

THE BUTTERFLY ETUDE

(Continued from page 6)

been long after midnight that I heard a strange sound across the hall, and when I jumped up and stole to Perrine's door I knew that she was crying again. But I didn't like to go in, for she was whispering all to herself about "Arthur" and "Violet," and not one word about that horrid Mr. Hargrave. I knew he was horrid because I had heard him laugh and it sounded sneering and cruel, not like Perrine's laugh, which was as if it were part of the butterfly music.

I was in such trouble for it seemed dreadful to have Perrine and her husband drift apart like Lord Montclair and Hildegard in "A Mad Mistake," which Carrie Jackson lent me last summer, but which is not a standard novel at all. At last, a Great Idea came to me and I fairly shivered at its audacity—for there is no other word to describe it. It would be such a lovely deed to bring these sundered hearts together. Besides, it is blessed to be a peacemaker. But the Conways never interfere and it is hard to tell the difference between a busybody and a peacemaker. It all depends on how the interference turns out.

I closed the door, lighted the lamp and then opened the rosewood writing-desk that had been my mother's. I had some pretty heliotrope note-paper that Perrine had given me the day before, and that, Aunt Hester said, "was hardly in good taste." It smelled of the garden for I had sprinkled it with dried rose-leaves and lemon verbenas. I wrote on an envelope: "Mr. Arthur Ockley" and his city address and then there came a solemn pause. It is difficult to write to anyone who is a perfect stranger; but when he is also the husband of the woman whom you admire above everyone else on earth, the situation is really very embarrassing. But I remembered Perrine's tears and the sadness of her voice when she sang "The Garden of Sleep," and I began with boldness.

My dear Mr. Ockley:

I am taking a great liberty in writing to you, but I am your wife's cousin, Rebecca Conway, and she has just nursed me through a fever. Yesterday, she told me her troubles, how she had lost her dear little girl and was afraid that you did not care. I felt so sorry for her and I just know that you really do care and that perhaps you merely don't understand each other, like the hero and the heroine in books. But I wish you would come down here and tell her how much you think of her, because she has cried twice to-day, and I don't think it is good for her health. No more at present.

Very truly yours,
REBECCA CONWAY.

P.S.—Perrine didn't say a word against you except that you did not care. She thinks that you are good and honorable.
—R.C.

I felt rather proud of the letter when it was written, for although there were no thrilling expressions, I thought I told him the truth in a simple and convincing way. I heard the milkman when he came quite early, and I threw the letter out of the window. He seemed surprised when I called to him to post it, but said that he would be sure to remember. Then I became so excited that I had to stay in bed all morning and Aunt Hester said that she couldn't imagine why I was so feverish and she hoped I was not going to be like my mother's family who had no stamina. I had to take tablets and beef tea but I just felt as if I had a secret understanding with Fate or whatever it is that makes married people live happy ever after.

In the afternoon, to my great surprise, Aunt Hester allowed me to go out in the red automobile with Perrine, and her wicked admirer. I disliked Mr. Hargrave more than ever when I met him face to face, for he has such cold close-set eyes. I knew that he was angry because Perrine had asked me to come, and when he looked at her I thought of snakes and birds, for he seemed to be just waiting—waiting like the villain in the stories that Emily used to read to me when Aunt Hester was at prayer meeting. Emily was our trustworthy servant, and is now the wife of the butcher. We did not go very fast because I was not strong yet and after an hour, Mr. Hargrave turned back, saying in a purring way; "I'm afraid the little girl is tired." Perrine did not come in for a long while after I had been home, and her eyes sparkled like brown diamonds while her cheeks were flushed as if I had given her the fever. But she worried me

more than when she cried, and Aunt Hester's face looked as if it were cut out of stone as she sat at the head of the table and poured tea.

"I wish to speak to you in my room, Perrine," she said, after Perrine had crumbled bread and cake into a heap on her plate. There was a long talk and I was awakened from sleep by their coming into the hall.

I heard Perrine say: "You need not worry; it shall not happen again."

"No other member of the family has been so forgetful of what is becoming."

Then Perrine came into my room and bent over me, thinking I was not awake. She kissed me softly many times and said: "Dear little sister! It's the very last time."

"You're not going away!" I cried.

"I must go, dear. There seems no choice. Now, you are to go to sleep again." There was an icy tone in her voice as if nothing could ever change in her mind again. So, I let her go, but I knew that I was to have another "white night." Perrine says that is what the French call it when your eyes just grow wider and wider as the hours go by and you fairly ache with wideawakeness.

But, just as I was counting sheep for the hundredth time, I heard just the faintest sound, as if some one were going down stairs. I put on the pretty kimono and my blue slippers that Emily worked for me and went to the landing. There was a ghostly, grey figure crossing the hall below and I knew it was Perrine in her travelling cloak. I was more afraid than if it had been burglars and yet I hardly knew what I feared. As she had her hand on the old-fashioned brass knob, I reached her and said her name very softly. She turned and seemed about to scream. Then she whispered almost angrily: "It is absurd for you to be up at this hour, child. Go back to bed."

"Where are you going, Perrine?" I whispered back. Her hand trembled and I said again, "Please don't go away like this, Perrine."

"I must," she said again, and tried to shake off my hand. But I clung all the closer, for I felt that she was in worse trouble than ever and I remembered the nice kind eyes in Arthur's photograph.

"Come into the parlor," I said, "or Aunt Hester may hear us." We went into the dark room, smelling of roses, and carnations, and I held firmly to Perrine even when we were seated on the slippery old sofa which I had always hated. "I'm sure that hateful man has something to do with it," I said, spitefully. "Tell me, Perrine. Do you really like a man who looks as if nothing were worth while?"

"He—oh, how can I explain to a child like you? He needs me, dear, and no one else does. At least, I can make him happy."

"Is he waiting for you out there?" "Yes," answered Perrine, as simply as if I were ninety years old and she were a little child. "I am going away from all those who don't understand and don't care."

"No, you're not," and I held her hands tighter in the darkness; "you're going to stay here because we love you and because she'd want you to—that little dead baby." Perrine slid down to the floor and knelt there for a long, long time with her head on my knees. When she looked up, at last, it seemed as if she were all tired out.

"Very well, little one. But I won't be a coward. We'll go together and tell him." She opened one of the French windows and we went out into the soft summer darkness until we reached the gate. A man was standing there, who started when he saw us. Far down the road there seemed to be a carriage. Perrine laughed in a worn-out way, as if she would just as soon cry.

"I have changed my mind—that is all. But, at least, I owed you—Good-bye." He tried to take her hand but she drew away from him and held me with both arms. He talked the most ridiculous things, about how lonely he was and how he was willing to make the Supreme Sacrifice, and he even quoted lines of poetry that might have sounded as fascinating as "The Mad Mistake" if I had not been getting so sleepy. But when he saw that Perrine was really a Conway, after all, and was going to stay with her own people, that awful man showed what he really was, and used language that Aunt Hester would simply have fainted to hear. I wouldn't have believed that a man, who was so very particular about his appearance, and has such an expensive automobile, could have been so rude and

vulgar. In fact, he simply swore, again and again, and we went back into the garden and into the dark little parlor without saying one word to each other. Perrine almost carried me upstairs into her own room where Arthur Ockley's photograph looked solid and comforting.

"Now, honey, just get into bed and forget that we've had this nightmare." But before I went to sleep, I felt her arms around me and her cheek against mine.

"You're not angry with me, then?" "Angry! you blessed little Betty, you've shown me just how a cad can act."

"Isn't 'cad' slang?" I asked drowsily. "It's the only word to describe that creature. What a dreadful time his poor wife must have had!" It was beginning to rain and we could hear the heavy drops on the roof.

"I hope he'll get soaking wet," was the last word I said, before I fell into a sleep that lasted for ten long hours.

The next afternoon I was sitting in the garden when a tall man opened the gate and closed it with a quick, firm touch that seemed to show that he always knew just what he wanted. When he came up to the long chair in which I was lying, I saw that he must be Perrine's husband, and I began to shake all over, for I had almost forgotten that foolish letter of mine. He lifted his hat and said in such a nice, gentle voice: "Are you Miss Rebecca Conway?"

"Ye—es," I said; I knew that I must be blushing. "But your wife calls me Betty."

"Then you know who I am. Where is Perrine?"

"She is on the veranda. I hope you won't be vexed."

But he was gone, with such long strides that I don't believe he heard me. He stepped on the mignonette bed and crushed one of Aunt Hester's finest begonias before he came to the steps. I didn't turn my head, at all, though I was just dying to know whether he would talk like Rudolf Rassendyll or Lord Montclair. I don't see why being grown-up makes people so silly. How Perrine could have endured to go out in an automobile with a man like that Hargrave person, when she had a husband like Arthur Ockley at home, is something I cannot understand.

After more than an hour, I should think, Perrine came down from the veranda and fairly danced across the grass to my

chair. "Betty, you darling piece of absurdity!" she cried, "To think of your caring so much about your foolish cousin's affairs that you wrote that letter!" Her husband stood behind her and his eyes smiled in just the kindest way. She took me in her arms and kissed me so gratefully, that I wanted to cry. Then her husband—he told me to call him Cousin Arthur—acted in such a chivalrous way. He just raised both my hands to his lips as if I were the Princess Flavia, instead of being just a shabby little school-girl.

"You have helped us to a great deal of happiness, Cousin Betty."

"It was a very interfering thing to do," I stammered. "But I think people ought to explain their feelings towards each other, don't you?"

"I quite agree with you," he answered in the politest manner. "That is just what we have been doing and we intend to spend the rest of our lives in such explanation. Now, Perrine is going to prepare Aunt Hester for my visit, and I am going to become acquainted with you." He talked to me for ever so long about books and music and said I must come to the city and hear the opera. He told me that he was very fond of "Alice in Wonderland," and remembered all the delicious poetry. I should not have believed that a successful business man could know so many interesting books and be so well informed on really important subjects. He was just the kind of husband that I should have liked Perrine to have and he seemed greatly pleased when I told him so.

I don't know how Perrine had managed it, but, when we went in to tea, we found Aunt Hester actually with her arms around the daughter of "that person from New Orleans." If I had not known it to be impossible, I'd have said that Aunt Hester had been crying. She seemed to like Cousin Arthur at once and said he had a look of the Conways about the forehead. It was the nicest meal we had ever known in the old dining-room, although I had to lie on the sofa and was not allowed to have any of the citron preserves. Then after tea we sat on the veranda while Perrine played for us—dreamy old tunes that belonged to the August twilight. Last of all she played my Butterfly piece, but it was different in some way, and seemed to have more meaning.

With the Journal's Juniors

A Corner for the Small Person

By COUSIN CLOVER

Answers to Last Month's Puzzles

THE diagram shows how to solve last week's puzzle of the man in the moon. With two dotted lines the other two men in the moon are made to appear.

Did you solve the problem of the three farmers and their twenty-four

circle formation is LEVEL. Try it out yourself.

The answer to the egg mystery is, the man keeps ducks and eats the duck eggs.

Curious Wedding Rings

AMONG the curiosities in wedding rings it is on record that in the early days in this country rings were made of rushes. Perhaps the most curious material used for rings required in an emergency is the case of one being hurriedly made by cutting it out of the finger of a glove and another cut out of a visiting card. The Quakers and Swiss Protestants do not use rings at their marriage ceremonies. The Irish people have a strong objection to any but gold rings. In St. Kilda wedding rings are made of worsted. The women of the Upper Bayanzi, on the Congo, wear their wedding rings round their necks. These rings are made of thick brass rods, which are made into great rings and strongly welded together. The more wealthy the husband the heavier the ring; in some cases they weigh as much as thirty pounds.

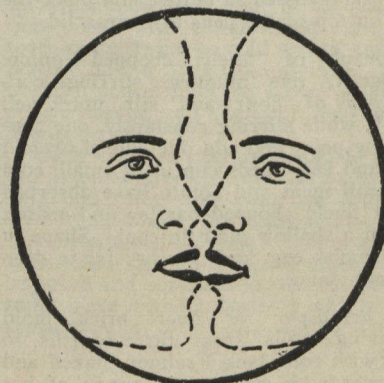
A Comfortable Preacher

ONE Sunday, as a certain Scottish minister was returning homewards he was accosted by an old woman, who said:

"Oh, sir, well do I like the day when you preach."

The minister was aware that he was not popular, so he said: "My good woman, why do you like when I preach?"

"Oh, sir, I always get a good seat then," the dame replied.



THE THREE FACES IN THE MOON

quarts of maple syrup? This is the way to divide the syrup into three portions of eight quarts each: Fill the eleven and the five-quart buckets and pour the remaining eight quarts into the thirteen-quart bucket. Empty the eleven and the five-quart buckets into the twenty-four quart kettle. Transfer the eight quarts from the thirteen-quart to the eleven-quart bucket. Fill the thirteen from the twenty-four. Fill the five from the thirteen. Empty the five into the twenty-four. Now each of the three larger vessels contains eight quarts of maple syrup.

The word used in the twenty-five