

LOVE in a HURRY

By GELETT BURGESS
ILLUSTRATED BY RAY WALTERS

SYNOPSIS.

Hall Bonistelle, artist-photographer, prepares for the day's work in his studio. Flodie Fisher, his assistant, reminds him of a party he is to give in the studio that night, and that his business is in bad financial shape. Mr. Doremas, attorney and Justice of the Peace, calls and informs Hall that his Uncle John's will has left him \$4,000.00 on condition that he marry before his twenty-eighth birthday, which begins at midnight that night. Mrs. Hena Royaltion calls at the studio and Hall asks her to marry him at once. She agrees for time, but finally agrees to give him an answer at the party that night. Miss Carolyn Dallys calls and Hall proposes to her. She agrees to give him an answer at the party. Rosamund Gale, art model, calls. Hall tries to rush her into an immediate marriage.

CHAPTER V—Continued.

She sat bolt upright and stared at him with harder and more glittering eyes. "Today? What in the world do you mean, Hall Bonistelle?"

"Why, I'm in a hurry—aren't you?"

She rose and smoothed down her skirts. "Why, you know, Hall, of course I've got to get my consent first, anyway. Naturally, I suppose she'll want to know whether you're able to support me, and all that. You don't really have to work, do you?"

"I'm afraid I do." He looked at her queerly. "Why?"

"Oh, nothing, only—I don't know—ma's funny, sometimes—it really doesn't matter, but—well, you know I'm crazy about you, in spite of anything, no matter what happens!"

"When can you find out?" he asked a little angrily. It was maddening, just as he had his millions within reach. For with her consent again the millions beckoned.

"Oh, I don't see that there's any particular hurry. Of course I'd have a lot to do in any case. There's my clothes." "Bother your clothes! I'll get you anything you want after we're married. I'll be well able to afford it."

"You will?" She eyed him shrewdly.

"Oh, well, then, I'll go right home and speak to ma. Of course you want it settled, I understand. I tell you, I'll let you know tonight, when I come to the party."

"Fine! You will come, then?"

"Of course I'll come! I say, Hall, if ma gives her consent, we'll announce our engagement tonight!" Her eyes sparkled, as she held out her hands and let herself be folded in his arms for a farewell kiss. In that caress his fears were forgotten. Then she freed herself and walked to the office door.

"Good-by, Hall, dear! Oh, I hope we can be happy! And say, won't those swells open their eyes, though, when they hear the news?" She hurried through the office without so much as a nod to Flodie.

Flodie jumped up. "Oh, your boss, Miss Gale!" and handed it to her.

"Oh, yes!" Rosamund took it, and emerged from her dream to look the

Flodie kept right on: "thy frowns vex G. D. Plumb." But love and curiosity won against embarrassment. She wheeled round in her chair. "What are you going to do, Mr. Bonistelle? There's work for you to do, I should think."

"Lord, I don't feel much like work today, but I've finished Mrs. Royaltion's plates, Carry Dallys', too; some of her poses are not half bad. She's almost pretty, did you know it? I didn't have time to develop Rosamund. She can wait; I expect I'll have plenty of time for her later."

At the infection Flodie turned to him again with a heartbroken look. "Oh, Mr. Bonistelle! Have you—really—made up your mind that she— Flodie couldn't finish. She choked.

Hall laughed. "Lord, made up my mind! What good would that do? It's up to them, now. Well, I'm on the way to buy the ring—and I ought to get a suit of clothes to go away in—I haven't anything at all to wear."

Flodie bit her lip hard. "Oh, Mr. Bonistelle!"—she was going to break down, after all! In despair, her fingers flew to the keys of her machine. "thy frowns vex G. D. Plumb. Quis Jack—"

He tapped her playfully with the tip of his stick. "Well, I'm off, Flo. See you tonight. Be here early!"

Flodie turned a wretched face to him. Her eyes were wet.

"But I don't know how you want the rooms decorated, Mr. Bonistelle!"

"Oh, I don't care—use your own taste. It'll be all right. You can do it. So long, Flo!" And he was off.

Flodie went to the washstand behind the screen and dabbed her eyes in cold water, then inspected herself mercilessly in the mirror. A sigh. She made a face at herself and returned listlessly to work.

But mental occupation was impossible; Flodie had too much on her mind already. Manual exercise was what she needed to keep her from giving up to her misery. There were the freshly developed plates—she went into the dark room to get them.

Taking the rack full of glass negatives, she emerged and walked into the office. Busy with melancholy thoughts of Hall Bonistelle, a shock awaited her. There was a stranger in the room.

"Mr. Bonistelle in?"

"I've Got to Get Ma's Consent First, Anyway."

Little assistant over with scornful triumph. "Thanks." She threw it about her neck jauntily. "Oh, say, never mind those prints, Miss Fisher; I'll get them when I come tonight." Up went her chin.

"All right," said Flodie sweetly. "If I have time to find them I will."

"Time? I'd like to know what you're here for!"

"To wait upon—" Flodie paused for effect—"customers!" and brought it out with force.

"Well, you may not be here so very long, if you don't look out," said Rosamund. "But while you are, it wouldn't hurt to hand a bit more polite, Miss Fisher."

Flodie held herself in well, replying, "No, that's true. But everyone is so kind, usually, and Mr. Bonistelle is always so nice and dear to me, I suppose I am spoiled."

"Oh!" Rosamund's eyes were pistols. "Yes, he is a dear!" She gave a glance in the mirror. "He's a savage when he's affectionate, though."

Isn't he? Why, he's mused up my hair awfully. But he is sweet, isn't he, Miss Fisher?" She smiled wickedly and went out.

Into the studio Flodie shot, a bullet out of a gun. Hall was not in sight. She pounded at the door of the dark room, stopped and listened, pounded again. Bang! Bang! Bang!

Hall emerged, scowling.

"What's the matter?"

She grabbed him by the arm.

"Mr. Bonistelle! Oh, Mr. Bonistelle," she cried, "you haven't gone and done it again, have you?"

"Why, you see"—Hall began to stammer—"really I think she's the best of the three—don't you? It just came over me—she's so devilish pretty, Flodie—and—well, she's going to give me my answer tonight."

"Oh, Mr. Bonistelle!" Flodie, despairing, dropped into a chair and stared at him glassily. Then she shook her head and sighed.

"Well," she said in a hard, dry voice, "I've heard of men who went out looking for trouble, but you are the first one I ever know actually to go and order it delivered at the house!"

It was two o'clock in the afternoon. Flodie was crying. Seated at her desk, her bills littered, her account books in disorder, her head was down on her arms, in an attitude of dismal abandonment. She did not weep, she cried. Hall Bonistelle married—and not to her! Married to whom? Ah, that was the worst of it. If Flodie had known the identity of her rival her sorrow might have, before now, been transmuted into anger. Would Mrs. Royaltion, or Carolyn Dallys become Mrs. Bonistelle? Or, worst of all, would the wedding ring be worn by Rosamund Gale? Flodie didn't know, Hall didn't know. Even Rosamund didn't know herself. Hence Flodie's tears, wet and heavy, splashing, trickling, soaking the dark blue blotter of Flodie's desk.

At two-thirty sundry sounds, translated by Flodie's intimate knowledge of Hall Bonistelle's ways, indicated his approach. She sat hastily down at the typewriter and began to print at this interesting message:

"Quis Jack; thy frowns vex G. D. Plumb."

Interesting mainly because, a concoction of Flodie's debutante days at the typewriter, it contained every known letter of the alphabet. Now it served to focus her mind on her fingers, and hide her face from scrutiny.

When Hall came in, she had copied the statement nine times, and seemed too busy for speech.

"Say, I'm going out, Flo!" he announced, and tapped with his stick on the floor thoughtfully.

Flodie kept right on: "thy frowns vex G. D. Plumb." But love and curiosity won against embarrassment. She wheeled round in her chair. "What are you going to do, Mr. Bonistelle? There's work for you to do, I should think."

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Flodie, at another time, would have had trouble in restraining her smile. Now her heart was too heavy; her sense of the ridiculous inhibited. She merely looked him over carelessly, added him up as some sort of drummer person, and replied that her employer was not in.

"Ain't in, eh?" He looked her over inquisitively. "What be you, anyway, his wife?" He stung her with his little blue eyes.

The words struck her to the quick; her nerves were all exposed. She managed her face, however, and replied, "No, I'm his assistant, that's all. Bookkeeper, sort of."

"He was still watching her shrewdly. "Ain't going to marry him, be ye?"

Flodie, sensitive as she was, could not help showing a little of her distress. The color began to rise on her cheeks. In her embarrassment she bridled. "Is that any business of yours?" she answered in meek resentment.

"Ye," he said, "considerable, as it happens. Hussying's my name. Jonas B. Ain't never heard o' me, be ye?"

Flodie gasped. "Oh! Not Mr. Bonistelle's cousin Jonas?"

He nodded solemnly. "Fust cousin—once removed."

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"He was still watching her shrewdly. "Ain't going to marry him, be ye?"

Flodie, sensitive as she was, could not help showing a little of her distress. The color began to rise on her cheeks. In her embarrassment she bridled. "Is that any business of yours?" she answered in meek resentment.

"Ye," he said, "considerable, as it happens. Hussying's my name. Jonas B. Ain't never heard o' me, be ye?"

Flodie gasped. "Oh! Not Mr. Bonistelle's cousin Jonas?"

He nodded solemnly. "Fust cousin—once removed."

"Oh," she exclaimed, "Mr. Bonistelle will be awfully sorry to have

He was a tall, gaunt, stoop-shouldered man, with a long upper lip. Deep lines, sharp as saw cuts, ran down his cheeks, and from the ends of his gashlike mouth. His neck was flabby, the cords showing like the ribs of a fan. Rusty provincial garments hung loosely upon him, draping his bony body, and in his hands he held a soft, felt, prehistoric hat. He was not at all a city person; one almost smelt salt marshes at low tide, and clams. His ill-cut hair, too, suggested wet seaweed.

Flodie, at another time, would have had trouble in restraining her smile. Now her heart was too heavy; her sense of the ridiculous inhibited. She merely looked him over carelessly, added him up as some sort of drummer person, and replied that her employer was not in.

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WON FROM DEFEAT

His Greatest Success Came to Him in the Midst of Failure.

By MAY C. RINGWALT.

"I'm tired and sick of it," sighed Letitia, her complaining voice rasping upon Digby's nerves like the rough touch of sand paper. "Housework from morning till night. Cooking a meal, eating a meal, washing dishes after a meal—that's all I have in my life."

Instinctively Digby looked about the cozy living room with the bright flames in the open fireplace, the bright flowers from the home garden that Letitia had so artistically arranged in their pretty vases—with Mildred's new piece of music on the open piano, Tom's violin case in the corner, Pink's reversible doll sprawling on the sofa, the black Dinah head uppermost.

"I might as well talk to a stone wall as to you, Digby," his wife went on querulously. "Sitting there like a graven image staring into space and smiling—actually smiling!"

"I wasn't conscious of smiling," apologized Digby, "but it seems so pleasant here—so homey and comfortable."

"Yes, very pleasant and comfortable," she repeated sarcast