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RICKRACK BRAID.

Women are funny folks. All of them have an inborn pride in their homes. Most of them want pretty things for their houses. Yet often they seem afraid to trust to their own judgment and sense of beauty by pressing into service, especially for everyday use, the simple things that are at hand and that would make the home attractive.

Take rickrack braid, for instance. Who would ever think that rickrack braid had an artistic and even very lovely soul? Who would think it could rise to an occasion?

Recently a little rickrack sleuthing brought to light some uses of adversity that were just too sweet for anything.

One woman with a troop of small children and an ardent desire for dainty beds in the daytime, but who could not afford the handsome things she wanted, just bought a lot of heavy plain white Indian Head cotton and plenty of heavy two-inch rickrack braid. She joined nine-inch strips of the cotton with braid and put a double row around the edge as a finish. When she got through she had plenty of counterpanes and pillow shams of real beauty. Yet they were so stout and practical they could be tubbed every week, if need be, without breaking anybody's back or pocketbook. For the sake of variety she used pink and blue rickrack with the white cloth in some of the rooms, though I thought the plain white ones the handsomest and much the most practical. The dresser scarfs she made to match were real triumphs.

Another woman made a wonderful set of dining-room curtains by whipping two rows of inch-wide rickrack together and using that as insertion in sheer marquisette. The edge was a double row of rickrack sewed on like any flat lace edge. They were lovely when ironed out flat.

This same woman also gave real tone to her kitchen, which she had had painted buff, by putting up little overdrapes and valances of small-checked yellow-and-white gingham, edged with narrow black rickrack braid. You can't imagine what a difference that one little rich touch of black made in a room that might otherwise have looked a bit bilious.

Another woman who loved a spick, pretty table all the time used rickrack and Indian Head for her more ordinary tablecloth and luncheon squares. She used linen-finish cotton and both wide and narrow braid. Some she divided into squares, putting rickrack between the squares and around the edges. Some she left plain in the centre and put several rows of narrow rickrack around the narrow hem.

She even made doily sets, showing an amazing ingenuity in contriving various ways to achieve a really handsome effect with the simple materials. On some of these she called in the aid of her crochet hook, using the rickrack as a basis for little crocheted motifs to be inserted and to make glorified edges and insertions by a few simple stitches. A particularly attractive luncheon cloth she made was of white with three circles grouped together in each corner, of pink, blue and lavender gingham. One circle was higher than the others and they overlapped. Around these she put narrow rickrack braid, held in place by a long, heavy black stitch in every rick and rack. It was lovely.

COMPANY MANNERS.

I have tried the following plan with great success in training my children not to monopolize the conversation at the table when there is company: Before the guests arrive I say something like this to them: "Mr. and Mrs. Jones are coming to dinner. We want them to enjoy themselves so much they will come again, don't we?" "To-morrow I am going to ask each of you to tell me the most interesting

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ISSUE No. 28-24

"When Hearts Command"

By ELIZABETH YORK MILLER

"When hearts command,
From winds the sunset counsellings depart."

CHAPTER XVII.—(Cont'd.)

Ardeyne hoped that the vast relief he experienced did not show in his face. He had been wondering and worrying over the possible construction Carrie Egan might put upon his sudden appearance in the company of Hugo Smarle. Principally—if not wholly—he had worried on Alice's account. But it seemed that Mrs. Egan assumed there to be no great secret. She was merely annoyed because he hadn't chosen to take her into his confidence, not dreaming that he was quite as surprised and disconcerted as she by the unexpected appearance of Hugo.

"I simply feel that I must put the world between Smarle and myself," she went on. "The impertinence of that, he's mad, and I'm afraid of course, that you ought to be taking rather a risk in marrying the daughter? Or don't you believe in heredity?" "To a certain extent I believe in it, of course," Ardeyne replied reluctantly. "He could not discuss poor Alice with a stranger."

"The woman's voice held an earnest note that gave it an unusual quality. 'Phil—don't marry her. I'm not saying this because I'm fond of you in—the way I'm afraid I am fond. It's for your own good, Phil, dear, heredity's a dreadful thing—a ghastly thing! It'll creep back on you when you least expect it and in ways you'd never dream of. You thought I was faithless to you that time for Jack. Well, it wasn't true. I cared for you too much, and I was beginning to forget a terrible lesson that I ought to have learned only too well. Don't marry that girl, Phil. Surely she must have a little common sense. She must know that she ought never to marry anybody. A convent is the only place for her—is she isn't strong enough to live in the world without tempting innocent men—'"

"Innocent men!" Ardeyne laughed harshly. "I mean what I say. Yes—innocent men. Why, Phil, you of all people ought to know that some of us poor human beings are born guilty. The taint is of the blood. Born in the very shadow of guilt. Your Alice Carney is one of them—"

Ardeyne shivered. What she said was true enough, according to his own stern creed. She lifted her arms in a hopeless little gesture, flashed her smile at him, then waving an adieu, ran lightly down the steps to the car.

"Good-bye, Phil. Whatever happens, I wish you the best of luck. I shall be back in London again some time in June. Look me up if it occurs to you."

Ardeyne, his hat in hand, followed. "Good-bye, Carrie—and thank you very much. I'm sure you mean well by your advice," he said soberly. "But you don't intend to take it! Oh, I scarcely expected that." She leaned out to reward the hopes of the concierge.

"Good-bye, Phil." The big car started with a furious roar. Mrs. Egan, at the wheel, waved a hand; Ardeyne waved his hat, the concierge smirked and the manager bowed. There was something like mockery in the loud note of the Klaxon horn as the silver car disappeared around the sharp bend.

Ardeyne turned back to see Alice standing in the doorway, a strange-looking Alice, her white cheeks painted with round red splashes. His concierge stabbed him fiercely. What had she heard him say? "Alice, my dear, have you finished at last?" "Yes—they will send the trunk down to the villa. Is Mrs. Egan leaving Bordighera?" "Yes, she is," he replied. "You didn't care very much for her, did you, dear?"

"Oh, what had Alice heard?" "Oh, a great deal." The girl came close to him. It seemed the almost as though he heard the swift beat of her unhappy heart. "I wanted to like her, Philip—on your account. But I was in love with her. I'm glad she's gone. There! It's out. I can't help being glad."

"My dear little girl!" he patted her hand, and was glad himself, that it was no worse than this. She was jealous. Such a rare admission for a woman to make to her lover. Perhaps it flattered him a little, but he felt most tender towards her, most loyally protective as she smiled into her pitifully anxious face.

"And mummy doesn't like her either," Alice went on, furtively and ashamed. "Is' 'uw A. I eDh 'm ashamed. 'It's something to do with Uncle John, I suppose. Do you think she really loved him that money, or is it only his—sort of fancy?" "His fancy, I dare say," Ardeyne replied hurriedly. "Come on—shall we go for a little walk by ourselves?" "Yes, I'd love to. Philip, is there anything about Uncle John that strikes you as queer? I mean unpleasantly queer?"

Ardeyne wished she would not look up at him like that. He felt that his very soul was being searched. "Oh, yes—quite queer," he replied lightly. "A comic little chap, really. He seems to have a great affection for Aunt. I rather envy them their exciting memories."

"Philip—that isn't what I mean. You're a doctor—a brain doctor. You ought to know what I mean. I feel that you do know. . . . What advice did Mrs. Egan give you? Had it something to do with me?" "Ardeyne was but human. He fell back upon a man's subterfuge. "What are you talking about?"

"I don't know what you mean," he said. "Yes, you do. You told her that you were sure she meant well by her advice. You thanked her for it. And she said she scarcely expected you to take it. I am awfully sorry, Philip, but I heard."

"My dear child—"

"Oh, please don't call me a child! Had it something to do with me? Philip, I want to know."

Ardeyne drew a long breath and expelled it with a lie.

"I haven't the faintest idea what you are talking about," he said.

"Then I shall ask mummy. I'll have it out of her. There's some mystery about—about us, and I mean to find out what it is."

Ardeyne walked in utter confusion. Was this the right moment in which to tell her?

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of course he did not tell her. When it came right up to it he had not the courage. He thought of other women to whom he had broken cruel news, him had laid as waste as the desert, and he wondered how he could have done it. He thought of them with a tinge of remorse, those pallid ghosts of memory which still haunted his beautifully furnished consulting-room in Harley Street.

"Yes, Mrs. X, I'm afraid there's no doubt. These symptoms in your son are inherited. . . . No, Mrs. X, I'm afraid he will not get any better. For the present we must get him to the country—advise rest and quiet in the country. I should engage a male nurse if I were you. If you like I will find you a thoroughly dependable young man. . . ."

Poor Mrs. X, sitting very straight, very white faced on the edge of her chair, would nod and gulp at this little talker, when the door had closed behind her the doctor would tell his assistant to ring up such and such an establishment to arrange for a mental nurse for young Mr. X, and for the moment the incident was closed.

This was but a general example of what made up Philip Ardeyne's ordinary life. Incident after incident, essentially the same, always with heart-break for somebody. Until now he had regarded the possibility of such a thing having any relation to himself or affecting his own happiness. He had always been the impersonal though perfunctorily sympathetic physician. His real sympathies had never been engaged. Those people, he said, were better out of the way. In his younger and more cold-headed days he would have prescribed the lethal chamber had it been in his power to do so.

But now it had become a part of his own life, the thing which had been his life's study.

With what stern carelessness he had said: "In no circumstances whatever must you dream of marrying. It would be a crime."

Now he had to say it to himself, and it was impossible. Leaving his own feelings out of the question, was his hand to deal this blow to the girl he loved?

Ardeyne began to argue that doctors are not infallible; heredity is an uncertain thing, even at its worst; Hugo Smarle was a simple, harmless lunatic, despite the fact that he had once killed a man. The history of the Smarle family? Well, there was Christopher Smarle, an esteemed and able London solicitor with a large family, not one of which had yet shown a trace of the taint. Unless one excepted Mr. Christopher Smarle himself. People spoke of his as being a little eccentric, but that was all.

Besides—why not, for once, take into consideration the safer side of the family? Why assume that Alice must inherit from her father? Physically she did not resemble him in the least. She was such a sensible, sweet child, and one could always tell by the eyes where even a remote danger of insanity lurked. Alice's eyes were calm and sane—neither clouded nor yet too bright. Yes, doubtless she would escape. In a large family there were

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When many women, they were the rule rather than the exception. Ardeyne felt that this was, perhaps, the best thing he could do here. For them he could not predict, and therefore there ought never to be any children.

He evaded her direct questions, but clumsily, so that an unpleasant impression was confirmed, and she believed he had been discussing her with Mrs. Egan, and that there was a mystery connected with "Uncle John" which Philip knew about and was in a conspiracy to keep from her. (To be continued.)

One of the axioms that are not true is "No one can perform the impossible." We can tell just what strain an iron bar can stand, and we can gauge precisely the force of steam; but when we come to the human being we find a paradox—a creature that does the impossible.—Frank Crane.

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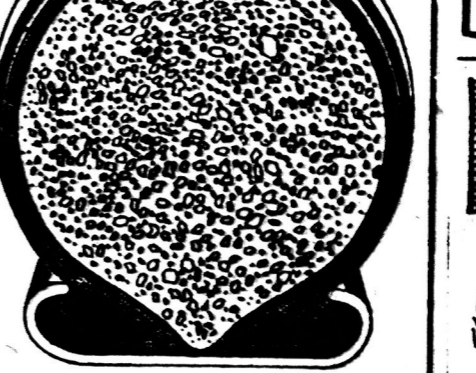
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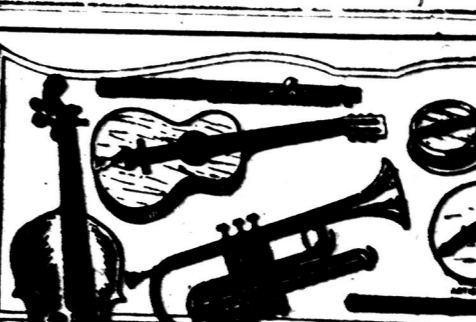
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