

Beware the Gentle Gossip Before She Makes You Her Aide

By HELEN BRUNSON
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Look out for the woman who leads you on until you make remarks about mutual friends—something derogatory that she can quote.

The other day at club I was trapped by such an individual, Friend A. She's the mild quiet type, but beware! We were alone together in the kitchen and while we made salads, she pursued her hunt for ammunition:

"Mrs. X was over yesterday," she began.
This was designed to give me an opportunity to say what I really think of Mrs. X—that she's an unholly bore, makes a dog out of her husband, and boasts of her material possessions ad nauseum.

BUT NO, I was ready for Friend A. I countered with, "Doesn't Mrs. X have the prettiest clothes? (She does). Such excellent taste. The other day I saw her and she had on so and so and so."

Friend A: "Her daughter does too, but I think she spoils the girl—gives her too much." (Another veiled barb, but I didn't take the bait.)

"Yes, Ann looked darling too. Had on so and so and so."

NOW, FRIEND A and Mrs. X are together often, exchange plants and do other kindly acts. It makes you wonder.

Seeing that her "tack" was not a success, Friend A pursued another; Mrs. Y.
"Mrs. Y is going to Ann Arbor this week to visit her son," she begins, "Guess he isn't doing so well in school."

Now Mrs. Y is a nosey old bat whom I heartily dislike, but did I bite? I should say not!

What Friend A wanted me to say was, "Yes, Russ always was lazy in school, and the orneriest brat in town."

What I said was, "Going to Ann Arbor? I thought she was housecleaning. Saw her draperies out as I went by her house. She's a wonderful housekeeper you know." (She is.)

This naturally was a big disappointment to Friend A, but she had to agree about the housekeeping.

She tried one more, some remarks about Mrs. Z, a hypochondriac of our acquaintance:
"Sometimes I don't think she's as sick as she thinks she is."

I know very well Mrs. Z is as strong as an ox, but I said, "Then I am truly sorry for her—she suffers just as much as if she were really ill."

With that the sweet-faced menace closed the conversation. I'd completely wasted her time by giving her no quotable material at all. But that's what she gets for wasting my time.

Any Friend A's in your circle?



Mrs. Brunson



WINNERS IN POSTER CONTEST
Dawn DeVerter and James L. Bryan III hold Garden club posters. (Eccentric Photo)

Display Winning Posters

Each year, Birmingham branch of the Woman's National Farm and Garden association sponsors a poster contest for children in elementary schools in the Birmingham school district.

Winning posters were put on display this week in local stores and each young painter whose poster was chosen for exhibit will be awarded a flowering crabapple tree on Arbor Day, April 30.

Among the winners were James L. Bryan III and Diane Hitchcock of Adams school; Terry Hefferman, Richard Bouchard and Robert Herrgott of Holy Name; Dawn DeVerter and Jane Thompson of Pierce and Buffy Heller, Julie Miller and Chris Hubert of Quarton.

Others were Nancy Gurley and Eric Broadus of Terry; Kent Rakas and Sally Kelly of Bloomfield Village and Polly Porter, Darleen Ursum and Bill Mitchell of Franklin.

Mrs. Harvey B. Bushnell, education chairman of the branch, was in charge of this poster contest. She was assisted by Mrs. William J. Bird, Mrs. W. C. Newberg, Mrs. Earl Kuehl and Mrs. Ralph School.

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