

How He Won (and Lost) His Chorus Girl Bride

The Happy, Proud Bride of
"Senator" Reynolds,
Multi-Millionaire,
Distinguished Diplomat,
with Estates in England—
Wakes Up to Find
She Has Married
a Disreputable
Gambler

Mrs. Jacques
Bustanoby,
Whose Husband
Sued Her for
Divorce and Who
Has a Suit for
a Quarter of
a Million
Dollars Damages
Against
Reynolds for
Mixing Himself
Up in Bustanoby's
Marital
Affairs.

By Mrs. Thomas L. Reynolds,
(In an Interview)

EVERYBODY is familiar with the old adage that "marriage is a lottery." And a lottery is a form of gambling, of course. My marriage was in the fullest sense a gamble—for I married one of New York's most notorious gamblers.

Four years ago I came to New York from the West—a country girl from a little farming town. It was my dream to become a great actress, and I was glad to make a start as a chorus girl in the Winter Garden show. For a wider range of experience and to learn something of the great pulsating city of New York I left the chorus and became a cabaret singer and a dancer.

The chorus girl of the White Light district of New York is supposed to be worldly wise and sophisticated. But I had come into the whirl of New York life as ignorant and innocent as any farmer's daughter. I had read of the great ladies of the stage and had cut out of the papers and saved their pretty pictures. Some day I hoped to wear such gowns and jewels if I could earn my way by hard work and faithful efforts.

But of the great and variegated mass of human beings who make up the wonderful kaleidoscope of New York night life—alas, I knew nothing. I supposed that a silk hat, gloves, patent leather shoes and well-crescented trousers were the sterling hall-mark of a gentleman. I never dreamed that they might cover a human wolf.

I was singing among the tables at one of the largest restaurants in the theatre district when a guest attracted my attention by applauding loudly and begged me to sit down and have dinner with him. He was a rather elderly person with a Vandike beard, carefully dressed in evening clothes, and with a manner which impressed me with his dignity. But my natural reserve led me to decline the invitation, and I went on with my work. The next night this same man sat at a table, and with him as his guest was a girl whom I had known in the Winter Garden chorus. She presented her escort to me, and with this introduction it seemed proper enough for me to join them at the table. I was dining with Thomas Lennon Reynolds, the man I was destined soon to marry.

Next evening Mr. Reynolds was at his table, but he was alone. I dined with him at his urgent solicitation—why should I have had any fear?

And the next night and the next night and every night Mr. Reynolds was at his table, and soon pressed me for theatre engagements and called to see me at my modest little home. Very shortly he arranged a dinner for me and my roommate at his magnificent establishment on West Sixty-eighth street. Here I was impressed by the luxury of the fittings and the great life-size paintings on the walls.

But who was this amiable gentleman of exquisite attire, of polished manners, of dignified bearing, of abundant means? My only source of information was his own stories of his life, of his achievements, of his social standing, of his friends, of his honorable career, of his standing as a statesman.

I was completely dazzled by his glorious pictures of his own grandeur and wealth and distinguished position. I took him at his own estimate. I had no friend to tell me he was an imposter—it never occurred to me to doubt him. So I married him and was happy in the pride of being the bride of a distinguished Senator, a man who had been our Ambassador to Russia, a cultured college man, a millionaire—but all these air-castles have tumbled into ruins. My husband turned out to be a common gambler. Hardly had we been married when I had the horrible humiliation of seeing him dragged to jail to serve a sentence behind the bars!

"You have heard of Senator Reynolds, no doubt?" he said. "No? Well, of course, not everybody reads the papers. See, here is an interview with me, Senator Reynolds, in the morning paper this morning. I have sorrows and burdens and political duties which I trust your dear heart and simple mind may never be troubled with. But statesmen have a duty to perform, and, after all, there is no nobler work than my own in fighting for the poor, the innocent and the unsuspecting. It is the one joy of my life in this wicked world of designing, rascally men and adventurers."

But how was I to know that the true Senator Reynolds, who lives in Long Beach, is an entirely different man and of a dif-

Mrs. Thomas L. Reynolds, the Chorus Girl, Who Was Lured into Marriage by the Fantastic Tales of Gambler Reynolds.



His Excellency
Hon. Thomas L. Reynolds



"He told me glorious stories of his life, of his achievements, of his social standing, of his friends, of his honorable career as a statesman, of his millions, of his estates. But nobody warned me that this amiable gentleman of exquisite attire, of polished manners, of dignified bearing, was a criminal, a common gambler, masquerading in the clothes of a gentleman."



This is a Picture Which Reynolds Exhibited to the Chorus Girl and Said Was His Castle in England. This Partly Influenced the Girl to Marry the Gambler.

sought with greater eagerness by bill collectors? After I became his wife my life was one long parley with importunate creditors, even including our four servants, the cook, the butler, the housemaid and the chauffeur.

"I am one of the best lawyers in this city, perhaps you would be interested to know, but I gave it up because I could earn millions to the hundreds of those poor hungry grubbers in law offices," he said.

But how was I to know he was not a lawyer until I received from Albany a letter saying there is no record that Thomas Lennon Reynolds was ever admitted to the bar in this State?

"Yes, my dear," he confided to me. "I am college bred. I am a graduate of Vanderbilt University."

How could I know that this was untrue until a polite note from the registrar of that institution of learning begged pardon for the delay and assured me that Thomas Lennon Reynolds was never graduated from the Vanderbilt University?

"My love," he tenderly said, "you will some day be in the receiving line with the First Lady of the Land, for I am to run for United States Senator next Fall and will certainly be elected."

But how could I know that instead of running for United States Senator he would be busily running from the police and the prosecuting officers of New York?

"Dear child," he said, with much solicitude, "it pains me to see you work for a living while I have wealth beyond the dreams of avarice. I have so much money that I cannot count it. I leave that to my clerks."

How could I know then what I discovered in the eleven months I was his wife—that there were forty judgments against him aggregating more than forty thousand dollars? Some of these were petty sums for menial service; for instance, \$50 for cleaning windows.

"You are the only woman I have ever loved," he declared with a dramatic gesture, "and the first to bear my name." But no one warned me that he had had two wives—one whom he divorced and one who divorced him, that the one who

had divorced him lived with him but five weeks. One of my many after-marriage discoveries was that he had been sued by Jacques Bustanoby for alienation of his wife's affections.

"You shall have everything in the world you want," he said while he was paying court to me.

How should I know that though he gave me an automobile I should have to sell it almost immediately to pay his fine of \$250 for keeping a gambling house?

"When we are married," he declared, "you shall hold your head up with the highest."

But how could I know that it would be bowed every day by some trick or evasion of my husband's?

"My house at No. 35 West Sixty-eighth street," he declared, "is frequented by the best people in the city. Men and women of arts and letters and finance meet there."

But how was I to know that the house was a gambling den and that the finance was crooked finance?

"This is a 'frame-up,'" the "Senator" said when the police broke in and arrested him in his gambling den, "to defeat me for the office of United States Senator. They think it will keep me from running this Fall. You'll find it will amount to nothing."

How was I to know that this elderly, impressive suitor of mine would be indicted and convicted and compelled to serve a term of imprisonment for being a gambler?

He used to say that he was above all things a man among men. He said, "Thank Heaven, I am not of the sissy brigade. I have never derived a dollar from a woman." Yet here was a Mrs. Reynolds furnishing \$3,500 bail for him, and there is a record that he brought suit for \$250,000 for alienation of his wife's affections. The suit was brought against her mother-in-law, Mrs. Thomas J. House. He sued her for the same amount for alienation of her daughter's affections that Jacques Bustanoby demanded from him for the trip abroad that "Senator" Reynolds took. It is charged, with his wife. Nor is mine the first suit for annulment of marriage in "Senator" Reynolds's career. Only in this case I am suing. In the other he himself was the plaintiff.

Yes, I was fooled. Bitterly, wholly fooled. I am ashamed to face the world. Particularly am I ashamed to face the clear-eyed young women who constitute the merry-merries on Broadway. I deserve their silvery "Ha, ha's!" I should have known. But who was ever a match for Munchausen?

I am waiting with what patience I can until my suit for annulment of marriage is won. Thank heaven, the law nullifies the marriage built upon misrepresentation. Had "His Excellency" not represented himself to be a man of wealth and honor and of high position in the community, with numerous other misrepresentations, I would not have been dazzled by him and married him. When the cornerstone is destroyed the house falls.

I left his house. My farewell note said, "I am leaving because I can stand you no longer." I went down to the Woolworth Building and engaged Edward H. Burger to bring suit. Mr. Burger has asked the courts to annul my marriage because I was victimized by the wholly false pretenses of the man who won me by his misrepresentation.

When freed from his name I shall begin a new life. I hope that the frank narrative of my childish trustfulness may be of service in teaching a lesson to other country girls who may be pursued by wolves who masquerade in false pretenses of respectability.



PHOTO: PACM BROS. N.Y.

Thomas L. Reynolds, Gambler, in the Uniform of an Officer of the New York National Guard.

life. Of course, as diplomatic representative of a great nation like the United States, one becomes very intimate with the Czar and the men and women of the Court. Their entertainments are very sumptuous and so different from the simple affairs of American diplomatic life. You know you must wear the uniform of the diplomatic service at the great functions and you are addressed as 'Excellency.' I wonder—oh, yes, I happen to have one of my cards with me which I used to use in Petrograd when I was United States Ambassador to the Russian Court. Here it is. See, 'His Excellency, Honorable Thomas Lennon Reynolds.' Would you like it? Yes. Keep it

as a little souvenir. Some day I trust I may revisit dear old Russia and that you will be with me as my bride."

But how could I know that all he knew about Russia he had gotten from books and maybe the East Side "brass" shops? "I am in the confidence of some of the greatest men of the world," he said to me. "I know John D. Rockefeller. Yes, the senator. He often sends for me and we have long conferences. He is so guided by my judgment that I have performed confidential services for the Standard Oil Company for which I have received \$3,000,000."

But how was I to know that this person so sought after by financiers was being

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