, choked, and sat up. She clung to her cousin desperately.

"I will be quiet. I will," she said faintly. "Wh-wha-what does it mean, Aimee? Why—?"

"Try to behave like a reasonable being, and I'll tell you."

"Yes, yes! I'm better now, dear."

Aimee inspected her and, judging the danger to be past, kissed her affectionately. After a cautious glance at the windows she proceeded, as Billy would have phrased it, to put her cousin wise.

Georgina, having heard her to the end, pressed both hands pathetically to the sides of her head.

"And—you're living in the servants' hall?" she said feebly.

"It's no catch, I can tell you, Georgie. But one mustn't grumble. Billy's living at the garage—in a green uniform with brass buttons."

"That—that extraordinarily good-looking young chauffeur?" said Georgina, staring at her. "Then he is—"

"Now don't get sentimental," said Aimee warningly. "Yes, he is not bad-looking, is he? Billy's great. If it hadn't been for him—" she checked herself. "Don't you see what an excellent arrangement it is, my being here—in spite of the little drawbacks?"

Georgina gave a sigh—positively of relief.

"It's better than having you wandering about the country, getting into all sorts of horrible scrapes. It will have to come out soon, and then Lady Erythea—"

"Yes, yes. Never mind Aunt. What I want you to do, Georgie, is this—oh, bother! Look out!"

Aimee seized her brush and, darting to the sideboard, began dusting busily. A step was heard on the gravel, and Mr. Alexander Lambe entered by the window.

"Cousin Aimee, you are looking pale," he said in tones of concern. "It is delightful out of doors, the air is so balmy. Shall we—er—take a little walk in the rose—"

Alexander stopped short, and his features froze. He had caught sight of Aimee's face, with the light full upon it, reflected in the mirror before her. He stared for a moment with remarkable intentness.

"Who is this?" he said sharply, stepping towards her. There was menace in his voice. "Who are you?"

Aimee, preparing to meet her destiny, turned composedly and faced him. She dropped him a small curtsey.

"Please sir, the parlor maid," she said.

Mr. Lambe's eyes were nearly starting out of his head.

"Parlor maid? You?" he said sternly. "You are the woman who drove that motorcycle. I could vouch for you anywhere. You are"—he shot the words out with extraordinary vehemence—"you are that abandoned creature, Calamity Kate! You are the woman who knocked me down!"

With unexpected agility he sprang forward and seized Aimee by the wrist. And with equal deftness she wrenched herself free.

"Am I?" she said fiercely. "Then keep your hands off me, or I'll do it again. Do you hear me?"

Aimee, thoroughly roused, flourished the feather brush in his face. Mr. Lambe started back, a little pale. He placed his thumb on the bell-push.

"Aimee," he said sharply, "go out—go out quickly! I will deal with her."

"What are you going to do?" gasped Georgina. Instead of obeying him she came forward, trembling.

"Go out! I am going to give this woman in charge!"

"In pity's name, don't do that!" Georgina gulped, and struggled for

Aimee Flourished the Feather Brush in His Face.

breath. "She—she is your kik-kik-Cousin Aimee!"

Georgina dropped into a chair and began to cry. Alexander, taking his hand from the bell, wondered if she had suddenly become insane.

"Quite right," said Aimee. With the calm of despair she planted herself in front of him, her eyes defiant. "I am your kik-kik-Cousin Aimee. And that's my cousin, Georgina Berners. I made her take my place here, because I thought it would be dull, and Dad insisted on my coming. So now call the police, Cousin Alick, and let's get it over."

It seemed to Alexander that he had suddenly been transported into Bedlam. He stared from Aimee to the gently sobbing Georgina. And then, as the door began to open, Mr. Lambe turned swiftly and caught the handle, preventing the intruder from entering.

"Did you ring, miss?" inquired Mr. Tarbeaux's voice.

"A mistake," said Alexander, quickly. "I will ring if I want you." He closed the door, and peered searchingly at Aimee.

"I do not understand what this means," he said coldly, "but it does not seem an occasion for the intrusion of servants. We are alone. Will you explain?"

(To be Continued)

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has obtained from the Orphans Court for Kent County letters of administration on the personal estate of

FANNIE B. MASLIN,

late of said county, deceased. All persons having claims against said deceased's estate areh ereby warned to exhibit the same, with the proper vouchers thereof, to the undersigned on or before the 19th day of October, 1923, otherwise they may by law be excluded from all benefit of said deceased's personal estate.

All persons indebted to this estate must settle at once.

Given under my hand this 19th day of April, 1923.

MARY E. GODWIN,
Administratrix.

a21-5t.

ORDER NISI

Hulbert P .Townsend, et al
versus
Clifton C. Townsend, et al

Herbert E. Perkins, Attorney

In the Circuit Court for Kent County
In Equity

No. 2183

Ordered, this 8th day of May,1923, by the Circuit Court for Kent County in Equity, that the sale of the Real Estate mentioned in these proceedings made and reported by Herbert E. Perkins, Trustee. Under and by virtue of the power of sale contained in a decree of this court, dated March 17, 1923, be ratified and confirmed, unless cause to the contrary thereof be shown on or before the 14th day of July next; Provided, a copy of this Order be inserted in some newspaper printed and published in Kent Co. once in each of lished in Kent county, once in each of day of June next.

The Report states the amount of Sales to be $700.00.

Robert R. Ayres, Clerk.

True Copt,
TEST: Robert R. Ayres, Clerk.

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m5-3t. Chestertown, Md.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has obtained from the Orphans' Court for Kent County letters of administration, pendente lite, on the personal estate of

WILLIAM GLADSKY,

late of said county, deceased. All persons having claims against said deceased's estate are hereby warned to exhibit the same, with the proper vouchers thereof, to the undersigned on or before the 8th day of November, 1923, otherwise they may by law be excluded from all benefit of said deceased's personal estate.

All persons indebted to this estate must settle at once.

Given under my hand this 8th day of May, 1923.

FRANK P. GLADSKY,
Administrator,
m11-5t. Pendente Site.

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—FOR—

$21,000

Kent County, Md.

Lateral Road Bonds

Notice is hereby given that the County Commissioners of Kent County, State of Maryland, will receive sealed bids for the purchase of TWENTY-ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS OF COUNTY LATERAL ROAD BONDS, up to 12 o'clock noon on

Tuesday, June 12, 1923

This issue of said bonds is authorized by Chapter No. 203 of the Acts of the General Assembly of Maryland, passed at the January session, 1922. Said bonds are to be dated July 1, 1923, and bear interest from date of issue at the rate of five (5) per centum per annum, payable semi-annually on January 1 and July 1 of each year. Said bonds are of the following denominations and fall due as follows:

2 $1,000.00 bonds, due Jan. 1st, 1927
2 $1,000.00 bonds, due Jan. 1st, 1928
3 $1,000.00 bonds, due Jan. 1st, 1929
3 $1,000.00 bonds, due Jan. 1st, 1930
3 $1,000.00 bonds, due Jan. 1st, 1931
4 $1,000.00 bonds, due Jan. 1st, 1932
4 $1,000.00 bonds, due Jan. 1st, 1933

Said bonds are exempt from State, County and Municipal taxation in the State of Maryland.

Each bid must be accompanied by a certified check payable to the order of the County Commissioners of Kent County, for two per cent of the amount of each bid to insure the County against loss resulting from the failure of the bidder or bidders to comply with his bid. Said bonds must be paid for on or before July 15th, 1923, at which time delivery of said bonds will be made to the purchaser or purchasers theerof.

The County Commissioners of Kent County hereby reserve the right to reject any and all bids.

ARTHUR H. BRICE,
N. V. WALTERS,
JESSE H. USILTON,
County Commissioners of Kent Co., Maryland.

Test—JOHN MEDDERS,
Clerk to the County Commissioners of Kent County, Maryland.

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