

# Rowena Rides the Rumble

By ETHEL HUESTON

## NINTH INSTALMENT

Rackruff 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 fearful 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.

Rowena suggests to Peter that they make a "companionate" marriage. They are married and go to Cheyenne, where their actions, when they ask for rooms on separate floors arouses the suspicions of the hotel clerk. They finally succeed in getting rooms, but not without exciting the laughter of the hotel loungers.

They resume the trip the next day and are overwhelmed by a cloud-burst in an arroyo and are thrown out of the car. A party of tourist campers gives them dry clothes and food. Spokane is finally reached and the hotel clerk smiles when they register. They find Rackruff Motors have arranged a public reception and dance for them. They are delighted with presents.

Now go on with the story—

When Peter went out for a look around town she hurried away with her share of the wedding presents in search of a pawn-shop, where she left them securely locked away from danger of theft or loss, and stopped for an express money order on her way home.

There wasn't enough money for the suit but she bought a new, frilly collar and cuff set to brighten up the old one which she extravagantly sent down to the hotel cleaners for pressing. She had a small electric iron and a folding board in her big suitcase, but she felt some hesitancy about resorting to such an economy with Peter in the sitting-room.

The reception was a huge success. The best people in their best clothes were properly impressed. Peter and Rowena in a mound of flowers in the Rackruff roadster were photographed for the local papers, interviewed by representatives of the press, and congratulated on every hand. Peter was given a pearl-studded cigarette lighter, which worked successfully, and Rowena a wrist-watch with the same design in chip diamonds. She accepted it with a glowing smile and inner regret that she had not had it earlier in the day to provide the coveted suit.

Mr. Meeker told her confidentially that the only reason he had not told her about the wristwatch was because they had evidently planned it as an afterthought and he hadn't heard of it.

When the reception was over they were driven triumphantly back to the hotel in a procession of Rackruff roadsters, so that a considerable crowd gathered in the streets to cheer them on.

"Peter, don't you love it?" demanded Rowena when they were again alone in the bridal suite—alone, but with the door noticeably ajar. "Don't you adore being a husband? Aren't you glad we got married? Why, if I had known it was such fun I'd have been married dozens of times before this."

Peter waited in the lobby downstairs while she dressed for the big affair of the day, and when she was ready he took possession of the bedroom and bath while she sat in the flower-filled sitting-room—the door into the corridor wide open, you may be sure—and wrote a long gay letter to Buddy, enclosing the money order. At 7 o'clock Mr. Meeker called to escort them down in person. He brought a huge corsage of orchids and orange blossoms for Rowena and a gardenia for Peter's buttonhole.

"Guess we better let her stick it in for you," said Mr. Meeker. "Seems like it gives more of a bridal touch to things."

Rowena rose to the occasion. She kissed the gardenia prettily and then flicked it coquettishly on Peter's chin before she tucked it carefully into the lapel of his coat—all this to the beaming delight of Mr. Meeker and the confusion of Peter.

Flushing with rosy pride, Mr. Meeker led them down to the reception-room and introduced them once more to all the Rackruff dealers and their wives, and then to the gentlemen of the press—and editors and publishers among them, too, as well as mere reporters. The orchestra struck up the wedding march and Peter and Rowena, flanked by Mr. Meeker on one side and the head waiter on the other, led the procession into the ballroom for dinner. The seats designed for them were

raised above the others in a royal mound of white roses. This, Mr. Meeker explained in a loud whisper, represented the solitaire diamond of an engagement ring, which was typified by the rest of the tables ranging the full extent of the hall in a great circle.

Never had Rowena been so beautiful. Her eyes—the blue of a summer sky—sparkled with pleased excitement. Her lovely lips quivered sensitively. Under the table she felt about with the toe of a silver slipper until she found Peter's foot to press when she wished to call his attention to anything particularly priceless that caught her eye or ear.

Peter stared and stared at her. Everyone else did, too, if it comes to that, but no one of all those present was so amazed and so bewildered by her beauty as Peter himself. Over and over again he had to remind himself that this radiant, exquisite creature, the cynosure of all eyes, whose sheer beauty fairly took away one's breath, was the very same crisp and curt Rowena who kept such a stubborn finger on the steering wheel of their trip.

When dinner was over and he danced with her for the first time he was startled and stirred to discover that she was a feather in his arms; that her gleaming hair was fragrant as flowers; her skin velvet to his touch—and that she seemed to melt into the music like music itself.

"Rowena," he whispered, "it's great isn't it?—Really, it's just corking!"

"It's gorgeous, Peter, it's glorious! And, oh, darling, think how they're going to feel in a couple of months when they read in the paper about the annulment and know it was all a farce. Won't they go down—plop! Like a flat tire?"

"I suppose so," he assented soberly. "Looking at it that way, it seems rather a low trick to play on them. They mean so well."

"But it was Rackruff got us into it—it isn't our fault," she protested. They danced thru the ball with a display of domestic devotion that was thoroughly convincing. At 2 o'clock when it was over they went laughing, upstairs to the bridal suite and while he changed quickly from formal to street dress, she lounged in full display in the sitting-room before the chaperonage of an open door.

When he went in to say good-night he sat down on the arm of her big chair and cuddled her bright head, roughly, in his arm.

"Why put me out, Rowena," he began in a wheedling voice. "After all, we're married. And I fancy we're going to have the devil's own time convincing any sane judge that there was nothing to it but the ceremony."

"My judge will believe it."

"If he does," said Peter moodily, "he's going to think what a damfool I am—Anyhow, it's been a nice night and there's more of it. We've had a lot of fun and a little more wouldn't do us any harm," he argued persuasively.

She laughed good-naturedly. "I've had all the fun I can stand for one night. Run along, darling, and be sure to get a receipt that will confound the skeptics."

When Peter had gone she sat on the edge of the bed and thought it all over. In a way, she decided it was rather an awful thing they had done. But it had been so tremendously important for both of them—the trip had—the pictures and the stories. And the money—the money most of all. But it was too bad this sort of thing had to happen—and to a sweet thing like Peter who really rather deserved a better break—he was so old-fashioned at heart.

Rowena stood up and yawned and got into bed. She would do her level best to insure that annulment, in common fairness to Peter. Certainly it was for her to make sure of it. He was too careless, too sensitive to public opinion. He might get that receipt for his night's residence and he might not. She would make sure. She lifted the receiver of her telephone and asked them to send up the housekeeper.

When she came in, an efficient, large, Scotch woman, Rowena looked a little limp and wan.

"I don't feel so very well," she said childishly. "I wonder if you could get me something hot to drink? I don't want to be sick."

The housekeeper was surprised. It was 3 o'clock in the morning and the bridal suite, well lighted, showed itself guiltless of groom. His pillow had not been touched. But hotel housekeepers are schooled to surprises. She brought Rowena some hot strong tea with a little rum in it and gave her an aspirin tablet.

"If you don't feel better pretty soon have your husband call me—when he comes in," she said.

Rowena's smile was a little forced.

"I will," she promised.

At five o'clock she asked for her again.

"I feel worse," she said. But she did not want a doctor. "I'm just nervous," she explained. "Would—would it be asking too much—for you just to sit with me a few minutes? I'm sure it's only excitement after the ball."

The housekeeper sat down beside the bed. Rowena looked very young

and very flushed, altogether adorable in her soft night things. In the dim light the housekeeper could not see how old they were, and worn. The housekeeper had her own opinion about men anyhow, and her face grew grimmer and grimmer. The night housekeeper in a big hotel sees much.

When Rowena had seemed to have dropped off to sleep, she leaned over her commiseratingly. "Poor child," she muttered, "a pretty young thing like that—him out all night and them just married!—Thank God I found men out in time!"

Rowena smiled comfortably to herself when the housekeeper had turned out the light and tip-toed softly from the room. She had a witness to the virginal privacy of her night in the bridal suite.

Rowena was about half thru breakfast the next morning when Peter came in. He sat down opposite her and the waitress almost ran up to get the order. But Peter said he already breakfasted, would take only coffee, very hot, please.

"She's entirely too good for him, the brute," said the waitress to the pastry cook. "She never said a word but 'Good morning.' Didn't even ask him where he'd been all night."

Peter was a little self-conscious about it all and to the critical maids his constraint seemed that of a guilty conscience. Rowena was sweetly gentle, even friendly.

"I only wish the hotel had given them a pearl necklace instead of that cocktail shaker," said Mr. Meeker regretfully. "She'd get to wear the pearl necklace if he didn't pawn it, and it's plain to see who'll use the cocktail shaker."

Peter had the receipt for his night's lodging and Rowena folded it away triumphantly in the pocket of her portfolio, along with the other proofs of their complete segregation enroute.

She was full of enthusiasm, entirely satisfied with their future prospects, as she was packing her bag before the witness of an open door.

"It's a great little burg," she said warmly. "When I am a thoro old maid I shall buy me a dog or something and come and live here. It's just the sort of town I like. And if I am rich and famous I will rent the bridal suite by the year and you can give me an autographed picture of the Rackruff to adorn my walls. And I'll invite Mr. Meeker to tea every Sunday and we'll discuss our past glories and remember-whens."

"It's pretty plain what they think of me in these parts," said Peter regretfully. "It seems a dirty trick to play them—they were so kind about everything."

"One good thing about it," encouraged Rowena, "if for any reason my judge should hit a snag in getting us annulled, we won't need any other grounds after last night. We'll call on the hotel force for affidavits."

"What a cad they must think me!"

"Don't you care, darling. Next time we come here, you shall have the bridal suite and their sympathy and I'll step out for the night."

(CONTINUED NEXT WEEK)

## The Family DOCTOR

HOW "BILL" GETS BY

Bill lives in my town—in yours, too. If the Bills in this land were organized, they would make a formidable political party.

There are some 15 doctors in my town. When Bill moved here he inquired around for the most popular doctor and retained him as his family physician—as long as the doctor would do his work without pay, which was over two years. The doctor became too insistent about his pay to suit Bill.

Then, our hero sought the formidable competitor of the leading doctor—and recited the two years of "robbery" that he had endured. The ambitious competitor swallowed the hook, line and sinker! He treated Bill's infirmities as long as he could afford to without remuneration; some competitors are that way.

Then Bill sought the doctor that lived farthest away from his neighborhood, who had never heard of the experience of his contemporaries with the new patron. He grabbed Bill with open arms. Out of this doctor Bill got a couple of tonsillitomes, two obstetrical services and several bedside influenza cases, before the doctor awakened to the real situation.

Every physician that ever touched Bill came away with a water-haul! At last Bill moves to another town, full of incentive for his last place of abode. It was a hick town, with the meanest people in it in the world.

Those of my readers who are acquainted with Bill, know that he can tell you just how the United States ought to perform! It will take a long time to educate some folks to the point of getting above the tactics of Bill—the fellow that public opinion alone can remove from our midst.

## GREENWOOD

(Mrs. Rava Thompson, Reporter)

Mrs. W. G. Kellogg and Miss Ann Aulls from the office of the county superintendent of highways, have had business in Bath the past week.

Miss Belle Bennett of Young Hickory is visiting her sister, Mrs. Ordo Williamson.

The W. F. M. S. met at the home of Mrs. Wm. Scott Tuesday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Lewis of Whitesville were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Lewis.

Mrs. Merritt Osmin and two daughters have returned from a week's visit in Alfred Station.

Mr. and Mrs. Harland Knight of Ithaca were week-end guests of relatives here.

Mrs. Minnie Riley, who has been caring for Mrs. Webster for several months has returned to her home in Jasper. Mrs. McDonald is now at the Webster home.

Mrs. Jennie Williamson has returned from visiting her daughter, Mrs. Blanche Rollins in Hornell. Mrs. Rollins had the misfortune to fall in her home, severely injuring her ankle.

Miss Helen Clarke and Dante Vezoli of Alfred University and H. C. McCaffery of this place were Sunday dinner guests at the home of Mrs. F. D. Young.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Taylor of Canisteo were in town Tuesday.

Mr. and Mrs. Aden Miner and Glenn Miner and son, Raymond of Hornell were calling on Mrs. Miranda Miner, Wednesday.

Mr. and Mrs. Arling Cobb and Mr. and Mrs. W. G. Kellogg attended a card party at the home of Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Chapin in Whitesville Thursday evening.

Mrs. Floyd Green is at Bennetts Creek caring for her daughter, Mrs. Gordon Barnard.

Clifton Rounds of West Jasper and Joe Fitzpatrick of Highup were business callers in town Wednesday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ben. Conley of Andover were in town Saturday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Buck were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Biddle in Hornell Sunday.

Greenwood High School was well represented at the St. Bonaventure-Alfred basketball game in Alfred Saturday evening. Those attending were: Dwight Young, Arling Harkender, Walter Birmingham, Nelson Carney, George McKinley, Joseph Harkender, Joseph Birmingham, Markon Streeter, Robert McKinley, James Birmingham and Joseph Murphy.

Mrs. Robert Holly, Mrs. Wm. Lip-

pert and Mrs. Asa Allison were shopping in Hornell, Saturday.

The evening services at the M. E. church, Feb. 12th will be in charge of the Epworth League.

It was necessary to change the date of the February meeting of the P. T. A. The date will be announced later.

C. A. Bruen was a business visitor here Tuesday.

Walter Redmond resumed his du-

ties as principal of the local school Monday after an illness which kept Mr. and Mrs. Charles White and Mr. and Mrs. Percy White and daughter, Lois, of Loon Lake were Sunday guests at the M. E. personage.

Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Dennis were business visitors in Rochester Tuesday afternoon.

The hairy chestnut of China has proved immune to the chestnut blight which is wiping out America's chestnut trees, and it is hoped that a cross may be developed which will replace the lost trees and resist the blight.

## BRUCE BARTON

Writer of "THE MASTER EXECUTIVE"

Supplying a well-to-work inspiration for the busy-bodied who will lead every human trial parallel to the experience of "The Man Nobody Knows."

### ALL MEN CREATED EQUAL

What was there for Jesus to add? It was a thought more splendid than all which had gone before and it has altered the current of history. He invited frail bewildered humanity to stand upright and look at God face to face! He called upon men to throw away fear, disregard the limitations of their mortality, and claim the Lord of Creation as Father.

It is the basis of all revolt, all democracy. For if God is the Father of all men, then all are his children and hence the commonest is equally as precious as the king. No wonder the authorities had trembled. They were not fools; they recognized the implications of their mortality. Either Jesus' life or their power must go.

No wonder that succeeding generations of authorities have embroidered his idea and corrupted it, so that the simplest faith in the world has become a complex thing of form and ritual, of enforced observances and "thou shalt not's." It was too dangerous a Power to be allowed to wander the world, unleashed and uncontrolled.

This then was what Jesus wished to send to all creation, thru the instrumentality of his eleven men. What were his methods of training? How did he meet prospective believers? How did he deal with objec-

tions? By what sort of strategy did he interest and persuade?

He was making the journey back from Jerusalem after his spectacular triumph in cleansing the Temple, when he came to Jacob's Well, and being tired, sat down. His disciples had stopped behind at one of the villages to purchase food, so he was alone. The well furnished the water supply for the neighboring city of the Samaritans, and after a little time a woman came out to it, carrying her pitcher on her shoulder. Between her people, the Samaritans, and his people, the Jews, there was a feud of centuries. To be touched by even the shadow of a Samaritan was defilement according to the strict code of the Pharisees; to speak to one was a crime. The woman made no concealment of her resentment at finding him there. Almost any remark from his lips would have kindled her anger. She would at least have turned away in scorn; she might have summoned her relatives and driven him off.

An impossible situation, you will admit. How could he meet it? How give his message to one who was forbidden by everything holy to listen? The incident is very revealing—there are times when any word is the wrong word; when only silence can prevail. Jesus knew well this precious secret. As the woman drew closer he made no move to indicate that he was conscious of her approach. His gaze was upon the ground. When he spoke it was quietly, musingly, as if to himself: "If you knew who I am," he said, "you would not need to come out here for water. I would give you living water."

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