

The Composite Girl

By LOUISE OLIVER

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Katherine frowned with displeasure as she turned to the first story in the magazine the postman had just brought. The story with her own name at the top in large letters under the title had been illustrated as she had feared by Julian Fletcher, and Julian Fletcher had managed to spoil the last half dozen or so of her contributions to the National.

Other people raved about his work, and did not stop to insist upon the fact, as did the author, that an illustration should stick to the context. When a girl is said to come down a stairway in a queenly gown of velvet and spangles it is maddening to see in the illustration a debonaire lass tripping lightly down the steps in a frothy creation of juvenile ruffles and a sash. Also when one describes a heroine as having raven locks and dark, soulful eyes, it is the veriest heresy to have her reproduced in a picture with rather fluffy hair of an indiscriminate yellow and eyes of gray with an unmistakable sense of humor that compelled one who gazed to smile back in answering sympathy.

Just now the lady represented in the picture was supposed to be a haughty person who prided herself on her knowledge of clothes. Also she was supposed to be alighting from her limousine and drawing back in startled horror as she saw approaching the one person in the world she was trying to avoid.

But instead of horrified haughtiness, the artist had sketched in an expression of rather glorified naughtiness. There again was an expression that rather refused to take life seriously.

"It," said Katherine, "that man wants to be a buffoon, how does it come he's engaged to spoil perfectly serious stories? I'm going to write to the editor and tell him that if he wants any more stuff of mine he's got to hunt another illustrator."

She looked again into the eyes of the girl who was intended to be soulful. In spite of herself she smiled back. Then happening to look up into her own mirror, she was startled. Her own eyes looking back at her from the glass were the exact counterpart of those on the page. And her hair, wavy and caught back loosely from her face, with its part on one side, was exactly like that of the girl in the picture. Then she caught up another picture, and another, and studied them, long and carefully. Then she took another inventory of herself.

Slowly the bright color mounted to her cheeks, and her breath came hard. The pictures in the magazine were of her, there wasn't a doubt of it. And now it came back to her gradually that she had heard people say they had noticed a resemblance. And the dress in the stairway picture was certainly hers, and the rather youthful knockabout suit of the limousine lady who was supposed to know how to dress, was a replica of her own blue jersey. And the hat!

Katherine grew thoughtful. What vengeance could she wreak upon Julian Fletcher, who, evidently knowing her by sight, had had his own little joke at her expense. But alas—even while planning vengeance, the gray-blue eyes, like those of the limousine lady, rather lacked the hardness essential to real vendetta.

She tossed back her head finally, having reached at least a partial decision, that is, in order to settle her account with one artist she must make up the difference she had had with another. Jerry Page, her erstwhile enemy, would now be essential to the fulfillment of her scheme and she must make up with him right away.

Poor Jerry! After all it was too bad the way she had treated him. She never dreamed she'd miss him so much until he had ceased to come. In the old days he had a way of giving three quick knocks and sticking in his head and saying: "Work's the password. Who goes there?"

If she was busy, she'd call out, "Kate." And he would softly close the door and vanish.

But if she called out huskily, "A great big bear!" he would let the rest of himself in, his pockets crackling suspiciously with parcels from the delicatessen across the street.

Then Katherine would lay a cloth and they would have lunch together. Sometimes when he had sold a picture and she had sold a story they would go to dinner at a big hotel and to a theater to celebrate.

Lately, however, Katherine had sold so many stories that she needed no longer to live on the same street as the delicatessen. And having sold more stories she worked more, and her answer to Jerry's knock had more and more seldom been "A great big bear." But then she didn't have to depend on packages for her meals any more. She had her own maid in neat black and white to announce quietly that dinner was served. Jerry came a few times at her invitation, but he didn't seem to be himself. Finally he blamed her for not caring for his friendship and they had quarreled after discussing it.

But now she needed Jerry and she smiled rather wistfully as she put on her hat and coat for a visit back to the old street.

She knocked timidly at the studio door, and Jerry himself in his old velvet coat opened it.

With his hand on his heart he executed a most profound bow. "Faith," said he slowly straightening, "it's a beautiful dream I'm having. I never mean to go to sleep."

She came in smiling. "Well, wake up, Jerry. I don't want to talk to a somnambulist. I've come on business, and you'll have to be very wide awake."

"At your service, milady. Won't you sit down? It isn't often I have such distinguished company."

She laughed. "Say, Jerry, before I ask you to do something for me I want to tell you I'm sorry for everything. I see things differently now, but it never occurred to me until afterward that you would think my prosperity had gone to my head. I didn't mean to say those things, Jerry. Forgive me, will you?"

"It's an honor to have a grievance. If forgiving kills the hope of another visit, I'm loath to consent."

"Come off your exalted perch, Jerry," she laughed. "I guess I'm forgiven. Look here, I want you to help me to get even with Julian Fletcher. He's spoiling everything I write by sketching me into the illustrations. I can't imagine his motive."

"Perhaps you are his ideal. Most artists feel they can do better with an ideal. And perhaps you didn't realize it, but you're a very beautiful ideal for any artist."

She reddened. "Jerry Page, I believe you are defending him! I don't see why you should when he's taken the place you ought to have. He's the most popular illustrator today, I do believe. And his things can't be compared with yours. Think of his putting one girl into every picture!"

"That's forgivable. We all do it. We can't help it. You see, as I said, we get one girl into our head and it's all up, we can't see anything else."

"But he hasn't got me into his head. I never even saw him."

"Yes, Kate, dear, you did. You're looking straight at him."

"Jerry!"

"Surest thing you know."

"You're Julian Fletcher?"

"Yes."

"But you don't—you haven't got me—I mean—"

"Yes I have. I've got you in my head and my heart all the time. I couldn't tell you in the old days when all I could afford was an occasional meal. But I love you, Kate, and I want you. And in all your dear stories I see only you. Now what vengeance will you have?"

She considered a minute, then into her gray eyes returned the teasing smile of the stairway girl.

"This!" she said, going over to him and offering her mouth for a kiss.

HAS SITUATION ALL SIZED UP

Writer on Metropolitan Daily Arrangely Imagines He Knows All About the Country Press.

We are prone to hypercritically sniff at the country correspondence in the old home paper, and tire of its weekly monotony of trivialities. Out in the Good Intent neighborhood it seems as if some member of the Pumpelly tribe is everlastingly cursed with a rising in his head, or the Pumpelly girls are always Sunday afternooning at somebody else's home, or a certain feller is Wednesday eveninging at the Pumpelly residence, or Grandma Feebles is no better in spite of the fact that she is kin to the Pumpellys, or Zeke Fagg is tending 'Squire Pumpelly's north forty this year, or Uncle Tuck Pumpelly can't remember as wet or dry a season as this is, or young Angus Pumpelly has bought a new henryford and all the girls had better watch out, and a good deal more of equally unimportant information.

If we know nothing of the conditions in that region we decide that there are few persons of any consequence there except Pumpellys. If we are sophisticated we say, "Uh-huh! The correspondent is a Pumpelly!" The truth of the matter is that the items are written by a young feller named Smith, who is stuck on one of the Pumpelly girls. By-and-by he will marry her and presently thereafter cease writing about the Pumpellys. And then there will be another correspondent at Good Intent, and the Heflingers or the Daubenspecks will have their innings.—Kansas City Star.

Comforts for the Soldiers.

An air cushion is worth its weight in gold to the man in the trenches. These can be bought in various sizes and when not in use fit into a small rubberized envelope. "I would rather lose my whole kit bag than that air cushion," one of the returned soldiers told me. "It is great to have something soft to lay your head on, after hours and hours of tramping." Tablet ink also deserves mention. This can be dissolved in water and makes a splendid writing fluid. Fountain pens have a habit of running dry, and sometimes ink is hard to get.—Woman's Home Companion.

Exit Inspector.

A school inspector happened to notice that a terrestrial globe in one of the classrooms was very dusty.

"Why, there's dust here an inch thick!" he said, drawing his finger across its surface.

"It's thicker than that, sir," calmly replied the master.

"What do you mean?" exclaimed the inspector, glaringly.

"Well, you've—er—got your finger on the Sahara desert," came the reply.

What They're Putting Up.

"Any building going on in this town?"

"No mister. All we're putting up nowadays is arguments."

WAR DEVELOPS WEIRD SCHEMES

One Inventor Would Snatch Enemy Rifles by Means of Magnets.

FLEA SHELL IS OFFERED

Then There is the Scissors Plane, the Tally-Ho Cannon, and the Moon Veil—Aeronautics Favored by Inventors.

London.—Pushing the war on is the latest popular hobby. It's a great amusement. Perhaps you have a tame balloon to snatch the rifles from the enemy's hands by means of suspended magnets; or, maybe, a few spare snakes to hurl into the trenches by pneumatic propulsion; or, perhaps, a shell with a man inside it to steer it at the target. If so, pack in brown paper and dispatch to Inventions Department, British Ministry of Munitions. Some months later you will receive a polite notification informing you that your invention is receiving their collective and "earnest attention."

Meanwhile your competitors have supplied suggestions for:

A shell to contain fleas or other vermin inoculated with disease.

The spraying of cement over soldiers so as to petrify them.

The throwing of live wire cables carrying a high voltage among advancing bodies of infantry by means of rockets.

Germany should be attacked in one case by making a "tube" all the way, and in another by employing trained cormorants to fly to Essen and pick out the mortar from Krupp's chimneys.

One inventor proposes a machine of the nature of a lawn mower as large as a tank to make mincemeat of them.

The Scissors Plane a New Idea.

The clouds are to be frozen artificially and guns mounted on them; heavy guns are to be suspended from captive balloons; the moon is to be covered with a big black balloon; airplanes are to be armed with scissors or scythes like Boadicea's chariot, or to trail bombs behind them on a long cord; heat rays are to be projected for the purpose of setting Zeppelins on fire; electric waves to paralyze the magnets.

One of the most popular suggestions of all is to attach a searchlight to an anti-aircraft gun, get the light on the object and shoot along the beam; but, unfortunately, the path of a shell is quite different from that of the ray of light. Most elaborate "decoy" schemes are sometimes worked out for the confusion of the enemy, comprising in at least one case sham factories with chimneys and hooters complete.

Not unnaturally aeronautics have been favored by the inventors. Many seem to have thought that the lifting power of hydrogen is unlimited, for they have suggested armor-plated balloons, the transport of artillery by airplane and of troops by balloon.

Shells and projectiles have received not a little attention. Proposals include a shell containing gravel to lay a path way over mud; another containing irritant powder or sticky substance to hamper machine guns, and another for holding many thousand feet of wire, weights and a clock motor.

Many inventors of a device requiring a knowledge of ballistics betray no knowledge that such a science exists. By one scheme two guns are to be fired simultaneously, the shot being connected by a chain to which bombs and incendiary devices, etc., are to be attached. It is clear that variations in powder or differences in wear would make it impossible to predict which direction the device would take.

Then There is the Relay Shell.

Another favorite subject, mechanically unsound, is the "relay shell," a shell acting as a small gun discharged in mid-air and expelling a small inner shell, the object being to obtain an increased range. The fact is that a shell in flight does not point directly along its trajectory, but makes an uncertain angle with it, so that accuracy of aim would be impossible.

In the group of inventions coming

under the head of motive power the majority are of the "overbalancing wheel" type, which dates from the thirteenth century. Power is to be obtained from other schemes of people walking about floors and up and down stairs; passenger lifts are to be used as power hammers, and power is to be generated from the flow of rain water from the rooms of houses.

Suggestions are also frequently received in connection with colored searchlights. The most remarkable proposition of all in connection with searchlights is perhaps that of a "black beam," whatever that may mean, for obscuring the moon.

Many inventors are absolutely impervious to argument or explanation and are always dissatisfied with the treatment they receive. In this respect they contrast unfavorably with a foreigner who submitted an engine which would not work, and concluded the correspondence with thanks and the admission that he was "completely cured" of the idea.

Postcard 12 Years in Mail.

Poughkeepsie, N. Y.—Marked "returned for correct address," a postcard mailed in this city by Miss Bertha Newman of Marlborough to Miss Ethel Hanson in Bradford, Pa., 12 years ago, has been returned. The card, bearing a picture of Vassar college, is as clean and unruined as on the day it was mailed.

IN HUN PRISON THREE YEARS

Doctor Beland, Once Canada's Postmaster General, Cannot See Dying Wife.

EXCHANGED AFTER DELAY

Says Kaiser Envis Hindenburg Popularity and Tries to Appropriately His Victories—Saw Capture of Antwerp.

An Atlantic Port.—After being kept in a German prison for three years Dr. Henri Severin Beland, postmaster general of Canada under Premier Wilfrid Laurier, and who lives at Beauce, in the province of Quebec, arrived here, accompanied by his daughter, Miss Jeannette, who was held in Belgium by the Germans while her father was in Germany. Added to the sufferings of his imprisonment was the death of his wife in Belgium after he had been locked up for 18 months.

His jailers refused to allow him to go from Berlin to see her when she was dying. The news of his wife's death was withheld from him for 11 days, and he was only given the date after he had begged to be allowed to go to her funeral, to show that it was too late.

Doctor Beland was only postmaster general for two months in 1911 when the Laurier administration was defeated over the reciprocity question. It was because he had held this political appointment that the Huns would not permit him to leave Germany two years ago when arrangements were made between that country and Great Britain for the exchange of civilian prisoners more than forty-five years old.

During the three years he lost 20 pounds in weight, and his luxuriant black hair became thin and turned gray. The only occupations he had were to attend the prisoners and the officials of the prison when they were ill and to learn to speak, read, and write German fluently. He was finally released in exchange for the brother of Prince von Bulow, who was the head of the Krupp gun company in London before the war.

The doctor was in northern France in August, 1914, and his wife was stopping at their estate in Cappellen, near Antwerp. He promptly offered his services as surgeon to the Belgian

AN ANGEL OF MERCY



This British official photograph depicts most strikingly the part that the Red Cross nurse is taking in the great conflict that is now raging. She braves the shot and shell of the German guns and sees only one thing, that of caring for the wounded. This photo taken on the British western front in France shows one of these "Angels of Mercy" treating a British officer who has been wounded in a car accident. Note the gas mask that the wounded man carries before him in readiness for any gas attacks.

LAIID PLANS

By JACK LAWTON.

As far back as she could remember, Laurel had known of the enmity existing between her father's family and that of their neighbor farther down the road. It was Laurel's mother who had told her the tale of her grandfather's crime.

"It was best," she had said, "that the child should learn of it from her own." Laurel had longed to make the mountain neighbor's child her companion, life was lonely among the hills. So Laurel's mother had explained why this could not be.

She had listened in frightened horror. Her grandfather was a murderer. That was the fact in all its brutal plainness, as her mother told it. Grandfather had killed the man who would be this mountain child's grandfather. His crime had been vindicated because the deed was considered one of self-defense.

But the grandfather had sought no such excuse. "Murder," he said, was in his heart at the time. "The man had told a cruel lie to the woman he loved, breaking the engagement between them. On the narrow mountain trail he had met and accused the victim, and when they had struggled in anger it had ended in the fall of the man to his death below."

Self-confessed, Laurel's grandfather was a murderer, and the shadow lingered on those who followed. Reconciled, he had married his sweetheart, but the enmity between the two families concerned remained a thing of reality.

When Laurel's own saddened mother had gone forever from the mountain home, it was at her wish that her daughter be sent away to school, and to learn what the great outer world might hold. Now, in all the sweetness of a mountain summer, Laurel had come back again, to be with her father.

It was in the weather-beaten church on Sabbath that she raised her eyes from her singing book, to meet those of a stranger. From the outer world he, too, had come back to the primitive. Like her's, his own eyes had widened in question, "How come you here?" asked the stranger's eyes. "And who," flashed Laurel's, "are you?"

After service both were answered. "That," said her father, in a tone of constraint, "is the last of the Wiltons, from down the road. He's been away for years, studying, they say, an' getting rich."

On the following morning, she met the man of the questioning gaze on a narrow mountain trail. His pronounced avoidance of her proclaimed that the last of the Wiltons still bore aversion to the granddaughter of a murderer.

Laurel's soft eyes clouded, but she felt no resentment.

The next day Laurel took a different path, hoping to avoid the man's displeasure at sight of her, and as Dan Wilton had started out with the same purpose, the two came again face to face in the roadway. Laurel's impulsive smile met his frown. And as he looked down upon her again in "meeting" Laurel fancied that the neighbor's eyes wore a kinder light, as though against his own will he were acting a part. She found it impossible to banish his face from her thoughts.

Grieved, yet wondering why it should so grieve her, Laurel decided to confine her walks to the wood; there, fatefully, she met him. He stood for a moment, watching the sunlight filtering down on her face, then spoke:

"You must not think," he said slowly, "that my avoidance of you has been evidence of the foolish enmity of my family. You will find it as difficult to believe the truth as I find it myself."

"I love you," said Dan Wilton. "I have loved you from the moment I looked into your eyes; but," he laughed harshly, "there is no use. I cannot reconcile that past stain in the blood."

Laurel's lip trembled; it did not occur to her to resent his self-confidence, to tell him that her own heart was not for the winning.

"We must not meet again," she said. "I always will take the upper path to town, you the lower. When I come to the wood, I shall leave always before four; it is a dark stain; I am sorry, and I understand."

Longing eyes followed her up the trail. She forgot as she determinedly kept to her stated routine, that the best-laid plans have been known to "gang alee."

Dan Wilton had forsaken the meeting house. He realized that he must resort to more rigid measures if he would keep from seeing the girl he loved. He must go away, and after four o'clock, therefore, through the silent wood he walked, fighting his fight.

True to her promise Laurel had left the eloquent spot of fir and pine. But on her homeward way she paused concerned. Her wrist watch was gone; she must have dropped it in the wood. Hastily she retraced her steps, absorbed in searching. So it was that fate downward bent, Laurel passed—straight into Dan Wilton's arms.

"You come," he murmured, "in answer to the call of my heart. I cannot live without you, Laurel; it was a foolish fight. Love is strong enough to blot out any stain. Dearest, can you forgive me, and come?"

And when at last Laurel raised her radiant face from her lover's shoulder, her forgotten little watch lay glinting at her from his grass.

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SWIFT MOSQUITO TANKS OF THE FRENCH



On this train, being rushed to the front, are some of the swift, light mosquito tanks built by the French that have proved so efficient in the allied offensive in the Aisne-Marne region.

Toothpick Conservation.

Cleveland, O.—The latest conservation move on the part of Cleveland restaurants has just been inaugurated by some of the "eat shops" in refusing longer to serve toothpicks with meals. What connection toothpicks have with saving for the big fight over there is not readily discernible to patrons.

Boy, Page Mr. Hoover.

Martins Ferry, O.—Here's a case for Hoover. Following a wedding here 240 spring chickens were consumed by the guests.