

'Plainest' and Already Seventeen, Girl Sees No Hope Of Marriage

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I'm a heartbroken teenage girl (17) with a problem. I've almost given up ever getting married. I'm the plainest of five girls and an extremely thin and wear glasses. I pray to forget my bitterness, but sometimes I have to face the fact. I don't keep going on with my friends very much because I do not like the crowd that much. Can you help me?

It's a c.m.s. to me, Betty, you've given up your inalienable right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit" before you ever reached the age to use it. Why not give yourself half a chance?

I know that some girls in our society feel quite mature at seventeen — in fact, about one out of every seven getting married are this age — but you still face some sixty more years of life. Aren't you pulling out of the competition rather early in the race?

You say you have to face the facts. All right, let's face them. At present you're considered the plainest of five. How do you know? Well, your sisters are always being told how attractive they are. I realize that this must be very hard to take, but what does it really mean? Perhaps your sisters are older than you or have developed physically more rapidly.

Both boys and girls show a wide span of age differences at which they start to "blouse out." Of course it's rough to be considered the "plain one" but remember this is a temporary, passing matter.

It is also a temporary matter that you now feel in competition with your sisters or, at least, constantly compare yourself with them. When you reach maturity, you will be accepted for what you are in yourself. It's what you have made of yourself that will count, so don't fall into the silly habit of always comparing yourself with your sisters, particularly when the comparison may be based on the thoughtless c.m.s.s. of others.

But, I'm so extremely thin! Are you really, or is this just in comparison with your sisters? Most girls your age are starting to run into the opposite problem — too many pounds, or too many in the wrong places.

However, if you believe it is unusually thin, you might check your diet. So, as young people acquire strange eating habits. Following their imagination rather than their normal appetite, they insist there's a whole category of foods they don't like or "just can't eat."

Much of this is sheer infantile fancy. Stick to a well-balanced diet — if you're in doubt about what foods are needed, check with your home economics teacher or counselor. If you're the kind that skips breakfast regularly, change the habit right now, and give your growing system a break.

Also, get plenty of exercise and at least eight hours of sleep. Of course, if you really are just "skin and bones," you should consult a doctor since your growing body may require additional vitamins or changes in your usual diet.

You say you wear glasses. Well, so do a good many other people, both young and old; and I might add, a good many others should be wearing them. Now I know glasses can be a bit of a nuisance at times, particularly during games and sports, but let's face it. If the type of glasses you wear are suitably chosen, most people around you don't really notice them.

Young people are sometimes so sensitive about wearing glasses because they fear to be different, but at seventeen you should be growing



out of this insecure stage of utter dependence on others. Glasses will mean no more or less than what you make them mean.

People react to you, not to your glasses, and it is only because you lack confidence in yourself, that you see your glasses or your figure as obstacles to popularity. Remember, it is you, the entire you as a person, your whole personality, that must be attractive. Individual items take their meaning from the total, unique self that you are.

This brings up a final point — to be loved, you must be lovable. You say you "don't keep company with friends very much because you don't like the crowd that much. But if you don't make an effort to like them, how can you expect them to like you?"

We become lovable only by loving, because love is not a one-way street, but a mutual giving and receiving — and

the giving comes first. An important part of growing up is to overcome the childish expectancy to "receive," and to learn to give. When you're with others, try to see what you can give, and who you can contribute to the happiness of others.

In practice this means that you take an active interest in others, in their feelings, problems, views, and concerns. You learn to listen, to observe reactions, and to guess feelings. Soon you discover that others are very much like yourself.

They need support, affection, encouragement, and understanding. They have their doubts, their fears, their human insecurities, but also their hopes, desires, and aspirations. In fact, they're very much like yourself. Seek to give when you're with your friends and you'll like them, you'll receive — and you'll be attractive!

Missioner Vanishes On Sacramento Errand

— (NOC) — A Catholic missionary who had been in the area for several years was reported to have disappeared on a recent trip to Sacramento.

New information has been received here about the disappearance of Father Marie Borjain, O.M.I., who was last seen in May in territory where many communist rebels are known to be operating.

Father Borjain, 37, was pastor of the Catholic church in Kien Kachan. His "parish" embraced an 8,000-square-mile area in the mountain district of Luang Prabang.

According to reports received here by Bishop Bernardini, O.M.I., Father Borjain was approached at Angkor's sacred forest.



Fined For Refusing Wedding

— (NOC) — A 35-year-old minister of the Swedish state church was fined by a court here for refusing to marry a couple because the man was divorced.

Lutheran Pastor Ali Hardelin refused to obey Sweden's law that every citizen has a right to be married by the minister of his parish church at least as long as there are no civil obstacles.

Pastor Hardelin, technically charged with neglect of duty, argued that he refused because he considered the bond of marriage indissoluble.

"I CANNOT think of any occasion on which I could perform the marriage ceremony for divorced parties," he said.

The pastor has the status of a civil servant. The man whose marriage he refused, it is said, appealed to the Parliamentary Commissioner, who has charge of supervising the performance of civil servants. The commissioner judged the pastor guilty of neglecting his duty and sent the issue to court.

The minister was given a 25-day fine, a Swedish penalty which extracts a percentage of the pastor's income over a 25-day period.

Interracial Marriages

Birmingham — (NOC) — Interracial marriage — a practice that is expected to increase in the Birmingham area — was declared by the Archbishop of Birmingham in his Advent pastoral letter.

Admitting that such unions were often beset by difficulties and problems for both the partners and their children, Archbishop Francis J. Grimshaw declared: "But let us one day of such a marriage that it is a bad one because one race is inferior to the other."

Large numbers of colored workers, many of them from the West Indies, have come to the Birmingham area in recent years. Some have married local girls.

Faces Court

Manchester — (NOC) — The legal argument whether a town without a public high school can pay tuition for students who choose to attend a Catholic school was heard at the Vermont Superior Court.

The court is being asked by the parents of a student to hear to show a violation by Chittenden County Chancellor William C. Hill, who held the tuition payment unconstitutional.

John Hollings, the son of the student, has no public school district in his home town, but he is in nearby Burlington.

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