

David's Dream Woman

She Materialized Into a Reality

By CLARISSA MACKIE

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David Wright paused on the corner waiting for a chance to cross the crowded thoroughfare. It was late afternoon, and lower Broadway was teeming with pedestrians and vehicles. Above the corner where he waited towered the eighteen stories of the tall building where his offices were situated. He had just left them for the day, and he had gladly closed the door on their subdued hum and bustle.

Life seemed very stale and dull to David Wright today. Perhaps he was tired from a long and busy summer's application to hard work, although he had always thrived mightily on hard work. Perhaps it was the rather lonely life he led in his handsome bachelor quarters, for he was without any near relatives. Indeed, he had never known the real meaning of a home, for he had been orphaned while he was a mere child and had spent most of his youth in boarding schools and other places of learning.

Now that his business was a success, he had no need to make more money. He could not spend his income by half, and he thought wistfully of traveling, but somehow, back within his inner consciousness, he had a hazy mental picture of himself traveling about the world in a leisurely fashion, but he was never alone. Always beside him there stood a woman's form. She was always small and dainty, and she was gowned in gray. But who she was he never knew. She had no identity, but he felt that she must be the woman who was to be his wife—some day. So he delayed a trip to Europe or the far east, secretly, though half denying it to his abashed self, waiting for his traveling companion.

"She will have to come along pretty soon," he smiled whimsically to himself, "or I'll be too old and infirm to travel in anything except a wheeled chair."

Just then the policeman's whistle sounded and there was a way clear to Broadway. David Wright took one step forward to the street, then another, slipped and fell, the back of his head striking the sharp edge of the curbstone.

After that he could not recollect what happened.

Suddenly he awoke and tried to sit up in the white hospital bed, but his head reeled dizzily, and he sank back on the pillow.

"Ah," breathed the nurse's soft voice close beside him, and he felt an arm beneath his shoulders, and he was half supported to a sitting posture. Then somebody sat down on the edge of his bed, and his head was supported in an outstretched hand.

It was all done skillfully and quickly, and by the time David opened his eyes there was a glass of stimulant at his lips, and as he swallowed it in little sips his dizziness cleared away, leaving a sickening pain in his wake.

Leaning over the low railing at the foot of the bed was his own physician, watching him with relieved eyes.

"What happened, doc?" asked David, with a wavering smile at the kindly face of his friend.

"Slip up on the pavement and a crack on the back of your head," returned Dr. Lawton, coming around and relieving David's prop. "A good rest up here won't do you any harm, Wright." His skillful fingers touched the sore spot on the back of David's head. He made one or two suggestions to the nurse, who stood in the background, and, with a final laugh, inunction to his patient, the doctor left, promising to return in a few hours.

After that fever set in, and it was several days before David Wright was able to sit up once more, weaker, but quite free from pain. His private room in the hospital was pleasant and sunbiny and so high up that the noises from the street came up in a subdued, pleasant blur of sound.

At last he lifted his weary eyes and looked at the nurse who had so patiently attended him during his sickness. He had always been conscious of her soothing presence, even when his fever was at its height, and she had become confused in his mind with the dream woman who was his traveling companion in those day dreams that had been his for several years.

He watched her now as she bustled herself in the sunny window, quite unconscious of his scrutiny. She was small and fair and exquisitely colored, with dainty features crowned with soft masses of waving golden hair—pale gold shot with deeper tints. Her eyes were hazel, and the white lids were fringed with dark lashes, and the line of her eyebrows was dark

and finely arched.

David had known very few women, and he watched this one with increasing delight. There was a familiarity about the poise of her head, especially when she bent it low. He somehow knew that her hair was parted, although the little white cap hid the parting from view, and the lovely hands looked familiar too.

Had he ever seen her before? He could not recollect. He did not even know her name. The doctor called her "Elsie," and so David addressed her.

"Nurse," he said in a voice singularly weak, "how much longer must I stay here?"

She turned her lovely, startled eyes upon him and came to the bed. "A few weeks longer," she smiled down at him. "You see, you've been working too hard, Mr. Wright, and the blow on your head was really a merciful accident, as it has resulted in your taking a rest. Now, I believe there is some medicine due you."

After he had taken it David turned thoughtful eyes upon her. "Where have I seen you before?" he asked bluntly.

"Have you ever seen me before?" she asked demurely, and then the doctor came in and there was not another opportunity to repeat the question.

As the days passed in a convalescence that was an entirely new and delightful experience for David Wright he did not ask his nurse where he had seen her before. He was quite sure that he knew—that really she was his dream woman, for now whenever he thought of the long vacation he was to take traveling through all of the countries he longed to visit the face of the woman who went with him as his wife was none other than the beautiful hospital nurse whose name he did not even know.

"It is fate," he murmured to himself one day.

The very next day there was a new nurse in attendance, and he was immediately alarmed.

"Where is my nurse?" he asked anxiously of the older, palmer woman who had taken her place.

"Miss Beeman? She has gone," said the woman, with pursed lips.

"Gone? Not for good. She hasn't left the institution, has she?" demanded David from his chair by the window.

"Yes; she was dismissed," said the woman, with unprofessional gravity. David frowned. "Dismissed? What has she done?"

"Oh, she made a mistake. She is too nervous and high strung for a nurse anyway. It is a rule of the hospital in such cases when the mistake is a serious one to dismiss the offender."

"And it was a fatal mistake—it cost a life?" asked David pityingly.

"Oh, no, indeed! But it might have proved fatal if the patient had been in a precarious condition. But it is best to avoid any such possibility," said the new nurse coldly, and then she changed the subject.

It was astonishing how rapidly David Wright recovered after the departure of Miss Beeman. In three days he was out of the hospital, and as Dr. Lawton had not visited him for several days, the house doctor having looked in on him the last week of his stay, David sought the physician's office as soon as he left the institution.

Bidding his taxicab wait he fairly ran up the steps to the doctor's office and fumed impatiently while he waited his turn for a consultation.

"Out again?" laughed the doctor, gripping his hand warmly. "I always say Miss Beeman is the best nurse there is. Feeling pretty fit now?"

"Great," returned David, and then without realizing how strangely his attitude looked to the doctor who had known him only as a quiet, self-contained bachelor of thirty odd years he burst out, "Of course you know she was dismissed, doc?"

"Who? Not Miss Beeman?"

David nodded and then went on to relate what the new nurse had told him.

Dr. Lawton shook his head regretfully. "I'm downright sorry," he said soberly. "Poor little Elsie! I told her she was not strong enough to tackle nursing. Proud little witch has not been near me since. I must go up there and see what I can do." He made a memorandum on his desk calendar, and David watched him hungrily.

"You might tell a fellow something about her," he blurted forth at last. "About Elsie Beeman?" asked the doctor, his eyes twinkling. "Is a fellow interested?"

"Of course. Who wouldn't be? Who is she? Where does she live?"

"Elsie Beeman is the daughter of an old friend of mine. When she finished at boarding school she found herself an orphan without much money and no ability to earn money for herself. First she learned stenography and went into an architect's office. Come to think of it, I believe it was your office, eh?"

"I knew I'd seen that golden hair and those hands somewhere," cried David triumphantly. "I dare say she sat down in my office and I looked at her lovely hair and hands while I dictated to her."

"It looks very much as if you

yearned to give her the opportunity to dictate to you the rest of your life," said the doctor.

David Wright blushed. "I do—go on, doctor, and tell me the rest."

"She found she wasn't fitted for office work, and she wanted to try nursing, so she served her apprenticeship and has been at it for several months. There's just one profession Elsie Beeman is fitted to fill—she's one of the women who are born to be wives and mothers. Her place is in the home, David."

"I've never had a home, and, please God, we'll make one together," said David solemnly. Then to himself as he went to his rooms he said convincingly: "It must come out this way after all, for I remember I first fancied my dream woman about four years ago, and that must have been the time that she was working for me and I didn't know it. She made her impression upon me just the same. What a stupid dolt I was!"

Then David Wright hastened his homeward way, for Dr. Lawton had promised to take him to see Elsie Beeman that evening, and there was a fair chance that his dream woman might become a wife in reality after all.

DIPHTHERIA.

Early Diagnosis and Quick Use of Antitoxin Imperative.

Diphtheria, which was formerly one of the most fatal of the diseases of children, has been robbed by antitoxin of much of its death dealing power. Nevertheless it is still a scourge of childhood.

It is an infectious and contagious disease that occurs for the most part in children, although adults also may suffer. It is due to the presence of a bacillus that lodges and develops on the mucous membrane of the respiratory passages, where it causes inflammation and the growth of fibrous feltlike sheet which covers the surface. This sheet is the so called false membrane, the visible evidence of the disease, in itself not dangerous except when it forms in the larynx. In that case it threatens death from choking. The real disease is the constitutional affection—fever, delirium and depression, due to poisoning by the bacillary excretions, the toxin, absorbed into the blood from the mucous membranes where the bacilli have lodged.

Diphtheria is one of the most contagious of diseases, although, as in the case with other similar affections, not all who are exposed suffer. It prevails chiefly where filth exists and where the air is charged with emanations from decaying matter, with sewer gas, illuminating gas or exhalations from many persons crowded together in unventilated rooms.

Authorities formerly held that the germs could linger for a long time in carpets, upholstered toys, especially woolly lambs and Teddy bears, books, and so forth, but that is now doubted by many sanitarians, who contend that disinfection of the room in which a child has been sick with diphtheria or disinfection of his playthings is unnecessary. Still, so long as a doubt exists it is obviously safer to disinfect. It is quite certain, however, that cats and dogs and probably birds, such as parrots, may catch diphtheria from a sick child and so assist in the spread of the disease.

The one sovereign remedy for diphtheria is antitoxin, but it must be given early to be certainly curative. For this reason an early diagnosis is imperative. The physician should be called at once to any child who has a sore throat if his throat is seen to be red or covered with whitish dots or streaks or patches of membrane.

Early treatment not only removes the danger of suffocation from the growth of membrane in the larynx, but also makes much less probable the occurrence of the paralysis that is often such a distressing sequel of neglected or tardily treated diphtheria.—Youth's Companion.

Hotel Bills in England.

The author of "Portugal Old and New" finds fault with English hotel keepers for using a printed form of bill on which the plain requirements of a simple traveler are lost amid a multitude of items. The result is that when a guest pays for a day's and a night's lodging he is positively almost ashamed at finding due registry of his having wanted neither liquors nor stationery nor warm baths nor douche baths nor shower baths nor pots of jam nor the hotel hairdresser and is apt to reflect what a poor, shuffling impostor of a guest he is to have had so few requirements.

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ADMINISTRATORS FINAL NOTICE.

In the matter of the estate of Amanda Doughty, deceased.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned administrator of the estate of Amanda S. Doughty, deceased, has filed his final account in said estate with the Hon. County Court of Polk County, Oregon, and the same has been set for hearing on Saturday the 20th day of January 1912 at the hour of 10 o'clock a. m. of said day, at which time all persons having objections thereto, if any there be, are hereby notified to appear and present the same to said court in the court room in Dallas, Polk County, Oregon, for adjustment, and upon failure so to do, said administrator will take an order finally and fully closing said estate.

J. M. GRANT, Administrator of the estate of Amanda S. Doughty, deceased. SIBLEY & EAKIN, Atty's for estate.

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