

The Masquers

A Story Showing That Our Inmost Thoughts Are Our Own

By CLARISSA MACKIE

Miss Vardemond dismissed her maid and leaned back in her chair with a weary little sigh. She had superintended the packing of her trunks and had inspected with languid interest the lustrous white bridal gown with its dainty accessories.

There was one hour before dinner. After dinner would come Stephen. She must do it at once. She went to a writing desk and from some secret hiding place brought forth a carved sandalwood box.

She turned a golden key in the lock, and odors of sandalwood and rose-leaves perfumed the air like incense rising from an invisible altar. She took out a bundle of letters and a man's picture. Untying the package, she placed the envelopes face upward in a long row on the rug. There were thirty in all.

Thirty days of perfect bliss in one's life. That was not so very much, she thought rebelliously. But then each day had been full of an unutterable joy that had been rounded to an idyllic close by the receipt of a letter. She pressed a white finger on the first envelope. It was merely an invitation to ride in the park. The last letter was a passionate avowal, ending in black night for her.

She stretched out her arms and murmured wistfully, "All within this little space!" Then she made a motion as if to gather and toss them into the fire, but hesitated: "Once more," she breathed to herself, "only once more."

She did not open the letters. One by one in the order of their dates she picked up the missives and read them with her mind's eye. Graphically she lived each day, and at the close of the



"ONCE MORE," SHE BREATHED TO HERSELF, "ONLY ONCE MORE."

day she tossed a letter into the fire's heart and watched while the passionate flames consumed it.

As she read her face changed from the first faint flush of newly kindled love to deeper recognition of love's meaning—tenderness, perfect joy, and then, with the last letter, awakening and despair.

When the last one had expired and its blackened specter had down upon the chimney, hot tears fell on the picture in her lap. She looked on it once as one looks on the face of the beloved dead and laid it on the pyre. Ere it was consumed in the flicking flames she placed the sandalwood box above it and watched the ascending smoke and crumbling embers through blurred vision. When the fire glowed clear and bright again her tears ceased to flow.

For a long time she gazed into the fiery coils wherein her tokens of happiness had been consumed and likened it to the ordeal through which she had passed. After it was all over, the brief, feverish term of joy which had been allotted to her, she had withdrawn into the grateful shadow of Stephen's friendship. Friends who which had ripened into a love in which she played the passive part of recipient, for she had no love to give—only entire affection—but it was affection that would be lasting as life itself, and perhaps would be more satisfactory than transitory love.

Stephen did not know this. He was not aware that the offer of his sheltering love afforded a grateful refuge to her bruised heart. He believed in her to be too high minded and steadfast to come to him with anything less than love.

Yet she had done it and he would never know. It would be her life's purpose that the noble hearted man who had promised to marry should never learn that in return for his deep love she brought him sincere affection—and nothing else.

With a quick, graceful movement she arose to her full height and shook back the copper glory of her hair. It was as if she had slipped off some

burden that had lain heavy on her beautiful shoulders.

"Now I can begin anew," she said triumphantly.

"I believe it is customary," so lightly quizzed Wade, with a bitter smile, as he drew a letter case from his pocket. Then he stared into the fire absently. A half hour passed, during which he sat utterly motionless, the fine profile of his face set like a cameo against the dark velvet of his chair.

With a sudden start he slowly opened the letter case. From an inner compartment he took a small parcel wrapped in tissue paper and unrolled it in his broad palm. He looked down upon an absurdly small fan with rich lace and delicate pearl sticks crushed and broken. His own hand had wrought the injury.

Ah, the pain again! He had not thought it possible, for had not his very soul died that night? Yet there was the pain, the terrible crashing agony. Could men suffer like that and live on?

Aye, man had done it and would. He drew a sharp breath. The pain deadened into apathy, and the broken fan slipped from his fingers to the floor.

He saw a full southern moon shifting light through honeysuckles and roses while he watched with passionate ardor the shadows flickering across a beautifully dark face with soft black eyes and rose leaf lips. There was the rise and fall of her low toned contralto as they talked, to the sound of whose music he could listen forever.

He saw a warm southern sun shedding light on long delightful days when life was intoxicatingly blissful—days wherein care nor apprehension nor any doubt found place, days when his upright, honorable, clean soul rejoiced in the love of a woman, in the glory of perfect womanhood that was without a flaw. Poets and historians were base revilers to the contrary; he, Stephen Wade, knew.

He saw a moonlit night, heavily scented with jasmine, when his very heart ached with the perfect joy of living—when, in the pale shadows of arching palm alleys, his perfect joy turned to agony, his strong hand clinched about the fragile toy of lace and pearl, had crushed it as his hopes were crushed under the faying scorn of her voice, under the indifferent mockery of her softly luminous eyes.

Bewildered with pain, he had turned away with ashen face. He had walked miles through the brilliant night, every star hanging like a lamp in the sky, while the clinging perfume of the jasmine flowers that rioted the wayside hedges overpowered his senses and numbed his agony for the time.

When the first pink flush of dawn had spread into the pale morning sky he had stopped beside a fern edged pool. Hot eyed and weary, he lifted one hand and looked at the fan, at first stupidly, then with growing apprehension and then realization. He shuddered now as he thought of the hours, days, months, years that had followed.

Then had come his meeting with Constance Vardemond, his warm admiration for her beauty and her sweet, sound disposition. They had become the best of friends. They understood each other perfectly, but he had never dreamed of marriage. He did not want to marry any one—now. But some one had whispered a word, or it materialized in the air, for it had never evolved from his modest inner consciousness that Constance cared.

Stephen Wade did not hesitate. He held out his hand and his heart and his life, and she took them gratefully, as one who thankfully receives a great boon, and between them had come a perfect peace and understanding.

To Stephen, Constance Vardemond represented the highest type of womanhood that he believed could exist beyond that his nature, which had been hammered into a cool, calm, evenness of temperament, did not inquire. Tomorrow they would be married with all the pomp and brilliant pageantry that was a part of such occasions in their circle. This was the last night he could open the book of the past.

A deep toned clock chimed the hour. He passed a hand wearily over his eyes. "Of course it is near dinner time," he muttered. "And after dinner there is Constance—it—I believe this is customary."

He laughed harshly and picked up the fan. The simple action seemed to give vent to some inward storm of passion, for suddenly he tore the sticks into fragments and tossed them into the fire. Then with a fierce cry he leaped forward and snatched a small bit from the glowing mass. With seared fingers he clutched the smoky tatter of lace and splinter of pearl and pressed it to his lips passionately. Then he flung it back into the fire.

With compressed lips and sullen, miserable eyes he watched the flicking flames devour his little all—the only thing he had cared for in the world. There was a last burst of devouring flame and then, when not one atom of his fetter remained, he sprang to his feet and faced the large photograph of Constance Vardemond that stood on the table behind him.

He looked at it with a grave steadfastness in eyes from which all passion had fled and where nothing but a great peace remained.

Constance should never know that the love he was bringing to her was a make believe, a sham. The love she had chosen to honor him with should receive its full quota of deep, earnest affection, and he would make it the purpose of his life that the woman who loved him should never guess that he had none to give in return.

"It is good to begin life anew," he smiled confidently.

There was a soft tap at the door. "Dinner is served, Mr. Stephen."

Franklin's Kite Experiment. Commenting on Benjamin Franklin's kite experiment, which proved that lightning and electricity are the same, a scientist says: "It was one of the most brilliant examples of luck yet recorded. To attempt the extraction of lightning flashes from a lowering sky was almost suicidal. Even at this late day timid persons occasionally fly to feather beds, sit on glass legged chairs or find refuge in rubber boots during thunderstorms. A repetition of Franklin's experiment cost his immediate initiator his life."

His Wig in His Pocket. Benjamin Franklin once wore his wig in his pocket at the court of Versailles. When he was about to present himself at the court for the first time he was informed that a wig was essential. Franklin's head was so large that no ordinary wig would begin to fit it. However, one was found sufficiently large to pass him through the ante-chambers, after which he was permitted to remove the ridiculous conventional appendage and place it in his ample pocket.

Points for Mothers

Timely Hints on Care of Baby. What mother does not long to give her baby all the advantages possible for normal development? Yet there are many, having had no special training for motherhood, who neglect methods best adapted for a child's welfare.

Take the question of pure air for babies. Many a mother thoughtlessly allows her baby to stay in a heated room in which there are several occupants. With so many people breathing this same atmosphere it soon has its oxygen exhausted, and it is not an uncommon thing to see the baby yawning and become fretful. Those who understand this cause either immediately change the air in the same room or take the little one into another room that has been specially aired, that he may retain his composure. For this same reason it is imperative for grown-ups to avoid keeping the baby in rooms where household duties are being performed, as the odors from cooking, the dust from sweeping and the steam from washing all rob the air of the freshness so beneficial to the health of an infant. Busy mothers especially should see the advantage of training a baby to stay in one place, and that place should be made clean and well ventilated. Frequent trips to this room can be made between tasks, to change positions and to look after his comfort.

Even in cold weather indoor airings of fifteen minute periods should be given to babies. They should be commenced when the little one is a month old, and an excellent way to keep him warm is to put him into his coat, leggins and bonnet and then tuck him into his crib or carriage beneath some warm, light weight covering and place him face forward toward the widely opened windows. Care should be taken to see that all doors in this room are kept closed to prevent drafts.

It is not universally recognized that the constant supply of pure air for the tiny lungs of the baby is fully as important as his food. Fresh, pure air is required to renew and purify his blood, and the beneficial effects produced by it are good temper, red cheeks and an improved appetite.

Just when it is safe to begin taking a baby out of doors in winter is a question often asked by the young mother. It is wiser to wait until he is three months old and then only on pleasant days. He should be tucked snugly into his carriage and kept in the sunshine, out of the wind, with the precaution always of shading his eyes from the sunlight. Days when it is very cold or when the winds are heavy should be avoided, and a nap in an open air sleeping room substituted. When babies are out of doors they should be constantly watched to see that they are not suffering from cold, as it is important that a baby's bodily heat should be maintained. It is well for mothers to remember that many of the diseases of infant life are directly attributable to overheated and vitiated air, so that riding in electric or steam cars in winter or the carrying of children into department stores is done with attendant risks.

Six Don'ts for Mothers. Haven't you seen mothers, not only the young, inexperienced mothers, but women of mature years who are old enough to know better, constantly doing things to their children that make you want to shake them and if possible bring them to a sense of realization of the error of their ways?

Mothers will persist in allowing themselves to grow old in feeling. Of course they cannot stay the passage of years, but they can keep young in thought by making themselves a companion to their children, joining in their play as well as the more serious phases of their lives.

Mothers must take care not to let themselves rust mentally. The growing girl and boy who can have mother help them out of a tight place in their lessons or can go to her for a clear answer to a perplexing question rarely get that disagreeable know it all air so common to young America.

Never try to force your children's confidence. If you have tried to be the chum of your child from the start the confidence will be given unhesitatingly. Confidences that are asked or demanded are always given grudgingly and with a sense of resentment when they are not refused altogether. Children never confide willingly in an unsympathetic mother. The moment a child realizes he will be criticised or scolded for the little mistakes he makes he will hide everything possible from the mother, but if he is sure of her ready sympathy the confidence will be given unasked.

Avoid disappointing a child to see that you are disappointed in him. There is no surer road to self-consciousness and the don't care attitude than if the boy and girl feel that mother thinks them a failure.

On the other hand, don't think your children are prodigies. Children usually know they are not the human wonders their fond mothers believe them to be, and when they are constantly exploited they are bound to be conscious of embarrassment and being under a strain show up to bad advantage. And if the child agrees with the maternal opinion he becomes a bore and disgustingly conceited.

BASKETBALL IN WATER.

New Game Proposed to Supplant Rough Rugby Polo. A new game—basketball in the water—is to make its first appearance this winter. The sport will embody the game of touchy polo without the objectionable points and will have all of the good points of basketball. It will be known as "basket polo."

Norman Cox, swimming instructor of the Chicago Athletic Association, is the author of the new game and has framed a set of rules for it.

Twelve players, according to the rules, six on a side, will engage in the game. The area of the playing pool will be not less than 40 feet long and 20 feet wide nor more than 100 feet long and 50 feet wide.

Baskets fourteen inches in diameter, on a background four feet high and five feet wide, will form the goals, the tops of which shall not be more than five feet above the surface of the water nor more than eight and one-half feet from the bottom of the pool at the shallow end.

Points will be made by allowing three points for a field goal and one for a goal from a free trial. The game will be played by halves of twenty minutes each.

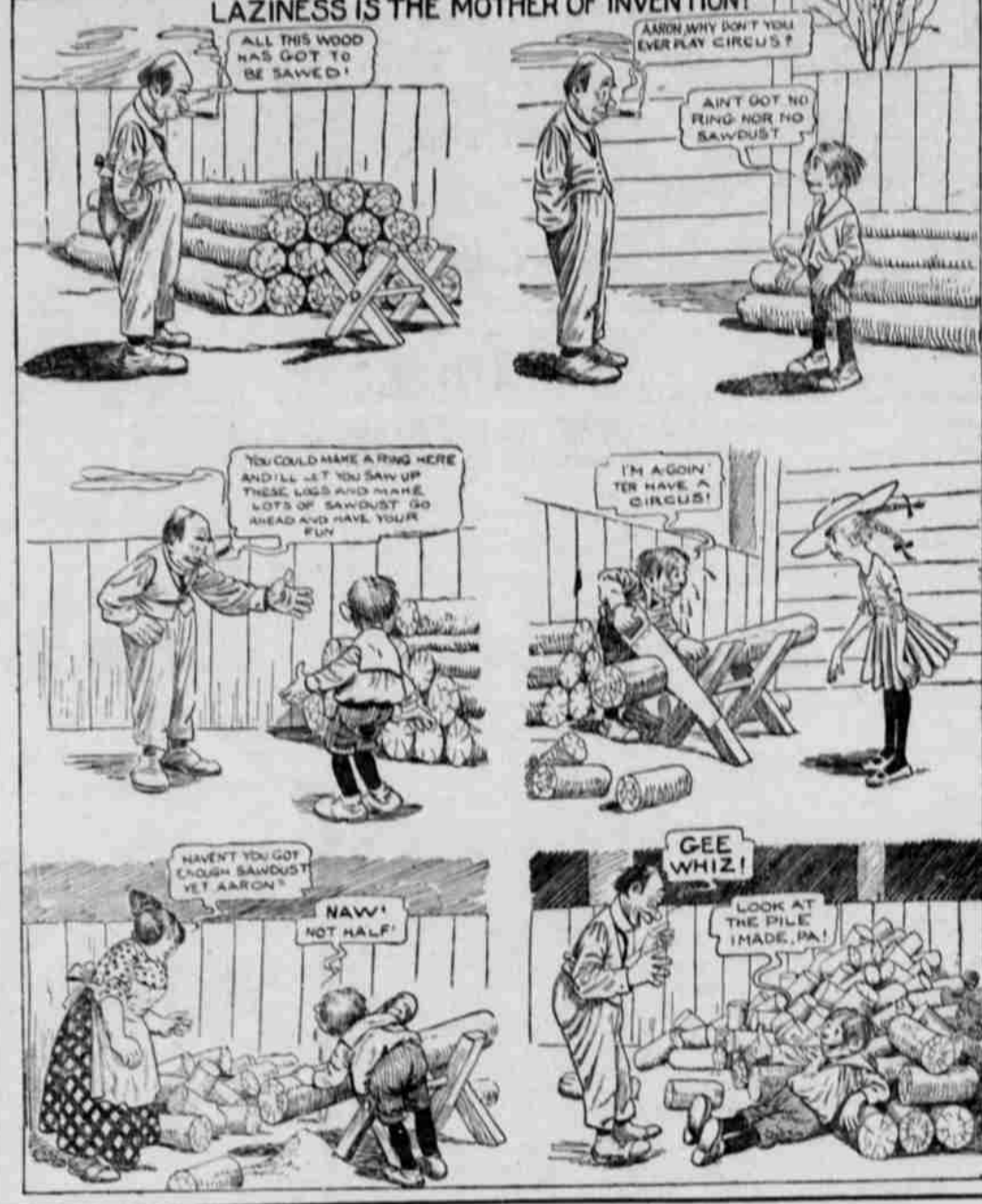
NAVY UNCOVERS WONDER.

Name, Leonard; Weight, Only 142; Speed, Lightning. Leonard, the lightest man on the Naval academy squad, has been doing some brilliant work in the back field during practice, and his ability as a runner, coupled with the fact that he is distinctly the best punter on the squad, makes him sure of playing against the Army team.

He weighs but 142 pounds, but has the greatest amount of natural half-back ability of any Navy player this year.

THE OUTLET

PERPETRATED BY WALT McDUGALL



DOMESTIC INFELICITY.

One Unhappy Cause of the Marital Estate Explained. It is undoubtedly a fact that most married people say things to each other that they would give notice and leave, and they would not dream of saying to a casual acquaintance.

Marriage is life with the polish rubbed off in a good many cases. It is the one relation in the world in which most men and women feel that they can dispense with all the amenities of civilization and in which they have the courage of their rudeness.

Most human beings have no idea of the number of faults they possess nor how they look to others until they hear the limy of their shortcomings chanted with relentless candor by their husbands or wives.

Other people laugh long and lustily at your pet story. Your wife or your husband feels that it is good for you to know that they have heard it at least fifty times and that your power as a conversationalist doesn't amount to much.

Other people praise your vivacity. Your husband feels free to tell you not to make a fool of yourself by acting like a schoolgirl when you are closing on to forty; that dignity and sweetness and silence are what you should cultivate; that you talk too much, anyhow, and it is getting to be a bore. He thinks these things are good for you to know.

Too often husbands and wives use each other to flash out on each other all the ill temper and irritability in their systems—irritability and ill temper that they dare not show to their customers or their servants.

It is usually husbands and wives that tell each other things that the other is not particularly anxious to know—that they are trying to blind themselves.

And there are people who speculate about the cause of the many cases of domestic infelicity.

Man Coughs and Breaks Rib

After a frightful coughing spell a man in Neenah, Wis., felt terrible pains in his side and his doctor found two ribs had been broken. What agency Dr. King's New Discovery would have saved him. A few teaspoonfuls end a late cough, while persistent use routs obstinate coughs, expels stubborn colds or heals weak, sore lungs. "I feel sure it's a Godsend to humanity," writes Mrs. Elma Morton, Columbia, Mo., "for I believe I would have consumption today, if I had not used this great remedy." Its guaranteed to satisfy, and you can get a free trial bottle or 50-cent or \$1.00 size at all dealers.

Sell Laudatory.

"There's only one thing I've got against the Congressional Record," said Farmer Corntassel.

"You refer to its occasional suspension of publication?"

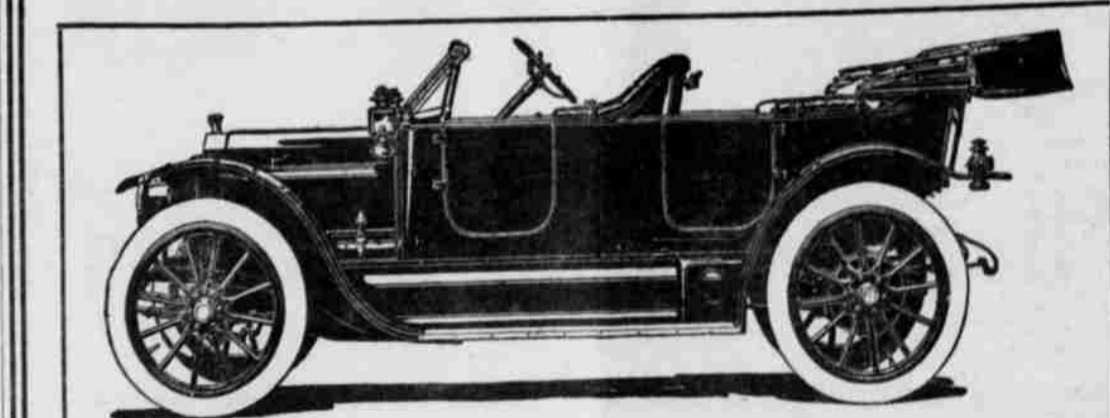
"No. It's kind o' misleadin'. A lot of the speeches our congressman makes about himself ought to be marked 'adv.'—Washington Star.

Antiseptic Remedies destroy disease germs. Dr. Bell's Anti-Pain is an antiseptic remedy for external and internal pains, relief is almost instantaneous. Sold by all dealers. For sale by Harding's drug store.

No Better. Silliness—There is honor among thieves. Cynicism—Nonsense! They are just as bad as other people.—Life.

Make Up Your Own Mind. When in need of a cough medicine, if you buy Dr. Bell's Pine-Tar-Honey we guarantee you get the best. For sale by Harding's Drug Store.

When you have a bilious attack give Chamberlain's Tablets a trial. They are excellent. For sale by Huntley Bros. Co., Oregon City, Hubbard, Mo. Hall and Canby.



Is This Your Automobile?

Its a 5 passenger car with full equipment, including a clock and self starter. It's one you would be proud to own, and we are going to GIVE it to somebody on May 1st. This is the plan: Votes will be given with every purchase—1 vote for each 1c purchase—and the person who has the most votes on May 1st will get this Automobile free of any charge. Its a prize worth working for—shall we enter your name and give you 2000 votes for a starter? Just ask for the Contest Manager at Huntley's. See the Car in our window.

IN OUR BIG HOLIDAY STOCK embracing hundreds and hundreds of desirable gifts—there is something for every taste and every pocket book, so now is the best time to make a start when your friends will be spending their Christmas money.

Votes are transferable before they are voted—not after. So if you decide not to enter you can give your votes to some friend who is contesting.

How to Become a Candidate

Fill out coupon below and mail or bring to Huntley Bros. Co. store, and you will be assigned a number, and given 2000 free votes for a flying start.

I hereby enter the \$1800 Auto Contest. Please assign me a number and credit me with 2000 Free Votes.

(Signed)

I hereby nominate

as a candidate in the \$1800 Auto Contest.

(Signed)

RULES OF CONTEST

- ONE. No names of contestants will be known, each entrant having a number.
- TWO. Each contestant receives 2000 free votes as a starter.
- THREE. Votes will be counted each Wednesday and recorded.
- FOUR. Different colored votes will be used each month and all votes of a certain color must be deposited during the month issued.
- FIVE. All votes are transferrable only before being cast in ballot box.
- SIX. All votes must be cast at ballot box in Huntley Bros. Co. Store, or mailed to the Contest Manager.
- SEVEN. Any individual, church, lodge, school, or other organization in the county is eligible to enter the contest.
- EIGHT. Contestants will not be permitted to solicit votes inside our stores or in front of them.
- NINE. The contestant having the most votes to his credit at 9 P. M. May 1st, 1913, will be declared the winner.
- TEN. The decision of the Contest Manager is final in every question which may arise during the contest.

The Rexall Store **HUNTLEY BROTHERS CO.** Quality Druggists

The following business houses are participating in this contest and will give votes with all purchases:

J. LEVITT The Up To Date Glothier. V. HARRIS Quality Grocer. STAR THEATER Pictures and Vaudeville. OREGON CITY ENTERPRISE The Paper with the News.