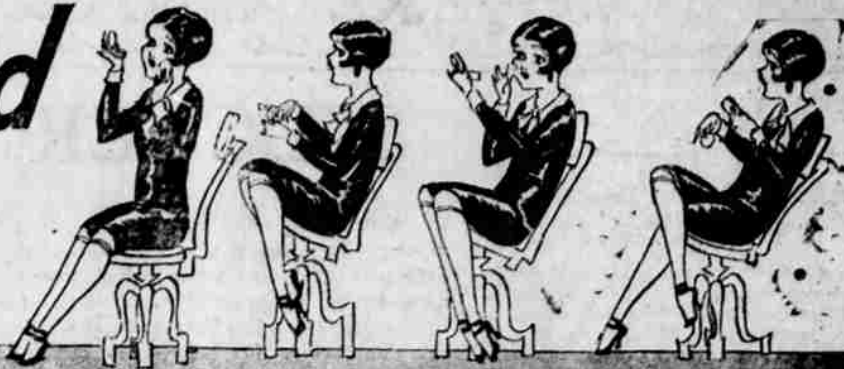


"Tillie the Toiler" Was Named Co-respondent

The Most Curious Divorce Case on Record--a Husband in Love with a Popular Comic Strip Charmer, and His Very Romantic Letters to Her Read in Court



IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

CLARA F. HARDESTY, Plaintiff, D 43892
vs.
E. V. HARDESTY, Defendant.

COMES NOW the plaintiff and for cause of action against the defendant herein, complains and alleges:

I. That the defendant has become a plaintiff in a divorce action and has failed and refused to give to the plaintiff love and affection; that defendant conducted the plaintiff that his ideal of a woman was "Tillie the Toiler";

That for the past two years defendant has been accumulating the papers and clippings of Tillie, the Toiler and pasting them in a scrap book and devoted all his time in reading said Scrap Book and amusing himself with said Tillie, the Toiler clippings and neglected to devote any time or attention to the plaintiff;

That defendant has heard read the foregoing contents thereof; and that the same is true of his own knowledge, except as to the matters which are therein stated upon her information or belief, and as to those matters that she believes it to be true.

CLARA F. HARDESTY

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 30 day of January, 1926

Elizabeth C. Broken (SEAL)
County Clerk for the County of Los Angeles, State of California



He wrote as follows:
Mack:
I will have Tillie slip you this. It is a warning. Keep on guarding Tillie, and tell me if that sheik Whipple starts anything. You sure are lucky to be in the same office with Tillie.
I would scrub floors if I could be there and have the opportunity to be near her. I would shine her shoes and bring her flowers every day. Now, Mack, take care.
In all the history of American jurisprudence there has not been so odd a divorce case as that of Clara and Everett Hardesty.
There are instances on record, of course, in which husbands neglected their wives because of other things besides "other women"—hobbies, like golf, pool or poker, objectionable practices like burning up the morning paper before wife had a chance to read it—twisting the cat's tail, wearing yellow neckties, or eccentricities of a hundred other varieties. But never before has a husband apparently become enamored of a fictional character, neglected his wife and aroused her ire and jealousy because of his devotion to the non-existent other woman.



"OTHER WOMAN." "Tillie the Toiler," the Cause of It All, Sketched by Russ Westover, Her Cartoonist Creator, With Other Characters from the Famous Strip.

JEALOUS WIFE. Clara F. Hardesty, Who Declares Her Husband's Letters to "Tillie the Toiler" Caused Her "great mental pain and anguish."



Clara F. Hardesty, who declares her husband's letters to "Tillie the Toiler" caused her "great mental pain and anguish," is shown in a divorce action.

Clara F. Hardesty, of Los Angeles, in a divorce action against her husband, E. V. Hardesty, alleges that he has been in a cruel and inhuman manner to bestow upon her his love letters to "Tillie the Toiler," a popular comic strip character, and spent his time reading and re-reading the same.

Clara Hardesty's complaint is familiar to newspaper readers throughout America and many other countries, as she has been named as the "other woman" in a divorce action.

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BILL FILED. Actual Facsimile of Specimen Pages of Complaint in Divorce Case of Clara F. Hardesty Against E. V. Hardesty.

Be careful. Your love, EVERETT.

"Whipple," the debonaire person in the office with "Tillie," who at one time in the course of the comic strip story seemed to be "Mack's," the head bookkeeper's, chief rival for "Tillie's" affections, aroused considerable resentment in the breast of the adoring Hardesty.

He wrote "Tillie" a note, attaching another anonymous missive to be delivered to "Whipple," which contained a stern warning.

This letter was as follows:
Dear Tillie:
Tear off below dotted line and leave on Whipple's desk.

Say, Mr. Whipple:
I am a lookout to help Miss Tillie. You listen—that "pal," as you call her, is my sweetheart. I will trim you to one hell of a sick man if I catch you being indirect to Tillie. You know what I mean.

ONE WHO KNOWS.

The letter which Hardesty wrote to the bookkeeper, "Mack," was also to be delivered to him by "Tillie." Evidently Hardesty wanted to keep no secrets from "Tillie."

Mack— You are the luckiest bird in the world to be able to be in the same office with Tillie. I'd scrub floors for the opportunity to be near her and to shine her shoes and bring her flowers.



Tillie— You ought to choke Whipple because he is a worthless sheik and Mack is a boob. I want to tell you that you are the ideal girl of my dreams and I only hope some day we can be soul mates.



Psychologists would call it a typical case of "frustration." They would say that Everett Hardesty was not happy with his wife. He found she did not measure up to his plans and specifications for the ideal "dream girl" who, according to song and story, tradition and science, lurks in the back of every man's head.

In "Tillie the Toiler," perhaps, Everett Hardesty found pictured the girl of his dreams. She existed far more realistically than would have been the case if she had remained merely a shadowy, dimly outlined creature in Hardesty's imagination. She was alive, moving, talking, every day in Hardesty's favorite newspaper. She had daily contact with human characters—all too human to Hardesty.

Like the schoolgirl revealing her most intimate thoughts and hopes in a diary, or addressing passionate letters to an imaginary Prince Charming, Everett Hardesty committed his dream-life to paper. That's where he made his mistake—writing letters. He had not learned the valuable lesson which experienced Lotharios reverse as the first law of philandering—never put anything in writing.

Wife found Everett's letters to his Dream Girl, and now she's using them against him.

A strange case, you may say—but Everett Hardesty need not hang his head in shame if his friends should call him the flat-tire of the ages or the prize boob of Christendom. He is not the first man who has allowed his dream-life to get the better of his ham-and-egg existence. The records of psychological research are full of such cases.

There is the classic example of the immortal poet Dante, who had the most celebrated "dream girl" in all human history. She was Beatrice, the wife of another man. Dante did not stoop to an affair with her, but, with Beatrice as a nucleus, he constructed his beatific vision of the perfect woman, and loved her more eloquently in burning verse than man has ever loved, before or since.

So Everett Hardesty can find high precedent for saying to his dream girl: "See you Sunday in the funny paper!" And who shall say him nay?