

# JOANNA

## Story of a Modern Girl and a Million Dollars

**SYNOPSIS**  
With unusual solemnity, MR. HARKNESS, buyer in the silk department of a mammoth store, summons JOANNA HARKNESS, before him. He tells her that before MR. GRAYDON, owner of the store, Joanna should be the thought of possible dismissal and thinks of the bills that have been accumulating. He tells her that he is not to deliver an overwhelming message, some one whose identity is not to be known. He tells her that he is not to deliver an overwhelming message, some one whose identity is not to be known. He tells her that he is not to deliver an overwhelming message, some one whose identity is not to be known.

By H. L. Gates  
CHAPTER VI  
Re-Enter Brandon

As a rule Joanna ran up the stairs that led from the first floor of the rooming house, once a pretentious residence, to the second floor where she occupied a one-windowed room made by a flimsy partition across what had been the dining room of more glorious days. But Mrs. Adams, who sat quite still in her chair in "the drawing room only," was conscious that Joanna walked up slowly, this time. She heard her open her door and close it, softly carefully. Usually Joanna slammed her door with a bang and a song.

Mrs. Adams examined her five hundred dollar note, turned it over and looked curiously at the yellow back, held it close to her eye to read the various engraved assurances that it was a solemn symbol of five hundred dollars real money. And she looked at the geraniums in the pottery bowl as intently as if she were counting the petals. But she seemed to be detached. There always had been a soft spot in Mrs. Adams' heart for Jo. Somehow, this soft spot was hurting just now. Her eyes lit upon the bundle Joanna had kicked into a corner. That was like Jo! She'd leave bundles all over the house if they contained anything that had been supplanted by something new. The landlady regarded this bundle with something troublesome gathering in her eyes. She got up, laboriously. Besides the flowers she put down the five hundred dollar note. Then she went over to the corner and picked up the package.

For a time she held the cumbersome parcel in her arms, staring down at it. Painstakingly she untied the cord and unwrapped it. She folded the wrapping paper, neatly, and put it down. Then she held up the coat and let it open out. This had been Joanna. The very breath of her, the zest and the pretense of her. It was imitation fur, but good enough to serve its purpose. Its lining was the swaggy, even if its lining was only mercerized cotton. Mrs. Adams had marvelled often at the uncomplaining patience with which a girl like Jo could put her hunger into a thing like this—the hunger that ten and fifteen cent lunches, and scantier breakfasts, pined. She shook her head dubiously. The trouble that had been in her eyes deepened to an inward sadness. She took the coat into her own room, laid it across the foot of her bed, tenderly, and then brought the five hundred dollar note which she folded and slipped into the handkerchief pocket in the coat lining. Then she sat down to

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### A Million Dollars

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Joanna, whose story appears on this page, was left a million. Read about what she did with it.

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Send your letter to the story editor of The Times so it will reach him on or before Nov. 10.

think, forgetting all about the flowers on the table in the "drawing room only."

UPSTAIRS Joanna was trying, also, to think. She sat down on the bed and put her chin in her hand, her elbow propped on a crossed knee. But the room imprisoned her too tightly. The walls, dotted here and there with photographs of boys, a movie star or two, and a framed lithograph of Niagara Falls, pressed in on her and suffocated her. She needed more space. With all that money in her bag, and with more—all the money in the world, more than she ever possibly could get rid of, she must get out again, out onto the street, where the crowds were, into the stores, and buy, buy, buy!

She'd never been able to buy. Joanna hadn't. Always she'd had to shop and haggle. The fellow who ran the store in the office district, where she bought filmy, sheer things of tinted crepe de chine, he'd collapse when she should walk in, call for his fanciest sets with real hand-worked lace on them, the one he hung in his show cases for the same reason Chen hung the mink in his window—when she should walk in, call for these expensive sets and pay the price without haggling him down a dollar or two. She'd go around there, now! Tomorrow, after she'd talked with John tonight, she could take an hour or two and think. Think what to do, and how.

She slipped out without seeing Mrs. Adams. At the corner she hailed a taxi and went, first, to the shop where the dainty things in crepe were. But she was disappointed. The shopkeeper didn't collapse. He was calm. As if such a lavish purchasing were not at all unusual to one who dealt in such dainties. Joanna lost interest in his wares, and in him. Suddenly this little shop, with the gaudy, but enticing window display, and the racks filled with billowy soft things, in every conceivable tint and shade, became unpretty, uninviting, she completed her purchases, though, and went out to her waiting cab.

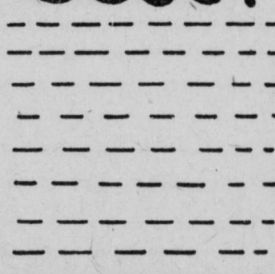
She remembered her first picnic. Strange how her thoughts were slipping backward during these hours! That picnic! Because she had been particularly good for a week, her mother had permitted her to go with the other girls, older girls, without a guardian to restrain her. And she was in such a stew when the baskets were spread out and the girls and boys broke up into parties and hunted out swings and wading places around the little lake. There was so much for her to do, so much sheer joy to garner in, that she ran about in circles unable to make up her mind where to begin. She was like that today, but it was funny that she should remember. And, queer, too, that today she had something of that same old, silly feeling that had come to her during the picnic afternoon.

She had stopped for a minute that afternoon from racing from one excitement to another, to catch her breath, and to say to herself, with childish earnestness, that she was glad she'd been—good. Today when she came out of the lingerie shop she was glad, in a way, that she had been—well, perhaps there were no medals hanging on her soul, but she was safe in wishing her mother and father were where she could go to them today. They'd give lots of room to give her an argument, of course; about skirts up to the knees, and stockings so thin that her legs showed through, and about some other things, but she could look them straight in the eyes just the same. It would be so splendid, if they, or one of them, could be here now!

This climax to her reflections, and her memories of the picnic occasion, revived the glow in the slim, eager body. There wasn't anybody to share

### Puzzle a Day

#### SCOUT



#### PANEL

This is a unique spelling test. Two words are given. The first is to be gradually changed to the last. Only one letter is replaced at a time. In each instance a new English word must be formed. The highest score will be given to the persons forming the fewest number of words.

What will the winner's answer be?

Last puzzle answer:

The price of the pearl necklace imported last year was \$8,729. This amount was divided into four parts. The smallest was \$9, the first was (600 times 9) \$5,400; the second was (335 times 9) \$3,015; the third was (35 times 9) \$315. \$5,400 plus \$3,015 plus \$315 plus \$9 equals \$8,729. Notice that the sum of the units in each part is the smallest part, 9.

with her, except John, so she decided to just let it go at that. He'd help her, too, to reason out something about the thing that happened to her. She, by herself, simply couldn't.

By late afternoon, what with some hectic scrambling into and out of her taxicab, she was ready for her descent upon the silk counter. She tried to forego that logical detail of the day, but couldn't. Courageously, she had slighted the shops and stores where girls of the counters and offices got their copies of Avenue modes. She boldly went onto the avenue itself, even into the upper section, where, to be admitted as a patron, is an award of honor which, earned, brings a marvelous deference, and where she was called "Mademoiselle." The result felt upon the silk counter as a sudden breath of some exquisite narcotic that sweeps the senses into appalling ecstasy.

Joanna had timed her visit cleverly; she appeared during the lull between the leisurely shoppers who finish early and the last-minute crush of the hurrying, belated ones. Trailing behind a spacious grande dame who was threading her way through the aisles, she suddenly stood at her old counter, only on the other side of it, her gray gloved fingers tapping sharply on the polished wood, in obvious imitation of the department buyer. With her roguery dancing out of her eyes at every face behind the counter—the faces of her workaday friends, she purred, sweetly:

"Good morning, young ladies!" At that moment Joanna's voice was the silver tinkle of ineffable inner harmonies.

Store patrons sitting at the counter, curiously to scan the newcomer. In the attitudes of the girls, who served them, they sensed a drama.

It was George, Joanna's best chum and also one of "Mrs. Adams' flappers, who was first to find her tongue:

"Look Lord! the store's dropped!"

Then there was a rush. Joanna, without ceremony, oblivious to customers with billows of varicolored silk in their hands, stepped back into the aisle and swung around for inspection.

"Miss Twenty-seven" had become the slender wraith of a hot house flower, all perfume, softness, and delicate color; beneath her mink wrap she shone vaguely gray; smart grey tailleur that fell straight from underneath her shoulders, but hugged her hips; skirt that dropped into straight lines without a touch of trimming or vagrant pleats or colors a thing that was infinitely and expensively, "Avenue" gray sheer hose of a quality that echoed into the very souls of George and the rest! Slippers, slippers that were wondrous things of some skin with the sheen of gray velvet! A ravishing little hat, grey with a splash of a scarlet at the side. George estimated the very simplicities of that hat as next door to being priceless!

A single flower, but that one a child, nestled at Joanna's waist. There was an immediate babel of voices, punctuated presently by the sharp reminder of an impatient customer that there were those with wants to be attended to.

"So you weren't fired after all?" George exclaimed, when she had summoned her wits. "Here we've been picking out the hymns for your funeral all day and you've—"

"Dropped the 'who' thing, Georgia!" she warned.

George stared at her. "Well, for the love of—!" "The girl on the other side of the counter on the outside now, interrupted, sharply:

"Yes, that's what I said! You're plugging in the wrong line! She had intended to let 'Mr. Good Morning' feast his eyes, also, but suddenly she lost the flavor of her play. She swung smartly about and, without as much as a nod, leaving an endless volley of questions completely unanswered, she elbowed her way into the street.

She had thought of going up to let Mr. Graydon see her, but he'd ask of him some more wild questions, but she forgot.

Why did everyone, even George, who, out of some very definite understandings between them should know her pretty well—why did all of them think things? What was wrong with the world, the whole world? Was there no one who really knew about a girl? Not even among other girls?

Something very profound was stirring down below the surface of the deep brown eyes of Joanna, but it was still to abstract a confusion for her to grapple with. She was snatching her breath when she reached home. The world, for some unfathomable reason, had picked her out to be good to.

treasured up against opportunity to voice them. Were effectually silenced when Joanna remarked:

"Lay off tomorrow, Georgia. Get sick or have a boil or something. I'm going to take you to some place I found today and buy you some real things—whatever you want. But you've got to wear your dresses looser, little daughter! That black satin you affect is all right, I guess, but when you get the real things that have some honest-to-goodness style in them, why you don't need to wear them so skimpy to look your best. If you don't know what I mean, stay awake tonight and think it over, Georgia. I'm giving you something straight!"

"So straight it sounds like a sermon to me," the other girl retorted. "And this isn't Sunday, either! But you've got a license all right, I suppose." It was a sententious finish, but Joanna preferred not to take it up.

Joanna heard Mrs. Adams, through half opened doors, tell other girls in the house that the drawing room has been assigned for the evening. And there was no call from Mrs. Adams. She fell again to examining herself in the bit of mirror, twisting and squirming to glimpse as much at one time as possible of her gorgeous soft and glimmering evening gown, out of which her throat lifted, round and white. She'd always had a frock without sleeves and a fairly low cut neck, but each of them, modest as she was, had made her hungry for something real—something that really would be a gown! At last! What the feel of that dress was to Joanna nobody but Joanna will ever know. She wouldn't admit it, herself, and it's the sort of thing that can be painted on a canvas or put into music, but never said in words.

She heard the rattle of the door bell. She signed to George to be quiet, and opened her door an inch or two. She heard Mrs. Adams answering an inquiry, and the voice she heard then was not John's, but the quiet, modulated tones of the man she had met at the bank—Brandon! She heard Mrs. Adams' confusion. "Why, yes, I'll tell her you're asking for her," the puzzled landlady was saying. "But I don't know whether to put you in the parlor to wait, or not. There's some one—her friend, is in there. I've just been talking to him about her. She doesn't know he's here, yet."

And then Brandon's suave voice: "I am sure we will get on famously, her—her friend, and I. We'll talk about her, too, you see, if she is very long coming down. I have brought her some flowers. Will you be good enough to hand them to her?"

Joanna heard Mrs. Adams herding him into the "drawing room only," and in her diffident, blundering way, mumbling an introduction. So John had come in. She was right when she thought she heard him. And he

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and Mrs. Adams had been talking together, all this time, in muffled whispers, so she would not know—talking of her. And now Brandon, a man who she thought, knew what was a secret for her, had come, as he had lightly threatened, and John would see him. Brandon and John! She wanted to keep John. She'd never realized before, how much.

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