

# The Wall Flower

By MARION RUBINCAM

## NEW EVENTS

Chapter 43

Events settled down to the usual routine—a rapid routine to be sure, for things went fast wherever Gloria Gates happened to be. That is, Gloria rose early, breakfasted from a tray on the tea table in her living room, skimmed through half a dozen papers and magazines, and through the morning mail.

Then she was off for her office, always trimly clad in a tailored suit, and always with the smartest hat she could buy or design. This was usually a toque of some vivid color, for Gloria could not completely subordinate herself when she dressed.

Pan who had been up early enough to have Franklin dressed and breakfasted, was left alone as mistress of the flat. She adored planning daily little dinners for the seranians when Gloria dined at home. She helped make cakes and salads if there was to be a tiny dinner party. She planned the work and ordered the day's supplies, taking Frankie along for his morning walk while she shopped for lower prices.

Then she answered as much of Gloria's correspondence as she could, but in a pile the letters Gloria herself had to do, and listed her future engagements. Frankie had his lunch and was forced into a semblance of a nap—the "nap" usually consisted in the child lying on the couch with a book.

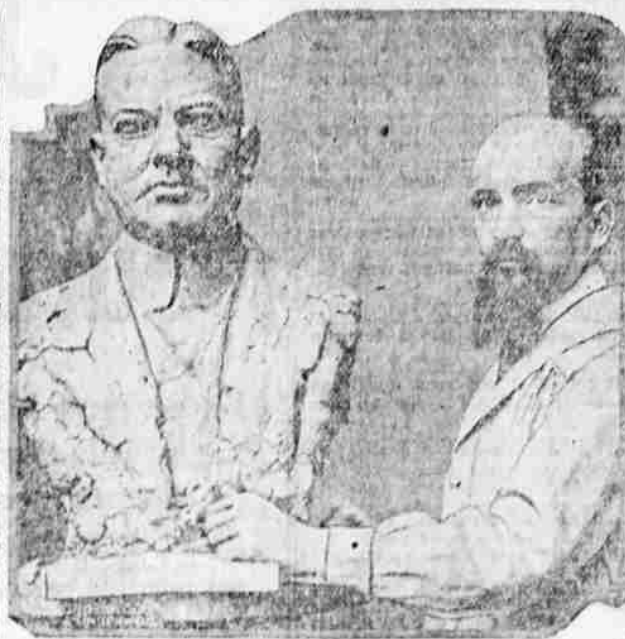
After that he was free to play and Pan to do as she wished. She kept Gloria's dresses mended, sent gloves and frocks to the cleaners, and made herself indispensable that way, too. She did a little sewing for herself, sometimes looked after details of Gloria's business, or read or went to concerts. It was possible to get student's tickets for a quarter and half a dollar, and she cheerfully climbed imaginable flights of steps to the topmost gallery of the concert hall, to hear good music.

"Excitement starts when you come home," she said one afternoon. "We live like quiet troops until you call hello from the door."

"My noisy self," Gloria laughed apologetically.

So the rest of the winter passed

## Noted Sculptor Makes Hoover Bust



Bust of Herbert Hoover which is being executed in Washington by Ivan Meztovic, the widely known Yugo-Slav sculptor, who is shown at the right.

and the spring after what seemed like a dozen false starts, actually settled down to its business of warm sunshine and budding trees.

"I suppose I should be going home," Pan said one day while they were waiting for the inevitable tea-guests. "Aunt Maude wrote that they were moving to the farm—and Gladys isn't so well now, you know."

"No, I suppose not, with a baby expected. She's to live there, isn't she?"

"Yes, until fall. My old bedroom is to be the nursery, Aunt Maude said I could have father's, and father, if he comes back, could have one of the garret rooms."

"Kind Aunt Maude!" Gloria laughed. "Do you want to go back, Pan?"

Pan did not answer, she could not a little dread of going back with her all winter. How could she bear the narrow life of the farm the days and weeks with one but the family to see, the prejudices of her aunt and uncle, the snubs and superiority of her cousin?

"Would you have any feeling about Morton?" Gloria asked curiously.

"No!" Pan answered emphatically. "That's just dropped from me—like an old rick. I could not have cared much, it's all passed, every bit. I—you know, I think I'd be a bit bored by him now."

"I knew it!" Gloria said triumphantly. "I knew what would happen as soon as you found something better. Don't go, Pan. We can't get along without you. You don't want to—"

"It's a sense of duty, I suppose," Pan answered. "Aunt Maude seems to want me and expect me."

"Naturally—since she can't find anyone who will work as hard as you did for three times the money."

"She thinks I've deserted—"

"Child, if you've such a strong sense of duty, how about us?" Gloria asked, smiling at the young girl. "I couldn't trust Frankie with anyone but you with a clear mind. Poor kid, he's been under a succession of nurse maids, each one worse than the other. If I hadn't a business of my own to look after, I suppose I could take care of him though I'm so neurotic that half an hour of my society is about all he can stand at one time. You're better for him than I am."

"I don't want to go—I won't," Pan answered, and felt as though a burden of several pounds had dropped off with this decision.

"Good!" Gloria commented, and felt too as though a burden had dropped off.

Later she said: "I ought to go abroad this spring, early this summer, you know—"

"I couldn't leave Frankie in strange hands. Benson wants me to pick up a lot of old French furniture for him. Of course, I could get it cheaper there—"

She sat silent for a moment. Then she turned around smiling. "Look here, we'll all go. I'll take Frankie with me, if you'll come too to look after him."

Chapter 44

To go abroad! Actually to be offered a chance to go abroad! Pan could not believe it.

But Gloria was busy planning. "Of course," she said. "That's the best idea of all. I had a general idea you might want to go back to the farm in the spring—your father might want you."

"My last letter was from Rio," Pan said. "I don't believe he'll come back, except perhaps for a few months. If he isn't home now, I'm sure Uncle Peter won't have him. He's always so cross whenever father goes off."

"Curious that you should be so pleased, so ready to stay in one place," Gloria mused, "your father has a roving foot."

"I wanted to go, but I never would have had the courage to go by myself," Pan answered. "But tell me more about going abroad. You can't imagine how wonderful it sounds."

you and Frankie in the nicest little hotel, in charge of a dear little old French woman, and you can amuse yourselves while I hunt Louis Quinze and Ormolu for my millionaire client—who incidentally will pay my expenses."

Pan protested at being a burden, to which Gloria answered practically: "My dear, if I took a nurse, I should have to pay her expenses as well as Frankie's, a salary at least as large as I give you—and probably more. If I sent him to a boy's camp, I'd worry all summer, and he would not be happy—and it would be costly too."

"Don't think too much about money. Don't you know that the people who count pennies never have a chance to count anything larger?"

"You were \$500 in debt last week," Pan reminded gently.

"And \$1,000 to the good this," Gloria answered cheerfully. "This is a big order, I asked for \$1,500 advance, which he gave me. Never mind, child, my hectic finances worry your methodical little soul—but I like them. It adds zest to life. Now then, I'll see about tickets and you arrange with whichever cook you can have this week, to leave us by April."

But April came and went, and May came, before there were definite preparations for sailing. The Benson house was up the river, and Mr. Benson put one of his cars at Gloria's disposal to run back and forth from country to town.

Pan had a letter from her father, who intended reaching the farm "somewhere before June," he wrote. "He wants to see me," she said a little regretfully.

"Then run home for a week end," said Gloria. "I'm going to a house-party next week end, and I can take Frankie with me. There are some children there and he would adore it."

"I think that's a good idea," Gloria agreed—he was lounging as

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## Workingmen's Store

Wall Street

usual in his favorite chair in Gloria's living room. "We learn by contrast. The child thought she was too fond of a lad in her home town—now let her go back and find out she isn't interested in him at all. She's never quite believed that."

Pan gave him a little smile that puzzled him.

"What is it, child?" he asked.

"You look so superior—as though you knew all sorts of things I don't know and never will."

"I do," Pan answered, and refused to be drawn out any more.

How could George know that she was in love with him? He would never suspect it, she would never let on, Gloria did not guess it.

She remembered the little diary she had left on the farm, tightly wrapped and hidden in a box in the attic, where some of her old things were stored.

That used to receive all her confidences, that was once her only friend. She was so alone then.

She was alone now, in a way.

"I am still standing apart from the world," she thought. "Once I had two good friends, both in my imagination—my ideal man and my ideal woman. I made the mistake of thinking Morton was the man, I know better now. Morton had too many limitations—he simply wasn't the sort."

"George is, he is everything. My standard is higher now that I've seen more. And he measures up to it. But isn't it odd that I once thought my ideal woman would be my friend, and my ideal man would be in love with me? Of course two people such as imagined, would fall in love with each other!"

And she went on thinking how happy she would be if Gloria cared for George as she was sure he cared for her. How different was his attitude to Gloria, from his attitude to her—to her he was a kindly big brother.

She was thinking how her life had changed, how happy things had turned out, how much better it was now, than a year ago, as she packed a small traveling bag and prepared to go home for a brief visit. Yet when she reached the familiar station, she had a momentary sinking around her heart.

Tomorrow—Home Again.

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