

Doorknobs

By Phyllis Duganne

The story of a modern girl who imagined she could take a naughty romance to a bad country and make it behave

LISHA went on talking. Kandy, which was short for K. Anderson and long for Sis, lay stretched on the grass beside him, chewing a blade of grass and glancing at him obliquely from time to time.

"He's such a thorough rotter!" Lisha was discussing the husband of the very pretty Elsie Paget.

"And you are such a thorough idiot!" thought Kandy to herself, with great bitterness.

Impartially, without prejudice, wondered Kandy, was there ever another man so attractive as Lisha Emory? His voice—which was unquestionably the most charming, most melodious and most exciting voice she had ever heard—went on intoning words about Elsie Paget and her regrettable husband, and she enjoyed the sound of it, paying little heed to the sense.

Then there was his figure. He was so very tall; his shoulders were so beautifully broad, his waist and hips so delectably slender. Kandy always wanted to hug him—especially when, as now, he was wearing lanky white ducks and a snowy sweater, with his slim ankles in blue wool socks and a blue-figured handkerchief sticking out of his hip pocket. His hair was thick, with just enough lights in its brown to make him a blond had not his deep blue eyes already done so.

It was only, reflected Kandy to herself, that rather rugged construction of bone beneath the smooth brown of his face that saved him from being detestably handsome. Even as it was, his resemblance to the swanky young men who light cigarettes or caress pipstems or sit at the wheels of low-hung motor cars in advertisements was startling.

She looked across at him lying there beside her on the smooth grass of the Anderson lawn. Just beyond them her four brothers were playing a noisy and at times profane set of doubles; her own racket lay in readiness at her side. His face was serious, his mouth a straight line. Good heavens, was he really falling in love with this Paget female?

"YOU fool," said Kandy to him in her mind, looking at him sympathetically the while and silently. "You driveling idiot! When are you going to snap out of it and realize that I'm the only woman you ever loved or ever can love? When are you going to realize that I'll be nineteen on my next birthday and that these seven years of difference in our ages are mattering less and less and less?"

She chewed up another stalk of grass efficiently.

"It's too bad," she remarked diffidently, "that she has such a hideous figure. She's so pretty."

Lisha looked at her, with that piercing look of his that always made her gasp in recognition of the fact that she really didn't know at all what was going on inside his head, in spite of their nearly nineteen years of companionship.

"She makes me think of that loathsome Schopenhauer's description of my sex," went on Kandy imperturbably. "What was it—wide-hipped and short-legged? I remember how mad it made me when I was sixteen!"

"But now in your maturer years—" said Lisha, and laughed at her. He drew his great length to a sitting position and contemplated her for an amused instant. "You're as long-legged as a newborn calf, Sis!"

She could have slapped him. When he looked at her with that amused, impersonal air, rage so welled within her that she could feel the beating of her heart grow louder, thumpier, in angry rhythm. And he knew how she hated him to call her Sis—because she had told him a thousand times—knew, and never for an instant, the imbecile, knew why!

She rose to her own sneakered feet, in one neat, easy motion and addressed her brothers:

"Hey! How long are you kids going to hog the court? Li and I've been waiting 'most an hour!"

ALONG the macadam road beyond the court a battered red roadster flew by, and an arm waved in their direction, in Kandy's direction. She waved absently, and felt Lisha's eyes on her face.

"Ha!" said Lisha. "Himself!"

Kandy didn't bother to answer. She liked Phil McKenna well enough, and she was humanly flattered by his interest in her—but he wasn't Himself, by a long shot.

"Did you ever hear about Phil and the doorknob?" Lisha asked her.

She shook her head, leaning against the trunk of a big elm and looking at him.

"You know those round white china doorknobs? When Phil was a kid there was one on his nursery door, and he got the bright idea of trying to see whether he could get it in his mouth." Lisha's deep blue eyes were gleaming. "He did, all right—but he couldn't get it out again! He stood there, kicking the door and trying to yell until some people came, and they couldn't extricate poor Phil from the doorknob either! So they brought a little stool and pushed it up to the threshold and let him sit there with the doorknob in his mouth until the doctor or the plumber, or whoever it was, came." He was laughing at her now, and his eyes seemed very deep.

Kandy chuckled.

"Fancy kissing him," said Lisha, "after that! One would always remember the doorknob."

Kandy looked up at him thoughtfully. So that was the moral of his tale! Well, she would always remember the doorknob; Li was right. But she wondered whether he could ever again look at Elsie Paget's pretty, limpid face without thinking of the writings of a German philosopher! Check . . . and checkmate. . . .

"Ready, sis?"

Jerry and Dave had won; the twins flopped down beneath the elm tree, surrendering their side of the court. On the veranda of the house, Mrs. Emory, Lisha's mother, smiled at Mrs. Anderson.

"You must feel as though Lisha were one of your own children!" she mur-



He had conceived the bright idea of getting the doorknob in his mouth

mured. "How devoted he is to them!"

"It's one big family," Mrs. Anderson assented. "They all think of Li as a brother."

Kandy was moving past Lisha to take her proper place on the court; a button on the sleeve of her orange flannel dress caught in his sweater, and she stood very still while he bent over to extricate it. When she moved on to the net her breath was coming as quickly as though she, like Dave and Jerry, had already played three deuce sets.

That autumn Lisha Emory went to China. No one, it seemed to Kandy, except Lisha would be doing the utterly absurd and romantic thing of going to China to design, for a wealthy Chinese merchant, a country home in the best traditions of Chinese architecture. The letters and photographs which he sent to the Anderson family were all addressed to her—and directed to them all. She treasured them in a box which Lisha might, but probably would not, have recognized. It was a box he had made long ago.

Kandy was the first to notice the increased frequency of the appearance of the name Irene Heland—one pronounced it I-ren-ie, Lisha explained—in the letters. Mrs. Heland was the wife of a British importer, the golden-haired type of Englishwoman, with strange violet eyes. "Do send us photographs of all your friends," wrote Kandy. They came. There was no denying Irene Heland's disturbing beauty. After six months, "Irene and I" began to be replaced by vague, ill-defined "we's." "I like it out

here," Lisha wrote. "I've just taken on another bit of work. . . ."

It was a year since he had sailed, and Kandy, at home, had twenty candles on her birthday cake, and Phil McKenna kissed her and asked her to marry him, and she thought of white china doorknobs and violet-eyed Englishwomen and Lisha Emory and told him no very gently.

JERRY got married, and Dave had a love affair with a pretty young dancer, and Kandy was appointed to keep the family soothed down about it. She went to New York occasionally with him, met and liked the little dancer, and felt very much a woman of the world. Then she found Carter Blakeman, who was tall and slender and had dark-blue eyes and brown hair with golden lights in it, and there were no doorknobs in his life, and on the very afternoon of the day when she knew he would propose there came a fat letter from China with a new photograph of Lisha—Lisha in a light linen suit, beside the Great Wall: Lisha dissolving the Great Wall to inanimate insignificance by the living reality of his own profile against the flat Chinese sky, the careless charm of his well-knit body.

More fully than ever Kandy recognized the resemblance between Carter Blakeman and Lisha Emory. You can teach a parrot to say just as good. . . . Kandy wept a little and went downstairs that evening to meet Carter with an undivided heart.

Then for a horrible period there were no letters at all, and she looked up cable rates to China and cried rather a lot. Then his cable—after nearly two years, Lisha was coming home!

He fairly stamped into the house and caught her in his arms, hugged her against him.

"My God, it's good to see you again, Sis!"



Kandy burst into tears, but as everyone in the room was laughing or crying or making some sort of fuss, no one bothered to wonder why, not even Lisha. She sat and stared at him all evening while he talked to them. He was only twenty-eight years old, but his brown hair—with the golden lights in it that made him a blond—was going quite gray. Becoming, of course, and distinguished, but, illogically, Kandy felt that she could claw those violet eyes out of that pink and white face. What did she mean, that Englishwoman? How did she dare make Lisha unhappy? New lines in his brown face; he was thinner. The New England quality of those bones beneath his cheeks was intensified.

"Lisha isn't so good-looking as he used to be," Mrs. Anderson murmured after he had gone home, and Kandy knew what she meant. Not that she agreed with her for an instant; Lisha was a hundred, an infinite number of times, handsomer!

He plunged rather seriously into work, bending over his blue prints and great squares of white paper for many hours every day. Kandy alone had the freedom of his workroom, that reconstructed barn in the meadow between his house and her own. She used to come in silently, with her own drawing board beneath her arm—she had begun to do fashion sketches and occasional small medallions in black and white for magazines—and sit down beside him without speaking. More often than not they talked.

"It's good to be home," he told her one day. "And, Lord, it's good to be with you!"

Kandy's heart pounded.

"You're really the only woman in the world who's worth the powder to blow her to hell, Sis!"

She bent over her drawing board, her fingers working swiftly.

He went on, "You don't know what you mean to me, Kandy!"

"And you—you poor idiot—don't know it either!" she wanted to shriek at him. But she didn't. How could she?

He was smiling.

"What good times we have together,

kid! It's so nice to have you all grown up and old enough for me to say anything I want to! We can talk together, you and I. We'll always tell each other everything, won't we? Save our best stories for one another—keep nothing sacred, no matter how many promises of tomblike silence we've made!"

She looked up at him, wondering whether he really didn't know that he was lying. He would never tell her about Irene Heland, and she couldn't tell him. . . .

She nodded.

HE HAD bought a roadster, and he was a source of perpetual speculation to the young women of the summer colony. "All that good material wasted!" they used to wail when they spoke of him. For he could dance like a dream—and seldom did. At the dances he did attend he would waste gorgeous tune after gorgeous tune in sedate tours of the floor, pushing elderly women before him. He and Kandy danced together like one person.

"Gosh, how do you make him talk, Kandy?" one of them demanded. "I can't get him to say more than three words at a time!" And, as Kandy hesitated, "Of course you two are like brother and sister, anyway!"

She didn't answer that.

They—the young women of the town

—continued to waylay him at every turn; they found trouble with their motors when he drew up in his; they had a positive epidemic of difficulties in putting on coats, fastening gloves, tying shoe strings. He was courteous and charming and eminently desirable—and as attainable as a star in the heavens.

Mrs. Emory worried about him a little. "Lisha's so changed!" she complained to Kandy. "It's so funny for him to have no interest at all in girls. And I used to think he had too much! Here he's getting toward thirty—do you know, Kandy, I don't believe he'll ever marry! It's nice for me, in a way. And of course it's so nice that he has you—he ought to have some contact with young women!"

Kandy had a momentary impulse to tell Lisha's mother everything. Perhaps she could help. Perhaps if one person, somewhere in the world, stopped accepting them as "practically brother and sister" . . . ! She swallowed. She couldn't help her pride. No one was going to know how desperately she was in love with Lisha Emory until he knew, himself, that he loved her!

He went to New York that autumn, and Kandy was twenty-one and came into a small inheritance. She decided to go to New York too; the markets for her drawings were growing, and she was restless. Mrs. Anderson approved

her going. Kandy was a well-balanced sort of girl—no nonsense about her!

"She's one of these modern girls," she told Mrs. Emory. "Perhaps it's because she's been brought up so much with boys. She has a masculine viewpoint. You know, sometimes I feel that Kandy will never marry! It worries me. Boys are

crazy about her—always have been—but none of them seem to cut any ice with her! She sees through them!"

Mrs. Emory nodded. "It's nice that she and Lisha are so devoted," she said. "He'll enjoy so having her in New York!"

Lisha was enthusiastic about her coming. His own studio was in a rambling building in lower New York, a honeycomb of artists of all sorts, and, as luck would have it, the studio just across the hall was vacant. Kandy moved in and took up her residence, separated from him by a scant three feet. Sometimes they had breakfast together in her studio; often they had tea in his. Whenever they were both free from engagements they dined together. Yet they kept, somehow, their separate circles of friends; frequently Kandy heard unfamiliar voices lifted high in the square room across the hall; Lisha swore that he could keep no track of the laughing young men and women who banged the brass knocker above the white card that bore the name K. Anderson.

ALL about them people were falling in love, getting married, having babies. In Lisha's circle, which was slightly older than Kandy's, some had even progressed to the stage of being divorced.

Occasionally young men fell in love with Kandy—it was, after all, an obvious thing for them to do. She was a young woman, vibrantly alive, colorful, animated, with a figure like a reed and an oval face dominated by wide brown eyes with curling lashes. Kandy had even a dimple, elusive, not appearing for everybody or everything, that made her irresistible. She dressed well. "You know, you have better taste in clothes than any woman I know, Sis," Lisha told her and was blankly amazed when she laughed at him. As though she didn't wear his favorite colors, his favorite materials, his favorite lines; as though everything she bought were not with an eye to his approval!

She opened her studio door one morning quietly, so as not to disturb the sleeping geniuses about her—artist or no artist. She had, as she said herself, the matutinal habits of a farmer's wife—and started to bend over to pick up the jar of cream that reposed just outside, when she saw that Lisha's door, opposite, was swinging slowly, gently open. She stood, hardly conscious that she was staring. The door continued to move soundlessly; she could see his familiar brown fingers gripping the edge. It opened further.

Simultaneously Lisha Emory was opening his door and kissing a young woman. Her back was toward Kandy, a pretty back, a back that was slender, even in a light-brown fur coat. Slender ankles in beige stockings; small feet in brown slippers. . . .

Kandy started to retreat, but as she stirred Lisha raised his head, and his eyes, looking vaguely over the top of the small beige-colored hat, met hers. He blinked—and grinned. Without a sound, Kandy closed her door before her and leaned against it, on the inside, not daring to move. She heard whispered voices, a muffled little laugh, the patter of small feet tiptoeing down the corridor. A door closed, Lisha's door, and she turned toward her couch, to fling herself upon it, when his voice, in a whisper, sounded through the panel, not three inches from her ear.

She opened the door, and he came in, still grinning, a little self-consciously.

"Gosh, I can't get away with anything, can I?" he greeted her, and he chuckled.

She looked at him dully.

Then: "I'll make you some coffee," she said. (Continued on page 44)



Anger rose swiftly within her as he contemplated her for an amused moment

Rules Rush In

By John W. Heisman

What was the foul? Darned if we know. Something is always going on and we never can tell what's happened. Off-side or holding or rough stuff or something. Of all times to call a penalty! But don't get excited. In this article, Mr. Heisman tells you enough about the rules of football to convince you that it's a good thing we have them

WHEN I started playing football at Titusville, Pa., more than 40 years ago, our game may have been a bit crude: cruder than the college variety.

With the exception of a couple of prohibitions such as running with the ball and murder, we had few rules. Doubtless, to many this made the game a source of endless delight. I remember hearing a man in a railroad train some years ago declare that he would quit anything he was doing and travel any number of miles to see a polo game.

"Why?" his friend demanded.

"Because," said he, "polo's about the only game I know that hasn't been ruined by rules."

But polo is a pastime limited to a very few. Unquestionably if it were to be reduced to terms understandable to the average pocketbook it would become so widely played as to require plenty of rules.

Like football. As football progressed and all colleges took it up as a very necessary part of their curriculums various things had to be done to restrain the lusty youths whose Saturday-afternoon ambition was to die for dear old Alma Mater and take two or three of the opposition into the hereafter with them.

As in all other sports, as in business, as in civilization's progress, rules came as the necessity, fancied and real, arose.

An Argument and a New Rule

Years ago, while my Alabama Poly team was playing Georgia Tech, the Alabama fullback punted. The ball did not travel five yards in the direction of the Tech goal but it probably broke all altitude records.

That ball went straight into the air, and so far up that before it had begun to descend the entire 22 players were milling around awaiting its arrival. As the ball came down the milling became a riot. And matters were complicated by a youth on the crowded and highly agitated sidelines.



A flagrant foul. Ertresvaag of Penn was all set to take a forward pass but his opponent tackled him

Thinking perhaps to add a bit to the fun, this lad booted a cheap ball into the fray. It came down on the edge of the battling players and almost simultaneously with the real ball.

Things were still further complicated by the fact that it was a dry day in a particularly arid spell. The dust lay two inches deep on the field. And with the stampeding of the 22 players and the furor on the side lines the air was heavy and opaque.

The players divided their attentions. One mass fought for the real ball while the other assaulted each other for possession of the false. And to make it all the more exciting the two balls soon were widely separated. The dust storm kept each group oblivious of the progress of the other.

Presently both balls were captured. Matthew Sloan, now president of the New York Edison Company, had one of them. The wrong one. A Tech man was on the right one.

In those brave days there was no rule prohibiting the coach from going on the field and taking part in arguments. I heard the referee rule "first down for Tech" and was at his side before the echo had died.

"Why first down?" I demanded. "They haven't gained their five yards."

"Yes," said he, "but this was a free fumble and that means first down no matter which team gets it."

"Free fumble," I roared. "Why, man, there hasn't been any such term since Noah played the game. There's nothing in the rules today about a free fumble. Tech kicked and Tech recovered. Also Tech had five yards to gain and hasn't made it. Poly touched the ball several times during the scramble, but we never had possession. It was never in our control. Therefore they've had it for the full number of downs and they haven't made their distance. Give us the ball."

"Stand back," said the referee. "There are no such words as possession and control in the book. Poly touched the ball and that gave them constructive possession. First down for Tech."

I lost the argument but I won my point—later. I wrote a letter to the rules committee and that august body wrote my contentions into the rules for the following season. So now, as you watch the game, you may see for yourself that when a fumbled ball is recovered by the team which fumbled, it counts as a down. Unless, of course, the required distance to first down is made in the excitement.

The only exception to this rule would come when, for example, the defensive team recovers the ball and, before it is down, refumbles it and the original

fumbling side recovers. That would mean first down for the fumbling side.

However, we shan't go into side issues of that sort. To get a comprehensive and detailed knowledge of the current rules of football is something akin to a career. Our present interest lies in what helped to bring into the book a number of rules which frequently befuddle the spectator.

When to Change to a New Ball?

Now you may have beheld a referee substituting a new and dry ball for the muddy and waterlogged thing which has served part of the game. The rule has it that on a wet field the ball may be changed for a new one at the end of the second period—at the referee's discretion.

Much of a bitter nature happened before the rules committee became that definite.

My Georgia Tech lads were hard at it with Vanderbilt one terrible afternoon in 1906. I do not recall ever seeing worse weather for anything, let alone football. The field was visited by everything except plague, fire and tornado. It took turns snowing and raining.

On such a field my light Tech team had no right to expect victory. Our one hope lived in Lobster Brown's right foot, and Brown could kick. However, after a few minutes of that mud a siege gun couldn't have done much with that ball. Brown tried valiantly but almost broke his foot.

The game proceeded slowly but the weather got worse with incredible speed and the few bets on Tech seemed to go glimmering as Brown demonstrated how little he could do with the ball. Our one chance had appeared to be a field goal.

We never got that chance but we did better. Somehow we slid across Van-

derbilt's line for a touchdown—five points in those days. A goal after touchdown counted but one—but how we wanted it! Vanderbilt's heavy team might crash through for a touchdown but with a ball like that it might fail of the goal afterward.

Here, then, was an opportunity to take chances. I sent a sub into the game and I was very careful to see that he wore a heavy raincoat as he splashed across the field. He reported to the referee, shed his raincoat and produced from thereunder a nice, dry, kickable ball.

Vanderbilt at once protested and Bradley Walker, the referee, was obviously uncertain.

"It's a regulation ball, isn't it?" I demanded.

"Yes—but—"

"All that the rules say," I went on, "is that the game be played with the prolate spheroid specified in the rules. Well, here's a prolate spheroid, the twin of the one we've just made a touchdown with. How about it?"

Walker perused the book. There was nothing therein forbidding the fresh ball. And Lobster Brown kicked the goal with it.

But today, as I have written, the referee decides when a new ball shall be taken into the game, and not the coach.

Perhaps you have attended a game which ended with the ball in play—in the arms of a runner, or in the air, or on its way from center to the backfield. And perhaps that attempt, executed after the timekeeper's watch registered the final second for play, won the game. Much argument resulted in the grandstand, didn't it?

Well, the rule for this reads: "Time shall not be called for the end of a period until the ball is dead." And a very good sporting rule it is, too.

