

# CHICKIE

Barry Dunne leaves, still protesting his love for Chickie.

Chickie (Helena), only daughter of Jonathan and Jennie Bryce, feels a bit of a twinge of conscience. Maria, her maid, has married Edwin Blake's proposal only because he is poor. Though Chickie now loves Barry Dunne, a young man, yet with Tufts & Lennon, she is interested in a wealthy Adel Morrison. He sends her a costly pin with a love note. She lies to Barry about the pin. Upon her honesty-like arrangement, so her father does not lose his oil investment. Barry tells Chickie he considers Barry's feelings for her as important as his own. She is waiting when Barry has jilted her. Chickie fears her father will be angry because of her length of engagement and subtly tries to urge Barry to think of his future as a present possibility, even though he believes he cannot afford it. He is hopeful when Ba Morris, father of the girl he is about to represent locally the Gulf Steamship Company of San Francisco and wife, Mrs. Morris, come to town. Chickie knows Barry and the thoughts of her seeing him again chill Chickie with fear. She is torn between her constant love for Chickie's vacation at Wauwasee is spoiled when Barry must take leave.

GO ON WITH THE STORY

By Elmo Meherin  
CHAPTER LIX.

Awful

In a stillness that murmured softly like a faint wind blowing from the heart of pain, she listened. His words were balm on the raw anguish of her thoughts. Because of hunger to hear them again she whispered softly, "Do you, Barry? Oh, really? More than ever?"

"Can you doubt it? How can you? Chickie, you're the only thing in the world."

Tears ached at her throat; she kept her head down. It seemed so strange that they two should stand here, in the sun—a part of the glad, shiny morning. The light fell in a bright shower through the madrone, touching with gay polish the tender green of the leaves. A bluejay with feathers spread, poised arrogantly on one leg, its wings blue than a jewel.

And all this seemed so bonny, so like a tune flung out in joy. It was so far away from her, as though she stood on that gray waste that she had seen in a dream—as though she stood there and listened to the vast, forlorn voice of rising waters. And she must stand there always—that or a hush more dismal in her ears.

He took her hand, but she wouldn't raise her head and meet his glance. "Barry—don't—oh, let me go."

"You can't go—why are you crying so? You're sorry, are you? You'd like to take it back?"

She drew in her lips, fighting to keep them still.

He pleaded, "Won't you look at me, Chickie? Do you want me to go away now? Listen, why so sad?"

The ruddy color was floating now in Barry's vital, impetuous face. He smiled, watching her. It was more than she could bear. She said faintly: "You're happy? Oh—you seem glad."

"Don't you want that, Chickie? Why not? You love me—I know it. You will love me."

"You think it's all right, then?"

And seeing the smile deepen and a swift assent on his lips, a moan shook through her: "Oh, did you want this? I never dreamed—why, you don't seem sorry! And all night long I wanted to die. I don't know, but this morning when Jonathan came and stood at my bed—oh, I'd like to die now!"

The blood sank from his face; he dropped her hand, flung along the trail, leaned against a tree. His back was turned, but he had a sagged look as though his muscles snapped suddenly.

It frightened her to hurt him so. She crept up softly and touched his arm. He didn't move. She put her hand on his.

He said, "Oh, what's the use, then, Chickie? You've said it. I guess that's how you feel."

She didn't wish to cry, but tears came so easily. They poured down her cheeks. She hid the sight from him.

He drew her then: "Oh, Chickie, this is awful! I don't know what to do. I thought you loved me."

She pressed her face against him. "Don't I? Why, more than my own life—how much more—oh—"

"But if you want to die—that's awful." He said this over, clasping his hands on her shoulder, and then he began to comfort her. They loved each other—they couldn't help it—and what of it—when he'd get back it would be settled—not so long.

She wanted to smile—oh just to please him. But her lips twisted and her chin—always like that—double so. She said: "Yes—yes—but why—oh I never dreamed. We could have waited—"

"Yes—we could have. We didn't." He rubbed her fingers as though he were working a tight glove over them. His breath heaved. "It's done now. I never meant to—oh, honestly! When I got into that boat . . . Listen—but now you'll blame me—oh, you'll think I planned it—came back for that—"

Working at her fingers, biting his lips: "Will you? You think that—?" Suddenly he flung his arm about her, pressed his head against her shoulder, sobbing like a boy.

She reached her hand to his face: "No—I don't think that—oh, I blame myself— It seems so strange—"

**INGROWN NAIL**

Turns Right Out Itself



"Outgro" is a harmless antiseptic manufactured for chiropodists. However, anyone can buy from the drug store a tiny bottle containing directions.



—Posed by Edythe Elliott of the Berkell Players.

Chickie Took a Street Car to Work. She Was Afraid to Meet Janina.

After a long while they sat on a drift of leaves. He pulled the crisp red bark in flakes from the tree. The hills lay dreaming under a soft blue haze. A butterfly, purple and orange, balanced on a long stem of grass. The deep, fertile peace of summer hummed like a song in the quiet and the color.

Sitting there like that reminded her on the Sunday when they had driven down the highway and she had felt the first tremulous joy when he caught her in his arms and kissed her.

Her eyes blinked. She wiped them. He began to plead. "You think I've hurt you, Chickie? Do you?"

She wouldn't answer, but stole her hand in his. He went on with broken, impulsive fierceness, now beseeching, now defending. "It's my fault—if you want to call it that—" "Well, Chickie, you won't stand it if you begin to think we did some crime—oh, you shame it all—"

"Oh, no—no—you'll write to me? Every day? You won't be long?"

Then he went over his plans; then he said how the time would drag; how he'd have her always in his thought; how he'd like to take her with him—

And she listened, filling her heart with his words, her mind with his image; her eyes with the pleasing tenderness of his.

He took her face in his hands, smoothed back her hair, staring into her eyes. He said: "You're beautiful. I love you. More than ever. Chickie—do you want me to kiss you?"

"Barry!" Crying again—she wished she could lose herself in this love of his—oh, let it wrap about her—shut her from her thoughts. She held to him.

He took her cheek on hers as he had that first night. How his touch was warm and firm, had flushed her heart with startled joy.

He kissed her lips and the gentleness pierced her so that she trembled. He murmured against them: "Then I love me, Chickie. Don't blame me so. It won't be long, Oh, soon—"

Like that again and again.

Then he was gone. Echoes of his steps crunching the leaves—echoes of his steps falling on her heart.

CHAPTER LX

Alone

He leaned mute and worn against the bank. Then he said quietly: "I didn't look at it so. Chickie, when I met you on the path last night, I had no thought of this. After we got into the boat and drifted there in the dark I don't know what wildness drove me. But alone there and the dark now and loving you all these months—oh well—you know all that. But I wouldn't undo it—not a moment. Only that you feel so. I can't stand that—"

She said with a pitiful smile: "You want me to be glad, then? You think I should?"

"What do you mean by that, Chickie? Well, I do think it! That's what I think. Why should we let the blind thoughts of others put a stain on a thing that was strong and swept us—well—me anyway—it's a kind of 'suicide' to deny it. If we don't love—but we do, I can't see why a few months should make such a difference."

"But are we sure, Barry? Once you said that feelings change. Suppose now—oh—"

He caught her elbows: "No, Chickie—don't say it! Don't think it. We only have an hour or so. Then I have to go. It's terrible to leave you like this!"

"Oh—it always seems so. Especially now—men always do."

He winced: "That's cruel. No—I won't be the one. I feel nearer a thousand times—to you. You must feel this—don't you? Chickie, dear, if you felt certain that I loved you more than anything in life and that I wouldn't change, then would you?"

"Yes—we could have. We didn't." He rubbed her fingers as though he were working a tight glove over them. His breath heaved. "It's done now. I never meant to—oh, honestly! When I got into that boat . . . Listen—but now you'll blame me—oh, you'll think I planned it—came back for that—"

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She reached her hand to his face: "No—I don't think that—oh, I blame myself— It seems so strange—"

be happy again? You wouldn't look so?"

She winked her eyes that were so gray, but all misted now. She twined her hand in his. "Do you, Barry? But only say it if it's so."

"It's so! Oh, come—I feel as though I killed you."

"It will be terrible alone, Barry. And Jonathan looking at me. I don't know how I'll stand that—"

"Well, Chickie, you won't stand it if you begin to think we did some crime—oh, you shame it all—"

"Oh, no—no—you'll write to me? Every day? You won't be long?"

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She dropped her face down and rubbed it against his palm. Oh—if he kept doing things like this the first time she knew he'd have her crying in his arms. Then he'd know. She'd die first. Let Jonathan know that! See the light go out of his chuckling eyes—giant that was—

She went in, swinging her hat. But at her place was bunch of sweet peas. Jonathan had done that. Now he took her chin in his hand. "Lonesome, Chickie, girl? But your dad was the gallant lover in his day. Ask your mother!"

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rolling it into a knot, stowing it in the bottom of her trunk. Books