

GLORIA

THE FLAPPER WIFE

Gloria Learns That May Seymour's Husband Has Killed Himself.

THE STORY SO FAR
Gloria Gordon, beautiful flapper, married Dick Gregory, a struggling lawyer. Her idea of marriage is fun and fine clothes. She likes to work or play. She has three babies and does her own housework. Gloria refuses pointblank to do any housework. Later, Dick left the maid, because he can't afford to keep one. Gloria has swamped him with debts for her clothes and a new automobile. She became infatuated with Stanley Westburn, an actor. He and Gloria with May Seymour and Jim Carey, make a jolly foursome. Dick has pneumonia and almost dies. When he recovers, Dr. John Seymour, husband of the flapper May, sends him away for a long rest. Gloria refuses to go alone, because she's mother, who she hates, is coming. Westburn leaves town to take a job on the New York stage. After two lonely weeks, Gloria follows him. But he spurns her, telling her he has just married his leading woman. Then Gloria tries to get a place as a chorus girl, but fails. When she comes home Dick takes her into the house, but not as his wife. She might as well be working late with his secretary, Susan Briggs. Gloria goes to Mother Gregory to complain that Dick left her alone half the night while he was out with Miss Briggs.

By Beatrice Burton

CHAPTER XLIX

"I DON'T believe for a single second that Dick was out half the night with Sue Briggs or any other woman!" Mother Gregory said with spirit. "I have to see that with my own eyes to believe it!"

"Well, then, where was he until 2 or 3 o'clock last night?—No place where he had any business to be!" Gloria cried. "He certainly wasn't working until then!...Don't try to tell me that!"

Mother Gregory's fine black eyes flashed. "Why don't you ask him where he was?" she asked quietly. Gloria laughed unpleasantly. "That's just it! He didn't give me a chance to ask him anything!" she answered. "He sneaked away this morning before I woke up."

"My poor child," Mother Gregory's voice was soft with sudden pity. "Can't you trust your husband out of your sight? Don't you know by this time what sort of man Dick is?" Gloria shook her head.

"I certainly don't," she said. "I thought I did once. But Dick's changed so, lately. He's going to be a regular crossword puzzle. I can't make him out. What do you suppose he did the night I came home from New York?"

"Tell me."

"He put me out of our room!" Gloria said. "He moved all my things into the spare room. He doesn't



"Where is Mr. Gregory?" she asked, turning to Miss Briggs.

want me for his wife any more, I suppose. And that was his gentle way of breaking the news to me." Mother Gregory knitted her brows. This was more serious than she had supposed—this breach between Gloria and Dick.

"My dear," she said. "How did you happen to go to New York in the first place? There's a story around town that you went there with that actor of yours...What was his name? Westfield? Wakefield?"

"Wayburn," Gloria helped her out. "But I didn't go to New York with him. He went two weeks before I did."

"But did you go because he was there?" Mother Gregory asked. Gloria was all ready to say "No." But she had a feeling that Mother Gregory's eyes could see right down into her very soul.

"Yes," she whispered. Her lips quivered.

MOTHER GREGORY sat down heavily on the edge of her great four-poster bed. The springs creaked under her weight.

"Ah—ah!" she said, "and then you expect Dick to take you back with open arms? When you've shown him you love another man?"

"I don't love Stan Wayburn," Gloria answered sullenly.

"You don't love Dick, that's sure!" Dick's mother said.

"And he doesn't love me!" Gloria came back at her. "If he did he wouldn't leave me alone in the house all night to be frightened to death!"

"He doesn't care a darn for me any more!"

"I hope he doesn't," Gloria. Mother Gregory said solemnly. "I'd hate his marriage to wind up the way poor John Seymour's did, last night."

"Dr. John!" Gloria cried. "Why, what's happened to Dr. John?"

A curious, cold fear seemed to take hold of her heart...to squeeze it. She could hardly breathe. Mother Gregory's voice seemed to come from a long way off, when she spoke again.

"Didn't you see the morning paper," she asked.

With a great effort, Gloria shook her head. Her thoughts flew to May. What terrible trouble was she in? What had happened to Dr. John?

"He shot himself," Mother Gregory said. There was a long silence. Then Mrs. Gregory arose and called down the stairs to Maggie.

"Maggie, bring up the paper, please," she asked. In a minute she came back into the room, shaking out the rustling sheet.

"Dr. John Seymour..." she began to read. But Gloria stopped her. "No, no," she said. "Don't read it! I must go to May! She hasn't any body but me..."

Puzzle a Day

Regardless of all that has been said about the uselessness of patent medicines, many people use them daily, and save their pennies to buy more.

In one village medicine can be purchased not only for cash but also for trade coupons. For this reason, these are carefully saved. Mr. Stump, who had twice as many coupons as his wife, asked her for two of her coupons. "No," she said, "If I do that you would have three times the number of my coupons. But if you will give me four of your coupons we will both have the same amount, and can each buy a bottle of medicine."

How many coupons are needed to buy a bottle of medicine?

Last puzzle answer:
To make a square out of the badly cut piece of lumber, Mr. Mack divided the plank as shown in the first sketch, re-assembled and nailed the pieces as shown in the second sketch, and so secured the flooring. But only an expert could saw such irregularly-shaped pieces.

She ran down the stairs and out into the street. A trolley car was coming. She ran to catch it.

Oh, it wouldn't be true! There must be some mistake! Things like that didn't happen in this warm, sunny world with its blue sky and its June roses everywhere!

And that it should happen to May of all people! Careless, careless May, who was like a yellow butterfly that did nothing but dance in the sun.

But May was a butterfly crushed on the wheel when Gloria saw her that June morning.

SHE lay with her face turned to the wall in her darkened bedroom. She made no sound at all when Sarah, the old landlady, opened the door to let Gloria in.

"My dear," the girl said, leaning over her, "I'm so sorry..."

May didn't answer. She lay motionless in her frivolous pink silk nightgown. Gloria sat down beside the bed and began to stroke her arm.

"Don't cry, dear," she murmured. There were tears in her own eyes.

But May was not crying. The face that she turned to Gloria, at last, was hard and white as flint.

"I killed him," she said dully. "You know that, don't you? Just as surely as if I'd held the gun!"

"Hush," dear," Gloria begged. "You don't know what you're saying."

May made a noise in her throat that was halfway between a sob and a laugh—a terrible sound.

"I killed him!" she said again, clearly, "Jim Carey..."

Her voice broke on the name. She suddenly burst into a storm of frightful sobs and threw herself back on the bed, waving her arms like a crazed woman. She tore at her hair.

Gloria rushed out into the hall for help. A nurse in uniform was running upstairs. It was Mrs. O'Hara—Dr. John's "boss" nurse.

"You'd better go," she said to Gloria over her shoulder, as she went into May's room.

Shaking all over, Gloria hurried downstairs.

Lola Hough came out of Dr. John's little office back of the dining-room. She had on a bungalow apron, and she looked as if she had been crying.

"Hello, Gloria," she said quietly. "What's happened up there?"

"She's been crying," Gloria answered. "Lola, how did this thing happen? Do you know?"

Lola looked at her steadily for a minute with her moist blue eyes.

"Yes, I do," she said. "I was here when it happened last night...alone with May."

Gloria sat down wearily on the hall seat. "How terrible for you!" she gasped. "But Lola shook her head. 'No,' she said. 'I was glad May wasn't here alone with him. And it was just by chance that I happened to be here. It was almost midnight, and the baby had the colic. I knew the drugstore would be closed at that hour, so I was over here to get some peppermint from Dr. John.'"

Lola paused for a moment. She wet her dry lips with her tongue and went on. "As I came up the street, I saw Jim Carey's car leaving the house. And May still had on her hat when she let me in. Of course, she'd been out riding with Jim! But anyway, I'd hardly set foot inside the house when we heard a shot in Dr. John's office. I looked in..."

"And was he dead when you looked?" asked Gloria, shocked to her finger ends.

"Stone dead," Lola answered. "I called the police, and then I thought we ought to have Dr. John's lawyer. So I phoned Dick."

"How did you know he was at his office?" Gloria asked sharply.

"I didn't, but your house didn't answer, Central said," Lola explained. "So I took a chance on the office, and got him. He came right over."

So this was where Dick had been! All of the time when Gloria had pictured him with Susan Briggs, either in his office or walking home with her under the stars!

"Our phone didn't ring last night at all," Gloria said, presently, "and it wasn't out of order, because I was talking to May at half past nine, or so...Just before I went out with Jim. I suppose...Oh, I'll bet the burglar cut the wires!"

Lola's blue eyes showed their whites with surprise.

"Now, don't tell me you had burglars last night!" she cried.

"We certainly did!" Gloria replied. "They stole all our flat silver...I heard them. I was waiting up for Dick to come home—worried to death, because I didn't know where he was!"

Lola smiled bitterly. "I guess you don't have to do much worrying about where Dick is at night!" she said. "He's a man in a million...I wish Bill behaved himself like as well as Dick Gregory does!"

SHE laughed with sudden nervousness. "Bill's having a terrible time today," she said. "He stayed home with toothache. So I left him in charge of the kids for a while. The baby's tummy ache is gone, and he was asleep when I left. But the teeth! I kept Bill busy. He'll get a taste of my job and its joys!"

But there was no laughter in Gloria that morning.

"Lola," she said, shuddering, "why do you suppose Dr. John did this terrible thing?"

Lola was not the kind of woman who balked at the truth. She said what other people only thought. She said it now.

"Why, because of Jim Carey, of course!" she rapped out. "He knew May was crazy about Jim. He'd forbidden her to see him. But you know May...She does as she pleases. And I suppose Dr. John sat here alone for hours last night, brooding, until he just didn't know what he was doing. That's the way I've figured it out, any way!"

"Yes, but to kill himself! He must have been out of his mind!" Gloria shook her head. "Honestly, Lola, I never thought Dr. John cared if May ran around with Jim. I used to wonder why he didn't."

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"Oh, he cared, all right enough!" Lola answered, "but you never can tell what those quiet men are thinking about. They bottle everything up inside themselves...until they do something like this!"

Out in the cheerful, sunny street again, Gloria thought over what Lola had said about Dr. John.

...Dick was the quiet kind of man, too! The kind of man who bottled up everything within himself...Gloria wondered if he had brooded about her, as Dr. John must have brooded over May for long months. The thought almost took her breath away.

She would go to Dick now and beg him to let bygones be bygones! She would make him love her again, as he had loved her in the early days of their life together...the days when he trembled if he touched her. He had been under her spell once. He would be under it again.

But the sight of Miss Briggs sitting at her desk in Dick's office shook Gloria's confidence in herself a little. Miss Briggs was actually pretty today!...Her cheeks were flushed and her eyes were filled with sparkle.

"Well," Gloria said, "you don't look as if you'd worked half the night!"

"I didn't," Miss Briggs answered demurely. "Mr. Gregory sent me home at 10 in a cab. He's very considerate."

Like ice, she was considerate, thought Gloria...He could send his secretary home in a cab, but his wife could walk, for all he cared!...But, perhaps he thought that she had driven downtown in her little car, last night. He probably did think that.

Gloria opened the door of Dick's private office and looked in. It was empty.

"Where is Mr. Gregory?" she asked, turning to Miss Briggs. (To Be Continued)

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