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They were young girls. In a year they would be bleeding-hard. Skin clear and death defying. They had no business in that business.

Time moves along for grown people, but the young are stuck in the moment like bugs who, after lapping syrup, can't move and believe that the sticky world around them is forever now.

May who should know known better thought the same—that the battle of life was to get it to stand still and the day Mr. Cosey told us who he was marrying was the opening day of her personal December 7. She changed in an eye blink.

When I first saw her standing next to Billy Boy she looked just like the last daughter of a preacher who had to accept clothes from his congregation—^{an under-loved girl in} ~~awful~~: badly marcelled hair, an over-mended lightweight coat, ^{The little} ~~with a~~ scrap of fur collar, ^{the a} lettuce green dress, black and white pumps. And while I was wondering where Mr. Cosey's son had found ^{his wife} ~~this under-loved girl~~, she raised Billy boy's hand to hr mouth and kissed it. The way her eyes swallowed everything, travelling up and around the hotel lobby, I thought

she would behave like a visitor expecting to be waited on. I was dead wrong about that. She put off unpacking her suitcase; just changed out of that hand-me-down dress and started in. "Let's," she said. "Let's polish this. Let's move that, clean here, wipe there..." How could we help but smile. Mr. Cosey most of all seeing his son had chosen a wife bound to be a plus.

She moved Billy Boy from waiting tables to tending bar and ^{then} booking performers which left Mr. Cosey to think about money and play. Even pregnancy didn't slow her down. May was the first mother I saw who weaned her baby at three months. When Billy Boy died and Mr. Cosey went low, May kept things up and going. Seven years of dedication rewarded with "I'm taking a wife. You know her. Christine's little friend." Rewarded by watching her father-in-law marry her eleven year old daughter's playmate and put that playmate ahead of everything including herself, her own daughter and all she had worked for. Not only that. She had to teach and train the playmate to take charge of us. ^{Still,} There was more to it than age. May's new mother-in-law was not just a child, she was a Johnson. In no wild dream could May have invented a family that scared her more. The ^{Fool} idiot on German Syrup labels. The ^{Savage} fool on Czar's Baking Powder. The