

Rowena Rides the Rumble

By ETHEL HUESTON

FIFTH INSTALMENT

Backruff Motors hire Rowena to accompany Peter on a nation-wide tour in their roadster as an advertising stunt. At the last minute Little Bobby is engaged to act as chaperon. A few miles out Bobby becomes tearful at being parted from her sweetheart and Rowena insists on taking her place in the rumble so that she can ride with Peter and have him to talk about Carter. Rowena gets Peter to consent to divide the expense money each week as soon as it arrives, and astonishes Peter by eating too economically.

The three tourists reach Denver, after passing thru Buffalo, Chicago and St. Louis. Peter and Rowena have many tiffs on the way while Carter keeps wiring Bobby to return to New York. The morning after they reach Denver, Peter and Rowena discover Bobby has deserted them and returned to New York by train. They are faced with the impossible condition of continuing their trip without a chaperon.

Now go on with the story—

"Well, you're not chained there, are you? There's nothing to keep you from getting out, is there? I'm in bed, too, but I'm not going to let a mere being in bed interfere with my professional future, am I? I'll meet you down-stairs in ten minutes." And she hung up the receiver.

Now, on the whole no one could have been more practical about things connected solely with business than Rowena. Her clothes were smart, for all their increasing shabbiness, but they were extremely tailored and trim. Her very manners were crisp and businesslike. But something—she didn't know just what—prompted her to discard her chic sports costume that night. She dived to the bottom of her bag and pulled out a soft and shimmering little dinner gown of enticing line and beguiling color. She put on her highest-heeled slippers. She got out tinkling little blue bracelets and earrings and chains. And she accentuated her shimmery sweetness with the flattering lines of a chiffon velvet scarf, deep and wide and ruffled.

When Peter, waiting rather sulkily in the lobby of the hotel, first saw her floating toward him he could scarcely believe it was Rowena of the rumble seat. Her rouge-red lips smiled at his frank amazement and she took his hand in hers, powdery soft to the touch and faintly perfumed.

"Peter, darling," she said. "I have a gorgeous idea."

Peter's sulkiness took instant flight. "Gosh, Rowena, you—you're exquisite! You're just ravishing! You must let me paint you like that. You're simply unbelievable—you're not real!"

"Oh, but this is the real Rowena," she said with seductive sweetness. "You never saw me before. You know only a poor little working girl trying to earn her daily bread."

"I—I've just got to paint you like that!"

"You shall," she promised, smiling. "I suppose it's too late to do it now—" he began.

"I'm afraid so," Rowena drew a deep, deep breath. Something about it—something about her—made Peter think vaguely of a swimmer's standing cold and bold and bare, body poised motionless, for a distance plunge into icy water—"Peter—you—you are very sure you are not in love?"

"I will be," he assured her gallantly, "if you look like this very often."

"I'm serious, Peter."

"No, I'm not in love."

"Absolutely?"

"Absolutely."

"Then, Peter, how about this?" Another deep breath—another premonitory quiver of cold flesh anticipating an icy plunge. "You know, marriage isn't the sweetly sacred thing it used to be. It's a matter of expediency, or convenience, or emotional experiment. And besides, business is far more important, don't you think so?"

"I hadn't really thought of it in that way," said Peter vaguely.

"Well, you think of it and you'll see I'm right. And as long as we're not in love with anybody else—or anything, and nobody cares one way or the other—well, why don't we—why can't we—don't you see what I mean? Why not just go ahead with the trip the way we are, and do the work, and get the money and everything—and just get married? That's all."

Peter hadn't remotely suspected what she had in mind—until she brought the word out, struck him full in the face with it, as it were. And it pulled him up short, shocked and resentful, like a struck man.

"Why, Rowena, that's—that's very nice of you—I suppose. But I really had never thought about—being married to you—"

"Well," she interrupted tartly, "it comes to that I can't think of anything in the world I'd like less than being married to you, either. But she realized at once she was on the wrong track and quickly

changed her method. "Of course, darling," she added kindly, "I know we don't get along very well together, and that we're anything but in love. But it isn't a real marriage I have in mind. Just to cover the proprieties and let us finish up the trip—And just think how much more money we can save, not always having to buy manures and souvenirs for Bobby!—I know a judge in New York and he'll annul us as soon as we get back. No harm done."

"Maybe he won't do it."

"Oh, yes, he will. He wants to marry me himself. He'll annul us like a shot out of a gun."

"But, Rowena—" he began wretchedly.

"And, Peter, dear Peter," said Rowena moving prettily in the transparent velvet scarf, "I'm really a terribly nice sort when I'm not working hard and worried about money. Ever and ever so many quite nice people are terribly anxious to be married to me. I dare say as a married couple we shall get along better than most. And we will be careful to get rooms on separate floors of the hotel and make the clerks give us a receipt making a note of it, so we can use it for evidence that we have never—uh—never been—anything but just—well, married, you know."

"That's enough, if you ask me," said Peter in a troubled voice.

"I'm terribly hungry," said Rowena. "Let's go down to that cunning little place the clerk told us about and have a sandwich or something. And you think it over. I had to think up some way out of it, Peter. We just couldn't chuck it—not here—not right at the very front door of the Rocky Mountains. I couldn't bear it."

So they took a taxicab and went down to the nice little place and Rowena didn't say a word about business, or money, or professions. She talked softly and lovely, lovable things, and smiled, and the beads shone blue on her throat and stars shone in the blue of her eyes, until Peter declared it was a very good idea of hers and they would get it done first thing next morning.

After breakfast the next morning Peter insisted upon using a small portion of their dwindling expense money to buy a plain wedding ring.

They had no trouble procuring the license, hurried directly to the office of the nearest justice and by twelve o'clock they were married.

Back in the hotel they turned abruptly away from each other as soon as they had their keys from the desk and went up to their rooms by separate elevators. And at 1 o'clock they were drawing out of Denver, headed north, both a little hushed, a little excited and more than a little nervous.

It was very late that night when they reached Cheyenne. The last twenty miles Peter drove slowly, creeping along as one who dreaded the ultimate arrival and when no amount of slowing down could postpone the inevitable he was plainly on edge.

"It's going to be awkward as the devil," he said moodily.

"Not at all," said Rowena. "Just go right in and ask for two rooms on separate floors."

"You'd better come with me. It will look odd for me to go in alone and then come back for you."

Rowena got out. "I—just be off-hand about it, Peter. Be casual."

"Yeh," he growled. "They're going to think it's very funny."

Obviously, they did think so. Peter strolled up to the desk with a conspicuous assumption of nonchalance, Rowena tagging nervously at his heels.

"Got a couple of rooms?" he asked the clerk.

"Yes, sir," said the clerk briskly.

"On—er, separate floors, I suppose," said Peter hopefully.

"No—connecting," said the clerk.

"Er—well—" began Peter, weakening.

But Rowena nudged him.

"We'd rather have them—er—on different floors, if you don't mind," he stammered and his face grew red.

The clerk looked up at them strangely. The telephone girl came around from her desk in the corner and lounged within good hearing distance. A large man in slouchy clothes sauntered over from the cigar stand. Two men sitting near dropped their papers in their laps and one began to rub up his glasses.

"Separate floors?" repeated the clerk.

"Y-yes, please," chimed Rowena helpfully. "So—so we won't wake each other up mornings. We—sleep late."

"Um, I see," said the clerk.

"Traveling together?"

"Yeh," said Peter firmly. "My wife and I are taking a motor trip up to Yellowstone."

The clerk swung the register toward him and handed him the pen.

"Will you register?"

"Peter Blande," wrote Peter firmly.

"Your—wife, too, please," said the clerk.

Peter hesitated. "Mrs.—Peter—"

he wrote slowly.

Rowena leaned over. "I'd rather use my own name, Peter," she said,

"for—for professional reasons."

Peter crossed out what he had written and wrote "Miss." Then he scratched that out and wrote "Rowena Rostand." But it did not look just right to him so he carefully inserted "Mrs." over the scratched-out "Miss."

The clerk studied the name, the telephone girl looking over his shoulder as he did so. The large man in the slouchy clothes, studied Peter.

"New York, eh?" said the clerk.

"Yes," said Peter.

"Yes, indeed," chimed Rowena.

"Motor out together?"

"Yeh," said Peter and Rowena in well-timed chorus.

The clerk frowned over the room chart. "I'm afraid we're full up," he said slowly. "Not a thing left."

Peter leaned over the desk and his mild face looked quite grim and ugly.

"You said you had two rooms," he said in a low voice.

"We did then," said the clerk evenly. "But just now"—he shook his head—"I'm afraid not."

The telephone girl snickered a little and one of the men sitting near by rustled his paper. Rowena flushed and caught a sharp breath, cowering slightly, but Peter suddenly showed surly and efficient.

"Oh, yes, you have," he said.

"Two rooms, and we'll take them."

"We've got a marriage certificate if that's what's eating you!"

"Yeh!"

"Rowena, get the certificate!"

Rowena hurriedly took it out of the side pocket of her bag. The clerk read it slowly and handed it to the large man in the slouchy clothes who looked it over and nodded churlishly.

"Denver, eh?" inquired the clerk.

"Yeh," said Peter.

"Some other people drove out with us," Rowena hastened to explain. "And they were unexpectedly called back to New York—and so—the rest of us—Peter and I—just got married."

"We've got a very nice suite on the second floor," suggested the clerk.

"All right," said Peter grimly.

"No," cried Rowena, faint but

Dog Owners' Notice

Dog licenses for 1932 expired on December 31, 1932. The 1933 license fee is due January 1st. Licenses so issued will cover the period from January 1 to December 31, 1933. Every dog must wear a tag of the current dog license year. A dog without such a tag is not protected by law and no action can be maintained for his injury or destruction.

An unlicensed dog may be seized and killed and the fact that a dog is without a tag is presumptive evidence that the dog is unlicensed.

Dog licenses must be obtained from the clerk of the city or town where the dog is harbored or kept.

License fees: Male dog \$2.25; female dog \$5.75; spayed female dog, \$2.25. Amounts include clerk's fees.

No license can be issued for less than the full license fee.

The owner of a dog who fails or refuses to obtain a license for the dog as required by law incurs a penalty of \$10.00 and costs.

The enumerators of towns and the police departments of cities are required to prepare in January of this year a list of dog owners. The omission of the name of an owner from the enumerators' or police list will not excuse the owner from obtaining a license.

If you owned a dog last year and do not own one now, so advise the clerk of your town or city.

Dog licenses in the town of Andover are issued by A. L. BLOSS, Clerk, P. O. Address, Andover, N. Y.

"Separate floors."

The clerk grinned, not unsympathetically. "All right, all right," he said. "Don't be nervous, lady. We'll put him on the top floor—Congratulations, Mr. Blande. She's certainly a beauty. She'll get over that nervousness."

Peter muttered unspeakable things deep down in his throat, and the boy came in and took their bags and led them off to separate rooms on separate floors. A loud gust of laughter swept up the elevator shaft in their wake.

In the doorway of the room assigned her, Rowena turned and held out an appealing hand.

"G-good night, Peter," she said sadly.

(CONTINUED NEXT WEEK)

GREENWOOD

(Mrs. Nova Thompson, Reporter)

Masonic Officers Installed

Members of Greenwood lodge F. & A. M., enjoyed a delicious chicken dinner last Wednesday night, served by the Ladies' Aid of the M. E. church, under the direction of Mrs. J. H. Goodno. Following the dinner Acting Grand Master D. D. Baker assisted by Acting Marshal Edward Scribner installed officers for the ensuing year. The officers are: Master, Clifton Rounds. Senior Warden, Archie Stephens. Junior Warden, Miner Streeter. Treasurer, Matt Rogers. Junior Deacon, Orville Matthews. Junior Deacon, John Krieger. Chaplain, Glenn Scribner. Senior Master of Ceremonies, Fred Miner. Junior Master of Ceremonies, Charles Taylor. Tiler, Aden Landfield.

Mrs. F. D. Young and Mrs. L. F. Thompson were shopping and calling on friends in Hornell, Saturday afternoon.

Miss Ellen Young and Miss Grace Young spent the week-end with relatives in Buffalo.

Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Kellogg and Miss Jane Kellogg were in Hornell Saturday.

J. K. Miller, District Deputy Grand Master of the Steuben First District, I. O. O. F., accompanied by John Krieger, Lawrence Knight, Clarence Webster, Wm. Reimann, Ralph Perry and A. H. Dennis were in Woodhull Wednesday evening to install officers.

Miss Ellen Young and Mrs. F. E. Carney were in Wellsville Thursday to attend the funeral of George C. Rosa.

Nelson Carney and Marion Streeter were in Hornell Saturday.

Miss Loretta Casey spent the week-end with her parents in Geneva.

J. K. Miller and John Williamson were in Canisteo on business Saturday.

Walter Redmond and F. Dwight Young were in Hornell Friday afternoon to attend a meeting of high school principals.

Miss Ann Aulls and Miss Nerec Deron were in Hornell Saturday afternoon.

The Needlecraft Society was en-

tertained at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Gamble, Thursday.

F. Dwight Young, accompanied by Fred Hewitt of Corning were in Buffalo Saturday night and Sunday to attend the Genesee Conference Epworth League cabinet meeting. Both Mr. Young and Mr. Hewitt are members of the cabinet.

Mrs. L. T. Hardenburgh was in Canisteo Wednesday afternoon to attend a card party at the home of Mrs. Joe Aronson.

A. W. Baker, Mrs. D. D. Baker and Miss Roberta Baker were business visitors in Hornell, Saturday. Mrs. Alva McMinde and son, Almond, of Cuba, were calling on relatives here Friday.

Mrs. Arling Cobb has been confined to her home suffering with sinus trouble.

The W. F. M. S. met at the home of Mrs. Sarah Redmond, Tuesday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Warriner are parents of a daughter, born last week.

Mr. and Mrs. H. A. Fish and Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Buck were Sunday dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. Cloise Tam of North Hornell.

The Cracker Club met at the home of Mrs. D. D. Baker Monday evening.

Mrs. L. H. Murdock, Mrs. W. G. Kellogg and Mrs. H. A. Fish attended a tea at the home of Mrs. Lyle Jackson in Hornell Saturday afternoon. The affair was in honor of Miss Josie Willis, District Deputy Grand Matron of the Steuben District of O. E. S.

Mrs. L. F. Thompson attended the Camp Fire Guardians' dinner at the Baptist church in Hornell, Tuesday evening.

Rev. Robert Horton of Troupsburg will preach in the Methodist church here next Sunday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Kellogg, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Buck and Mr. and Mrs. H. A. Fish attended the Hop-A-While Club in Hornell, Tuesday evening.

A New York company claims to have perfected a synthetic rubber automobile tire which will run 375,000 miles.

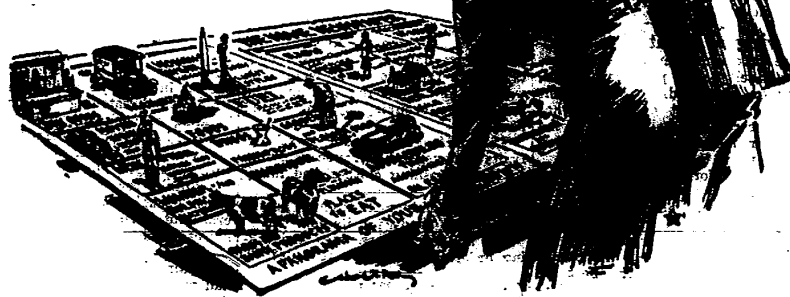
Pleasant conversation is the best appetizer at any meal.

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