

GLORIA THE FLAPPER WIFE

Dick Discovers Wayburn Was In Gloria's Car When It Was Wrecked.

THE STORY SO FAR
Gloria Gordon, beautiful flapper, married Dick Gregory, a struggling lawyer. Her idea of marriage is fun and fine clothes and to work or play. Dick borrows money from his mother to teach Gloria to cook. But to the disgust of mother Gregory, Gloria won't learn. Later Gloria leaves because of Gloria's wild parties. When Gloria hires Randolph Swan, although Dick tells her they can't afford a maid, and she swears Dick with debts for new clothes and an automobile. Dick becomes dangerously ill with pneumonia. During the days of his recovery, Gloria sees a great deal of Stanley Wayburn, an actor, with whom she is infatuated. Her best friend, May Seymour, wife of Dr. John Seymour, warns her against being seen with Wayburn. She tells Gloria how she herself has been snubbed because of her foolish affair with Jim Carver.

By Beatrice Burton
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"She won't wake up for a while," the nurse said. "We gave her a sleeping powder."

Gloria's mother clasped her hands tightly together.

"You're sure she's not seriously hurt?" she asked for the third time.

"Well, her collar bone's broken and she's pretty well bruised," the nurse answered, for the third time, also. "But she's not going to die, of course."

"Who is 'Stan'?" she asked, after a moment's silence. "She kept asking about 'Stan' before she went to sleep."

Gloria's mother didn't answer. She knew at once who 'Stan' was. That had been what Gloria had always called that good-for-nothing Wayburn!

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She stood up and looked at Gloria's face.

A year ago Gloria, in her sleep, had looked as innocent as a baby. Mrs. Gordon had often told herself so when she had gone into her daughter's room to tuck her up for the night.

Now that look of child-like innocence had gone. There was a new and hard expression around the beautiful mouth.

What had brought it there, Mrs. Gordon wondered.

And as if in answer to her question, Gloria stirred in her sleep and murmured "Stan."

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IN her hour later she stirred again and opened her eyes. She smiled as she saw her mother, who was sitting beside her.

"Car?" Gloria asked, after a few minutes. Her voice was drowsy.

"I guess it's pretty badly wrecked. Your dad's going to see about it in the morning," Mrs. Gordon answered. She took the fingers of Gloria's bandaged hand in hers.

The girl winced and drew them away.

"Stan?" she asked, after another long pause.

Mrs. Gordon shook her head. "Was it Wayburn who was with you in the car this afternoon?" she asked.

Gloria closed her eyes. She pretended that she was asleep so that she would not have to answer her mother's question.

But her pale lips quivered and a tear slid down her cheek from under her shadowy lashes. . . . then another.

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"SHE'S been seeing that Wayburn again. I'm sure of it!" Mrs. Gordon said to Gloria's father that night, as they walked home. "The nurse says she's been calling for him ever since she came into the hospital!"

"Do you think he was with her in the car when it turned over?" Mr. Gordon asked.

His little Gloria! His baby girl! Ah, no! She wasn't the kind of woman who ran around with men after she was married.

What the little daughter that he and mother had raised so carefully! The little daughter who had learned her prayers at his knee! Not his Gloria! There couldn't be anything bad in her!

"Mother, you don't think Wayburn was with our Gloria today, do you?" he asked again.

"I'm afraid I do," Mrs. Gordon answered firmly. "I'm afraid I do! She wouldn't answer me when I asked her about him."

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TWO weeks later Gloria was able to sit up and have visitors. The first of them was May Seymour.

The minute Gloria laid eyes on May she saw that she was bursting with bad news.

"Well, I must hand it to you for giving the gossip the best nine-day with Jim Carver."

Wayburn was the offer of a job in New York. He needs money. Gloria gets \$200 for him from Dick's secretary, Miss Briggs. She tells Miss Briggs the money is to be spent on improving the back yard as a surprise for Dick.

Wayburn and Gloria go riding one afternoon. Wayburn, drunk, makes a violent lunge to Gloria. In her effort to protect herself she forgets to steer the car and it overturns in the road. Wayburn disappears and Gloria is found and taken to hospital. There she calls for Wayburn.

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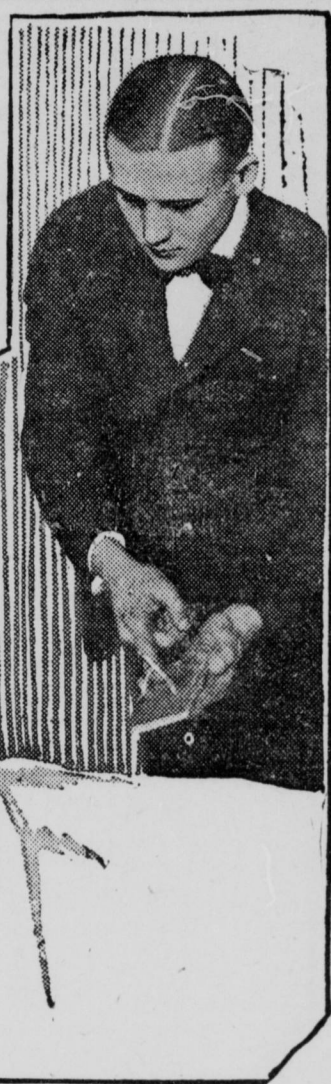
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wonder of the year, Gloria!" she said, after she had kissed her on both cheeks.

Gloria started.

"What do you mean, May?" she asked. There was a queer, sinking feeling at her heart.

"Well," May went on cheerfully, "that cat, Mrs. Wing, saw you pick up Wayburn up in your car the afternoon of the wreck. She said that Wayburn was three sheets to the wind. . . . And the story's going round that you were too squiffy to drive straight. . . ."

"It's not true!" Gloria burst out angrily. "I hadn't had a thing to drink! Not a thing!"

May smiled sweetly.

"You can tell me the truth, dearie! You know I'll never breathe it to a soul," she said.

"I don't care whether you do or not! I tell you I didn't have a thing to drink! It was raining and the car skidded into the ditch, that's all," Gloria said.

"But Stan was with you, wasn't he?" May asked.

"Yes, he was," Gloria answered defiantly. "But how did you know he was?"

"Oh, doctor's wives hear things, you know. Things that happen in hospitals!" May answered mysteriously.

"I'll tell you how I found out!"

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at Dick, showing the two tiny dimples that were tucked in at the corner of her mouth.

"You haven't kissed me yet, Rikky-Tikky-Tavy," she said.

"I'm not going to kiss you," Dick answered calmly.

"Never again?"

"Perhaps . . . but not right now," Dick replied. "Right now I'm interested in just one thing. I want to know who was with you 'way out in the country that day of the wreck! And, by Jove, I'm going to find out, too!"

Gloria burst out laughing.

"Not if I don't choose to tell you," she said. "After all, nobody knows who was along but me! And I'm not going to tell."

Dick whitened. Suddenly Gloria was sorry for him.

"I was all alone, Dick," she said. "There wasn't anyone with me. Cross my heart!"

Dick looked at her quietly for a minute. Then he put his hand into his coat pocket and pulled out a little mud-stained flask, covered with cheap leather.

"How did you happen to have this along with you?" he asked. "Have you taken to solitary drinking, Gloria?"

His wife widened her eyes that were the color of brown panes.

"Where in the world did you get that thing?" she asked. "I never saw it before in my life."

She shuddered as she looked at the flask. She seemed, still, to see it in Stan's hand as he tried to make her drink from it.

"You mean to tell me, upon your word of honor, that you never have seen this whiskey flask before in your life?" Dick asked her.

"Gloria answered him gravely. 'I mean just that,' she said.

She watched him put the flask back into his pocket.

She drew a long breath of relief.

Then, fascinated, she saw him draw from his coat another shining object . . . a silver cigarette case. It, too, was caked with yellow mud.

"Did you ever see this before, Gloria?" he asked.

Gloria shook her head.

"Never?" Dick asked, "Think before you speak."

"Never!"

Dick smiled scornfully.

"What kind of a woman are you, anyway?" he asked. "You know as well as I do whose cigarette case this is!"

He turned it over, so that Gloria could see the initials that were engraved upon it. . . . "S. W."

Stanley Wayburn!

(To Be Continued.)

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