

# GLORIA

## THE FLAPPER WIFE

May Seymour Advises Gloria to Get a Divorce from Dick.

**THE STORY SO FAR:**  
GLORIA GORDON, beautiful flapper, meets DICK GREGORY, a struggling lawyer. His idea of marriage is fun and fine clothes . . . but no work or children. She refuses to do her own housework and hires a maid. But Dick has to let the maid go because he has debts for her extravagances.

She becomes infatuated with the actor, STEPHEN BRAIN, when he leaves town. She follows him to New York. But he repudiates her. She tries to get a job as a chorus girl and fails. Finally she comes home to Dick. He takes her in but refuses to live with her as his wife.

Gloria begins to suspect that he is in love with SUSAN BRIGGS. Dick stays out late one night, and Gloria is sure he is spending it with Miss Briggs. But next day she learns that he was at the home of DR. JOHN SEYMOUR, a love affair between his wife, MAY, and JIM CAREWE.

The bridge between Dick and Gloria. Gloria packs up and leaves him finally. One afternoon she comes home again. She has come into the house she has left. While she is there, May Seymour telephones and says she wants to see Gloria.

By Beatrice Burton  
CHAPTER LX.

**G**LORIA stood at the window watching for May to drive up in her little crimson car.

But she came in a taxicab. And the driver followed two large traveling bags.

The instant she set foot in the house, Gloria saw that there was some subtle change in her. She was not the crushed and tearful May of a week ago.

The air of dash and impudence that had been her chief charm had returned to her. She had reddened her lips, and around the collar of her soft black dress was a row of little pearls.

"Don't look so surprised," she said to Gloria as she sank into Dick's chair. "I told you way last week that I was going to shake the dust of Indianapolis from my shoes, didn't I?"

"Yes," Gloria nodded, "but I had no idea that you were going so soon . . ."

"Why should I stay here?" May asked. "There's nothing for me in this burg that I can see! Nothing but a lot of friends who've stopped speaking to me, and a story that I'll never be able to live down . . ."

"Where are you going?" Gloria asked.

May threw out her hands with a vague gesture. "New York, London . . . Paris . . . Bombay. Who knows?" she asked. "Thank heaven, I have enough money to keep me going! Going, going . . . that's the only way for me to keep from losing my mind, I guess."

She stopped speaking, and stared out of the window, as if her eyes were filled with long distances already . . .

"Why don't you go with me, Gloria?" she asked suddenly. "That's what I came here to ask you . . . You know, you'll never go back to Dick now that you've actually left home, don't you?"

Gloria nodded, with a word.

"Well, then," May went on, "tell him you want some money and come along with me. I'm going to stay at a hotel tonight, and take an early train in the morning. You could get ready to go by then, couldn't you?"

**G**LORIA looked at her thoughtfully. What was this dull town to her, now that she had lost Dick?

"For two pins . . . for two little rusty, bent pins . . . I'd go with you, May," she said slowly. "But somehow or other, I just can't do it."

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long as Dick's here . . . I've got to stay I guess . . ."

"What I can't understand," May answered, with a little frown on her face, "is how Dick ever happened to let you pick up and leave him."

Her eyes questioned Gloria.

"I guess he just got tired of me," Gloria said with a break in her voice. "He wanted a home-keeping wife. And I wasn't one. I bored him."

"Bored him? Never! . . . Not with that face of yours!" May exclaimed.

"Oh, blah! Men get tired of nothing but a woman's looks," Gloria told her. "You can get them with your beauty. But you've got to hold them with something else . . . Braing, for one thing. And love and care."

"Love and care! You talk about them as if they were babies!" May laughed.

"Well, and so they are! They're only grown-up children," Gloria went on, with that new wisdom of hers. "When life hangs them on the head, they want someone to rub the bump, and tell them not to mind . . . And they want their food right on the dot, poor things, just as we did."

She stopped and shook a solemn forefinger at May.

"And you flip it from the Flapper, that the wife who wins is the one who mothers her man," she said. "I used to think that what Dick wanted was a playmate. And all of the time he wanted someone to take his troubles to . . . someone he said. "It seems a shame to spoil good food!"

"It would be a good thing if I did spoil it tonight," Gloria announced. "People shouldn't eat anything but salad and green vegetables in weather like this!"

**A**LONE in the kitchen, she set to work. The lettuce was lying in a bowl of water. Gloria cut it up and made a French dressing for it. Mother Gregory had shown her how to mix the oil and lemon juice to silken smoothness.

Gloria wondered what Mother Gregory had ordered for dinner at their house tonight. Would Dick be there with his father and mother? . . . Or would he be dining somewhere or other with Susan Briggs?

Gloria wrinkled her forehead. "Well, I can't live like this . . . worrying myself to death about him all the time. Wondering where he is, and what he's doing," she told herself. "Perhaps May's right. Perhaps I'd be happier if I divorced Dick . . ."

She debated the question with herself as she set the meal on the table. With unseeing eyes she smiled at her mother and father when they praised it.

She was looking far away into the hidden future. What did it hold for a woman who had separated from the only man in the world for whom she cared? . . .

"I mean . . . get a divorce," May answered. "What's the use of being tied to a man who doesn't care a snap of his fingers about you? You say Dick doesn't."

Gloria put her head on one side like a wise robin.

"Weell, I don't know, May," she mused. "Divorce has always seemed a terrible thing to me . . ."

"No more terrible than the way you're living now!" May answered briskly. "You're neither married nor single!"

Gloria sighed. "I'm awfully lonely," she said sadly.

May got up to go. "Oh, if I cared about a man I'll bet I'd make him care about me . . . or know the reason why! Why don't you go to Dick and tell him you're going to divorce him? That'll bring him round, fast enough!"

"Nothing will do that," Gloria answered. "I tell you he's through with me! I know Dick . . . when he says he's through he means it!"

She sat staring into space while May telephoned for a taxicab to take herself and her bags down to the hotel.

She drew a long breath of pure relief when May had gone, and she stood alone in the house, once more . . . the dear, familiar house.

Gloria hated to leave it. She had told May it was "spooky." It was not "spooky" . . . except that it was haunted with memory. Gloria could almost feel Dick with her in the empty room.

She ran out into the back yard and picked a bouquet of roses. She put them in a vase on the table beside Dick's chair. She drew his little smoking stand up beside it. There was dust on it . . .

Gloria wiped it off with her clean handkerchief.

**W**HERE have you been all day?" Her mother asked her when she walked into the hot little kitchen at 6 o'clock that night.

"Oh . . . I don't know. Gadding around town," Gloria answered. "I know I'm dead tired. . . . She dropped down on a chair beside the kitchen table.

Her mother was bent above the gas stove. She was frying veal birds for dinner.

Her face was flushed. Her hair curled in little damp wisps around

her ears. There was a weary droop at the corners of her mouth.

Gloria jumped up. "I'm going to get supper tonight," she cried. "Just to show you that I can do it! . . . I'll be down in a jiffy!"

She hurried upstairs to the little bedroom under the eaves. It was close and stuffy, although the one window was opened wide and the muslin curtains looped back.

Gloria ripped off her silk dress, and put on her new bungalow apron . . . the apron in which she had planned to look so pretty for Dick!

She ran down to the kitchen. Her father had come in. He was sitting in his shirt-sleeves beside the door that led to the back porch.

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