

Secrets of Love, Struggles, Disappointments and Heartbreaks of Comedienne Revealed in Diary

BILLIE YOUNG TOOK NAME FROM FATHER

Spends Life Helping Two Younger Sisters

By M. H.

This story is not new by any means. The cast is changed, the plot's the same. It was old when Shakespeare first wrote of unrequited love and long before. The characters themselves are antiquated too. The names are now and in this simple fact lies the story of Billie Young.

Billie Young, the buxom stage comedienne, is like many other less celebrated personages, a link in that endless chain of love, in which the one she loves loves someone else, and the one who loves her she can't love, and so everybody is supremely miserable.

All these things and more I gathered from Billie's diary which she had the faith to lend to me. The notes started way back in 1907 when she first landed in America from her native San Domingo, where she was christened Lolita La Blanche Guerre. Her father was the well known comedian, Clever Billy Young, whose name she took when she decided to go upon the stage herself, a craving that was present in her mind when she was only ten.

The diary at this early age shows her saying: "A girl asked me to run away and go on a carnival with her today, but I was afraid. I wish that I was a little older." Later the diary tells how she and her father were forced to flee from Houston, Texas on the day that Jack Johnson beat Jim Jeffries, and they found haven in Louisiana.

Loved Father

The idol of Billie's younger life was her actor father. Occasional references to him are found throughout the little book. One place we read: "My father sure is a lady's man. He has lots of fine lady friends and three living wives, all of which seem to love the ground he walks on."

At another point we read: "Gee, I wish my father would stop drinking so hard. None of the girls will have anything to do with me because of him. I think I will run away and go on the stage. It is unbearable living in this small town."

Later in 1914 we read: "My father is dead, and now I must make my own way in the world. I have three sisters

She Does It All for Mother



MISS BLANCHE JONES,

comely little chorine with the "Nest Club Revue," which played the Royal Theatre here last week, headed by Nina Mae McKinney, who dances to support her mother, now ill in a hospital. And is it hard sledding for her in these depressing times? Well, you know as well as we do.

and must look out for them. I got \$100 more than I ever had at one time in my life. Now I can get a lot of clothes at the second-hand store and go on the stage."

In 'Smarter Set'

After numerous tries cited in which failure was most persistent, she finally landed in Whitney and Tutt's "Smarter Set" as a chorus girl. And then one day, according to the diary, one of the stars, the wife of Luke Scott, died and she was given a chance to sing a song. This paved the way for a real stage career. She later teamed with Bessie Oliver and after her death she teamed with Eloise Johnson, now Eloise Bennett.

In 1920 she married Laborn Horsey in New Orleans. Later he went to Europe, where he is now, one of the "Three Eddies," and the diary says one day: "I hear that Laborn has married an English girl and is never coming back to America."

It was not until about 1924 that "my tall, handsome man" began to creep into the diary and his re-appearance is most frequent from that time on.

He moves from a "chance acquaintance" to "the only love of my life." A log is kept of his goings and comings day by day. We find him in New Orleans a while, and then in Chicago, and love for him grows in torridness and poetry and happiness seeps through the daily tabulations. One day we find this poem wedged in between the notations:

WISHING

Wishing some and dreaming some,
Nothing else to do;
Sighing some and smiling some,
Thinking some of you.
Hoping some and fretting some,
Lonesome as can be,
Wondering if that someone
Is thinking some of me?

Shattered Romance

Then as suddenly as it started there came a crash. The "tall handsome man" disappears. Out of her life and the diary he goes, only to reappear again with this simple notation: "Now I know the truth. He loves Gloria, although she cut him and treats him awful, while I who love him most must go on alone."

The diary from then on takes on a saddened aspect. Each day there seems an added emptiness, a reaching after something that cannot be obtained. From this point on the inner self of this comedienne is quite forgotten. She lives for her two sisters, Lillian and Dorothy. She takes Lillian on the stage as her partner. Dorothy also tries the stage, but does not like it and so she is made the housekeeper for the Harlem home. The life of Billie Young becomes one of simple resignation exemplified best in this little creed written in between

the lines of this crowded diary:

Sunday—I gladly forget all slights for I love to express good will and happiness.

Monday—I willingly forget unpleasant gossip because I know that truth is the only reality.

Tuesday—I cheerfully forget to be sorry for myself while I think of my wonderful father who is in heaven.

Wednesday—All hate, revenge and anger are swallowed up in divine love.

Thursday—All worry is dissolved by perfect faith in God.

Friday—There is nothing to fear for God is near.

Saturday—All negative and unpleasant thoughts are washed away by the cleansing love of Jesus Christ.

The What-Cha-Column

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that it is with sincerest regret that we find ourselves forced to dispense with your valuable services. Yours very cordially.

Maybe you have never received such a communication and maybe you have. How much nicer it would have been had the letter read, instead, as follows:

My dear Mr. Crunch:
You're fired.

Yours truly,
I admit that the latter letter is rather abrupt, yet it is to the point, saving time of the composer, typist and the reader. These are savings in good hard money and I see no reason why big business should not welcome the change.

This is the announcement for which you have been waiting and I feel certain, with my reading public in mind that I shall get at least three votes for a bust in the Hall of Fame, or worse yet, a bust in the nose.

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