

Truth is a relative term. One man's truth may be another man's falsehood. And when the word of my loving husband conflicted with that of my young cousin Julie, I, Ann Sayers, had to determine whether she was a sweet young thing... or a fiendish..

Teen-Age Home Breaker



"AFTER TWO SERENE AND PEACEFUL YEARS OF MARRIAGE, JOHN AND I WERE EAGERLY AWAITING AN UNEXPECTED VISIT FROM MY AUNT HELEN'S WARD, JULIE."

OH, JOHN, I CAN'T WAIT FOR JULIE TO GET HERE! I PROMISED AUNT HELEN WE'D MAKE HER ESPECIALLY WELCOME. LET'S SHOW HER A REAL GOOD TIME.

YEAH, HONEY! A KID AROUND THE HOUSE MIGHT BE FUN! SAY, MAYBE SHE'LL LIKE THE MOORE KIDS DOWN THE STREET. INTRODUCE THEM. I'LL TRY TO GET HOME EARLY!



NOTHING OF THE KIND! AT LEAST TODAY I'M GOING TO HAVE HER ALL TO MYSELF! SEE WHAT I BROUGHT HER? DO YOU THINK SHE'LL LIKE IT?

SHE'S A GIRL, ISN'T SHE? IT CAN'T MISS! BYE, HONEY. GIVE HER A KISS FOR ME.



STRANGE THAT I SHOULD BE SO EXCITED ABOUT A VISIT FROM A LITTLE GIRL I'VE NEVER MET. BUT SOMEHOW, PERHAPS I SEE IT AS THE ONLY THING THAT'S BEEN MISSING FROM MY OTHERWISE PERFECT MARRIAGE!



WHO CAN THAT BE? SHE'S VERY BEAUTIFUL. WHY SHE'S HEADED FOR OUR HOUSE!



HELLO! I'M JULIE BRENT! AND YOU MUST BE ANN! MY, I NEVER SUSPECTED THAT THE GRAVEL DRIVEWAY AND THE PICKET FENCE EXISTED ANYWHERE OUTSIDE OF CHEAP NOVELS! WELL... DO I GET INVITED IN?



"I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES! I THOUGHT OF THE LITTLE DOLL I'D BOUGHT, AND OF ALL THE PLANS. WHY HADN'T AUNT HELEN BEEN MORE SPECIFIC?"



IT'S SO NICE YOU COULD COME, JULIE! AUNT HELEN WROTE THAT YOU HAD SOME DIFFICULTY BACK IN GREENVILLE AND NEEDED A CHANGE.

IT'S NOTHING TO TROUBLE *YOUR* HEAD ABOUT, ANN! AS USUAL, I WAS THE VICTIM OF OTHER PEOPLES' STUPIDITY! MAY I GO TO MY ROOM AND FRESHEN UP?



LET ME SHOW YOU WHERE YOU'RE GOING TO STAY.

DON'T BOTHER! JUST TELL ME AND I'LL FIND IT! I REALLY DON'T WANT TO BE *FUSSED* OVER!



"I WAS VAGUELY UNEASY ABOUT THIS STRANGE GIRL, AND WAS IMPATIENT FOR JOHN TO COME HOME. WHEN HE FINALLY DID..."

OH, JOHN! JULIE... I... SHE'S NOT A *LITTLE GIRL*! SHE...

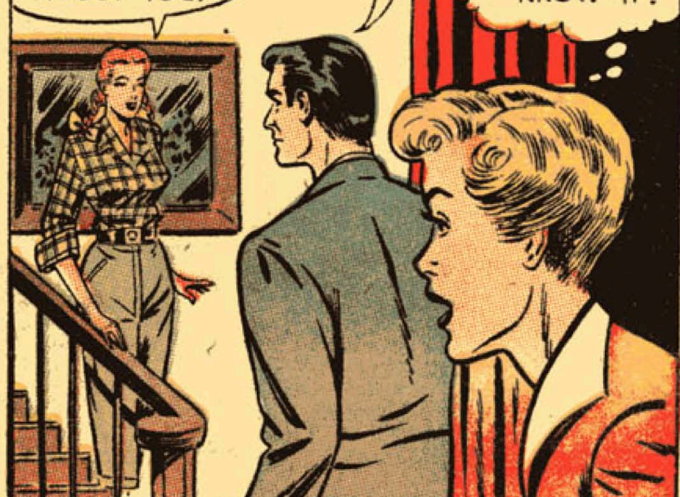
EASY, HONEY! START OVER AGAIN! AND SLOWLY! WHAT ABOUT JULIE?



MR. SAYERS! I'D HAVE KNOWN YOU ANYWHERE! AUNT HELEN HAS TOLD ME SO MUCH ABOUT YOU!

SO YOU'RE JULIE! WELL... WELCOME TO SAYERS MANOR!

MY EYES ARE PLAYING TRICKS. I JUST KNOW IT!



BUT, SAY... YOU'VE GOT TO CUT OUT THAT "MR. SAYERS" ROUTINE. I'M PLAIN OLD JOHN. WHY, YOU'RE PRACTICALLY ONE OF THE FAMILY!

JOHN... IT'S SUCH A NICE NAME! THE ATMOSPHERE I'VE LIVED IN IS SO STRAIT-LACED AND FORMAL, I JUST FORGET HOW TO RELAX.

WELL, THERE'S NOBODY MORE RELAXED THAN US. SO DON'T WORRY, HONEY, WE'LL GET ALONG JUST FINE!

YES... WE'LL HAVE A... FINE TIME.



"BUT LATER THAT NIGHT WHEN JOHN AND I WERE FINALLY ALONE..."

I DON'T WANT TO THROW A DAMPER ON YOUR ENTHUSIASM, DARLING, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT JULIE.

BABY, SHE'S JUST A CONFUSED KID! IF WE SHOW HER WE'RE HER FRIENDS, SHE'LL UNBEND. MARK MY WORDS.

BUT SHE'S HAD SOME TROUBLE SHE DOESN'T TALK ABOUT!

SO WHAT? REMEMBER WHAT PRANKS WE GOT INTO AS KIDS? COME ON, STOP WORRYING AND GIVE YOUR OLD MAN A KISS!

"THEN NEXT MORNING, AS I WAS GIVING JOHN HIS BREAKFAST..."

I THOUGHT I'D LET JULIE SLEEP LATE THIS MORNING. SHE MUST BE TIRED AFTER HER TRIP.

NOT AT ALL! I'D LIKE TO RIDE DOWNTOWN WITH JOHN, IF HE DOESN'T MIND. I'VE SOME SHOPPING TO DO.



SAY! WHO'S THE SIREN IN OUR MIDST? IT CAN'T BE BABY COUSIN JULIE! BUT KIDDING ASIDE, YOU'RE WELCOME TO DRIVE DOWNTOWN WITH ME. I'LL ENJOY THE COMPANY.

BUT YOU DON'T KNOW YOUR WAY AROUND, JULIE. DON'T YOU THINK IT WOULD BE MORE SENSIBLE TO GO SHOPPING WITH ME THIS AFTERNOON?

"AS SHE WALKED OUT OF THE HOUSE WITH JOHN, I WAS BEGINNING TO WONDER WHETHER JULIE DIDN'T KNOW HER WAY AROUND..."

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, ANN DEAR. I'LL BE QUITE SAFE IN JOHN'S CARE.

BYE, HONEY! KEEP THE HOME FIRES BURNING!



"I DISMISSED MY MISGIVINGS AS IRRATIONAL JEALOUSY. AFTER ALL, I TRUSTED JOHN AND JULIE HAD GIVEN ME NO CONCRETE REASON TO DISTRUST HER! BUT LATER THAT AFTERNOON..."



OH, ANN, I'VE HAD SUCH FUN! I WENT TO A MOVIE, AND JOHN TOOK ME TO LUNCH... AND **SEE** WHAT HE BOUGHT ME!

I... IT'S VERY ATTRACTIVE, JULIE! BUT IT MUST HAVE BEEN VERY EXPENSIVE!



I'M AFRAID IT **WAS...VERY** EXPENSIVE. BUT THEN, I'VE ALWAYS HATED CHEAP THINGS.

"IN SPITE OF MY HIGH RESOLVE OF THE MORNING, MY AFTERNOON WAS RUINED. WHEN JOHN CAME HOME, I FLEW DESPERATELY INTO HIS ARMS!"



HI, HONEY! HEY! WHAT A WELCOME!

OH, DARLING!



UH...DARLING! JULIE SHOWED ME THE NECKLACE YOU BOUGHT HER! IT'S... LOVELY!

REALLY? I THOUGHT IT WAS PRETTY JUNKY BUT SHE SAW IT ON SALE. IT ONLY COST A COUPLE OF BUCKS, SO I GOT IT TO KEEP HER HAPPY. THEN I BOUGHT HER A NICE LUNCH.



THAT WAS NICE!

WHAT A FOOL I WAS TO GET UPSET OVER THAT!

OH, BEFORE I FORGET, HONEY, I WON'T BE HOME TO DINNER TOMORROW. I'M TAKING A NEW CLIENT TO THE BRADFORD CLUB. GOING TO SEE IF A GOOD STEAK WON'T GET US HIS ACCOUNT.



HI, YOU TWO! SAY WHAT'S FOR DINNER? I'M STARVING.

JULIE! THOSE CLOTHES! ARE YOU A TOM-BOY... OR A WOMAN OF MYSTERY? **LET'S EAT!**

"JULIE RETIRED EARLY, AND JOHN AND I SPENT AN UNUSUALLY PLEASANT EVENING TOGETHER. BUT LATE THE NEXT AFTERNOON AS I WAS ABOUT TO PREPARE A LIGHT SUPPER FOR JULIE AND MYSELF..."



YOU L-LOOK RAVISHING! BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THOSE CLOTHES?

DON'T BOTHER FIXING DINNER FOR ME, ANN. I HAVE A DATE TONIGHT. SEE YOU LATER.



"THE FOLLOWING WEEK I WENT ABOUT THE BUSINESS OF LIVING AS NORMALLY AS POSSIBLE... BUT IT WAS HARD IN THE EVER-PRESENT SHADOW OF JULIE BETWEEN JOHN AND MYSELF! THEN ONE DAY THINGS WERE UNEXPECTEDLY BROUGHT TO A HEAD!"



I HOPE THE STORE CAN REPAIR THIS OLD FUR COAT WELL ENOUGH TO LAST ME ANOTHER YEAR.



THAT'S THE KIND OF FUR I WISH I HAD... BUT IT COST SO MUCH! I... WHY THAT GIRL... IT'S JULIE! AND JOHN IS... OH, NO! NO!



HE WAS BUYING **HER** A FUR COAT! HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SO BLIND? HE'S IN LOVE WITH HER! THAT'S WHY HE WAS SO FURIOUS WITH ME THAT NIGHT. I TOUCHED A VULNERABLE SPOT. WELL, THIS IS IT! WE'RE **FINISHED!**

"I THOUGHT I WAS READY TO CALL IT QUITS. I COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT ONE LAST DESPERATE EFFORT TO STRAIGHTEN THINGS OUT! WHEN JULIE CAME HOME, I WENT RIGHT TO THE POINT."

JULIE, BEFORE I TAKE ANY DRASTIC MEASURE, I WANT A STRAIGHT ANSWER TO A STRAIGHT QUESTION! ARE YOU AND JOHN IN LOVE?

SINCE YOU CHOOSE TO BE SO BLUNT... YES, WE ARE!



THANK YOU FOR BEING TRUTHFUL. I THINK I'VE KNOWN EVER SINCE YOU ARRIVED THAT YOU WERE AFTER MY HUSBAND. BUT I NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHY!

YOU WOULDN'T! IN YOUR SMUG MARRIED SECURITY, YOU'VE NEVER KNOWN WHAT IT IS TO HAVE BEEN THE **ONE** KID IN SCHOOL WHO HAD NO **REAL** FATHER AND MOTHER... THE **ONE** GIRL IN THE CROWD WITHOUT A HUSBAND!

AND SO YOUR WAY OF GETTING EVEN WITH THE WORLD IS TO STEAL SOMEONE ELSE'S!

DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH! I DIDN'T **FORCE** JOHN TO BUY ME THE NECKLACE OR THE FUR COAT! HE WASN'T COERCED INTO TAKING ME TO LUNCH AND DINNER!

YOU'RE RIGHT, JULIE. I'M NOT GOING TO FIGHT ANYMORE. YOU'VE WON! **25083**



"I WENT TO THE RAILROAD STATION. THERE WAS NO PLACE TO GO BUT AUNT HELEN'S. SHE WAS THE ONLY RELATIVE I HAD. WHILE WAITING FOR MY TRAIN, I CALLED HER."



LEAVING JOHN? BUT WHY?

I... HE... OH, AUNT HELEN, HE'S FALLEN IN LOVE WITH JULIE!



OH, NONSENSE! OF COURSE HE HASN'T! I'M SO SORRY, ANN DEAR. I HAD HOPED THAT IN THE WHOLESOME FAMILY ATMOSPHERE OF YOUR HOME SHE MIGHT CHANGE. BUT I SEE SHE'S UP TO HER OLD TRICKS AGAIN. I SENT HER TO YOU TO ESCAPE A SCANDAL SHE'S CAUSED HERE.

...BUT SHE'S ALWAYS BEEN A TROUBLE-MAKER! THE GIRL'S A YOUNG FIEND! AND ONE OF THE MOST ACCOMPLISHED LIARS I'VE EVER KNOWN! YOU GO HOME AND SEND HER TO ME! AND BLESS YOUR STARS FOR THAT HUSBAND OF YOURS!



OH, YES! YES, I WILL! THANK YOU, AUNT HELEN!

"I HURRIED HOME, PRAYING THAT JOHN WOULD BE THERE... BUT I STOPPED COLD AT THE SIGHT THAT MET MY INCREDULOUS GAZE!"



...YOU'RE A SPOILED BRAT! NOW GO BACK WHERE YOU CAME FROM BEFORE I DO WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN DONE TO YOU LONG AGO!

YOU'RE HATEFUL! AND I THOUGHT I LOVED YOU! BOO HOO! PLEASE DON'T SEND ME AWAY!

YOU DON'T LOVE ANYBODY BUT YOURSELF! YOU COULD HAVE LEARNED FROM ANN... SHE'S A REAL WOMAN! AND YOU DARED TELL HER SHE'D LOST ME TO YOU! WHAT A LAUGH!



JOHN! OH, JOHN, DARLING!

ANN, THANK GOODNESS YOU'RE BACK! BUT YOU **MUST** SEND THIS BRAT BACK TO YOUR AUNT HELEN. I TRIED TO BE DECENT TO HER FOR YOUR SAKE, BUT I'VE HAD ENOUGH!



DON'T WORRY! I'M LEAVING... NOW! I'LL SEND FOR MY THINGS!



"OF COURSE, AUNT HELEN WAS RIGHT. JULIE HAD LIED ABOUT EVERYTHING... INCLUDING THE FUR COAT. IT WAS TO HAVE BEEN MY BIRTHDAY SURPRISE. BUT TROUBLE HAS ITS COMPENSATIONS... JOHN AND I ARE MORE IN LOVE THAN EVER!"

The End