

# GLORIA

## THE FLAPPER WIFE

Gloria Learns That Stanley Wayburn Has Been Married.

THE STORY SO FAR: Gloria, a beautiful flapper, married Stanley Wayburn, a struggling lawyer, for the idea of having a fine home and a car. But no work or money.

She refused to cook or keep house, and hires RANGLAND SWANSON to do it for her. Stanley, who says they can't afford a maid, and she swears Dick with some for her clothes and a new automobile.

Gloria becomes infuriated with STANLEY WEYBURN, an out-of-work actor. Her "lucky" friend, MAY SEYMOUR, wife of DR. JOHN SEYMOUR, warns her not to be seen with Wayburn. She tells Gloria how she herself has been snubbed because of a foolish affair with JIM CARLISLE. Gloria says she'll do as she pleases.

Dick becomes seriously ill with pneumonia. During the days of his slow recovery, Gloria sees Stanley constantly. He tells her he is going to New York to get a job acting with SONIA CHOTEK, a Russian actress. He needs money. Gloria gets \$200 for him from Dick, secretary, MISS BRIGGS. She tells Miss Briggs the money is to be spent improving the luck of the Gregory house.

Wayburn and Gloria go driving, and the car overturns. Gloria, badly hurt, is rushed to a hospital. Wayburn disappears. Later Gloria has a letter from him. He is in New York.

Dr. Seymour orders a car away for a rest. His mother, who has been ill, plans to go with him. Gloria is told that if NOTHER GREGORY goes she will have to tell his mother that Gloria doesn't want her alone. A few hours after the letter, Dick and Gloria leave on their trip. Gloria sets out for New York.

By Beatrice Burton  
Chapter XLII.

G LORIA, as if she were sleepwalking as she followed the redcap who carried her bag, through the great noisy railroad terminal.

Outside, she drew a deep breath of air. New York! She shook herself. She was really here!

"Free at last!" she sighed. "I'm glad I came! I'll never go back! Never!"

Her heart beat high and wildly as she hailed a taxicab.

A woman on the train had told her about a clean little hotel in West Eleventh Street.

Gloria made up her mind that she would go there first to freshen up. She was dirty and tired, after her journey.

... And then—then she would hunt up Stanley Wayburn. She sat back in a corner of the taxicab and watched New York whirl by outside the windows.

In the pale sunshine, the tall buildings seemed rich and wonderful. The very trucks and busses seemed marvelous to Gloria that day. She was going to see Stanley Wayburn!

Perhaps she would go on the stage and become a great star!

And this big, careless town, this New York, would be hers to struggle with, to conquer! Perhaps she would write her name in electric lights against the night sky of Broadway yet!

At the little hotel she registered as "Miss Gloria Gordon" . . . a better stage name than "Gloria Gregory," she decided.

She went upstairs to the tidy, demoralized hotel room, and unpacked her bag.

She bathed. She brushed her red-gold hair until it shone like polished copper. She "did" her nails, and rubbed perfume into the palms of her hands, and on the nape of her neck. She rouged her cheeks.

"When tulips bloom in Union Square . . ." sang Gloria, happy for the first time in weeks.

She was happy!

And wasn't she pretty, though! She put her head on one side and laughed at herself in the looking glass. Oh, she could land a job in a beauty-show all right!

If Stan couldn't help find her a job, she'd go to Kit Cameron!

Kit was a chorus girl in the "Gayeties" . . . the most beautiful chorus in the world! And Kit could introduce her to the great Ginfeld, himself.

Gloria was sure that if Ginfeld saw her, he would give her a place in the "Gayeties" . . . She was sure she was beautiful. Dick had always told her she was the prettiest woman in the world.

Dick! The thought of him made Gloria's heart ache for just a minute. She put the thought of him aside. . . . She closed her heart against him.

She threw back her head, and studied herself with eyes that were like dark stars under their white lids. She smiled into the mirror. She knew that she was better-looking than Kit Cameron had ever dared to be!

minutes. Wanta go up and wait for him?"

"Yes, thank you," said Gloria. She followed the boarding-house keeper up the red-carpeted stairs to the second floor.

Stan's rooms were at the back of the house, overlooking a dirty backyard. Upstairs, some one was practicing on a doleful saxophone.

But the rooms themselves were cheerful enough.

There were magazines scattered about. A tin box of cigarettes and a cocktail shaker stood on the table. Stan's bright silk housecoat was thrown over the back of a chair.

Everywhere there were pictures of women . . . the photographs that Gloria first had seen in Stan's dressing room in the theater back home. She looked at them, again.

Then she saw that there was a new one among them!

It stood all by itself in a Dutch-silver frame on a table in one corner. The pictured face in it was broad and fore-shortened. It was crowned by a swirl of blond hair. . . . It was Sonia Chotek's face!

Live pangs of jealousy stabbed Gloria like two-edged knives at the sight. She wondered if Stan was in love with that face. . . . She wondered if he thought Sonia Chotek was beautiful.

Was she beautiful? Gloria picked up the picture of the actress and studied it closely. Then she crossed the room to a mirror that hung there against the wall, and looked at her own face. Under the deep coppery waves of her hair, it smiled back at her. . . . vivid and sparkling.

"Pooh!" she said aloud, "I make her look like thirty cents!"

She put Sonia Chotek's picture back on the table, so that it faced the wall.

It was then that the telephone in Wayburn's bedroom rang.

Gloria flew to it and unhooked the receiver.

"Hello," she said.

The voice that answered her had a foreign accent. It was a woman's voice. It was Sonia Chotek's voice. Gloria knew at once.

"Who is this speaking, please?" it asked.

"Gloria didn't answer. She banged the receiver back on its hook, and turned away from the phone. Then she stopped dead-still.

Wayburn had come in. He was standing in the doorway between the two rooms. Of course, he must have been listening. . . .

He stared at her as if she had been a ghost. "What the love of Mike! Where did you drop from?"

Gloria's voice was wistful when she answered. "From home, of course—Aren't you glad to see me?"

Wayburn ignored her question.

"Who was that on the phone just now?" he asked harshly.

"Oh, just some Jane who wanted to talk to you," Gloria replied. She managed to ripple a laugh at him, flippantly, as she walked past him into the sitting-room.

She was hurt—bewildered. What was the matter with Stan? The Stan who used to catch her hands in his, give her a look that was like a caress, and call her "Russset"?

"Aren't you going to ask me to sit down, or say you're glad to see me, or anything?" she asked.

She dropped into a chair, and watched Wayburn through her lashes. He took off his overcoat and hung it up. He lighted a cigarette with a steady hand. He drew up a chair and sat down.

And not until then did he answer her.

"Well," he said, "as a matter of fact, I'm not exactly tickled to death to see you, Gloria. . . . What have you done? Left your husband?"

Not exactly tickled to death to see her! Stan not glad to see her? . . . She tried to speak but her lips would scarcely move. They were white and drawn.

"I suppose you'd call it that—" she said at last. Her voice vibrated high and thin, like a violin string that has been stretched too taut. It broke suddenly. . . .

HE wanted to tell Stan how empty life at home had been for her since he dropped out of her life—how terribly she had missed him.

But his coldness froze her. She couldn't tell him anything. Her voice was congealed in her throat.

"Does your husband know you're here with me?" Wayburn asked. He gripped the arms of his chair with both hands as he leaned forward, hanging upon her answer.

"Suppose he does know it? What difference would it make?" Gloria's voice was a dull whisper.

"Difference!" Wayburn shouted.

"It would make a deuce of a difference to me!" He began to dash up and down the room like a caged tiger.

He stopped suddenly before her chair, and glared down at her.

"Do you suppose I want to be dragged into your troubles?" he asked violently. "Do you suppose I want that husband of yours to hunt me up and shoot me, eh?—What could I do with you, anyway?"

Gloria saw in a flash how his mind was working. She shook with cold anger that was like an icy chill. And when she answered Wayburn her voice came between clenched teeth. She couldn't get them apart.

"I see what you're driving at, Stan," she said. "You think I'm asking you to take care of me—well, I may be cheap, but I'm not so cheap as that!"

Her anger broke over him suddenly, like flooding waters bursting through a dam.

"I'm not such a fool as to expect help from you," she cried. "Why, you can't take care of yourself—I'll bet you're still living on that \$200 you borrowed from me!"

She could see Wayburn wince. That had got under his skin!

"Don't worry, I'll pay every red cent of it back!" he said.

Gloria sneered. "I'll frame it when I get it," she said. She wanted to hurt Wayburn. She hated him exactly what all Sonia Chotek's "Sunshine," as he had once called her "Russset."

Pet names—part of Stan's love-making, part of his "line" with women! Little caressing names that were like kisses on his lips as he whispered them! And they meant exactly what his kisses meant. Nothing! Nothing at all!

Oh, she had found Stan Wayburn out at last. He was a coward and a cad. Why, hadn't she seen it long ago?

Wayburn came back into the room rang sharply. Wayburn slammed the door after him as he hurried in to answer it.

Gloria tipped to it, and laid her ear against the panels of it to listen.

"Hello, Sunshine," she heard Wayburn say. Her lip curled. That was like Stan—to call Sonia Chotek "Sunshine," as he had once called her "Russset."

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room. He sat on the arm of Gloria's chair, and laid his hand on Gloria's shoulder.

"Now, let's talk this over quietly," he said.

At his touch, all the fury went out of Gloria. She hated him, yes, but with a kind of misery. She turned in her chair and looked up at him, pleading with her eyes.

"Don't send me back home, Stan!" she begged. "If you know how lonely I've been! . . . If you only knew! Look here, I'll get a job on the stage. Maybe Kit Cameron can get me into the show she's in. . . ."

Wayburn got up. "No, you'd better go home," he said brutally. His voice cut like a whip. And Gloria went mad for a moment.

She crossed the room, and picked up Sonia Chotek's picture. She held it above her head, and brought it down hard on the back of the nearest chair. The glass broke in a hundred pieces. . . . Above the crash of it, Gloria heard the sound of Wayburn's laugh.

"Well, that's about all you can do about it!" he said. "I married Sonia Chotek yesterday!"

(To Be Continued)

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