

# Keep Your

*It's a wise father who knows his son. And Mr. Armstrong didn't know Peter—until Sally took a hand*



"Hello!" he said, seemingly relieved. "Look here, tell me who's giving this party, and why?" He looked worried but very nice

SALLY HUSTON wanted to go home, but she couldn't. Not possibly. Not for hours yet. Not unless she walked to the station, five miles away. And even if she grew desperate enough to do that, it would mean a row later, and she wasn't, she thought, up to facing even the prospect of a row.

She was licked. This party, somehow, had beaten her. She loathed it, but its ironic contrast to the way she'd been living for the last year and seemed likely to have to keep on living had been too much for her. She'd managed to get away for a few minutes, and she sat and smoked a cigarette on a bench hidden away in a clump of white birches from which she could keep an eye on things with a fair chance of not being seen herself until she was rested. Sally didn't like her aunt, but she had to admit that this was a good show. There'd been a perfectly marvelous lunch, out of doors, and people were wandering around, now, waiting for the golf to begin, looking the place over.

Hordes of nice people, beautifully dressed, gay and cheerful, vivid, colorful. Half a mile of Westchester real estate with a stone wall around it, worth incalculable sums in terms of building lots. Eighteen of Mr. Devereux Emmett's very choicest holes for a private golf course, with greens gleaming like emeralds and traps full of sea sand, as white as snow, brought in lighters and trucks from Long Island, and damn the expense. And the house, rising above the trees, gray stone, looking, really, Sally was obliged to confess, like the French château its architect had copied.

"Listen—"

SALLY turned, with a start. There was a young man. She hadn't heard him come up. He looked worried. But very nice, Sally thought. She didn't know him, which was, that day, a point very much in his favor. She smiled at him before she quite knew she was doing it.

"Hello!" said Sally.

"Hello!" he said seemingly relieved. "Look here, tell me— who's giving this party, and why?"

"But, good grief, don't you know?" she said.

"Would I be asking you if I did? Be yourself, lady. There's no time to be lost. Tell me."

"Oh!" said Sally. "It's my aunt. At least, she's not really my aunt. She's my real aunt's husband's second wife."

"I see," he said. "Quite—but do you mind if we go into that some other time? About how many wives your uncle had, I mean? What's the woman's name, and why is she giving this show?"

"Because she wanted to, I suppose," said Sally. "Heaven knows there's no other reason that I can see!"

"I wish you'd stop trying to be funny," the young man said crossly. "Haven't you any concentration at all? Keep your eye on the ball! What's her name, and is this a garden party, or is Lindbergh going to fly over, or what?"

"Oh, now I see what you mean," said Sally. "My aunt's name is Mrs. Madden, and it's just a party to celebrate this new golf course. They're going to have mixed foursomes—"

"My God!" said the young man. Sally thought he'd have turned pale if he hadn't been too sunburned to make that practicable.

"And, you see, her daughter—her stepdaughter, I mean, my cousin—"

"YOU know," he said, "I think your family tree's extraordinarily interesting and all that, but that's not the point just now, is it? Madden, eh? Mrs. Madden. What's she wearing? How do I know her when I see her?"

"Bl-black and—white—voile," Sally gasped. "A large white hat."

"Good! Tall—short—thin—fat?"

"In between—" said Sally. "Quite—quite nice looking—her hair's white—"

"Good!" said the young man. "You see—if you just concentrate you're all right—" and off he rushed. Sally arose and followed him. She didn't want to go home, any more. Not until she found out what this young man wanted.

In a minute she found out. Her aunt was introducing him to Marjorie Romer, and the young man who'd been with Marjorie, looking incredulous but happy, was fading away, swiftly, in the direction of a débutante who had five men already but was perfectly capable of handling another.

"Well!" said Sally to herself. Then she smiled wickedly. All that simply because he had wanted to meet Marjorie!

Wild horses couldn't have dragged Sally away now. Her behavior was entirely shameless. Deliberately she watched the two of them. The young man started in to talk to Marjorie, breathlessly. But he didn't get very far. Before long it was Marjorie who talked. Sally saw varying expressions come and go in the young man's eyes. Doubt, curiosity, suspicion, desperation. Sally bided her time. At what seemed to her the right moment she struck. All she did was wander into the line of the young man's vision. She wanted to see what would happen.

She did. He saw her; looked at her; looked at her again to make sure. Then he turned and paid concentrated attention to Marjorie. Ruthlessly, at what, Sally was sure, was his first chance, he broke in, accompanying his words with a wide, free gesture. Then he bowed, and turned away, and came straight to Sally.

"Hello!" he said. "Wondering where you were, I was." He took out his handkerchief and wiped his forehead. "My good gosh! I ought to have known there'd be a catch—but how can you tell that a girl who looks like that's



# Eye on the Ball

By William Almon Wolff

going to talk like someone reading a guide book out loud? Anything you'd like to know about the English lakes or the château country in France?"

"No, thanks," said Sally, "but, please, I'd love to know the plot."

"Plot?" he said. "Plot?" Then he smiled a slow smile that grew into a grin. "Oh, well! Driving along, just so-so. Got held up somewhere. That girl in the next car—with a man. Fell for her. Fell hard. Turned in here, after them—saw it was a party, you see. Crashed it. Thought there'd be someone I knew. Never saw so many people I didn't know all at one time."

Sally just listened.

"Barged around. Beginning to feel nervous. Tried to make this girl. Thought she gave me a glass eye. Tried to spot hostess. No go. Lots of old girls looked as if they might be hostess. You know."

Sally did.

"It's not funny," he complained. "That's your trouble, though. No seriousness of purpose. Chap can't count on you. Got to know hostess' name if you're crashing a party, haven't you?"

"I—I suppose it is a help!" said Sally.

"Of course. Elementary, that is. Come on. Let's go."

"Go?" said Sally, startled. "Go where?"

"I don't care!" he said. "Away. That's all. You—" He looked alarmed. "You don't live here, do you?"

"No," she said. "I live in New York."

"Good," he said. "So do I. Drive you down. Have dinner somewhere."

"Oh—I oughtn't—all right—let's!" said Sally. Why not? If she didn't go now she'd have to wait around for hours before they sent her to the station, and the train would be crowded, and what good did it do her, anyway, to keep in the good graces of an aunt who wasn't really an aunt at all?

Driving down with Peter—she found out, quite soon, that his name was Peter Armstrong—was fun.

"Where were you going, originally?" she asked him.

"Oh, just to play golf—it didn't matter," he said. "You wouldn't have been there anyway."

Everything was all right until late, when he began talking about the future.

"Tomorrow's out," he said gloomily.

"Date I can't break. Silly, but there it is. Monday, though. That's another day. Lunch—d'you mind having it early, about one? And dinner rather late, and we'll do a musical show, so we can miss all we like of the first act. And then we can start seeing if any of the night clubs are any good this summer—you know, find out where they have music we both like—darned important, that is—"

"STOP!" she said, "I can't have lunch at all on Monday, and I oughtn't to go out that night—except—well—dinner, perhaps, if I go home right away afterward. I have to get some sleep week nights. I work."

"Work?" he said, shocked and annoyed. "Why bring that up? So do I work. That's why I said an early lunch—I have to beat the old man back to the office."

"You don't have to work the way I do," she said viciously. "You don't have to take dictation all morning and type letters all afternoon and then stay around for hours typing half of them over again because you've made so many mistakes."

"Maybe," he said. "But the worst they can do to you is fire you."

"Well, you can't even be fired!"

"You'd be surprised. You don't know the male parent. A hard-boiled egg if the cook ever forgot to turn the gas off under one! Fired! I'll say I can be fired. And if I am I get cut off with a dollar, too! Laugh that off." His voice was increasingly bitter. "Know the fast one he pulled on me this morning? No more golf!"

"But you were going to play today—"

"Oh, I mean real golf. Tournament stuff. Saturday afternoons and Sundays—yes. Says I can't concentrate on business and tournament golf, too!"

SALLY laughed, to his annoyance. She wasn't appalled, as he'd expected her to be.

"I don't see why you had to start talking about work," he said. And, quite soon, he took her home, to the dull, respectable upper West Side block where she shared an apartment with a couple of other girls from the office—which wasn't where she'd been brought up, by any means, in the days before her father had died suddenly, without leaving any money, and her aunt had made her uncle do the right thing by her in the way of a secretarial course. He got out with her and they stood and looked at one another.

"Well," said Sally. "Good night, Mr. Armstrong."

"Peter," he said, absently. "Oh, damn—"

"What's the matter with you, I'd like to know?" she said crossly.

"I'm just trying to think," he said. "It's so mixed up—"

"I don't see—"

"Oh, hush, of course you don't!" said Peter. "Can't you take my word for it? If I tried to explain—" He shook his head. "No use. Have to wait."

She stared at him, mystified. And then he did what absolutely nothing he'd said or done all day had warned her to expect. He grabbed her, suddenly, and kissed her, most unskillfully, somewhere under her left eye, and then let her go.

"You just leave it to me," he said. "It'll come out all right. Good night."

And before she could catch her breath, much less say anything, he was in the car and going off.

"Well!" said Sally, as she let herself in. What a day! Sally, considering the times she lived in, hadn't been kissed much. And now she'd been kissed twice in one day.

Twice—yes. The first kiss hasn't come up before, but it had happened, even though subsequent events had rather banished the memory of it from Sally's mind, until the last event of all recalled it sharply.

Peter's kiss meant nothing; Sally knew that. Arthur Butler's kiss, though, which had occurred much earlier in the day, in the taxi in which he'd taken her to the station, had been different. It had meant nothing to Sally but a lot to Arthur. Arthur was not one of your light and casual kissers, as Peter probably was. But what was she to do?

Sunday was a blank, mercifully. But Monday, at the office, was terrible. Sally's head ached, and she'd forgotten what little she had ever known about a typewriter, and her spelling, always original, became grotesque. Arthur wanted her to have lunch, and she wouldn't, and then he called up again. Not to ask her to dinner, but just to say he'd broken an engagement so that they could dine together; a command, not an invitation. She said she couldn't,

and he hung up, ominously, and when she started home, well after six, he was waiting for her downstairs.

"You're late," he said.

"Do you suppose I don't know it?" Was Peter coming to take her to dinner or wasn't he? She hadn't heard a word from him. "Arthur—"

"Yes?"

"You know everything. Is there a golf player called Armstrong? A—a well-known one, I mean?"

"Peter Armstrong? Of course. Plays from Baltamis. Be pretty good if he'd take the game seriously. Doesn't concentrate. Lasted to the semi-final in the amateur last year, though, at that."

"Oh!" said Sally.

"Why can't you have dinner with me?"

"I'm going out."

"With a man?"

"I don't know."

"Sally, don't equivocate! Of course you know!"

Then she got a respite while he se-

lected a taxi, something he always did with care, ending with a comparison of the driver and his photograph on the card inside. There was this about Arthur, though; he could afford to take a girl home to South Brooklyn, even in a taxi, to say nothing of the upper West Side.

"Sally," he said, gravely, when they were in the cab. "I don't want to press you, but, after all, now that we're engaged—"

"Engaged!" she said, with a start.

"Of course!" he said. "After what happened Saturday—"

She racked her aching head. Yes. He'd kissed her, just as they reached the station, and she'd run for her train, then, while he paid off the cab.

"But—" she (Continued on page 52)

Illustrated by  
James Trembath



Wild horses couldn't have dragged Sally away. Her behavior was shameless. Deliberately she watched the two of them



# Where there's Smoke ~

*The snorting of motors has replaced the clatter of hoofs as accompaniment to the clang of bells that follows a cry of fire! But the kick remains*

Below: This is the kind of fire that you don't mind turning out to watch on a cold winter's night. It looks movie, but actually it's a burning part of Villanova College, Pennsylvania

Wide World

Wide World

When the scaffolding on this unfinished tower took fire it made a great sight against the skyline. The long, light lines are falling embers. The time exposure makes 'em look like that

Left: Fire engines, old or new, could count for little in such a blaze as the famous Chicago fire

From an old print

Brown Bros.

Above: Much of the thrill passed with the horses and shiny boilers

Left: If it's a waterfront blaze, the fireboats chug along in all their picturesque glory and spout their stuff

Wide World