The Thirteenth Commandment

By RUPERT HUGHES

Copyright by H[illegible]per & Brothers

FOREWORD.

"The Thirteenth Commandment" is an American story written by an American for Americans. It is, according to a famous English critic, "American to the bone and to the marrow of the bone." It deals with that eternal conflict between finance and romance. It tells the story of what one lovable, modern American girl did when she discovered how often the checkbook's groan drowns the love song. In this story Rupert Hughes is at his best, and that best cannot be surpassed by any American author of the present day. If you start "The Thirteenth Commandment" you will finish it, and when you have finished it you will be glad that you started it.

CHAPTER I.

—1—

As usual nowadays, instead of knocking at the door Fate called up on the telephone.

Though the bell shrilled almost in Mrs. Kip's ear she would not answer it. She winced, shook her head, agitated her rocking chair with petulance, embroidered vindictively, and hardly so much called out as sighed very loudly toward the hallway:

"Daphne! O-oh, Daphne! the telephone again!"

On the stairs there sounded a muffled scurry like the rush of an April shower chased down a hillside by the sun. An allegory of April darted across the room and raised the telephone to her lips as if it were a beaker of good cheer.

Her mother was used to this humor of Daphne's and paid no heed till a sudden frost chilled the warm tone of the girl's voice. The smile of hospitality wasted on the telephone had given place to a look of embarrassment.

Mrs. Kip whispered anxiously, "Who is it?"

Daphne motioned her not to interrupt, and her voice grew deep and important. It became what her brother Bayard called her "reception voice." In her grandest contralto she said:

"This is Miss Kip. Yes, I have. Yes, he does. I beg pardon? Oh!—Oh! Oh! How do you do, Mr. Wmbwm."

"Mr. Who?" her mother keened.

Daphne whispered to quiet her, "A young man from New York—friend of Bayard's—same office. I haven't got his name yet."

Into the telephone she was saying, and bowing and nodding the while with her politest face. "Indeed I'll try to be. Of course Cleveland's not New York, but— By the way, do you dance? That's good. That's right; might as well be deaf if you don't! How long will you be in Cleveland? Oh, is that all? Well, then, you must come out here and have tea with us this very afternoon. I'll call for you at the hotel in my little car. No; it's not one of those; it's an electric. I run it myself. Afraid to risk it? Brave man! I'll be there in fifteen minutes, and you might be on the steps. Goodby, Mr. Wmbwm."

This last was said in the fond tone of ancient friendship, and she hung up the receiver with a gesture like shaking hands.

She turned to find her mother thinning her lips in a long, tight line; her cheeks bulged explosively. Daphne forestalled her:

"He's a young fellow in the same firm as Bayard. Says he's here on business for ten days. Bayard told him to call me up and tell me to be nice to him. That sounds like By. Also said he hadn't time to write. That sounds liker still. Bayard told him to kiss you for him, so he must be all right. I was going to take him to the hotel to a tea-dance, but I thought I'd better give him a look-over first. So I'll roll him out here. Get out the nice china and the napkins I monogrammed, and—"

"But, Daphne! Wait! I can't—"

"I haven't time to argue with you, mamma. Please do as I tell you for once, and don't fuss. Mr. Wmbwm will probably have a lot of news to tell you about your prodigal son. G'by!"

She popped a kiss on the forehead that anxiety had turned to corduroy and ran upstairs like another April shower chasing the sun uphill. She dashed down again with hat and gloves, and, with nose repowdered, slammed the front door gayly, thrummed the steps, and strode across the long lawn to the little electric car standing under the porte cochere. The car was very large for a beetle but pretty small for an automobile.

CHAPTER II.

The night train from New York had deposited Clay Wimburn in the grimy cavern of the station at an early hour. He had dawdled over his breakfast, feeling lost without his New York morning papers.

When at last it grew late enough to telephone for an appointment with the man he had come to see he was disgusted to learn that the wretch would not be visible till the next day.

It was then that Bayard Kip's parting behest to call up his sister recurred to Wimburn. He planned to compose a formal note of self-introduction, but Bayard had forgotten to tell him his sister's name or his father's initials. There were several Kips in the telephone book, and he could not tell which would be which. He decided to call up each number and ask a maid or somebody if Mr. Bayard Kip's people lived there.

The very first number he called brought Daphne herself suddenly voice to voice with him. Voices are characters, and it was a case of love at first hearing with him. She had him smiling and cooing at the second phrase. He felt that she was going to make his stay in Cleveland pleasant.

He formed all sorts of pictures of her while he waited on the hotel steps, but when she stepped out of her car and looked about she was none of the Misses Kip he had planned. She was a round, pretty little thing, amiable of eye and humorous about the lips, and cunningly dressed. She looked as if she would be a plucky, tireless sportswoman; yet she had a wistful, tender huggableness that a girl ought not to lose, however well she plays tennis.

"Is this Mr.—" she began. He was too nervous to notice her pause.

He retorted, "Is this Miss Kip?"

He noted that she shook hands well, with a boyish clench accompanied by an odd little duck of the head.

"Mighty nice of you to take me off this desert island," he beamed.

"Mighty glad to have the privilege," she said as she verified the fraternity pin on his overcoat. "Mother is dying to hear how Bayard is."

Mothers have little power left as guardians, but the children find that the title has a certain value at times in keeping order.

"Won't you get in?" said Daphne, pointing to her car. She made him crowd in first, then followed and closed the door and pulled the throttle.

He meditated aloud: "How wonderful it really is that you should talk to me over the telephone and invite me to your home and come and get me like this."

"What's so wonderful about that?" said Daphne. "Everybody does it."

"Everything that everybody does is wonderful," said Wimburn. "But how especially wonderful it is to live in a city where there are no walls about the gardens. Look! there aren't even fences. The lawns are all joined together and the houses are mostly windows. Everything is so open and free, full of sunlight and frankness. You're taking me home in this charming little glass showcase to introduce me to your mother. I tell you the world do move! A woman of today has a lot to be thankful for. You ought to be mighty happy."

Already Wimburn Was a Member of the Household.

"Ought-to-be hasn't much to do with is," Daphne sighed. "We've got a lot to get yet—and a lot to get rid of."

He sank back discouraged. The sex was still insatiable.

After a short ride they turned into a driveway leading through a spacious expanse of grass dotted with trees and shrubs, to a homelike house without beauty or ugliness—a house that had grown with the personalities of the occupants. The only ostentations about the place were the cupola of an earlier day and the porte cochere stuck out like a broken wing.

She led him into the house and waved him toward the hall tree. When he had set down his hat and stick she led him into the drawing room.

"Mother, we're home."

"Yes, dear," said Mrs. Kip, who called Daphne "dear" before company.

"Mother," said Daphne, "I want to present Mr.—" (mumble—gulp). She had not yet achieved his name.

Her mother shocked her by saying, "Delighted to meet you, Mr.— I didn't quite catch the name."

Daphne blushed for her mother's query, but was glad to overhear the stranger's answer:

"I am Mr. Wimburn, Mrs. Kip—Clay Wimburn."

At this moment a tall, shambling man walked in. He looked as if he looked older than he was. His spectacles overwhelmed a rather unsuccessful nose. Daphne hardly needed to introduce him as her father. She gave Wimburn a name now, and he felt called upon to explain his incursion.

"I know your son Bayard very well. I'm in his office. We belong to the same fraternity—different chapters of course. We struck up a great friendship. When he knew I was coming to Cleveland he said, 'Tell my sister to be nice to you,' and—and—"

Wimburn paused in some embarrassment before the ballroom manner of Mrs. Kip, but the pompous disguises of timidity fell from her as she murmured—and blushed in a motherly way:

"Daphne told me. He said for you to kiss his mother for him."

"Ye-es."

"Well, I am his mother."

"Oh! May I?"

"Will you?"

He pressed his lips respectfully on her cheek, but she, closing her eyes to imagine him her son, flung her fat arms about him and held him a moment. He kissed her again with a kind of vicarious devotion.

"I'd want Bayard to deliver such a message to your mother," she explained.

Already Wimburn was a member of the household; he had been kissed and sympathized with.

He turned to Daphne with an apologetic look and saw that she was staring at him with softer eyes than he had thought she had.

Definite anxieties engaged Mrs. Kip, for tea had come in tottering on a tray carried by a panic-smitten cook, as agile as a hippopotamus and as shy as a violet.

Daphne and her mother and father went through the tea ceremony with the anxiety of people in an earthquake, and the "Swedish dromedary" stared at the unaccustomed sight as if the tea bibbers were drinking poison and she watching for the convulsions to begin.

Clay Wimburn talked altogether about Bayard and his wonderful progress in business in spite of the hard times. Bayard, he said, was sticking to his desk like a demon, and he let nothing distract him.

"It must be glorious living in New York," Daphne sighed.

"Why don't you come and pay Bayard a visit?" Wimburn suggested.

"He wouldn't have time to take me anywhere, and I don't know anybody else there."

"You know me. And I'd be only too glad to try to repay your hospitality to me."

Mrs. Kip looked on and listened with the fond alarm of one who has seen fatal courtships begun with just such fencing.

When at length Daphne suggested that there was still time to rush down to the Hotel Statler for a dance or two Mrs. Kip smiled at her. Wimburn did not know that he had been brought home on approval. Mrs. Kip realized that he was not to be returned as impossible. Her fancy gambled in futures.

Wimburn was the victim of an onset of that delirium amans known as love at first sight. He was at the right age, and he found something exotically captivating in this strange girl in the strange city. He was poisoned with love, and his opinion of Daphne was lunatically fantastic. No one in the world equaled her. No one ever had equaled her or could equal her in any future ever.

Spring and love are the perennial miracles, always new, always amazing. It was springtime in Wimburn's years and in the calendar of the world; and countless other youth of mankind, animal kind, bird and fish kind, flowers and fruit trees, and perhaps of chemicals in the ground were feeling the same mania.

Daphne's cordiality was at first merely the hospitable warmth of her unusually cordial community. But she caught the fever from Wimburn and decided that he was the final word in human evolution.

They began to dread the society of others, to resent the existence of a squatter population on their private planet. The world was too much with them. The little car was transparent. Even at night etiquette required them to light it up within.

Wimburn did not return to New York so soon as he expected. It seemed impossible to uproot himself from that pleasant soil. One afternoon when he had already overstayed his furlough Daphne and he were riding in the little car through the outer suburb known as Shaker Heights—a section rapidly evolving from a sleepy religious community to a swarm of city residences.

The late afternoon moon had risen in a sky still rosy with the afterglow of sunset. The air was murmurous with pleading.

Suddenly Wimburn cried aloud, to his own surprise and hers, "Daphne! Miss Kip! I can't stand everything, you know! I'm only human, after all."

"What's the matter?" she asked in prosaic phrase but with a poetic flutter of breath.

"I love you, d——n it!—pardon me, but I'm infernally in love with you. I'm tormented. I came here on business, and instead of my finishing it you've finished me. I'm two days overdue in New York and I've had to lie to the office to explain why. And all I can think of now is that I'd rather resign and starve to death than go back and leave you here."

"Honestly?" she barely breathed.

"Desperately!" he moaned. "What's to become of me?"

"You'd better go back, I suppose. You'll soon get over it and find somebody else to love."

"There's nobody else in the world worth loving. I'd die if I gave you up! I'd simply die."

He went on with aching anxiety: "Could you care for me just a little? If you could love me or just promise to try to, I could face my exile for a while. Do you think you could love me ever?"

She dropped her chin on her breast and sighed.

"I guess I do now."

The miraculous felicity of this situation overwhelmed them both. He clipt her in his arms, and she flung hers about him, forgetting entirely the steering wheel. The neglected little car promptly scuttered off the road, crossed a gutter into a vacant lot, scooped up a "For Sale" sign, and was about to tip over into an excavation when Daphne looked up long enough to shut off the power. Then in a blind rapture she returned to where she belonged—his embrace.

Soon she was assailed with fears for the credibility of this wonder work, and when he said:

"When shall we announce our engagement?" she protested:

"Oh, not till we are sure."

"I'm sure now."

"But we must be terribly sure. It's such a dangerous thing, getting married. So many people who think they love each other find out their mistake too late. You don't know me very well."

"You mean you don't know me very well."

"I'm not afraid of you, but for you. I'd hate to disappoint you, and I don't really amount to much. I can't do anything except gad around; and you'd tire of me."

"Not in this world—nor in the next."

"It's darling of you to say it, and you think you mean it—now. But—"

"I know it, Daphne, honey, now and forever. I don't want anybody but you. Life won't be life without you. You've promised to be my wife. I hold you to your promise."

"All right." It was exceedingly satisfying to surrender her soul into his keeping. She had reached harbor already after so brief and placid a voyage.

He ended a long, cozy silence with the surprising remark, "I suppose I ought to ask your parents' consent?"

The daughter of the twentieth century laughed: "Parents' consent! You do read a lot of ancient literature, don't you?"

"Still I imagine we'd better break it to 'em."

"You leave it to me to break it to 'em. They'll be glad enough to get me off their hands."

"I'll never believe that."

When they reached her home it was late and his hotel was so far that, since he would be spending his last evening with her, anyway, she asked him to stay to dinner.

She broke that news to her parents, and it caused them acute distress. Her father and her mother were deep in the battle that always broke out between them when the monthly bills arrived. Daphne was so used to this that she hardly noticed it.

After dinner the parents retired to the living room to read and sew and mumble over their mutual grievances, while Daphne and Wimburn sat and the piazza which the moon turned into a blue portico of mystic spell.

CHAPTER III

The next morning Wimburn woke from dreams of bliss to the realization that his hotel bill would require all of his funds except enough for the porter's tip and a few odd dollars.

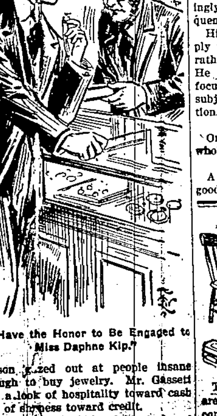
He could not buy Daphne an engagement ring with a few odd dollars, and he was afraid to leave her without the brand of possession on her finger.

But how was he to come at the necessary sum? He could not decently ask the firm he was dealing with to lend him money. He might have asked it to cash a check on his bank, but his account was at the irreducible minimum.

After an hour or two of meditation he determined to beard a jeweler in his lair and try to coax him into the extension of credit.

He loitered in front of several windows, staring at the glittering pebbles on the velvet beaches till he found a tiny gem that he thought might feebly represent his exquisite adoration. He went in and asked the price. An eager salesman peered at the very small tag and announced the very large price—$185. It was not much for a solitaire, but it was too much for that bachelor.

He clung to the counter for support and in a husky tone asked for the credit man. He was escorted to a barred window where a very sane old



"I Have the Honor to Be Engaged to Miss Daphne Kip."

person gazed out at people insane enough to buy jewelry. Mr. Gassett had a look of hospitality toward cash and of shyness toward credit.

Wimburn hemmed and blushed and swallowed hard. With the plausibility of a pickpocket he mumbled as he pushed a card across the glass sill:

"I am Mr. Clay Wimburn of New York city. I have been out here closing up an important deal for my firm with one of your big mills. I happened to see a little ring in your window—rather pretty little thing. Took a fancy to it. Had half a mind to buy it. But rather short of cash and—er—and—"

Mr. Gassett waited with patience.

Clay went on: "I have no right to ask you to give me credit. But I'm very anxious to leave the ring here."

"Leave it here! I thought you wanted to buy it!"

"Of course! I want to leave it for the finger of a young lady."

"Oh," said Mr. Gassett, to whom ladies' fingers were an important market.

Finally he said: "I don't suppose you would care to tell me who your fiancee is. That might make a difference."

"Why shouldn't I tell you? I'm certainly not ashamed to. I have the honor to be engaged to Miss Daphne Kip."

Daphne, accompanied by her mother, goes to New York for the purpose of buying her trousseau. There the first shadow is cast upon Daphne's romantic dreams by the discovery that the money which her father has been able to raise for the purpose will not buy much of a trousseau. Don't miss the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Real Riches.

He who has fortune in love and truth and beauty is entitled to be called rich. Time and change and adversity have no power upon them. They are the only things a man can take with him when he goes. In the process of acquiring them they become part of him inseparably. He who has them "wears his commendation in his face," for it may be read as he passes that his converse is with the higher and finer things and his daily walk is on the plane where the noblest meet and greet familiarly.—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

OLD PRESCRIPTION FOR WEAK KI[D]NEYS

Have you ever stopped to reason why it is that so many products that are extensively advertised, all at once drop out of sight and are soon forgotten? The reason is plain—the article did not fulfil the promises of the manufacturer. This applies more particularly to a medicine. A medicinal preparation that has real curative value almost sells itself, as like an endless chain system the remedy is recommended by those who have been benefited, to those who are in need of it.

A prominent druggist says, "Take for example Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, a preparation I have sold for many years and never hesitate to recommend, for in almost every case it shows excellent results, as many of my customers testify. No other kidney remedy that I know of has so large a sale."

According to sworn statements and verified testimony of thousands who have used the preparation, the success of Dr. Kilmers' Swamp-Root is due to the fact that so many people claim, it fulfills almost every wish in overcoming kidney, liver and bladder ailments, corrects urinary troubles and neutralizes the uric acid which causes rheumatism.

You may receive a sample bottle of Swamp-Root by Parcel Post. Address Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., and enclose ten cents; also mention this paper. Large and medium size bottles for sale at all drug stores.—Adv.

STRIVE FOR CONCENTRATION

Short Period With the Mind Keenly Focussed on a Subject Will Produce Amazing Results.

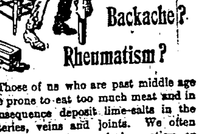
A college professor said to his faithful but poorly prepared class: "Judging from your worn and tired appearance, young people, you are putting in twice too many hours on study." At this commendation the class brightened up visibly. "But," he continued, "judging from your preparation, you do not study quite half hard enough."

Ten minutes of really hard concentration are worth an hour of fitful effort, and are actually less tiring, because of the satisfaction felt at the results obtained. This is another reason the beginner in attention training should at first be content with exceedingly short exercise periods of frequent occurrence.

His real need is to acquire not simply the ability but the habit of keen rather than prolonged concentration. He wants to accustom his mind to focus instantly and vigorously on any subject presented to it for concentration.—Chicago News.

One man in every sixty is partly or wholly color blind.

A jolly man always finds himself in good company.

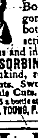


Backache? Rheumatism?

Those of us who are past middle age are prone to eat too much meat and in consequence deposit lime-salts in the arteries, veins and joints. We often suffer from twinges of rheumatism or lumbago, sometimes from gout, swollen hands or feet. There is no longer the slightest need of this, however, as the new prescription, "Anuric," is bound to give immediate results as it is many times more potent than lithia, in ridding the impoverished blood of its poisons by way of the kidneys. It can be obtained at almost any drug store, by simply asking for "Anuric" for kidneys or backache. It will overcome such conditions as rheumatism, dropsical swellings, cold extremities, scalding and burning urine and sleeplessness due to constant arising from bed at night.

Send to Dr. Pierce's Invalids' Hotel, Buffalo, N. Y., for a 10c. trial package.

MADERA, CAL.—"I recommend Doctor Pierce's Anuric very highly. I have suffered for the last three years with catarrh of the bladder, having tried every remedy I heard of but without relief. I saw Anuric advertised in the paper, and like a drowning man grabbing at a straw I thought I would try it also, which I did with great success, as it relieved me almost immediately, before I had taken all of the trial package, and having great confidence in the remedy I immediately sent to the drug store and bought a full-size package. I can say to all suffering from any disease of the kidneys or uric acid troubles, try this remedy and suffer no longer. I have great faith in Dr. Pierce's remedies."—S. R. HENSLE[illegible]



ABSORBINE TRADE MARK REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

Will reduce Inflamed, Strained, Swollen Tendons, Ligaments, or Muscles. Stops the lameness and pain from a Splint, Side Bone or Bone Spavin. No blister, no hair gone and horse can be used. $2.50 a bottle at druggists or delivered. Describe your case for special instructions and interesting horse Book 2 R Free. ABSORBINE, JR., the antiseptic liniment for mankind, reduces Strained, Torn Ligaments, Swollen Glands, Veins or Muscles; Heals Cuts, Sores, Ulcers. Allays pain. Price $1.25 a bottle at dealers or delivered. Book "Evidence" free. W. F. YOUNG, P. D. F., 310 Temple Street, Springfield, Mass.

Itching Rashes — Soothed — With Cuticura

All druggists; Soap 25, Ointment 25 & 50, Talcum 25. Sample each free of "Cuticura, Dept. R, Boston."

Coughing is annoying and harmful. Relieve throat irritation, tickling and get rid of coughs, colds and hoarseness at once by taking

PISO'S