

Dear Meredith,

I know you will be very, very cross with me for not having written in so long, but I'm sure you will forgive me (I hope) when I tell you my NEWS!!! I AM ENGAGED!! To the most wonderful man in the world!!! His name is Hugh Gibson (so I shall soon be Mrs Myra Gibson – can you imagine!!) and we met nine weeks and two days ago at Church Fellowship down at the Presbyterian Church in Forbes St, Beth Williams dragged me along. Anyway, I was helping serve tea after an interesting talk on the missionaries in Africa and Hugh came up and we started nattering away ten to the dozen – honestly, Meredith we just hit it off straight away like we'd known each other forever! There was none of the usual strain of trying to think to topics that will interest them, or keep things light and amusing – we talked about anything and everything that first evening, and haven't stopped talking since!! So, you see, Meredith – it can happen!! Don't give up hope! Love comes even to the over-thirties!!

Hugh is a little younger than me (29) and he works at Cascade Brewery in the packaging dept. He is hugely interested in amateur theatrics, has a lovely singing voice, and is not always pressing a girl for you-know-what all the time. He loves to waddle and always ends our evenings with a kiss, but he seems to have greater control of his urges than some. In fact, he has confessed to me he is very inexperienced in these marital matters and professes to be somewhat squeamish about it all so I shall probably have to coax him along a bit – he gets very nervous and blushes whenever we broach the subject, but I put that down to his being a virgin (I shall have to pretend that I am one, too!!) He asked me to marry him Tuesday evening last week when we had been to see a marvellous film called “The Vanishing Race”. He said, “Look here, Myra, I think you're terrific, you're the nicest girl I've ever met and I always feel tops whenever we're together – what do you say we marry??” Well, needless to say, I said “YES!” (very quickly) and then we went to see his Mother (he still lives with her). She said “Well, I never thought I'd see the day our Hugh would take shine to a girl!” She has already begun embroidering a table cloth for our wedding present.

So I am going to hand in my notice to that old bitch Mrs Barrett and her hideous children, and move in to Mrs Gibson's for a while (after we marry) till we can save up and afford a place of our own. We have set the date 14<sup>th</sup> March – just a small wedding but Meredith dear, I would love you to be my bridesmaid. I have seen some lovely satin-viscose for my dress, and there was a nice lilac which could do for you – I know you always say lilac washes you out but I disagree! Anyway do tell me you can come!! You simply have to, Meredith darling.

Now I know you will want to know what my future husband looks like. He is a little taller than me, (when I was in my stockinged feet) he has ginger hair (what's left of it, as he is prematurely balding) and trim moustache and the nicest, kindest brown eyes. He's always smiling and I have never seen him cross. He always dresses very nicely and has a great collection of colourful neckties, always with matching handkerchiefs. I am knitting

him a darling jumper in fawn and teale – he chose the pattern and the wool - it is very tricky so I've had to put that jumper I promised you aside for the moment, Meredith dear – I hope you will understand! Which brings me to another matter Pusspuss.

I will have to find another home for him as Hugh is allergic to cats. Laura Wilcox downstairs has offered to take him on it I contribute towards the cost of his food – is that all right with you? At the moment I take PP down to Laura's room before Hughie comes over and even then Hughie will break out into dreadful fits of sneezing – also he says Pusspuss aggravates his eczema (not as bad as my eczema – he only has it on his elbows and knuckles). I'm afraid Pusspuss has been getting into a lot of fights and had a nasty abscess on his face which thankfully seems to have finally healed after I applied poultices of warm bread – I'm afraid it was quite ghastly, oozing pus everywhere. Ever since he has been rather a different cat, and will have a go at me when I try to pick him up. So he really is becoming something of a handful. I know I promised I'd care for him for you, but as you can see, it's all become a bit difficult now. I'm sure you will understand. And Laura will look after him – I know you two never got on but Pusspuss seems to quite like her, and he hardly seems to like anyone these days.

Well, I seem to have blathered on about myself and my exciting news endlessly. How are you going, dear Meredith? You Uncle sounds like a dreadful trial (I would be tempted to fling his poached eggs right back at him) but I must say, you sound like you are doing your best to persevere with good grace – typically Meredith. Now I shall get to my point – why don't you come back? I have been scanning the classifieds and there always seems to be a vacancy for a typist/stenographer. If you came back for the wedding (I know it's short notice), then you could take over my room and reunite with old Pusspuss, who I'm sure would be very glad to see you again. And if you're worried about gossip, let me reassure you that everybody has pretty much forgotten these days – no one ever mentions it except to say “I wonder how poor Meredith's going...”

Which reminds me, please don't pull apart your old blouses and try your mad ideas – wait till you come over and I will help you with it – I dread to think the awful hash you will make.

I have sent you a few clipping from the Mercury, as you seemed to want to know all about what is going on. There is a new Ronald Colman picture coming out very soon – be still, my beating heart! I must confess, sometimes when Hugh gives me his goodnight kiss, I close my eyes and think of Ronald Colman! (The only thing they have in common is the moustache – rather tickly) (And here I am almost married!!) There is a sale on at Edments, and if you are wondering about what to get for a wedding present, I have ticked some items which might be in your price range.

Let me know at once if you can come back for the wedding as if you can't, I shall ask Beth Williams – after all, she brought Hugh and I together. (I suspect she's a little jealous, though she claims not to be, but suspect she had him picked out for herself.)

Must go as Hugh just arrived. I told him I am writing to our possible bridesmaid, and he says he is very much looking forward to meeting you. (I hope you don't mind, but I did tell him some of your trouble, only because I don't wish to have any secrets from my future husband. I fear he was a little shocked but rest assured, he is very discreet and your secret will be safe with him.)

Must go!

Myra (soon to be) Gibson) xx