The THIRTEENTH COMMANDMENT

by RUPERT HUGHES

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DAPHNE GETS THE BIG CHANCE THAT SHE HAS BEEN PRAYING FOR AND AT THE SAME TIME HAS FEARED.

Synopsis.—Sky Windsor, a young New Yorker on a visit to Cleveland, meets pretty Daphne Kip, whose brother is the same office with Clay in Wall street. After a whirlwind courtship they become engaged. Daphne goes to New York with her mother to buy her trousseau. Daphne's brother, Bayard, has just married and left for Europe with his bride, Leila. Daphne and her mother install themselves in Bayard's flat. Daphne meets Tom Dunne, man-about-town, who seems greatly attracted to her. Daphne accidentally discovers that Clay is married. Bayard and his wife return to New York unexpectedly. The three women set out on a sightseeing excursion and the younger women buy expensive gowns, having them charged to Bayard. Bayard is furious over the expense, scores Daphne for her extravagance, indignant, declares she will earn her own living and breaks her engagement to Clay. Through an introduction by Dunne, Daphne landed a theatrical engagement, to give her a position in one of his companies. Her first rehearsal is a fiasco, but Reben, at Dunne's request, gives her another chance.

CHAPTER XI—Continued.

"Well, I never!" he gasped. "And all this trip of your mother's and yours and all the expenses gone for nothing?" was his first doleful thought. He remembered the second mortgage he had placed on one of his properties to get the money for the vitally important wedding festival. And now there was to be no wedding. The one lady who was to have been the chief guest of Daphne's bliss was banished. Daphne was again her father's own child.

He was glad to have her back, but he could see behind that she had not gone away, since he paid the freight in both directions. And now here was himself in New York and nothing to show for all the spill milk of time, money and emotions.

All the critical moment Daphne mentioned that the star whose understudy she was would carry Fifty thousand dollars' worth of jewelry to Wesley's earn. If Daphne could get possession of that he would believe in miracles.

"Where were you planning to live, honey, while you're acting? Why Bayard, I suppose."

"Oh, no!" said Daphne; "we've rented his honeymoon cough already."

"Who with, then?"

"Oh, by myself, I suppose."

"Good lord! you couldn't do that very well—a young girl like you."

"Why not?" she said.

He turned pale. This was like being asked why babies were found under cabbage leaves. He was an old-fashioned father, and he had never been able to rise to the new school of discussion. He remembered how some of the children totally incensed him.

"Why, why?" he stammered, "why, because nobody does it, honey. You girls don't live alone."

Daphne stabbed him with a tender amusement. He was so innocent in his way, in spite of all he had seen, he understood what he was thinking of. She was sophisticated in the main, nor of the sins girl of her time and she liked to treat adolescent friends with chum caution. She thought that prudery was a form of slavery.

"If you're just put to stay in New York and get job's work your mother could stay with you, I suppose."

"But who would chaperon and your honeys?"

"Oh, I'll get along somehow. I don't matter."

This broke her heart. She cried out in her mother, daddy, you don't matter terribly. Can't you understand daddy, that I'm trying to grow up and make myself useful instead of a parasite? Thousands of women are alone—professional women, art students, music students, college girls, normal school women, besides the women in shops and factories, in central work and offices.

"But you've not brought up a lady's trade."

"I wish I had been."

"Well, that's a new complaint, anyway, but—well, of course you wouldn't do anything unless your father and mother would have brought you up for it. Why, I'm sure I don't know what I'd do if I had grown up in your place."

"I had plenty of that when I was living at home."

"Daphne!" He cried out in pain at the very thought.

Daphne was charming him with a vengeance. Proof of composition and plenty of opportunity, daddy, and of your fault. You gave me all the protection that anybody could ask, daddy. But you can't protect people all the time. And it was when you trusted me most that you protected me most. People are just beginning to realize that even in prohibitation the higher the walls and the stricter the guards the more prisoners try to escape. They're sending convoys out to work on roads now with no guards at all. And they do their work and come back. I'm sure I think women can be trusted as far as men.

"I suppose so," he sighed. But he was convinced of the security of any other the contents nor of the women snuffs there were another. He was convinced of only one thing and that was his helplessness.

Daphne took him home in a taxicab. At the apartment they weight Bayard had nothing for his office. He greeted his father with chirrup of affection, but he knew that he would phone Wesley before he hurried on to his office then by neglecting his business for the purpose—interrupted—he

Wesley could not be persuaded to stay even an unnecessary minute. His business was in a perilous condition. The staunch Cooper firm had gone into bankruptcy owing him a hundred sums of money which he was not likely to recover. The failure also closed an important and profitable market for his calculating machines. It frightened his banks as well, and he had wrestled like another Jacob with an almost invisible cashier for money enough to meet his pay roll.

Yet he slipped a large bill into Daphne's hand when he bade her good-by. It was a little to the other from home, and he whispered to her she should have other expenses unknown whenever she relied on him.

Daphne reached the theater at seven o'clock and sat in the dark on a canvas rock, watching the stage hands gather and listening to their repartee.

Rehearsal arrived at length. He was in one of his humorous moods. He asked Daphne if she had memorized her lines and she said she had. He told her that he would give her another rehearsal the next day after breakfast. "After breakfast," he explained, was his cocktail hour.

At that morning Daphne presented herself at the theater and was admitted to her rehearsals, with his assistant greeting all the cues in a lifeless voice. Rehearsal was more disorganized than she was. He showed it for a time by a patience that was of the sort one shows to a slip imbecile.

He was so outraged that Daphne broke out for him. "Do you think I am a complete idiot, Mr. Rutherford?"

"Far from it, my dear," said Rutherford. "You are a very intelligent young woman. The trouble is that you are too intelligent to be an idiot on the stage. It's all a kind of big nursery game you can't forget that facts are facts in this toy game. If you forget yourself or your surroundings and play dolls house you might succeed. It's the only way I know of. Now, I'm willing to do anything in reason to try to remain it out. It's like music and fiction and all the arts. You've got to pretend or you can't make your art work. Do you get my drift?"

And that, indeed, was Daphne's agony. She could not release her imagination and pretend her close friends were what was not there.

Night after night she reported at the theater and left it when the curtain came. On one of these nights Tom Dunne met her outside the stage door. He explained that it was his duty to look after his cheap.

"Rehearsal's over for the day," he said, "and I'm waiting for a friend. She declined with thanks. He argued that she take a little spin in the moonlight. She declined without thanks. He asked what it was a pity to waste moonlight.

She said she would get enough when she walked home. He asked if he might "double along." He said he was not a pickpocket. Daphne said he looked like one. Wesley had gone beyond the reach of Seventh avenue. He quoted Scripture and said he was a lost sheep. Grateful flattery there in an appeal for another accomplice. Daphne found it easy to tell him of her difficulties. He extracted sympathy and indirect complement out of all of them.

When they arrived at her apartment house she said, "Sorry I can't ask you in. But my mother's asleep and I'm tired out."

"You have waited enough of your time on me," he said. "I'll see you in the morning."

As Daphne stepped into the hallway she found Clay Winkleon there, waiting grimly. He sprang to his feet with a gasp of relief. He caught sight of Daphne and his jaw did instantly.

Winkleon loved Daphne and wanted her for his own. He had counted too on the engagement ring not paid for. It was a pretty ring and he had saved money enough then with Dunne's fortune.

"Good! you are safe! I thought she had left one of the big front doors open. I'm waiting for Mr. Wesley Cooper."

"He's not back."

"Oh, I'm sorry! I've a complaint against the boiler. The engineer and janitor have been at it all day and they could not make it go. I'm sorry I'm so late."

The woman was a big, ungainly creature, and she looked clawed and mean and cursed. Her very smile was mean, exactly adjusted between those of the grinning hyena and of the jackal.

Daphne was in the way to the room that was for rent. It took Daphne at once. Spitefulness is the weapon of the jealous in a rented room and Dunne knew he's a grave off its own. The sunlight had gone with its varnished posts, the exquisite lines and the honeys of expensive furniture and decorations.

She felt a sense of relief from the cold rather gaudy beauty of Leila's apartment. She felt that Mrs. Chivvin, who looked such fine materials in her furniture, would be equally discreet in renting her own affairs.

"I'll take it," she said; "that is, if the rent is right."

Mrs. Chivvin said she was sure it was right with a New Englander's memory of exchanges, but her voice was kindly and Daphne decided that she was glad that Wesley had lacked the courage to use them.

Daphne looked at some into the Chivvin apartment what belongings she had brought and was thankful that her mother promised to dispatch the rest of them on—she, the rushed home.

Clay, for your own information. Every step you make in this business will be watched by people who are not fools. Do not let your mother and yourself be made a laughing stock. Do not let your mother and yourself be made a laughing stock. Do not let your mother and yourself be made a laughing stock