

Mary, St. Virginia, Sister
St. Peggy's ---
ADV 6319



**ST. PEGGY'S
GROWING UP**

(A FICTIONAL SAINT)
By SISTER MARY ST. VIRGINIA, B.V.M.

THE QUEEN'S WORK

3742 West Pine Boulevard
ST. LOUIS, MO.

Imprimi potest:

Peter Brooks, S. J.

Praep. Prov. Missourianae

Nihil Obstat:

F. J. Holweck

Censor Librorum

Imprimatur

✠ Joannes J. Glennon

Archiepiscopus Sti. Ludovici

Sti. Ludovici, die 27 Novembris 1940

Third edition, January 1942

*ANY FINANCIAL PROFIT made by
the Central Office of the Sodality
will be used for the advancement
of the Sodality movement and the
cause of Catholic Action.*

Copyright 1940

THE QUEEN'S WORK, Inc.

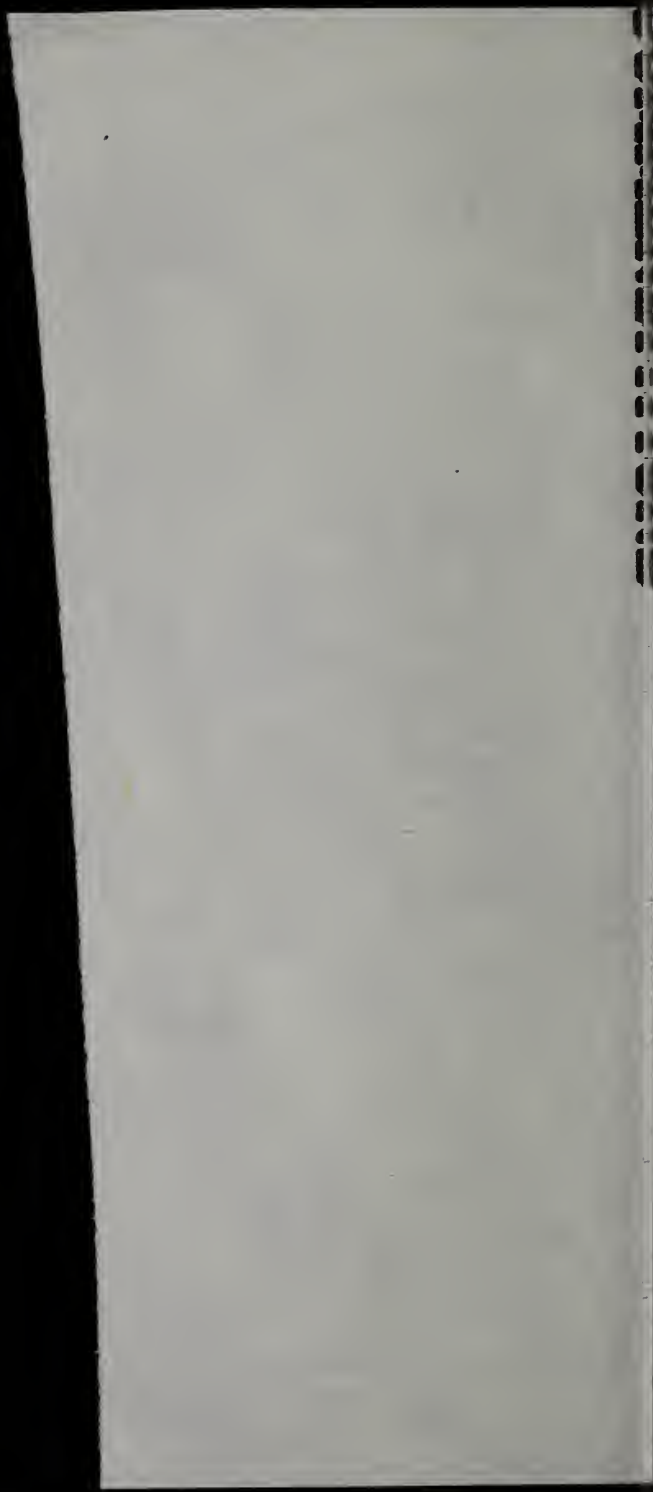
φ ΝΟΑΗ

φ ΝΟΑΙΣ

φ ΟΣΣ

3/19/21

μρ



Saint Peggy's Growing Up

(A Fictional Saint)

“YEAH; I'll get her. I think she's pluckin' her eyebrows, or somep'm, so you better pitch your tent.”

“Dick!” indignantly objected Dick McLendon's mother. “I don't intend to tell you again that that is not the way to talk to a lady or a gentleman on the phone.”

“I know, mother, but it's neither this time. Just some guy for Peggy,” her fifteen-year-old son assured her, cheerfully, coming into the living room from the telephone alcove. “Hey, Queen Elizabeth!” he shouted down the tiny corridor of the apartment. “It's for you. But take your time. I told him you were putting your hair up in curlers.”

“When little boys finally do grow up,” his sister observed, serenely, coming down the hallway, “the first way they prove it is that they recognize a real joke when they see one.”

Dick returned to the living room proper from behind the lounge, where he had migrated when he remembered having flung his ear muffs in that direction. “Gee,” he said, “so I ain't bright. I recognized you when I was only two hours old, Peg.”

He bolted, triumphantly crowned with ear muffs, as Peggy said into the phone, “Did you want to speak to Peggy McLendon?”

“**T**HAT’S right,” came Bud Harris’s voice over the wire. “At least I did a year or two ago. And if I don’t go into a coma before I get her, I’m thinking of asking her to go dancing someplace Friday night.”

“Oh, Bud! how nice!”

“You mean you’d advise me to go ahead and ask her?”

“I mean you can’t get out of it now, mister,” she assured him.

Bud had started being around when Peggy was in fourth-year high school and he a college sophomore. Now that she was a junior in college and he in his first year of medicine, he was still around.

“Do you think they’ll ever fall in love with each other?” Mrs. McLendon asked Bill, her engineering son, one day.

Bill thought it over for a quick moment before he answered: “I don’t suppose it will ever occur to either of them. Peg would be as apt to think of marrying the baby panda out at the Brookfield Zoo as she would of marrying Bud. She just takes him for granted.”

Ruth McLendon sighed. “And he’s such a nice boy too. He and Peggy have a lot in common.”

“Yes; but that’s not why people marry each other, is it, mother?”

Peggy, pulling on her gloves, appeared in the doorway in time for the last comment.

“O. K., my friend, I’ll cue your line. Why do they marry each other?” she demanded.

“Oh, gosh!” Bill shrugged. “Don’t ask me. But take you for instance, Peg—you always date the track-star type and other such sterling varieties of he-man—”

“I do hope,” his sister interposed, solicitously, “that you remember your manners and always thank Bill McLendon for the compliments you get from him.” Bill had starred in track from third year in high school on through college.

“—but nevertheless,” he went on, obliviously, “nevertheless you’ll probably run off and marry some leering scoundrel with a cigaret holder.”

“Is that a threat or a promise?” Peggy asked, impudently, holding up her ringless left hand dramatically.

“You shouldn’t let her be so sassy, mother,” Bill warned. “You’ll rue the day. Anyway, little one, remember someday that your Uncle William saw it coming.”

“And how’ll I recognize the villain when he enters my life?” she wanted to know.

“That’s easy. By the curls on his mustache,” he pointed out.

“Look into the crystal globe again, and tell me where he’ll be waiting for his entrance.”

“Why in a night spot of course,” her brother obliged, “the natural habitat of his kind.”

"I'll keep a sharp eye out and see that he doesn't get away," she vowed and ran downstairs to meet Mary Eleanor for a shopping trip.

SOME girls thought that Peggy McLendon and Mary Eleanor Brownell liked to be seen together because of the undeniable effect of Peggy's brunette piquancy beside Mary Eleanor's delicate blondness. But those who knew them didn't believe that. The two girls had been close to each other since grammar school. Peggy's crowd had changed somewhat with the changing years, but Mary Eleanor was still classmate and crony. On days when their afternoon schedules tallied, the two usually went home from school together.

Sometimes Peggy's freshman sister, Rosemary, and Rosemary's new friend Connie Armstrong turned up on the same bus. But when that happened, Peggy invariably wondered if the younger girls really did loiter over their bus fare until she and Mary Eleanor were seated; it looked like loitering—and hurt one a little. Then with careful nonchalance they would take a seat as far away from the two older girls as possible, and from that point their mysterious hilarity would reach the two juniors in such a way as to puzzle Peggy and infuriate Mary Eleanor.

"Who is Connie Armstrong anyway?" the latter demanded, one afternoon. "How did Rosemary pick her up? She isn't from Saint Clare's, is she?" Her tone implied that

Saint Clare's had never turned out anything like that.

"No; I forget what high school she's from. But she lives in the next block, and she seems to be thrown with Rosebud in classes and stuff."

"Well if Rosebud were my sister," Mary Eleanor stormed, "Connie'd be thrown *out*, not *with*. I don't see how you can stand having her around."

"Oh me, I can take a lot," Peggy murmured. "I've been standing you for nigh on twenty years, don't forget. And Connie's a cute kid. I can see why they gravitate toward each other; they seem to have a lot of fun together."

But it was whistling in the dark, and Peggy admitted it to herself later that afternoon. There *was* something about Connie....

PEGGY had been in her room for over an hour, poring feverishly over her term paper on the results of the Reformation, when her mother came to the door and asked her to go to the store for her.

"I know you're rushed with that term paper, Peggy," she apologized, "and it seems to me you're always getting the errands lately, but Rosemary's not in yet. I don't know why having a coke should take this long."

Her daughter jumped up gaily and got her coat. "Oh she and Connie got to talking, I suppose, and you know how time marches on. Anyway it's all right about

the errand. Good for me to get away from all this junk for a bit. History's terrible stuff, Mums!" And she dropped a kiss on her mother's nose, pulled the hood of her coat over her dark head, and was off.

In the little vestibule at the foot of the stairs she ran into Rosebud and Connie saying an uproarious good-by. "Apparently the world's greatest humorists," Bill had sardonically labeled them one day when they were in one room and he was trying to read the sports page in the next room.

"Hi, Peg!" they duetted now as she made the stairs two at a time and passed them in the same tempo; she wasn't through with Germany yet, and there were still England and France to cover.

"What's the rush?" Rosemary interjected. "The girl scout on her way to do her daily good deed?" Connie's approving laughter indicated the brilliancy of this contribution.

"Yes," Peggy called back, with good-humored emphasis. "Today's good deed is to save a child from starving tonight—a little lass named Rosemary McLendon." She closed the door behind her but opened it immediately again, thrust her head back into the vestibule, and declaimed, feelingly:

"'Good night, good night! parting is
such sweet sorrow,

That I shall say good night till it be
morrow'."

And as she plunged her hands into her pockets again and turned into the street,

she made a swift mental note that whereas Rosemary had grinned back at her and made a face Connie had flushed an angry red.

“**L**ISTEN, Rosebud,” she asked, curiously, as they were finishing the dinner dishes that evening, “is Connie Armstrong afraid of me, or something?”

“Afraid of you!” repeated Rosemary, scornfully. “Don’t flatter yourself.” She at once became elaborately absorbed in sorting the silver, but Peggy was insistent.

“Well you’re always telling us how clever Connie is, and I’m perfectly willing to believe she knows what time it is—but any time I’ve been around, her repartee has been about as scintillating as Pollyanna’s.”

“Oh of course” — Rosebud’s tone and manner had all the iciness that was becoming usual with her of late whenever she was questioned on anything personal, an iciness that left a little numb circle around her sister’s heart—“of course if you’re convinced that all the cleverness is in your crowd—”

“But I’m not!” Peggy cried, with a cheerfulness which she had sternly commanded her voice to find. “Us clever? I’d say we were anything but. I always have to laugh at Bud’s jokes a month after I’ve heard them on the radio, and while Mary El’s quick on the pickup, most of us certainly aren’t. No; I’d say that what I need is a bit of Connie’s much publicized sense of humor. It ought to do wonders for my line. But from the humor she gives out when I’m around, you’d

think I were the skeleton in her family closet, she shuts up on me that fast.”

“Oh, heavens!” Exasperation showed up frequently in Rosemary’s repertoire these days. “All this because Connie and I ride home from school together! Darling” — either very patiently or very sarcastically — “she happens to live in the next block.”

“And if she lived on the next planet, it would be too close to suit me,” Peggy thought, decisively. But aloud she said: “O. K. We’ll drop it. Do you want me to help you with your trig, Rosebud, before I go back to my term paper?”

* * *

“**M**AYBE you’d better concentrate on the trig for a while instead of on Connie, hm-m, Peggy?” Father Stuart suggested, the next time Peggy ran into the rectory. Father Stuart had been standing by since high-school days, when the McLendons had lived in his parish, and worries like this one were the kind in which he was particularly helpful. “He keeps my perspective in line,” Peggy explained to herself.

“I mean,” he went on now, “the trig technique you hit on with Rosemary seems to me to have been a neatly executed blow against Connie’s side. Yet it was simple: You stopped running Connie down and started to do something nice for Rosemary. Peggy, that was worth a month of clever remarks at Connie’s expense. If you’re right on this Connie person, and somehow I’m afraid you are, I hope you’ll fight her,

all right—but only with kindness to Rosemary. Do things for her; be interested, and friendly, and sweet. Don't take the other side; simply refuse to. Fight to get her confidence back."

"I don't feel that the market's so high on that chance," Peggy said, with a wan smile.

"And naturally the market will crash entirely if you start negotiating with such an attitude. Tell me this: Does Rosemary find trigonometry as bad as she found geometry?"

"Much worse, I assure you!"

"There you are. You're a math major, aren't you? Don't skip a cue as conspicuous as this one. I know"—as she started to protest—"you have plenty of your own work to do. Still . . . Do you still spend an afternoon a week over at the settlement?"

She nodded, her eyes questioning him.

"Good for you for sticking to those youngsters. But look: Don't make the mistake of choosing their somewhat faraway little souls instead of one as near-by and taken for granted as your sister's. You see helping a college freshman with her trig may look far less heroic, less important than taking care of God's poor, but it might prove to be the key to this whole baffling situation. And we can't forget that the prize in the baffling situation may be Rosemary's soul."

"I'm not—forgetting, father." Peggy was inwardly berating herself for her silly suspicion that she was going to cry.

“And when you’re dealing in souls, Peggy, let me tell you you’re in high finance. They cost, my dear; they cost.”

“Oh. Do they?” she said, slowly. “I—I think I get it.”

“And have you the price?” he wanted to know, in a quite businesslike voice.

“Maybe I haven’t,” she said, at last. “Yes; I guess that’s it. I just don’t have the price. Here I am, worrying and wondering and becoming frightened about losing touch with Rosebud . . . and I keep putting out a hand to reach her again. . . and there’s never anything there. There’s dad too. I used to mind so desperately about his never going to Mass, and I tried desperately about it too. But sometimes now I realize that I’ve practically yielded to taking it for granted. Oh I don’t like it of course; and I pray—that is, I say prayers. Maybe I’m trying to get something precious for nothing. Is it—like that, father?”

“I’m inclined to think so,” he said, regretfully. “But you weren’t poverty-stricken once. Where’d you lose your capital?”

“I don’t know,” she said, frankly. “You see I didn’t realize I had lost it. I was bothering about Rosebud all along. I didn’t look at Peggy long enough to see that she could take some bothering about too. Where could I have lost my capital?”

“Let’s see,” said the priest, thoughtfully. “Didn’t stake it on—something big? or something that looked big?”

She knew what he meant, and she met his gaze.

"No." She shook her head. "No, father. There's not any one thing. . ." Her voice trailed away restlessly.

"I knew of course," he said, more gently, "that there wasn't, really. If you still lived in Saint Stephen's, I'd still be seeing you kneeling at the rail every morning as I turned around at the *Domine, non sum dignus*, wouldn't I, Peggy?"

"Oh yes." Her voice was almost rueful as she added, "I hang on. Still—that doesn't prove a lot about me."

"It proves this," Father Stuart pointed out: "It proves that you still have a sharp eye for a good business deal. Maybe you've slipped up on some of the fine points of the transaction—on how to increase your profits consistently—but you'll wake up to that one of these days and start being a smart Peggy again; I'm pretty sure of it. Once—remember?—you were playing the market with Christ, and the sky was the limit."

"Yes"—a little wistfully—"I remember. Once Christ was my reason for everything I did—both the hard things and the nice ones. But I've slipped up, all right, father—I guess because it got harder."

"Maybe. Maybe not." Father Stuart was terse.

"But it does get harder as you grow older—and as your life fills up with more things—"

"True," he agreed, crisply, "but you aren't missing the point, I hope, that one's technique in anything doesn't exactly improve without some practice."

"That's it," she smiled. "The old technique's getting pretty ragged."

But Father Stuart was merciless. "Will ragged technique give you much of a start against your rival Connie?"

The dark young eyes narrowed with thought.

"There is Connie," she admitted. "There just is."

"Well are you surrendering Rosemary without a counterattack?"

"I'll say I'm not!" Peggy cried as she sprang to her feet. "She won't get Rosebud into her gang without a fight from me, I'm here to tell Connie Armstrong."

"And I'm here to tell Peggy McLendon," Father Stuart said, quietly, "that *she* won't get Rosebud without a fight either—a fight that starts and ends with herself. Can you fight that girl any more?" He leaned forward, watching her closely.

"Yes!" There was something almost grim in the look with which she met his. "Yes! Watch me!"

"I'll be watching," he approved. "And I've still got my money on you, Peg. Come on now; let's go places!"

"O. K.!" She put her hand in his and made him a promise with eyes which also held comprehension of what that promise meant. "But then what?"

"Well then, I suppose"—he sat back easily and spoke almost indifferently—"then to get the price for Rosemary—yes? You say you don't have it, I believe?"

She understood fully at last. "No; I don't have it," she said, humbly, "but I know somebody who has."

"Look Him up again, Peg," the priest suggested, "and—"

She laughed swiftly—the old, carefree-Peggy laughter. "—and touch Him for the capital?" she finished.

A few minutes later she was kneeling in the long-loved shadows of Saint Stephen's, watching the sanctuary light punctuate the curtained door of the tabernacle.

KENNY MORGAN, almost as long-standing a part of Peggy's social life as was Bud Harris, gave her a lift home. Kenny had had to leave college after his second year in commerce, but he was discovering that there were certain advantages accruing to the step: His job gave him more money to spend on a girl than did the allowances of his college-student rivals. But Peggy had a fairly well-founded suspicion that Kenny was also paying the tuition of his sister, who was in her class, and in her secret soul she applauded him for it and for the offhand, undramatic way he was going about the business. Meeting Kenny like that tonight had done her a lot of good, she decided later: reminded her that you could live in terms of other people and still squeeze a high percentage of fun out of the game. He knew how to laugh, did Kenny. She was glad that she had a date with him for a movie Saturday.

The week of semester examinations was

pretty bad. She had her own worries. Differential calculus would be hurdle enough; still good old math was within reason. But in what balmy moment had a person with her memory elected a superfluous history course? Nevertheless it was in Rosemary's plight that she saw her hand conspicuously waiting for her. And it seemed that she had to play it.

"You're scared silly of that trig, aren't you, honey? Listen—I'll stay up with you tonight, and we'll go over it."

"Oh no, Peg!" Rosemary protested, feebly. "You were up till all hours last night with that old history of yours. You wouldn't be able to stay awake tonight."

"Me? I'm the original owl," Peggy guaranteed, good-naturedly. "After I take my bath, I'll make some coffee, and then we'll plunge in at the Sign of Ye Olde Cosine."

"I wish you could slit a little hole in my head and pour the stuff in like vaccine," Rosemary sighed.

That night was one when the younger girl seemed to be Peggy's old Rosebud. In spite of the hard work they both enjoyed it and each other again. When even the effects of the black coffee proved of no avail and they switched off the light, Rosemary, shivering, scrambled into Peggy's bed and curled up like a little girl. She was sound asleep in a moment, but Peggy—with one arm almost fiercely intense around her little sister and the other hand pulling abstractedly at the dance bids dangling

from her bed lamp—lay rigidly awake and stared into the darkness, wishing desperately that there were no Connie Armstrong, no evasive look deepening in Rosemary's honest blue eyes, no tone of sophisticated boredom deepening in her fresh young voice. When at last Peggy fell asleep, she was praying: "Help her manage trig, dearest Lord, and help me manage Connie Armstrong. . . ."

But when Rosemary came out of trigonometry the next day, she seemed almost annoyed to find Peggy detaining Janet Barnes outside the door in order to be on hand to inquire about the examination.

"Oh I probably skimmed through," she said, airily. "Hi, Jan!"

Connie was directly behind Rosemary, Peggy observed, as she turned away. She was glad that Jan had an examination at once; the only person to whom it was safe to talk when you had this kind of a lump in your throat lived in the chapel.

Bill didn't like Connie either. But Mrs. McLendon chose this as a situation in which to have one of her occasional blind spots, and she thought the girl "delightful." And of course Mr. McLendon, in the great American tradition, left "all that sort of thing to your mother." It was impossible to fight openly when Rosemary was backed up at home and when too her sister and brother were going only on instinct. So far at least Rosebud's dates were still with the boys who had always taken her about, not with

the type one took for granted as Connie's escorts. That was a lot for which to be thankful.

LIFE took on new color immediately after exams when Chuck Harvey, who had been away at law school in the East and hadn't been home for the Christmas holidays, appeared on the horizon for the week between semesters and proceeded to rush Peggy. Their first engagement of the week was a double date with Gwen Parsons and Mac Fitzgerald.

If the date was not super, that was at least the way the two girls identified it at lunch the next day. The evening began by Chuck's telling Peggy that that was how she looked—although his saying so was what Mary Eleanor would have termed "a luxury, not a necessity; there are mirrors." And that mirror might have considered itself challenged which had the duty of doing justice to suave violet wool setting off soft dusky hair and softer dusky eyes. Still Chuck's taste in girls was notoriously fastidious; his O. K. had an official sort of ring.

Chuck had been on the scene since Peggy's first days in college. He was Bud's type. A little smoother than Bud perhaps; more money; but still Bud's type. He had evidently started out with much the same sort of girls as had Bud.

Peggy ventured this opinion to her father one night.

“What do you mean by that, Peg?” her father asked, studying his cigaret with sudden intentness.

“I mean that his idea of a-pleasant-time-was-had-by-all is dynamic, not static. Ketch on?”

“I ketch,” Peter McLendon replied, solemnly, and dove into the safe abysses of his evening paper.

The second time Chuck had taken her out, back in her freshman year, he had been inspired to add a little affection to the entertainment.

“Do you throw this in free of charge, or do I get a bill for it tomorrow?” Peggy had inquired, anxiously. Chuck decided to laugh. So they saw each other off and on for the next two years. She had missed him this year. And here he was again—smoother than ever, but still Chuck. Yet when it came to ordering drinks between dances, he seemed to have a bad memory.

“A Tom Collins, Peg?”

She looked at him levelly, though with a reassuring hint of a smile playing on her lower lip. “We’ve met before,” she said. “Don’t you remember? It was a cold day, and I was selling shoelaces on the corner, and—”

“Just think,” murmured Gwen, “down to selling her shoelaces!”

Chuck’s eyes met Peggy’s quizzically.

“So you *are* still the same—”

“—lady reformer,” grinned Peggy. “A lemon coke, please, sir, if you can afford it.”

“Even if it puts me in debtor’s prison, you shall have a coke,” he promised. “In fact you can make it a large coke.”

“I’ll be daring and do that,” she conceded.

When their order arrived, it consisted of two cokes.

“But mine’s cherry,” Chuck assured her. “I gotta keep some independence.”

When he was taking her home, he reverted to the subject. “Do I owe you an apology or something, Peggy? Of course now I remember your teetotal platform very well, but tonight in the Lake Room I honestly didn’t think about it as a question. I suppose I’ve become used to ordering for girls, and though you certainly have a right to do as you please, I don’t happen to see it quite your way in the matter of a drink or two. However,” he went on, “Chicago must be seriously repealing the prohibition repeal, what with Gwen Parsons gulping down a coke too.”

Peggy laughed an affirmative.

“Is good old Gwennie heading a reform ticket?” Chuck wanted to know. “I have known her to—shall we say not decline a highball?”

“Exactly.” Peggy stopped smiling and looked at him seriously. “And perhaps you remember an occasion or two when you might have wished that she *had* declined the first highball, or whichever one it was that got her started. With Gwen it’s all in

getting started. And somehow or other, Chuck, she generally takes what I take when I'm along. Still think I should have ordered the Tom Collins?"

"Oh I see. Well—maybe I don't then, Peg."

And they launched into a discussion of the shows in town from which they might choose one to see after their dinner date on Thursday.

ONE day shortly after Chuck had gone back to school, Peggy came home early to find Rosemary already in their room and doing her nails.

"Want me to put on the polish?" she offered.

"Thanks. I'll tell you when I'm ready. Say, Peg"—Rosemary's absorption in her emery board was suddenly deeper than before—"what do you do on dates?"

"That, my child, is a blanket question," Peggy laughed. "I do a variety of things. Depends."

"On what?"

"On the type he is, naturally, and on what tastes we can find in common."

"And on how much money he has to spend?"

"On how much money I think he *can* spend," Peggy corrected. "That little problem, Rosebud, is one reason why God gave girls imagination."

"Yes. . . but—in general what do you do? I mean. . . besides dancing and movies?"

“Besides dancing and movies there isn’t any in general, both men and pocketbooks being individual matters. I play a lot of tennis with Bud. Doug Farrelly likes golf, but that’s expensive, and he really can’t afford it; I generally talk him out of it, although I do love the course at Brentwood.

“Of course I admit I’m lucky that I happen to know a few fellows with some brains. I don’t mean arty—heaven forbid! I never know what to do about such men. But brains never hurt anybody—they really never did. So once in a while I go to a lecture or a forum discussion with somebody; and Bill Searles and I have had a lot of fun we didn’t quite expect, prowling around the Art Institute a couple of Sunday afternoons—Sunday afternoon being *free* at the institute, don’t forget, precious. Bill thought I was ready for a comfortably padded suite when I first suggested the institute, and I halfway thought so too; but we both had a grand time for ourselves.

“And of course in summer the Grant Park concerts make a wonderful date—and the price comes to the cost of a sandwich afterward. After all a fellow doesn’t get off so lightly from a formal in a downtown hotel; it’s only decent for a girl to plan a few dates that won’t end by having him pawn the dining-room table. Besides I’ve had as much fun on nothing a night as I’ve had on ten dollars.”

“Yes?” The tone was a little skeptical. “Well—what do you talk about?”

“The answer to that one,” Peggy observed, “is the same in all languages: whatever he talks about.”

“Yes; but what if you don’t know anything about it? Take Jerry Mercer—he’s majoring in economics, and he’s a bat on labor. And golly! Who could keep up with him when he gets off to a good start?”

“You could, if you read the front page and looked for the labor items in the news comments of the good reviews.”

“It would be comforting,” said Rosemary, thoughtfully, “to have the answers once in a while.”

“Heavens, no!” Peggy’s disgust was clear. “It isn’t answers you’re after; it’s vocabulary. He—whoever he happens to be at the moment—has all the answers. Don’t ruin his evening.”

“So all this reading,” Rosemary remarked, “is just to teach a girl to ask the right questions? turn her into a sort of cue sheet?”

Peggy laughed. “Why not? You both throw in what you’ve got to make the evening a success. But the big thing on a date”—she looked around and deliberately caught Rosemary’s eye—“is to *do* something. Something specific. It’s only the girls without brains who don’t know what they want from an evening. I’ve never been bored in my life, but if I had been bored, I’m sure it would have been on what seems to be an average date for some people. Planning solves a lot of problems before they come up.”

But she had lost Rosebud again, Peggy realized, as the younger girl looked away at once and said, a little too quickly: "Well here are the nails. Where's the polish?"

As she applied the polish, Peggy asked: "Who's taking you where, hon?"

"Tonight? Oh just Tom Searles—to a movie. I get so weary of Tom and that crowd. But"—and into her eyes came an unfamiliar gleam that Peggy vaguely didn't like—"have I ever got the date for Connie's brother's fraternity formal! With Freddy Lang—and he's a super feature, I mean he really is."

"Who's Freddy Lang? Where does he go to school?" Peggy asked, interestedly.

And when Rosemary launched into a monologue on Freddy, whom Connie had introduced to her, Peggy forced herself to play up, reminding herself sternly that Freddy might be Sir Galahad's favorite little brother, for all she knew.

LUNCH always stretched out on Wednesday, the one day on which most of Peggy's crowd didn't have one o'clock classes. They would sit in The Shack, talking on until a sudden glance at a wrist watch sent them flying up the long block and a half to their two-o'clock's. Peggy liked Wednesday, but she had liked it better before Maura Carmody began to drift in on them with Marjorie Allister.

"Maura has a talent for making you feel provincial if you don't agree with her on

books and plays and ideas, hasn't she?" Mary Eleanor said to Peggy one Wednesday, on the way out of their afternoon history seminar.

"Oh is that my part in the play?" asked Peggy, curiously. "And here I've been missing my cue all these weeks! You see I didn't feel in the least provincial when Kenny and I walked out on 'Manhattan Cycle,' and I still don't, even after hearing Maura Carmody discuss it as if she were a page out of a smart magazine."

"I know, but still, Peg. . . Well Maura does know the score. And you have to admit that she's clever. She was clever today about—"

"—about 'Manhattan Cycle,'" Peggy interposed. "Exactly. Mary El, as far as that goes, George Washington was a hero, but just what does that make of the crisis in Europe?"

Mary Eleanor blinked. "I don't follow, my friend," she said, with pseudo meekness.

"Cleverness," Peggy explained, "is cleverness. Sure; I like it. Everybody does. It helps make the wheels go round. But it doesn't seem to have too much to do with some situations—such as truth. It wouldn't precisely have added to old Euclid's reputation—would it?—if he'd gone wisecracking about isosceles right triangles instead of proving 'em similar. Frankly it always strikes me as corny to use cleverness as a weapon against things that are as absolutely true as isosceles triangles."

“Ha! I’ve got you there,” crowed Mary Eleanor. “When I was reading Chesterton’s autobiography and crammed it down your throat on the bus those nights, you enjoyed his cleverness as much as I did. And yet he used that cleverness to put his viewpoint across. Well it ought to work both ways.”

“It does work both ways,” Peggy agreed, calmly. “Of course I enjoyed what you read me from that book. Anybody would. But I’m a loon if Chesterton’s cleverness was his real weapon. It struck me that it was a sort of bait. The weapon he used didn’t really depend on Chesterton, did it? Wasn’t it rather truth that it depended on? Take the smartness away, and you still have that, haven’t you? Take the smartness away from the attack ‘Manhattan Cycle’ made on marriage, and what do you have? Is there a single argument in that play that can fight its own battle? It’s like using an emotional appeal for a cause—militarism for instance: Either side can use it—but sentimentality about nationalism doesn’t do one basic thing to keep drivel about militarism from being drivel.”

“The theory, Peggy, my love,” Mary Eleanor approved, “is swell. Sure. I believe every word of it. But the catch in it comes along when you get down to cases. Now, Peg, don’t you ever wonder if there isn’t something to what Maura said: that sometimes the Church’s law is simply too hard, too narrow—and that when the Church just won’t allow any discussion of a matter

individuals have to interpret it for themselves?"

Peggy laughed as she looked into Mary Eleanor's serious eyes. "Listen, Mary El; maybe you remember that back in fourth grade I had quite a time with fractions. I always handed in my problems with answers that checked with the answers in the answer book, but sometimes I had my own little way of getting those answers. It was easier than the way Sister Alberta held out for. My system happened to be any at all which produced the answer. I can still recall how narrow I thought sister was when she marked the problems zero."

Mary Eleanor laughed too and then grew serious again. "Why don't you tell Maura about the fractions the next time she discusses her objections to the Church's marriage laws?"

"Personally"—Peggy shrugged—"I don't see any point in getting in on these discussions. Why are we in a Catholic college if we have to go out shopping for dime-store philosophies? Once I had given Sister Alberta my phony reasons for thinking I was right in the mathematical field and she had set about showing me why I was wrong, she didn't invite me to a series of conferences to talk it all over, man to man. I've always thought the purpose of controversy was to arrive at truth—and I don't much care for major premises that sound as if truth isn't the objective. Why waste my time?"

“Something to talk about, I suppose.”

“Oh there are always clothes! Today for instance I could have told all of you about the good-looking henna outfit Joan Hibbard—Driscoll, I mean—was wearing when I ran into her in the Loop yesterday. Now there’s the most intelligent girl I know.”

“Joan?” Mary Eleanor was clearly surprised. “Maybe the best-looking, but there’s nothing especially intelligent about her.”

“Oh yes there is,” responded Peggy, warmly. “She knew just what she wanted from life, and she went out and got it.”

“It being Art Driscoll?”

“It being marriage, and Art Driscoll happening to fit the requirements, heart and otherwise.”

“Honey, it didn’t take brains to land Art Driscoll. It took Joan Hibbard’s looks.”

“I’m not talking particularly about landing Art Driscoll. I’m talking about her attitudes that are making her marriage what she wants it to be. I double-dated with her a lot, you know, even before she was going steady with Art; so I really knew Joan. And you like to think about having known a girl like that. I was over at her apartment the other day, and we got to talking about—things. And then I understood why she’d always been like that on dates. She told me she’s convinced that her marriage has something utterly and beautifully different about it because she kept to her code as she

did. She made me want my own marriage to be like that. Mary El, last Lent, when she and Art were engaged, I used to see them at communion every morning together. Sort of nice, isn't it?"

"Yes," the other agreed; "that is—nice."

"Well I call all that having been smart. I think it's a lot brainier to take what the Church tells you about purity—from the baby catechism on—and build a happy life out of it than it is to learn the answers out of best sellers just so you can sit around and wisecrack on them. If it's a philosophy you want, my pet," Peggy pointed out, "Joan's gets you somewhere."

"I'll say it does!" said Mary Eleanor, enthusiastically. "It gets you into a tidy little apartment that I myself wouldn't mind having." And laughing, they ran tardily for their S. A. C. meeting.

PEGGY heard about Freddy Lang the Saturday she went downtown to buy her dress and shoes for Bud's fraternity formal. It was a rapturous day. "If there's anything I like to do better than shop," she murmured to her statue of the Sacred Heart as she put on her hat, "I don't know what it is. Do you?"

As soon as she saw it, she knew that it was her dress. Gwen Parsons knew it too, and Gwen was recognized as having second sight about clothes. The price was, miraculously, all right too. But of course Peggy

had to fuss about it a little, just to prove her orthodox femininity.

“Shall I take it, Gwen?” she asked, anxiously, for the fiftieth time as she turned about in front of the triple mirror for the hundredth time.

“You’re a ghou! if you don’t,” Gwen declared, flatly. “White taffeta, and that du-bonnet sash, and those lines, and your hair, and the personality smile—oh, oh! let’s devastate!”

Peg took the dress of course, loving Bill frantically for the check he had slipped into her hand the night before after he had heard her confiding to Rosemary that she didn’t “actually need new shoes, but I would love them.”

“Let’s have a milk shake and build ourselves up after that endurance contest,” Peggy suggested as, thoroughly tired, they came from choosing the new silver sandals.

It was over the milk shakes that Gwen suddenly mentioned Freddy Lang. She was telling Peggy about Sue Penniman and how much she had changed since the Saint Clare days.

“She’s dating Freddy Lang’s kind nowadays,” Gwen said, pointedly, but went back to her milk shake with such concentration that she did not see Peggy’s face as she said it.

In a minute or two Peggy was able to manage a casual “Who’s Freddy Lang?”

What's his kind?" But she knew before she was told.

Some of the thrill went out of the gown for the dance after that. Whenever she glimpsed the cellophane-swathed white taffeta hanging impudently in her closet, she heard Gwen's voice again unwittingly informing her that Rosebud was going over to "that kind." And what was there to do about it? Make an issue of it? She doubted the wisdom of a step like that. After all Freddy Lang was just a symbol. If that weren't his name, would it still be his kind with another name? You couldn't get away with beating Rosebud into dating Tom Searles and his kind instead. The Freddy Lang date was now a brief fortnight away. What could you do about it?

WELL for one thing, according to Father Stuart, you prayed—and maybe for two things. Peggy had returned to her counselor, bringing him the problem.

"Sort of an old idea of yours, I'd say," Peggy murmured.

"Oh it isn't original with me," he admitted.

"That's modest of you," she approved, and Father Stuart agreed.

"Peg," he said to her, seriously, during that conversation, "it's a bad world we're sending you youngsters into, and from where we're standing, it looks as if it's possibly going to be a worse one."

“We know it,” she responded, intensely.
“We think about it.”

“What do you think?”

“Sometimes some of us think wild, resentful things. But somehow I don’t resent it. It seems pointless to go about sorting out the blame for such a lot of bewildering situations — political and economic and social and all the rest. Why call it blame anyway? There’s a challenge in being alive and young today. It’s exciting. What’s finding new worlds to conquer compared with building this one over?”

“And how do you propose going about that little job?” The priest was frankly smiling into the shining eyes.

“Oh don’t think I’m kidding myself. It’s a man-sized job all right. If the world’s going to seed before our eyes, that’s because too many individuals who are supposed to be specimens of a race of men that have souls are cracking up. Remedy? In individual souls. Yes?”

Father Stuart knew that even to agree with her would be an interruption. The swift flow of young words swept past him.

“Golly, father! ten saints would have saved that place mentioned in the Bible—”

“Sodom,” he suggested.

“—so why couldn’t ten saints today save—well Chicago, in case she ever needs saving?” she demanded.

"I don't know why they couldn't," he said, almost meekly. "But are you," he asked then, curiously, "thinking of the kind of saints who lead crusades or something of that sort?"

"Yes; a crusade of private lives," she cried. "A crusade of the right kind of homes—of real families—of people who believe in the freedom to live as your soul wants to and who have the moral strength to defend that freedom. But I don't think for a minute that anybody wakes up some sunshiny morning to find moral strength waiting inside her shoes for her to step into."

"How do you think you find it, Peggy?"

"You don't find it; you make it. All along the way—before you actually need it. By having a program for every day and sticking to it. By turning off the radio before your favorite program is finished—because it's time to study history. By passing by the open box of candy on the table. By holding back the clever thing you'd like to say at somebody's expense. By being interested in the college bore when you happen to have a splitting headache. Self-discipline, I guess they call it."

"I guess they do." He smiled quietly. "Does it get pretty hard, Peg?"

"Yes, father," she said, honestly, and there was suddenly a tired look in the young eyes. "Sometimes it gets awfully hard. And lonely—so darn lonely. And then there are the times when you fail yourself — and

Christ. Everything goes crash inside, and you think: 'What's the use? I can't make it in high. Why keep on trying so desperately? Why not be satisfied with comfortable mediocrity?' You feel that the one thing you can't possibly do is start over again. But as you told me once a long time ago, those are the situations in which you've got to stick at it harder than ever if you really want to help save the things you believe in. Christ said something about that, I think. . . ."

"About putting your hand to the plow and not looking back?"

"That's it. You know, father" — very earnestly—"the New Testament's the book that's got the platform for saving this old world."

"Think so?" he said, casually.

"I sure do. It's loaded."

"Really advise me to look into it, eh?"

And then they laughed together.

ON the night of Bud's formal the McLendons were so frankly impressed by a white-and-dubonnet Peggy that the evening was a blissful occasion even before it started. Her father was satisfactorily responsive when called in as audience. "Well now, Peggy, you certainly look very pretty to me, but I suppose that isn't the correct way to say so. What should I say she is, Rosebud?" — appealing to his younger

daughter, who was appraising the scene judiciously.

“Dramatic, dad,” Rosemary supplied, promptly. “Now there’s a good fifty-cent word for you, isn’t it?” And Rosemary held out her hand expectantly.

Mrs. McLendon came into the room, carrying Bud’s gardenias.

“She’s dramatic, Ruth,” her husband informed her at once.

“Oh you never thought that up by yourself,” she said, unimpressed. “Besides don’t put ideas into her head, or she’ll begin to think she is dramatic.”

When Dick came back from his ping-pong game at the parish Young People’s Club, he told Peggy that she looked like Priscilla Lane. And of course Bill came in to look her over before he started out on his own date.

“Well! Well!” He whistled. “Give the little girl a hand for doing all that with what she had to start with.” He dodged Peggy’s powder puff just in time.

“Think she’ll make good?” Peggy asked, modeling her gown for him.

“Peg, they’ll be dueling in the courtyard over you before cockcrow,” he assured her. He was almost out of the apartment before he called back: “But it’s the silver sandals that do it!”

Bud's fraternity formal was always "really something," and this year it outdid itself. Comparatively early in the evening Bud told her that Steve Holmes had suggested an exchange.

"Who is he?" she asked, indifferently. (She recalled later that she had asked it indifferently.)

"Oh I thought you knew him—Fran McAvoy's been dating him now and then. He's out of school; practicing law. Peggy, you certainly look glamorous."

And then the dance with Steve Holmes.... So this was what they meant by "falling" for somebody! Well! You just didn't seem to notice anyone else. . . .

Steve was probably twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old. Had she once thought Chuck Harvey smooth? Listening to Steve was like hearing a new language. Every man with whom she had ever gone out suddenly seemed utterly obvious.

Take the white-taffeta effect tonight. Steve call her glamorous? Steve? Hardly. But she knew that never before in her life had she been given such a compliment as she got when he looked at her and said: "I hope you wear white and deep red always, on principle, Peggy. You're rather convincing in it, you know." Just like that.

Peggy had never thought of herself as a rival of Francine McAvoy's auburn loveliness; and even when Steve took her telephone number, she refused to allow herself

fairy-tale endings. But the very next day he used the number. They saw a movie together a few evenings later. Peggy kept feeling that it was a tentative evening; but Steve's verdict on her seemed definite when the opera topped off with dancing at The Asterisk was proposed for the next Friday. Even Chuck didn't make The Asterisk. Peggy had a little difficulty with her breath for a moment, and Steve, misunderstanding, added, solicitously: ". . . or don't you like it? Would you prefer the Emerald Room at the Harkins? I think their floor show is a little stupid."

Peggy retrieved her breath. "Oh I'd love The Asterisk!" she assured him. "I've never been there. Don't bother picking out a floor show to entertain me though. I hardly ever like them anywhere, but that's all right; I go to dance, not to watch the floor show."

EVERYTHING about The Asterisk was "a little more so," as she described it to Bill afterward. Especially the floor show. "Now you'll *have* to talk to me," she warned Steve when it started, "unless you have an almanac in your pocket that I could read."

He thought that highly diverting. "But why?" he was curious to know.

Abruptly it took courage, but—"I just don't like. . ." She gestured vaguely toward the spotlight.

Steve ordered glibly until he turned to

the liquor menu, which demanded his careful concentration.

“How would you like a Martini?” he suggested.

“I wouldn’t.” She meant her voice to sound pert and flippant and independent, the way it did when she put Chuck or Kenny in his place. But it didn’t; it merely sounded flat, and she knew it.

“Wouldn’t—what? I’m sorry,” he apologized, charmingly; “I didn’t get it.”

“Nothing to get,” she said, “but the fact that I don’t usually take a cocktail except at home.”

“Oh really?” There was a mask over his eyes and another over his voice. What was he thinking? “But you said usually. You’ll take this one, won’t you?”

She wondered fleetingly if when Steve Holmes smiled people always did what he wanted them to do.

“Well . . .” She smiled back at him hesitantly.

“There’s really no great issue involved in one little cocktail before your supper, is there, Peggy? I’ll stop with one”—his smile *was* persuasive—“so I’ll see that you do too.”

They both laughed. It was clear that Steve was not the drinking kind. . . . It did seem a bit pointless to make an issue of this. . . . Well she’d let him order it.

She didn't know whether she preferred dancing with Steve Holmes or talking with him. He did both admirably. Bud liked good music once in a while too, but he couldn't talk about it as could Steve. When the subject of the *Ballet Russe* came up, she was glad all over again that she and Bud had saved on movies in order to see it twice. She knew that she was holding her own in the give-and-take of dialogue, and she sensed Steve's approval of the fact.

At times during the evening things worried her a bit. Steve took rather a good deal for granted in his conversational sweep. Something like Maura Carmody, except that he was subtler about it. There were moments when Peggy felt an unlabeled discomfort, a strange, unreasoning little question as to whether just sitting here with Steve Holmes were not disloyalty to Christ. But why? What specific thing? Even the question became confused when she looked up into his eyes. And then they danced, and she forgot about questions.

But by the time they went home, Peggy knew that she had a problem on her hands. As Steve closed the door on her side and started around the car, she faced the question hastily. "And the problem's name isn't Steve Holmes either," she told herself, grimly. "It's Peggy McLendon. Managing Steve would have been comparatively elementary—if you hadn't happened to have fallen for him." Instinctively she sent a swift prayer Maryward.

The winter moonlight on the Outer Drive had a conviction all its own, and Steve thought that it would be still more convincing farther north. Peggy was quite sure that it would be, so . . . “You still have a few brains, haven’t you?” she demanded of herself, contemptuously. “Or have you?”

Steve shrugged smilingly over her negative to his suggestion and started obediently home. Peggy found his line more intriguing than ever; his subject now was not at all Lily Pons’s voice or propaganda techniques or the *Ballet Russe*.

“Yes; but,” she told herself, desperately, while she smiled charming appreciation of some Holmes bons mots, “don’t forget, Peggy, they’ve been falling for this since Eve. Start using your head now, if you didn’t on that Martini.”

Clearly Steve Holmes would never come back if she stuck to the ship. That realization was final, with a finality she never doubted. If she proved amenable to suggestion—yes; she was fairly sure that he was prepared to show her the town. All the things her mother had told her about men’s respecting you more and becoming more interested if you held out for your code might be true of fellows like Chuck—but Peggy had never had an illusion about Steve.

O. K. Steve Holmes wasn’t the only man in Cook County. Maybe he wouldn’t come back, but Bud would, and Kenny would,

and Doug Farrelly would. . . . Oh who cared about Bud and Doug and the rest? Silly youngsters, that was all they were.

It would be pleasant having her name coupled with that of Steve Holmes. Being nonchalant at school about having dined in the Emerald Room, about his high-powered car, about his orchids. No! Even that wasn't it, she acknowledged, wretchedly. She just wanted to be with Steve Holmes. She wanted to feel that he was thinking of her when she wasn't with him. And when she was with him—yes she did—she wanted him to want to kiss her.

Love? Was this it, or wasn't it? Oh what was love anyway? What did love and marriage necessarily have to do with a season of being rushed by someone who happened to find one attractive? Yet Joan Driscoll had said that there was a connection. She had said that after you were married you were glad all over again for having thought of that connection ahead of time. She had said. . .

But at communion the next morning Peggy realized once more that it wasn't Joan Driscoll in white *moiré* and tulle who had walked between her and Steve. After all one hadn't really tried to be loyal to Christ this long only to turn on Him in one brief evening; one hadn't sheltered Him in one's heart, even when it cost, only to drive Him out now at Steve Holmes's bidding; one hadn't eaten with an eye on one's watch on date after date to keep one's communion

fast only to forfeit now the white Host waiting for her in a Chicago tabernacle. . . .

No; Steve Holmes would not come back. Nor could she comfort herself the next day with the remembrance of having been clever and smart and suave in managing his dismissal, as she had been with others on one or two similar occasions. It was the difference between caring and not caring, she supposed, drearily.

IT was Saturday, and she was at home alone most of the afternoon. She was trying to prove to herself that she was reading Carlton Hayes's "Political and Cultural History of Modern Europe" when she heard the buzzer. With some surprise she found that it was Rosemary.

"Thought you were downtown with Connie, shopping for a formal," Peg said.

"No." There was a definite abbreviation in Rosemary's voice and manner as she walked past Peggy.

Did this make the thousandth time in the last month that one had wanted to shake her instead of being everlastingly kind? Where did kindness get one with her anyway? But before she followed her sister into their room to pick up her book, Peggy stopped resolutely and looked up at the living-room crucifix.

"I used to have ambitions to do big things for you, dearest," she whispered, "but now

I've sunk so low that if I can just hang on to my temper you'll probably be pleased and surprised. I guess it's that I'm not a very good loser. It isn't going to be easy for Peggy McLendon to be sweet when Fran McAvoy acts possessive about Steve Holmes—or when people find out that he lost interest in me very quickly. All the same"—grimly—"I'll *make* her be sweet. You throw in some grace, and I'll make her take it—and like it! But you see"—jabbing violently at her eyes—"I seem to be losing all the games just now. I don't see why you let me lose the Rosebud game. Still I guess you want me to say O. K. even there, don't you? So . . ."

She'd go and get her book and then get out of the bedroom at once, leaving its safely unshattered silence to Rosebud.

But as Peggy left the bedroom, with her book under her arm, Rosemary, stretched out motionless on her bed, suddenly called: "Hey, Peg! Come back will you?"

"Sure." Peggy reappeared in the doorway, determinedly good-natured. "What do you want? My perfume?"

"No," Rosemary announced. "I want to talk to you."

Peggy walked over and hunched herself up on the foot of Rosemary's bed, staring at her sister squarely. "If you do, Rosebud," she said, slowly, "it's the first time in months."

"I know. . . . Well. . ." Rosemary dropped her arm listlessly over the side of the bed. And then with a startling briskness: "Listen, Peg, what do you do when you go out with a man?"

"Listen yourself, little monkey," said Peggy, sharply. "You asked me that once before, and you seemed about as interested in my answer as if I was—were? was?—talking Sanskrit. Go ask—" She stopped herself abruptly and then laughed ruefully. "Oh what a sweet sister you've got! Sorry, hon." She gave Rosebud's hand a swift, awkward little pat. "Let's talk about—"

But Rosemary's wide blue eyes hadn't changed expression. "I know what you were going to say, Peg. And I did ask her. But she didn't tell me what you told me."

"Well?"

"Well I told her your little story."

"And?"

"And she didn't believe it. She said no girl could go places if she didn't—go in for that sort of thing."

"Oh, gosh! I didn't think that even Connie was that dumb."

"Is that being dumb? Really, Peggy?" There was an eagerness in Rosemary's voice that Peggy did not miss. "Look! I don't like—all that messy business any more than you do, but don't you really have to do it to get around?"

“I haven’t exactly taken up solitaire of an evening, have I? And”—with some asperity—“my allowance doesn’t cover the renting of a gigolo.”

“And don’t you ever go in for it, Peg?” Rosemary’s gaze bored into Peggy’s with an intensity that would have been hard to stare down if—if last night had ended any other way. The little wordless cry of gratitude that burst out of her heart in that moment was the sincerest prayer Peggy had ever prayed.

“No, honey,” she said, quietly. “I never do.”

“And don’t you ever have to pay for taking a stand like that?” Rosebud asked, wonderingly.

“Oh, but of course!” Peggy marveled at her own nonchalance. “I’d say that once in a while the price comes—pretty high. But then the price for anything that’s worth a lot to you comes high, doesn’t it?”

“Oh.” Peggy hardly heard the little syllable whispered from the bed. Then: “But if you’re not any saint but just an ordinary sort like you or me, Peg, how do you get the price?”

Peggy locked her hands about her knees, leaned back against the foot of the bed, and stared up at the ceiling for a long minute before she said, reflectively: “Maybe that has something to do with something else.

“It’s sort of involved, I guess, but—you see I—I like the Blessed Sacrament.”

“Why you old crook!” exclaimed Rosemary, indignantly. “You’re supposed to *love* God; you know you are!” No; there was nothing especially intuitive about Rosemary.

Peggy laughed self-consciously and said, briefly: “Call it what you like. Anyway—once, a long time ago, I told Father Stuart that everything would be so much simpler if I could take the Blessed Sacrament around with me.”

Rosemary was shocked. “Why how perfectly sacrilegious! Why Peggy! that would be *terrible*.”

But there was a sudden sureness in Peggy’s smile and in Peggy’s voice as she shook her head and, looking down at her little sister, said, gently: “No. No, Rosebud; it wouldn’t. It would be—precious.” Her eyes went back to the ceiling, and presently she said: “But father said that I could take Christ around with me if I wanted to, even if not in the Host. He explained all about how Christ is inside my soul and how I can take Him and His grace into places where He’d never have entree if people didn’t get Him in in that way—incognito, father called it. Rosebud, I’ve become used to feeling that that’s my commission. You see I haven’t what they call a vocation, and I haven’t any talents or abilities to do big things—either for Christ or for a career. But this I *can* do—I can take Him along when we go danc-

ing in the Lake Room on College Night; I can take Him to formal dances in hotel ballrooms. But of course to keep Him there, Rosebud"—their eyes met again—"you have to stick by the code. And when it costs—well He's got the price. See?"

Rosemary said, very earnestly, if with a little bewilderment: "I see." There was a pause before she went on: "Look, Peggy. You're known as a popular girl. Well what makes you popular?"

"Oh, really!" Peggy still had a trick of blushing over a compliment. "Let's make this an academic question, please. Or better—let's take another specimen. Well then in theory: I'd say it's personality and charm that ought to put a girl over. And in practice: I'd say it works out. Consider Joan Driscoll. Tell your friend Connie about Joan some time."

"Joan certainly went over in a big way," Rosemary agreed. "But nevertheless you have to admit that a lot of popular girls do go in for—"

"—adolescence," finished Peggy, succinctly.

Rosemary giggled. "I like that. I'll use it. I'll say: 'Don't be adolescent, Connie!'" They both laughed, and Peggy realized deeply how good it was to laugh with Rosebud again.

Then Rosemary sat up abruptly. "No; I probably won't tell Connie that at all. We

had a fight, Peg. And now I know that I don't care that we did. She's not our kind, honey."

Peggy's heart missed a beat over the old intimacy surging out of that "our kind."

"I don't believe she is, Rosebud," she observed, matter-of-factly. "But how about—her friends?"

"That's how the fight started. We ran into Freddy Lang in Schubert's yesterday, and—I just didn't like the way he talked. I decided I wouldn't like going to that dance with him after all. So last night over at Connie's I called him and broke the date."

"Three cheers for a smart girl!" It was probably just as well that the phone, with all a phone's habitual discourtesy, interrupted Peggy's celebration, or the jubilation might have become slightly maudlin.

So that was what last night had paid for! Her eyes said her thank-you as she ran past the crucifix on her way to the phone. Suddenly, as she lifted it from the cradle, she stopped. Absurdly into her mind leaped Bill's glib prophecy about the leering scoundrel with the cigaret holder and the mustache curling up at the corners à la the very best villains of the nineties. Prophetic Bill had misread the tea leaves on the cigaret holder and the mustache. But the villain had turned up in a night spot—according to specifications!

It was Bud on the phone. "Hello—Peggy?"

. . . Oh this is luck, Now listen hard: I've a proposal to make to you."

"Bud!" she cried. "This is so sudden!"

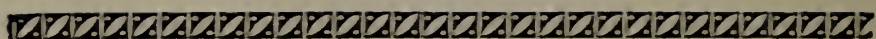
"Oh, gosh! Don't take me up on that."

"But I can prove it in any court of law," she reminded him. "The whole Bell Telephone System heard you."

"I can always bribe 'em," he said, cheerfully. "And this is serious business, Peg."

"I should say it is," she agreed. "There's a jail term for breach of promise."

"LISTEN!" he ordered. "Will you keep still while I ask you to play ping-pong tomorrow afternoon? A cousin of mine who's won a couple of trophies is in town, and he and Rita Murphy want us to play doubles with them. So—I'm counting on you to help me show 'em the game. Let's really go places, Peggy."



Have You Read
THE FIRST
St. Peggy Booklet?



**ST. PEGGY
OF CHICAGO**

By Sister Mary St. Virginia

If you've enjoyed "St. Peggy's Growing Up," you won't want to miss "ST. PEGGY OF CHICAGO," in which the lovable and wholly delightful St. Peggy was first introduced to pamphlet readers.

Single copy, 10c (by mail, 12c);
25 copies for \$2.25; 50 for \$4.00;
100 for \$7.00

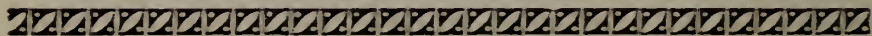


Order From

THE QUEEN'S WORK

3742 W. Pine Blvd.

St. Louis, Mo.



846350

