

HER mother had been a lodging-house keeper before her. And now, in the same northern town, she too let lodgings, she too was a widow now as her mother had been, and time still flying. Not that she thought of time as still flying; rather it seemed to have flown while she was not watching. For she was far on in the forties now, so it must have flown, looking at it that way. And

Mrs. Mulger

(A Short Short Story)

By

LORD DUNSANY



Soft and Soothing

KLEENEX

for Baby's tender nose

● Don't use harsh handkerchiefs when children have colds. Their sore, inflamed nostrils are even more sensitive than those of grown-ups.

These super-absorbent, strong tissues are actually softer than the finest linen, soothing. And, above all, they are safe. You use a clean, dry tissue every time, yet Kleenex now costs so little that everyone can afford it. Kleenex makes an ideal handkerchief during colds.

Women everywhere use it to remove dust, grime, cosmetics and creams.

In white and dainty pastel shades. At your chemist or store.



yet with spring coming on, and two young men from the University, her lodgers, sitting at that table of theirs talking poetry, time mightn't have moved at all.

She had come into the sitting-room to see after her goldfish, and there they were talking away. And it might have been thirty years ago, which only seemed like yesterday, when her mother's young lodger had talked the very same stuff to her.

She couldn't help stopping a while to listen to them after she had fed her goldfish: it brought the years back so. No sense in it, and more than there had been in the talk of the other young man so long ago, but the same fervour, the same overwhelming certainty about something, whatever it was, as there is in the black-bird's voice in early April, when he seems so certain of spring.

So she stood still, smiling slightly, and listened as they talked to each other. Poetry as usual. And the curious thing about it was that though she could not understand a word of what they were saying, yet not a phrase was new to her. Sometimes she almost thought she could have completed their sentences for them. And then from the curious phrases one of them began to quote lines from an old poem. They were praising it with their queer words, lavishing praises upon it.

"I am afraid we are talking poetry, Mrs. Mulger," said one of them.

"Never mind, sir," she answered. "It doesn't do any harm."

Nor did it, if one kept away from it. Curiously enough, she might once have married

a young man that wrote poetry, wrote it himself, that lodger of her mother's, a University student and all; but she knew what poetry led to. When she did marry, she married the secretary of a branch of a trade union, a plumber in a good way of business; everybody wanted a plumber; and when he died he left her very well off. The other young man died long ago. The two men flashed through her thoughts all in a moment, like ghosts going home at cock-crow.

More talk and more lines quoted, and gradually the line began to arrange themselves into a pattern that grew clear to the widow; not the meaning, whatever that might be, but the sound of them, and certain sounds and sights of springs that were gone, which seemed somehow to hang and glitter along the lines. It seemed funny to her what things would call up memories; you couldn't tell what would do it.

"The incomparable majesty of the Ode to a Rose," one of the young men was saying, and Mrs. Mulger was still standing there smiling slightly, and he turned to her rather sharply.

"But I am afraid," he said to her, "that the poem we are discussing is scarcely of interest to you, Mrs. Mulger."

For a moment her thoughts turned away from him down the years and came back again.

"You know," she said, "my name's Rose."

"Almost perfect non-sequitur," said one to the other.

And when she had insisted on having it explained what that meant, and having got at the meaning, she said, "Not so much of a non-what-you-call-it as all that."

And there she stopped, thinking all of a sudden of a gun she had once heard fired in a wood, when she had gone five miles from town to see the spring, and all the birds were singing; and at the sound of the gun, their singing had ceased at once. She wouldn't stop their merry talk, she thought, as what she had been about to say would have stopped it. Never mind whether there was any sense in it or not; let them talk, and let the birds sing. So she ended up with: "It's a nice poem, I'm sure."

But that ode had been written to her.

LET ODORONO PROTECT YOU

What comfort to a fastidious woman—the knowledge that by using Odorono she cannot offend with perspiration odour—that her clothes are free from the damage of perspiration . . . Odorono is a doctor's formula for checking perspiration. It comes in two strengths—"Regular" and "Instant".

ODO-RO-DO



Muller & Phipps (Manila), Ltd., Dept. G-13
National City Bank Bldg., Manila
I enclose 10c for the Odorono Sample Kit.

Name

Street & No.

Time