

# GLORIA

## THE FLAPPER WIFE

Gloria Meets Dick While She Is Resting In the Park.

**THE STORY SO FAR**  
Gloria is a beautiful flapper, married Dick Gregory, a struggling lawyer. Her idea of marriage is fun and fine. She refuses to do the work of a housemaid. But Dick has to let the man go, for Gloria has swummed with debts.

She becomes infatuated with Stanley Wadsworth, a rich man, and follows him to New York. But he spurns her. Then she tries to get a job as a reporter, but fails. When she comes home to Dick, he takes her back, but not as his wife.

**By Beatrice Burton**  
CHAPTER LXVI

DICK walked slowly into the hall. He picked up the telephone and gave the familiar number of the Gordon home. He could hear Central ringing it...

Then, resolutely, he snapped the receiver back on its hook, and set the little instrument down on the table.

He stood there looking at it. With his hand raised to his lips, he pressed Gloria's handkerchief hard against them...that bit of cambric seemed to hold some of the fragrance of her in its scented folds. Her hair had smelled of mimosa flowers...

Dick put out his hand again for the telephone. But suddenly, he snatched it back, as if the little black instrument had been flame.

There was subdued panic in the speed with which he snapped off the lights, and left the house. He flung himself into the little blue car, and backed it down the driveway... "If I'd stayed a minute longer, I'd have called her up...told her to come!" he said, disgustedly to himself, as the car rolled along the road.

He took out his watch and looked at it. Ten o'clock...too early to go to bed on a moonlit night like this.

He drove aimlessly around the dark streets where the trees made black shadows along the sides... every street a Lover's Lane tonight! The same moon that had looked down on the lovers of Babylon and Nineveh looked down on the couples that were abroad tonight...the Immortal Two, a Man and a Girl.

And then, almost without surprise, Dick found himself turning into the street where Gloria lived. He seemed to have known all along that this was where he was going...

He passed the house, with his eyes straight ahead of him. But halfway

down the street, he turned in his seat and looked back at the gray, blurred outlines of it. There was a light in the window of Gloria's room...

The blue car slowed down and almost stopped. Its brakes screamed in the stillness of the street.

Then, suddenly, it shot forward in silent flight. Its tall-light winked like a small, evil eye as it turned the corner.

**N**OT knowing whose car it was, Gloria heard it as she stood before her dresser, getting ready for bed.

She looked at herself in the mirror... What was the good of all her beauty, she wondered, when Dick wasn't there to see it?

Her hair might just as well be drab instead of red gold in all its deep waves. And her mouth... why should it be shaped for kisses, when he had grown tired of kissing her?... Gloria turned away her head, so that she couldn't see her reflection.

She put up her hand, and turned out the light, with a vicious little movement. Then she lay down on the bed, and tried to sleep... It was past midnight, before she finally dropped off.

The next morning dawned to the sound of slow dropping rain on the leaves outside her window.

She ran downstairs, through the early Sunday morning hush of the house, and brought in the newspaper. The "Help Wanted" columns... they were what she wanted.

She went quickly through them, and marked two or three that looked promising. She'd go downtown first thing in the morning, and find something to do... That was the thing to keep busy! To keep from thinking!

When she heard her mother moving around in the kitchen, she dressed and hurried downstairs to help her.

"We won't have much for breakfast... just some berries and toast and coffee, I thought," Mrs. Gordon said. "Your Aunt Dorcas always has such big dinners that we'll all be sick if we eat too much now."

With a shudder, Gloria remembered that they were going to Aunt Dorcas' house for dinner!

At one o'clock they went. Aunt Dorcas, flushed and beaming, welcomed them with her best manner as Head of the House, Uncle Henry, small and silent, stood behind her.

And as Head of the House, Aunt Dorcas took her place behind the platter of stuffed, roasted veal at the dinner table. Aunt Dorcas always carved, just as she always drove the family car.

Cousin Lulu and her young husband, George, were there, too. The new baby, the explained, was taking her nap upstairs on Aunt Dorcas' bed.

"What are you going to name her?" Gloria asked innocently.

Lulu and Aunt Dorcas turned reproachful eyes upon her.

"We're going to name her Dorcas, of course," Lulu said. "Why, she's the living amie of Mother... hair eyes and all!"

Once more Aunt Dorcas beamed. Even the baby had deferred to her as head of the house. And all was well.

**G**LORIA was afraid of Aunt Dorcas. "I do hope she doesn't get started on me and Dick, again," she said prayerfully to herself, as she ate the hot cherry pie that followed the meal.

But she soon found out that what the family had really come together for, was counsel. Aunt Dorcas with her fines military air, took the floor the minute they were all settled in the living room.

"Your mother tells me you've gone back to work, Gloria," she began severely. "What's the meaning of that?"

Gloria drew in her breath. "Why shouldn't I work, Aunt?" she asked.

"I'm used to working."

"Doesn't this young Gregory intend to give you a raise?" Aunt Dorcas went on with her investigation.

"He's sent me money...but I gave it back to him. I didn't want it," Gloria answered in a low tone. She could feel the blood rising to her cheeks.

Aunt Dorcas looked at her with disgust. "Well, you are easy!" she exclaimed, "to let a man treat you the way Dick Gregory has... And then to let him go scot-free without giving you any money at all! You are a ninny!"

Gloria said nothing.

"What are you going to do about it?" her aunt prodded her. "Don't you realize that it's no more than right that you should take his money? You're his wife!"

"Yes, and if Gloria divorces Dick she ought to get good, fat alimony!" Cousin Lulu broke in shrilly. "She's a ninny!"

Aunt Dorcas looked at her with a moment "Pape's Diaepsin" reaches the stomach all distress goes. Lumps of indigestion, gases, heartburn, sourness, fullness, flatulence, palpitation, vanish.

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Last puzzle answer:

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a fool not to start suit tomorrow!"

Gloria felt her mother's tender, wounded eyes pass over her. She heard her voice, soft and low after Aunt Dorcas' strident tones.

"No, there won't be any divorce," that soft voice said. "Such a thing as divorce has never been in this family.... There isn't anything for Gloria to do that I can see...."

"There are several things she can do!" declared Aunt Dorcas. She was like a lawyer giving an opinion. "She can sue young Gregory for alimony. Or she can go back to him, if she wants to."

**S**HE stopped suddenly. Gloria heard it as she stood before her dresser, getting ready for bed.

She looked at herself in the mirror... What was the good of all her beauty, she wondered, when Dick wasn't there to see it?

"Haven't I told you before that that's the one thing I can't do?" she cried out. "I've been on my knees to Dick to take me back, if you know! And he won't have me back! He's sick and tired of me! Don't I know..."

Aunt Gregory nodded her large blonde head. "Then there's more to this affair of yours than anybody knows," she remarked sadly. "People don't separate unless one of 'em is in love with somebody else..."

She studied Gloria with her prominent blue eyes as if she could read her thoughts if only she looked at her long enough.

The girl knew she couldn't bear to be in the room a moment longer. It was none of her aunt's business whether she took money from Dick or earned it typewriting.

And it certainly was nobody's affair whether she lived with Dick, but his and hers...

She looked from her aunt to her Cousin Lulu with hostile eyes. "They don't want to help me anyways," she told herself the brutal truth. "They just want to find out all my business... so they can talk me over afterward!"

She turned swiftly toward the wide doorway that led out into the hall of the house. "I've got to go," she said wildly. "I promised May Seymour I'd go for a walk with her..."

It wasn't until she was out on the sidewalk that she realized that May Seymour wasn't in town... probably never would be in town again!

"Oh, well, what if do know that I fibbed to them?" she thought furiously. "People who try into every one's business don't deserve the truth..."

But she hated herself for lying.

**S**HE walked slowly away from the house where she were still holding the family counsel. She imagined her Aunt Dorcas' rich voice saying: "Well, Gloria's having what old Aunt Fanny used to call the 'high strikes'! She's always been a liar!"

Sam Trattner

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