

# JOANNA

Due to a mechanical error, Thursday's installment of Joanna did not appear in some copies of The Times. For the benefit of readers in whose papers the chapter did not appear yesterday, it is being reprinted today. This is yesterday's installment. Today's installment appears on the story page as usual.

Beautiful JOANNA MANNERS, a No. 100 clerk, who was given \$1,000.00 by an unknown benefactor, is listed by the name of JOANNE COLEMAN, alias source, with whom she lives at 1114 Avenue in France.

While FRANCIS BRANDON, wealthy nephew of her brother, ANDREW EGLESTON, inspects the structure being erected for Joanna's forthcoming wedding, he confesses he loves her, but she is unmoved. Yvonne had played to him in vain.

In Eggleston's library hangs a large oil painting of a girl who resembles Joanna.

LADY BETTY WEYMOUTH asks Joanna to discontinue her attentions to her brother, JOHN DORR.

When Brandon hears that Joanna and Kenilworth are going to the suburbs on the Turbine mountain, he follows. After a hold-up, Eggleston escapes.

By H. L. GATES  
CHAPTER XXXIII  
The Test

WHEN the dominated figure loomed at her table Joanna looked up, curiously. When she recognized the unmasked face she started. The relieved greeting she would have given any one close to her, who might provide intimate companionship through the rest of such an exciting adventure, trembled for an instant at her tongue. But something in Brandon's face numbed her lips.

She rose to her feet, hand up, over her breast, with a faint recoil.

The fear that she had never shaken off, crashed down upon her in a tumult—the unformed, unutterable fear that came to her when he first touched her fingers at the table across from Eggleston in the bank when she had written her first check against her mysterious money.

"You here?" she breathed. "I didn't know—have you been—?"

"I have only arrived," he said, his words suave but irritatingly ironic. "I am happy to find you—alone!"

Joanna knew, from his tone and manner, that a climax portended. A climax of some sort; something associated with the night, with her, with whatever Brandon had stood for in his relationship to her since that day in the bank.

Out on the dance floor, and at the tables near, she saw men and women looking at them curiously; at her, the Golden Girl whom everyone recognized and for whom many eyebrows had been raised when she came in with the bedraggled troop that had been ushered back to club house by the brigands. Looking at her and Brandon whom they also knew. Her chin went up a little, and she braced herself inwardly.

"I am alone only by chance," she said coolly. "I was here with Kenilworth. He has been . . ."

"I know," he broke in. "Some mountain bandits have taken charge of him and returned you here—so that every one may know that for your relaxations you choose a society and a surrounding that are to say the least, daring."

"That, of course, is what pleases you to know. Why have you come? I feel that you are here—because of me."

"I am," he said, shortly. "I am here to tell you, at last, that the play is over. As you have put your mask aside for the rest of the night, so your interesting little masquerade must be dropped. You came up here, I imagine, to color your answer. Instead, you are about to discover what you're made of."

She sank back into her chair. Her face blanched. Her brain ached with the knowledge of an animal that in some mysterious fashion it has been caught in a trap. Before he spoke again she leaped, a short, unmusical laugh, as if she were amused by the foolishness of her feeling, the utterly ridiculousness about it.

The laugh died abruptly and she watched the man who still stood looking down at her unsmiling, ungracious, inconsiderate.

"I have a great deal to say to you," Brandon declared. He paused a moment and then continued:

"There is a room—a small upper room, just off the balcony. If you do not object, may we talk—in that room?"

She got to her feet silently and, when he had bowed his acknowledgment of her assent, walked with him to the circular stairway that led to the mezzanine. At the door of the private banquet room he stood aside that she might enter ahead of him. A waiter met him at the door.

"We shall not be served," Brandon said to the man, "but, as I shall leave the door open, perhaps you will stand near to discourage loitering on the balcony."

Joanna faced him when he stepped across the threshold.

"Don't spend your wits in skirmishing," she challenged him. "What is it?"

He ignored her challenge for a moment while he lighted a cigarette, first offering her his platinum case. When he had evened his light to his satisfaction he went to the fireplace and dropped the burnt match into it. For another moment he puffed calmly. Then he turned to face the girl, who leaned back against the table in the center of the room.

"Would you mind," he asked, softly, deliberately, "telling me what is your general impression of me? Not an analysis of my character, please but an expression of the quality of your regard for me?"

She replied without hesitation. "I have always distrusted you, but I have never been convinced that I was justified. If I had feared you, I'd have liked you. As it is I am afraid I despise you, at times, because I know you are dishonest—dishonest with me, and with Yvonne who loves you. Is that the answer you want?"

"Not exactly, but it will serve. Suppose I should ask you to become my wife?"

You used to tell me that you might do that some day. I've always had an answer ready. I'd never marry you because I could never love you. If I could love you I wouldn't marry you because, by all the laws of decency, you belong to Yvonne whom you allowed to love you before you decided to laugh at her for her pretension that she would be worthy of you."

He examined his cigarette flame, and then drew in its smoke.

"That establishes our position toward each other," he observed, and was silent for another interval. "But

the situation is that you are going to marry me, never-the-less, because you will have to."

She swayed. Her slender white hand went to her throat again. She knew he was not talking idly. She had gone through one sort of battle—with Kenilworth, now, she sensed, she was at the beginning of another, and in some unsuspected way, a more desperate one. She waited for him to go on.

He threw the cigarette into the fireplace and faced her across the table.

"I've decided to understand the import of what I am about to say," he breathed. "You have wondered where your money came from; you have wondered why it was given you; I am about to solve for you, at least a portion of your mysteries."

"I control the source of your money, I guard its secret and its reason and its purpose. I am the one to whom you have made your accounting, the accounting you haven't known you were making in every whim, in every spendthrift mood, in every choice of the paths you have elected to follow!"

"Your accounting has been fully made. It is totalled up by me. I give you now, the results. I demand that you marry me."

"I do not say that I love you, for I do not."

"I do not say, even that I respect you, for I despise you, as you have professed to despise me. I shudder before all that you stand for; the abortive pretenses of you, the sham of you, the deceit and cheapness of you!"

"Yet I am saying to you that I want you to be my wife."

JOANNA had stood as if transfixed. Her eyes widened. The brown deepened to black. The scarlet of her lips became ashen.

Her hands were hot with the scalding riot of her blood. Through her mind ran the one phrase: "I am the one!" And in its wake all those other sentences, sharp and bitter, that emerged from his lips like the crashing of cannon on a battlefield, pierced her with the precision of a deadly fusillade. She collapsed into a chair and threw her hands before her eyes as if to shut out a vision.

But Brandon, moving over to her, went on cruelly, relentlessly:

"Of your enormous gift of money you have made a farce. You have used it to enhance—not the world, not society, but the lure, the sense appeal, the woman of you. You have created nothing with your gift, but love; the kind of love that thrills but is nothing of nobility. You have shown what the kind of girl you represent shall surely become if given rein."

"But the farce is over, as I said downstairs. The mystery of your money is dispelled—or you may count it as being dispelled. The other mystery, which must exist for a little while, is that despite the frailty of you, I want you to marry me."

"And if you do not, there will be no more money. All that you have will be taken from you—even the night! Whatever is yours now—gained by fraud must be surrendered. You will be—Miss Twenty-Seven of the silks again, if your old girl is still open to you!"

"Are you, by any chance, still of the mind not to be my wife?"

The crumpled figure in the chair straightened a little. He tried to rise but sank down again. His hands fluttered a bit. The girl looked up, at last.

"But I couldn't marry you! It could never be. I don't love you, I said. You wouldn't want me—without! You are playing with me."

"Not playing, very assuredly. And, final, and definite," he said, "as I said, that is the new mystery for you to be baffled by. As my wife you shall keep your money; more money will be given you perhaps, and you shall, of course, share mine."

Now she gathered strength to stand. She made a little move as if to go up to him, but faltered. Her lips moved as if she were praying for words—words that would save her money, save her dreams, save beauty and luxury and pearls and diamonds and priceless furs—save them and, at the same time, save herself. But whatever her prayers, she heard no echoes of an answer. She turned to go out the door. Brandon, the torturing smile playing, now, about his lips, watched her silently, coolly, unmoved.

At the door she hesitated, stood for a minute leaning against the easement looking down into the ribald scene on the dance floor that blurred into a whirling black pool with monsters swimming on the surface.

SUDDENLY the little body stiffened, a bit of the brown came back into the eyes. Something of the scarlet returned to the quivering lips. She swung around slowly and walked firmly back into the room until she stood close to Brandon that her body was almost against his.

"I want to keep my money, Francis," she said, her voice quavering, but soft and ineffably pleading; "I couldn't do without it now. But I am very much in love with someone else. Very much in love with Francis. And it's the kind of love

you would never understand. I don't understand it myself. Nor does he—the man, I mean, that I'm in love with. You'll be kind to me, won't you? You'll tell me why the money was given me? You'll tell me what I've done that's wrong, so that I shall not do it again? I'll be anything you say, if I may have my money, the money that has made life so beautiful—with money and my love!"

"Anything I say?"

Before his sudden thrusting back at her those pleading words, she shrank as if he had struck her. Dazed again, she heard him say:

"You may have your love, my dear girl. I would not interfere with that. It's you I want, for reasons and purposes of my own: not your love. I know the one you mean; I know the man to whom you've given the love that neither you nor he understands. Give it. Let him have it. Take his in return if you can win it. All of that shall be the bargain—a bargain of today!"

"The morals of today, you know, and the conventions, are not what they were in the yesterday. You are not the girl of yesterday, nor your kind of love the sacrament that it used to be."

"I am asking you to be my wife—only. To give me yourself only. You may give your love where you want it to be received and take whatever pleases you in exchange. Surely you, who have played the game of lure, will not shrink before the flame that your very essence kindles!"

Deep colors came and went across her face. She closed her eyes and then opened them slowly, to quickly shut them. For a moment she seemed about to collapse again, but instantly she recovered herself. When she held her eyes open there was fire in them.

"You mean," she said, "that I may marry you, but love some one else and invite him to love me? That if I do that it will be—quite all right, with you, by husband? And that if I do all this, why, I may keep my money?"

"Just that!" he answered shortly. "Your money, and your love! When she did not speak, at once, he went on with a merciless sneer:

"The man you are thinking of will not hesitate, I imagine, to take full advantage of such an arrangement. He has shown himself to be amenable to any kind of conditions. While we are here, tonight, he is kneeling before satin slippers that were never worn by your feet. You have not done with him as you would like to have done only because he was afraid to bind himself to you. Free him from that fear, and offer him another way; and I fancy, he will not be so elusive. Perhaps I might add that by giving me yourself, as my wife, mind you, you will not only retain your money, but you will solve the problem of retaining—him!"

She stared into his eyes for a long time, then dropped into the chair. "Would you mind," she asked, "ordering me something to drink? My throat is parched."

Then she buried her head in her arms.

Without a word Brandon went to the door and signaled the waiter, who had remained on the balcony in the vicinity of the door. The man hurried away. Brandon returned to the chair and stood by the side of the limp form of the girl. He touched her body relentlessly. She put up her hand in mute appeal for him to be silent. He hesitated, and then, with a shrug of his shoulders, went to the fireplace.

When the waiter brought in the champagne, with glasses arranged on the tray, Brandon signed him to deposit it on the table, and waved him out of the room. Joanna stirred

and lifted herself, by bracing against the table, to her feet.

When she looked across at Brandon the quizzical smile that so many people had never understood hovered about her lips.

Brandon went at once to the table and reached for the champagne to open it.

Then he sank, noiselessly, to the floor.

Joanna stood over him and watched the crimson rickle from his forehead, the broken, jagged neck of the champagne bottle still clutched in the deadly grip of her hand.

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(To Be Continued)

## BABIES SAVED AS HOME BURNS

(Continued From Page 1)

charge of the orphanage, sponsored by the Catholic Community center.

Scores of Beech Grove citizens were heroes in the rescue of the babies.

The flames were discovered about 8 p. m. by August Straub, who was driving by in his auto. He turned in the alarm. Firemen and police sped to the rescue, but the children had all been removed when they arrived.

Misses Martha J. O'Connor and Mary Helen Doyle, two nurses on duty, hastily wrapped the children in blankets, clothing and handed them to the men who came in to carry the children to safety.

The babies screamed at the sight of strange men and nurses had difficulty in soothing them.

The children were first carried to the home of Mrs. Bailey.

She was one of the first to see the flames and yelled:

"We must get those babies out!"

The orphanage is a home for foundling children.

Girls Seek Babies

Father Peter Killian, pastor of Holy Name Church, nearby, said two girls, both in tears, came up to him during the fire and asked him if the babies had been turned.

"Our babies are in there," they said.

Mother of the youngest child, two weeks old, is still in St. Francis Hospital.

Loss was estimated at \$12,000.

After the children were rescued, a large part of the furnishings were saved and carried to the Holy Name parochial school, several blocks away.

John Butler, 1612 Oxford St., fireman, said the fire started from sparks on the roof. He assisted the nurses in getting the children ready for their rescue.

Firemen Handicapped

The fire started upstairs. Firemen were handicapped in battling the flames, due to lack of water.

Sister Superior at St. Francis Hospital was told over the telephone that the orphanage was on fire, and with Peter Fleming, hospital en-

## Commercial Art Service of the Highest Quality

(Continued From Page 1)

gineer, left for the scene, taking blankets and clothing.

The orphanage formerly was the home of Captain Dawson, a Civil War veteran, and was purchased by Father Killian and Father Morris O'Connor four years ago and remodeled.

Children up to 3 years of age are kept there.

The Beech Grove fire department was the first on the scene and under direction of C. O. Driskell, assistant chief, cooperated with Indianapolis firemen.

In the excitement, Butler, the orphanage fireman, lost his false teeth. He had removed them preparatory to going to bed. He said he was in the engine room when he heard one of the nurses cry fire. He grabbed the fire extinguisher, and, with another man, went to the roof in an endeavor to put out the fire. The hose was too short and he returned to assist in the rescue of the children, forgetting all about his teeth until too late.

Seen By Neighbor

Mrs. John T. Overman, R. R. 5, Box 350, was one of the first to discover the fire. She saw the reflection in the windows and told her husband.

"I believe there is a fire," she told him.

"You're always hatching up a fire," he replied. Then he went to the window. "My God, I believe you're right. There is a fire."

They then ran over to the orphanage and assisted in the rescue.

Carol Stevenson, 16, living on Wade St., said one little boy frightened, ran through the corridors and he had to chase him to catch him.

The children, while awaiting rescue, screamed so loudly that one of the nurses went to a store and bought horehound candy to keep them quiet. One little girl of 3, how-

ever, sat up in her bed calmly and waited to be carried out.

Mrs. Bailey, to whose home the children were first taken, was near collapse today as a result of her experiences. Her home, too, was littered with baby beds, cribs, blankets and clothing.

Carried Three

When she saw the flames she ran across and rescued one baby and brought it back. Then made a second trip, carrying three. She carried them head down and every way, she said. And by that time, everyone was carrying children into her home.

One baby, six weeks old, slept calmly through the entire rescue.

Most of our smaller birds fly at the rate of 25 miles an hour.

## Don't Miss The Telegraph Out Tomorrow

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