

REVELATIONS OF A WIFE

The Story of a Honeymoon

A Wonderful Romance of Married Life Wonderfully Told by
ADELE GARRISON

CHAPTER CCLXXXVI

WHAT DOES "SHE LAUGHS
BEST WHO LAUGHS LAST."
GRACE DRAPER, REALLY
MEAN?

There is no magic healing like that held in the hands of a little child. It was providential for me that a short time after Lillian took me to the apartment which had been home to her for years, her small daughter, Marion Morton, was restored to her.

The child's father had died suddenly, after all, and to Lillian fell

the task of caring for and comforting the old mother of the man who had done his best to spoil Lillian's life. She had brought the aged and feeble sufferer to the apartment, established her in the bedroom which Lillian had always kept for herself, and engaged a nurse to care for her. When I recalled Lillian's story, remembered that her first husband's mother, without a jot of evidence to go upon, had believed her son's vile accusations against Lillian, my friend's forgiveness seemed almost divine to me. I am afraid I never could have equalled it.

When I said as much to Lillian she looked at me uncomprehending.

"Why, Madge!" she said. "There was nothing else to do. Marion's grandmother is devoted to her. To separate them now would kill the old woman. Besides, her income is so limited that she cannot have the proper care unless I do take her in."

"I thought you said Mr. Morton

had a legacy about the time of his second marriage."

"He did, but most of it has been dissipated, I imagine, and what there is left is in possession of his second wife, a woman with no more red blood than a codfish. She would let his mother starve before she would exert herself to help her, or part with any money. No, there is nothing else to do, Madge. I'll just have to work a little harder, that's all, and that's good for me—best reducing system there is, you know."

Madge Rouses Herself.

The sheer indomitable courage of her taking up burdens in her middle age which should never be hers and assuming them with a smile and a jest upon her lips. I felt suddenly ashamed of the weakness with which I had met my own problems.

"Lillian!" I said abruptly, "you make me ashamed of myself. I'm going to stop grieving—as much as I can—" I qualified, "and to get to work. Tell me, how best can I help you. I'm going back to my club work next week—I'm sure I shall be strong enough by then, but I shall have such loads of time outside."

My friend came over to me impetuously and kissed me warmly.

"You blessed child!" she said.

"I'm so glad if anything has aroused you. I'm going to accept your words in the spirit in which I am sure they are uttered. If you can share Marion with me for a while it will help me more than anything else. I have so many orders piled up I don't know where to begin first. Her grandmother is too ill to attend to her, and I don't want to leave her with any hired attendant, she has had too many of those already."

"Don't say another word," I interrupted. "There's nothing on earth I'd rather do just now than to take care of Marion."

Thus began a long succession of peaceful days spent with Lillian's small daughter. She was a bewitching little creature of nine years, but so tiny that she appeared to be a child of six. I had taught many children, but never had been associated with a child at home. I grew sincerely attached to the little creature, and she in turn appeared very fond of me. Lillian told her to call me "Aunt Madge," and the sound of the title was most grateful to me.

"It's a Mystery."

"Auntie Madge, Auntie Madge."

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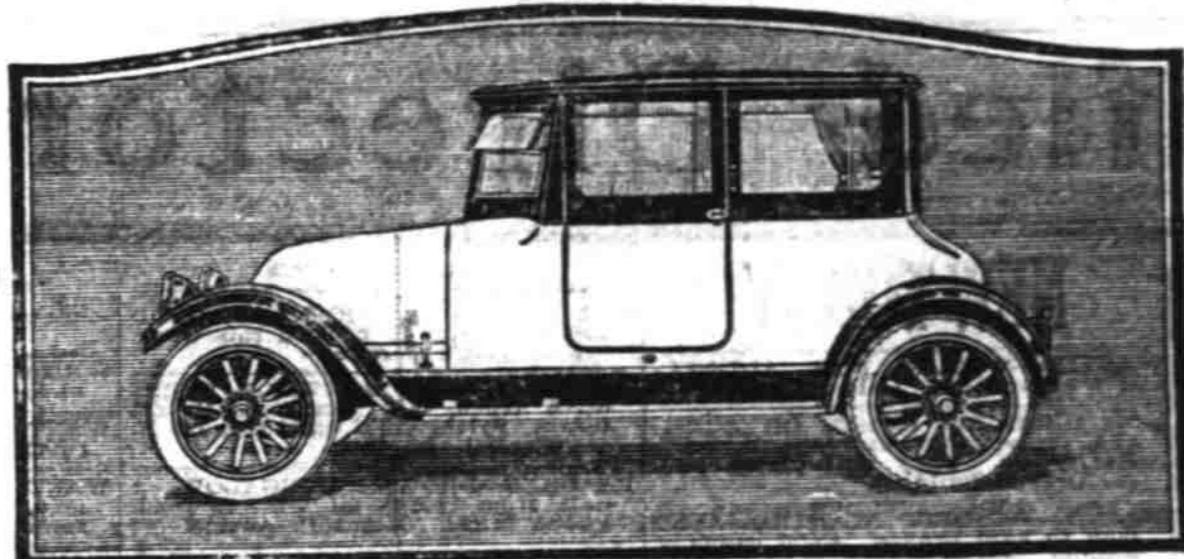
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the sweet, childish voice rang the changes on my name so often that I grew to associate my name with the love I felt for the child. This made it all the harder for me to bear when the child's hand all unwittingly brought me the hardest blow fate ad yet dealt me.

It was her chief delight to answer the postman's ring and bring me the mail each day. On this particular afternoon I had been especially busy, and thus less miserable than usual. I heard the postman's ring, and then the voice of Marion: "Auntie Madge, it's a letter for you this time."

I began to tremble for some unaccountable reason. It was as though the shadow of the letter the child was bringing had already begun to fall on me. As she ran to me and held out the letter I saw that it was postmarked San Francisco. But the handwriting was not Dicky's.

I opened it, and from it fell a single sheet of notepaper inscribed: "She who laughs best laughs last."

"Grace Draper." The very words I had heard her utter in the horrible dream which had come to me after my accident. The rest of the visions of that night had been fulfilled. I had found my father, Dicky had fled from me, for what reason I knew not. In the last dream glimpse I had caught of him, Grace Draper's arm had been around his neck, and they were going away together, while the words I had just read floated back to me in her mocking tones.

I had awakened from the dream to find Dicky's loving clasp and words. But there was no awakening possible this time. It was stark terrible reality.

I looked at the thing until it seemed to me that the characters were alive and writhed upon the paper. I shudderingly put the paper away from me and leaned back in my chair and shut my eyes.

Then Marion's little arms were around my neck, her warm, moist kisses upon my cheek, her frightened voice in my ears:

"Oh, Auntie Madge," she said. "What was in the naughty letter that hurt you so? Nasty old thing! I'm going to tear it up."

"No, no, Marion!" I answered. "I must let your mother see it first. Call her, dear, won't you, please?"

When Lillian came in I mutely showed her the note. She studied it carefully, frowning as she did so.

"Pleasant creature!" she commented at last. "But I shouldn't put too much dependence upon this, Madge. She may be with him, of course. But you ought to know that truth is a mere detail with Grace Draper. She would just as soon have sent this to you if she had not seen him for weeks, and know no more of his address than you."

"But this is postmarked San Francisco," I said faintly.

Lillian laughed shortly. "My dear, little innocent!" she said, "it would be the easiest thing in the world for her to send this envelope enclosed to some friend in San Francisco who would mail it for her."

"I never thought of that," I said flushing. "But, oh, Lillian, if he did not go away with her what possible explanation is there of his leaving like this?"

"Yes, I know, dear," she returned. "It's a mystery, and one in the solv-

ing of which I seem perfectly helpless. I do wish someone would drop from the sky to aid us."

(To be continued)

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AUSSIE FINDS AMERICANS O. K.

People of United States De-
clared Courteous and
Not Money-Mad

LONDON, Sept. 2.—The typical American is no more a boisterous multi-millionaire with coarse manners and only money ideals than the typical Englishman is the glacial, monocled, high society specimen who calls everything "rippin'" and ultimately marries a chorus girl. This was the comment of H. Y.

Broddon, recently trade commission-
er for Australia at Washington, at a
luncheon given him in London by
Australian and other officials.

"Their home life in the States is
charming," said Mr. Broddon, "and

their conversation is directed to sub-
jects of interest to the stranger in
the most courteous and considerate way
They have no special admiration for
wealth as such, but only for wealth
as wisely and generously used."

FISHING TIME FISHING TACKLE

RODS BASKETS REELS
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SPOONS BAIT HOOKS

EVERYTHING FOR THE ANGLER

HAUSER BROS.

Qui S'excuse S'accuse

Those American soldiers who have been in France have, perhaps, heard the above pronounced in the patois, or every day lingo of the streets, as "key sexuse, sackuse."

It is an old French adage. Its full, clear meaning is: "He who excuses himself accuses himself."

If a person steps on another's pet corn he excuses himself; he admits his guilt, and in doing so is understood to practically ask forgiveness for doing wrong.

It also applies to other forms of wrong doing, and a person with a guilty conscience will often make excuses before being accused, thereby accusing himself.

Now, we wouldn't like to make the application of the phrase too pointed, we have frequently, when reading the automobile pages of newspapers, seen space devoted to telling motorists: "don't" do this, and "don't" do that, and "don't" do a score of other things, all appertaining to the battery system of an automobile, and we wonder if the French saying would mean that the writer of those "don't's" was accusing the battery system of being subject to many faults, and why he didn't boldly say: "use an EXIDE BATTERY because the only 'don't' needed for that sturdy Battery is 'don't worry.'"

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