



# Mr. and Mrs. Sallie

—being the Confessions of a new wife—

Illustrated by Paul Robinson

by Gladys Baker

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### INTRODUCTION.

A modern chronicle of the bewildering situation which confronts the young married contingent of every village, hamlet and town—a straightforward record of the flirtations, problems, adventures and romance that colour the crowded hours of America's youth.

The heroine is Sallie and through the fearlessness of youthful eyes she will bring to you the vivid experiences which daily beset her group of interesting young friends—interesting because among her laughter-loving comrades you'll meet personalities with whom you are familiar in everyday life. In Sallie's coterie of friends you will recognize the characteristics and mental equipment of your own daughter perhaps, or again you will see the moral battles which at one time embarrassed some very dear friend, or, who knows but what as you follow Sallie's confession of events, you will come face to face with some inherent remissness of your very own.

"Sallie!"  
No answer.

"Better put a little pep in it or you'll have a forlorn bridegroom waiting at the church."

I gave one last look into the long cheval mirror and caught my breath. I had not had a chance to see the whole effect of my wedding gown on account of the many girls who had crowded my room in their friendly little efforts to assist the bride. Now I had asked them to leave. Only Marj Chenworth, who was to be my matron-of-honor, remained.

I couldn't for the life of me, believe the tall, slender figure reflected in the glass. The slim, ivory-tinted gown with its myriad rhinestones twinkling under lengths of misty tulle, gave me an almost courtly air. I, who had been many things, but never courtly, in all my life. The veil, with its coronet of soft orange-blossoms framed my face and helped my hair. And then I noticed my eyes. There was a new greenness about them—a sort of hushed reverence that I now recalled in the eyes of every bride.

"Well, don't you think you've admired yourself enough, old thing?" persisted Marj coming up to me and looking me over from the top of my filmy veil to the white satin slippers with their buckles of rosepoint lace.

"No, Marj, honestly I'm not doing that. I was just thinking, that's all."

"What about?" gently.  
"Oh, just wishing I were exactly what I seem to be in the glass. I don't know how to express it—it's something you feel when you're a bride, I s'pose. There's a sort of whiteness and cleanness and purity that makes you wish you'd lived in a convent all your life."

"Rats, Sallie," comforted Marj, "to hear you talk one would think you'd been a wild woman with a lurid past and you've never done anything real bad at all."

"I know, but that isn't the point. I just wish now with all my might that I'd never taken a cocktail or smoked a cigarette or let anybody kiss me but Curtiss. Oh, Marj! if you just knew how much I'd give to come to him fresh and unspotted, even the least little bit, by the world." My voice quavered.

"Bless his heart, Curtiss doesn't want a saint. Some of the most perfect dolls have feet of clay. Besides he wants you just as you are, silly. So come on now your father has sent up a dozen times for you to come down. He's dying to see his Sallie. And I can't blame him, for honestly, I've never seen a brider bride."

My wedding night. Before me stretched the crimson aisle of historic



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wavering and firm.

Curtiss was saying "I will" and in his response there was just the right amount of proud conquest and decisive calmness that sent little thrills of joyousness through my entire being.

Now side by side, we were returning down the long, long aisle. The murmur of the guests had risen to an excited buzz. I thought of the many times I had been a bridesmaid and how we had all walked back from the altar wreathed in smiles. This was a—so, I remembered, an established custom of the bride. But somehow I couldn't smile. There are some happinesses too big for emotional expression. Too enveloping to permit any outward sign. Such was mine.

The reception at home. More flowers, more music, more chatter, and endless congratulations couched in the same proverbial terms. That the same sentiments were expressed at the wedding of Cana in Galilee, I haven't a doubt. How much more sacred, I thought, is the small wedding where one is surrounded only by friends. Here also were acquaintances, who came merely to appraise the decorations, the bridal equipment and even the groom!

"Sallie, I've never seen you so reserved. Why you look perfectly like a saint," giggled one "friend of the family," as she passed gushingly by, but never mind, she threw back at Curtiss by my side, "that holler-than-thou attitude with Sallie won't last."

"Don't worry about her," Curtiss whispered as he squeezed my hand. "The exuberance on my face will make up for any bit of wistfulness in yours, little saint."

We exchanged a glance of magic meaning before the next guest came down the line.

"You'll return from your European trip with a dozen scalps of titled foreigners at your slender waistline," predicted a little man who had lost his first youth but was determined to play the part of the gay gallant. As if I would flirt on my honeymoon! I, who loved Curtiss so. What did they mean?

"Just" because I've been more or less frivolous all my life am I never to leave the butterfly?" I returned.

"Ah, that's just it, the butterfly

type!" the little man replied. "Exactly, ma chérie. Its something that's incapable of change. Either one is or one isn't. So don't think for an instant that matrimony is going to make you over temperamentally, my dear. In your case it will just add piquancy and charm."

I hated him. Oh, if it were all over and Curtiss and I were quietly alone. I was so utterly weary of it all. As usually the case, there had also been endless parties up to the very eve of my wedding day. A custom I am quite sure is a relic of barbarous days.

Just then Ted Billings came reeling by. Too much champagne. Only that feeling of charity which forgives all past grievances when happiness fills the heart, prompted me to invite Ted. Now I was sorry that I had. He pointed to the orchids that formed my exquisite bouquet.

"What! A touch of lavender. Why Sallie," he thought he was funny because he laughed uproariously and staggered out of sight.

"He doesn't mean any harm," Marj whispered, seeing the blush which had suffused my cheeks at his reference to the well-known joke. "Nobody's serious about anything, any more," she declared.

Just the same I was praying for the free and easy camaraderie which had existed among my friends.

The hours, with leaded wings, passed by and when, at last, I was

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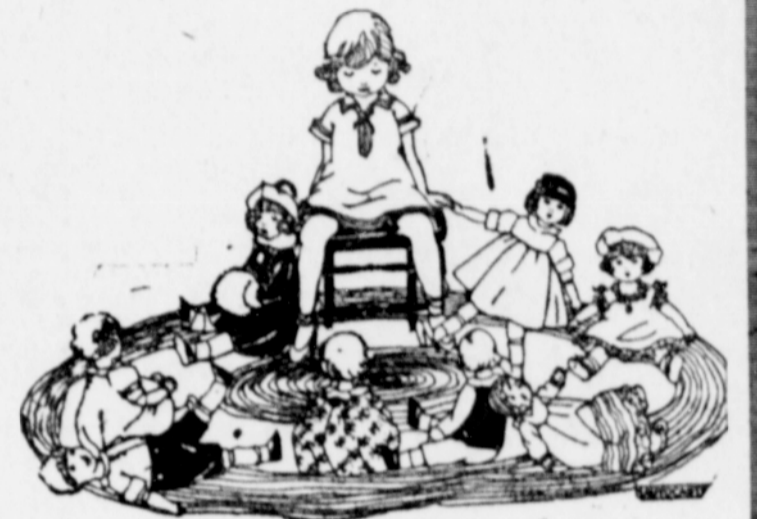


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