

# SERIAL STORY

## The Real Agatha



By Edith Huntington Mason

Pictures by Well Watters Frey Campbell Aleishie Wilson

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### SYNOPSIS.

Lord Wilfred Vincent and Archibald Terhune are introduced at the opening of the story in England, the latter relating the tale. The pair, on an outing miss their train and seeking recreation meet "the Honorable Agatha Wychkoff," whose hand is much sought after, because of her wealth. Five other Agathas Wychkoffs are introduced. The deceased stepfather, in an eccentric moment, made his will so that the real Agatha, heiress to his fortune and the castle at Nye, England, might wed her affinity. Thus Mrs. Armistead, chaperon, was in duty bound to keep the real Agatha's identity unknown. An attempt by Terhune to gather a clue from the chaperon fails. Terhune finds old books containing picture of a former Baroness Wychkoff, which is exactly like Agatha Sixth, whom he is courting. Agatha Fifth confesses her love for Vincent and also that she is the real heiress. He spurns her proposal. Many clues to identity of the real Agatha prove fruitless. Agatha Fifth later confesses she is not the heiress. More apparently uninteresting clues materialize.

### CHAPTER V.—Continued.

The next morning when she came down to breakfast I inquired with great concern as to the effects of the accident of the day previous. She replied most kindly that she felt very nearly as well as ever and thanked me earnestly for my share in her rescue. In fact, her gratitude was so profuse as to make me uncomfortable, and I protested volubly that what I had done was nothing. Nevertheless, from that day on Agatha Second clung to me in a manner that was almost touching. Vincent, to my surprise, instead of taking advantage of his part as hero, seemed rather anxious to avoid the girl, whereas, before our mutual discovery, he had seemed to be quite taken with her. Although his conduct was a puzzle to me, yet I could only rejoice that it was so, for it left the field absolutely free to me, and I felt as each day passed that now, indeed, I was hotter on the trail of that twenty millions than I had yet been.

It was the first Sunday after the accident and the fourth of our stay. We had breakfasted at eight and were sitting around aimlessly waiting until it was time to go to church.

When it was finally time to get ready my head ached from the sun, for I had been sitting without my hat, and I decided that I would not go that morning, though there was a flattering chorus of protests when I made this announcement.

"I shall go," said Vincent, positively, just as if anyone had disputed it. "I always go, don't I, Miss Marsh?" appealing to the secretary, who was present, but who, of course, had been rather left out of the conversation.

"Yes," she answered, smiling at him faintly. "You always do—ever since we've known you, that is. You're a saint, Lord Wilferd." But she laughed as she said it, and Vincent, for no reason at all, looked pleased.

Then the girls all went into the house to change their frocks, and Vincent, too, had to go and get himself rigged out in all the swiftness of his Bond street afternoon things.

"Are you going to ride or walk?" I asked him as he came downstairs ahead of the young ladies.

"Walk," he said. "It's such a ripping day the girls thought they'd like it. The phaeton is coming for us after church. What's the matter with you? We shall miss you."

"Oh, just a bit off my feed this morning. But, Vincent, my boy, do you realize that you're going to church all alone by yourself with six girls, the prettiest in England?"

"Seven," corrected Vincent, unmoved. "The secretary is going with us this morning."

I shook my head at him admiringly. "You're a wonderful fellow," I told him; "I couldn't manage seven of them at once to save my skin. It keeps me busy enough when I take 'em one at a time."

At this moment the girls trooped downstairs. They had their prettiest gowns on and were fully aware of the admiration in the eyes of Vincent and myself. And that admiration was perfectly excusable, for the six Agathas were looking unusually lovely in their flowered frocks, big white hats, and the dainty parasols to match the wide sashes, and I should have been hard put to it to say which was the handsomest. But as they filed out of the big door I saw Vincent look longest at the secretary, who walked a little behind the others, her plain, dark blue silk gown and little rough straw hat with the pink roses being a conspicuous contrast to the frills and furbelows of the six Agathas. I thought I had never seen her look so well, and she passed us men without so much as glancing in our direction though Vin-

cent's gaze, I thought, was a trifle rude.

They had been gone some 15 minutes when it occurred to me that it might do my head good to go out and get some fresh air. Besides which I had begun to regret that I had permitted Vincent to go to church the only esquire of such a galaxy of beauty. So I put on my hat and strolled out over the lawn and down the long drive, and before I knew it I had reached the bottom of the hilly road and had set out over the fields. The church party had gone by the way of the path over the fields, for that was a shorter route than the main road.

As I walked quickly along the well-beaten path between the thickets I stopped suddenly and stooped to pick up a small dust-covered object which proved to be a prayer book. "One of those careless girls has dropped it," I said to myself, for they had all carried them. Opening it to find the owner's name, I was much excited to read on the flyleaf this inscription: "To my daughter Agatha, from her father, Fletcher Boyd," and the date, 1900. It was, then, a gift which Fletcher Boyd had made to his daughter only two years before his death.

I was wild with excitement in a minute. I would keep the book, and some time when all the girls were gathered together I would announce that I had it in my possession and see if one of them did not betray fate by asking me for it. But Fate decreed that I should make my test of the prayer book more speedily, for I spied in the distance the white figure of a girl hastening back. The path was dusty and the sun was shining right in her face, so I trusted she had not seen me, and, putting the little volume down just where I had found it, I jumped behind the bushes. The owner of the book was looking for her property. On she came, running slowly and glancing eagerly from side to side of the pathway. As she came opposite me she stopped and snatched up the book, and when she had run back again the conviction that the Honorable Agatha was no other than Agatha Fourth was forced in upon me.

So roused was I by this event that I turned my steps homeward at once. Suspicion had now fallen on every one of the six Agathas, but this—this was



The Owner of the Book Was Looking for the Property.

the most convincing of proofs! That night I could hardly wait for the end of the evening, so that I could drag Vincent into my room and disclose to him my final and greatest discovery. It was so full of excitement over it, besides feeling a certain pride in my wit and sagacity which had led to the discovery of so many important clues, that I was rather disappointed when Vincent received my disclosure with indifference.

"At it again, Arch," he said, rather gloomily, as he sat cross-legged before my fire in extreme deshabille, and smoking his vile pipe. "What is the use? I should think you'd get tired of pursuing the elusive gold. I admire your patience, my boy, but I don't take any more stock in this 'clew' than I did in your others. When you think that you have now fastened suspicion upon each one of the six fair ladies who have been christened Agatha I marvel at the sanguine temperament which permits you to place so much importance on this last find of yours." He stopped, and I answered him rather sarcastically, as I didn't like the gentle ridicule of his tone or his lack of enthusiasm.

"It seems to me," I said, "that considering how you've spent your time, my dear boy, you are a very poor person to look down upon my efforts to turn this adventure of ours to some account. The fact that I have kept my eyes open and used those faculties of penetration and observation of which I am the natural possessor to discover a piece of information which might prove of great value, not only to myself, but also to you—this fact, I say, Vincent, ought hardly to bring upon you your derision as well as your lack of sympathy." I don't mind admitting that I really felt hurt, and Vincent saw that I did.

He took his pipe out of his mouth and looked at me with those big, truthful eyes of his so penitently that I smiled inwardly; then he gathered up his long limbs from my hearthrug and came and encooned himself at my feet as I sat in my easy chair.

"Well there, then," he said, patting my hand as if I'd been an old woman or a small child. "Poor old Arch! Did I make it cross? Well, it was a shame!" And he smiled at me with such a mixture of contrition and fun that I was obliged after a short struggle to laugh unconstrainedly.

"Well, I suppose you will begin op-

erations according to your latest clew to-morrow?" he laughed at me.

I did not answer him, and silence fell upon us. I was pondering over the problem and did not look at Vincent for a long while, but when I did I saw that his face wore a troubled, hopeless look, and that his whole attitude indicated profound dejection. "Vincent," I said, leaning over him, "what's the trouble?" I had been noticing of late that he had been subjected to fits of melancholy altogether out of keeping with his character, and I had come to the conclusion that he had some trouble on his mind. I wanted to know what it was, so that I could help him. When I spoke he turned his head slowly and looked at me a moment solemnly, then smiled faintly, the very ghost of that splendid, boyish smile of his, so that it went to my heart.

"Oh, Arch," he burst out, "everything's wrong! But it's not my fault; how could I help loving her?"

I was amazed. What was the boy talking about, and who was it that he loved?

"Yes, sir," he went on; "I met her four miles from town carrying an old beggar-woman's bundle because the poor old thing had hurt her foot. And when I drew up the dogcart and asked her to get in and take the bundle too, she shook her head, and, by Jove, she wouldn't get in till I let the old beggar-woman get in, too!" Vincent turned to me positively radiant. "Ah, Terhune!" he cried, "you don't know what it is. I love her so!"

And as he stood there, his face transfused, I grasped in a moment the meaning of the whole thing and the understanding struck like a blow at my heart and I knew how dear the welfare of this boy was to me. Somehow, Vincent represents to me the things I might have been, and am not, the things I might have won, and have lost; he represents the first flush of my own youth. And now that I had wasted those opportunities to lead the selfish existence of the average bachelor, I found a certain joy in again experiencing those first throbs of living that had been mine, in the person and life of young Vincent.

As he stood before me, glowing with feeling, I felt that it was for me to wipe that look from his face, cruel as it seemed, and my anger at the woman who had so deceived the boy by withholding from him the knowledge that she was married helped me to do the deed.

"Vincent," I said, slowly, "do you mean—I gather from your ravings that you honestly—er—care for this person?" I had risen to my feet, and as I spoke Vincent's whole expression changed in a flash.

"Your inference is perfectly correct," he said. His face went white and there was war in his tone, for he perceived that I meant trouble.

The necessity of saving the boy I loved from the consequences of his own folly took possession of me, and I was full of rage at Vincent and at that conscienceless woman in the gray gown who had entrapped him.

"You fool," I said, putting my face close to his square, cleft chin, "why do you throw away your chance in life like that? What do you want to let yourself get entangled with an adventuress for? Don't you know the woman's married? She confessed to having one husband; she may have a dozen, for all I know!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### GUARD FOR GEN. WASHINGTON.

Soldiers So Honored Chose for Their Motto "Conquer or Die."

By general order 11 dated at Valley Forge, March 17, 1778, 100 men were selected from the army to be annexed to the guard of the commander-in-chief. The guard then existing numbered 80 Virginians and for that reason it was ordered that the new members be taken from the troops of other states. It was further prescribed that the men must be Americans born, 20 to 30 years, five feet eight to five feet ten, of "robust constitution; well limbed and men of established characters for sobriety and fidelity." The official designation of this force was the commander-in-chief's guard, but it was commonly known as the life guard and Washington's body guard. Its first commandant was Capt. Caleb Gibbs of Rhode Island. He was in turn succeeded by William Colfax of New Jersey, who had been made lieutenant of the corps when it was first brought into being. The motto of the life guard was "Conquer or Die." Capt. Colfax eventually attained the rank of general. His grandson was Schuyler Colfax.

### WHEN "CUB" SHOWED UP LATE.

His Excuse Was One That Few of the Tribe Could Make.

The average newspaper reporter is a young man generally not possessed of too much money and who considers himself lucky if he is able to square accounts from week to week. But there is one newspaper reporter in New York who does not have to bother about financial problems. He rides down to the office of his paper every day in his own automobile. The young man is the son of a wealthy iron manufacturer. He is a reporter of the common or garden variety on an afternoon newspaper and so far has managed to hold on to his job.

He showed up so late at his office the other morning that his city editor inquired, somewhat sarcastically, whether he thought he was working on a morning newspaper. The cub tapped his highly polished tan shoes with his slender cane, flected a bit of dust from his clothes and struck the city editor dumb by replying: "Well, you see, my man failed to wake me up 92 time."

### Night Sweats & Cough.

E. W. Walton, Condr. S. P. Ry., 717 Van Ness St., San Antonio, Tex., writes: "During the summer and fall of 1902, my annoyance from catarrh reached that stage where it was actual misery and developed alarming symptoms, such as a very deep-seated cough, night sweats, and pains in the head and chest. I experimented with several so-called remedies before I finally decided to take a thorough course of Peruna."

"Two of my friends had gone so far as to inform me that the thing for me to do was to resign my position and seek a higher, more congenial climate. Everyone thought I had consumption and I was not expected to live very long."

"Having procured some Peruna, I decided to give it a thorough test and applied myself assiduously to the task of taking it, as per instructions, in the meantime."

"The effects were soon apparent, all alarming symptoms disappeared and my general health became fully as good as it had ever been in my life."

"I have resorted to the use of Peruna on two or three occasions since that time to cure myself of bad colds."

### Marine Insurance.

Marine insurance is the oldest kind of modern insurance. Its principles were first employed in the fourteenth century by the merchants of Barcelona, in Spain, when that city was the capital of the kingdom of Catalonia and when its hardy mariners were second to none in the world. About the same time, and also at Barcelona, the famous code of maritime laws known as the "consulado del mar" was promulgated, which is the foundation of the present shipping laws of every country.

### It Came Off.

The fair bather was in the greatest danger when the heroic rescuer seized her by the hair. It came off. Puffs and coils and waves and rats it grewed the shuddering sea.

For a moment the rescuer was dazed.

Then he grasped the tiny knob of real hair that remained on the lady's head and drew her into shallow water.

Did she thank him for saving her life?

She didn't.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Sheer white goods, in fact, any fine wash goods when new, owe much of their attractiveness to the way they are laundered, this being done in a manner to enhance their textile beauty. Home laundering would be equally satisfactory if proper attention was given to starching, the first essential being good Starch, which has sufficient strength to stiffen, without thickening the goods. Try Defiance Starch and you will be pleasantly surprised at the improved appearance of your work.

### Shower of Sulphur.

Charolles, a small town 30 miles from Macon, in France, has recently been visited by a shower of sulphur. The roofs, gardens, fields, vineyards, rivers and ponds were covered with a yellow dust, and for some time the peasants in the fields were troubled by a sulphurous biting odor which made breathing difficult.

### DISTEMPER

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### The Sarcastic One.

"Air cut, sir?"  
"No, I want it done up in a bun and fastened with a pink ribbon."—The Tatler.

### One of the Essentials

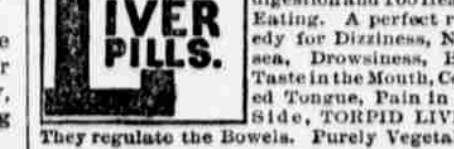
of the happy homes of to-day is a vast fund of information as to the best methods of promoting health and happiness and right living and knowledge of the world's best products.

Products of actual excellence and reasonable claims truthfully presented and which have attained to world-wide acceptance through the approval of the Well-Informed of the World; not of individuals only, but of the many who have the happy faculty of selecting and obtaining the best the world affords.

One of the products of that class, of known component parts, an Ethical remedy, approved by physicians and commended by the Well-Informed of the World as a valuable and wholesome family laxative is the well-known Syrup of Figs and Elixir of Senna. To get its beneficial effects always buy the genuine, manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Co., only, and for sale by all leading druggists.

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Positively cured by these little Pills. They also relieve Distress from Dyspepsia, Indigestion and Too Hearty Eating. A perfect remedy for Dizziness, Nausea, Headaches, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Coated Tongue, Pain in the Side, TORPID LIVER. They regulate the Bowels. Purely Vegetable. SMALL PILL. SMALL DOSE. SMALL PRICE.



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Brewer's Refuse Substitutes.

### A Timely Air.

During one of the political tours of Mr. Cleveland, in which he was accompanied by Secretary Olney, he arrived during a severe storm at a town in which he was to speak. As he entered the carriage with his friends and was driven from the station the rain changed to hail, and immense stones battered and rattled against the vehicle. A brass band, rather demoralized by the storm, stuck bravely to its post and played.

"That is the most realistic music I have ever heard," remarked the president.

"What are they playing?" asked the secretary of state.

"Hail to the Chief—with real hail!" rejoined Mr. Cleveland.

Laundry work at home would be much more satisfactory if the right Starch were used. In order to get the desired stiffness, it is usually necessary to use so much starch that the beauty and fineness of the fabric is hidden behind a paste of varying thickness, which not only destroys the appearance, but also affects the wearing quality of the goods. This trouble can be entirely overcome by using Defiance Starch, as it can be applied much more thinly because of its greater strength than other makes.

### The Real Test.

"Poor fellow, he died in poverty," said a man of a person lately deceased.

"That isn't anything," exclaimed a seedy bystander. "Dying in poverty is no hardship; it's living in poverty that puts the thumbcrews on a fellow."

### Good for Sore Eyes.

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Lewis' Single Binder straight 5c cigar is good quality all the time. Your dealer or Lewis' Factory, Peoria, Ill.

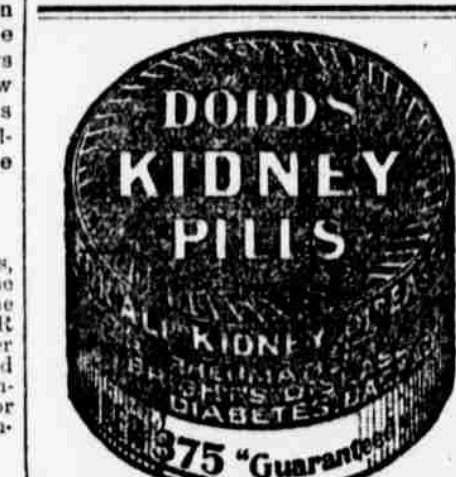
Try to love your neighbor as yourself, but if you can't, don't.

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Defiance Starch Company, Omaha, Neb.



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Mrs. S. A. Williams, of Gardiner, Maine, writes:

"I was a great sufferer from female troubles, and Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound restored me to health in three months, after my physician declared that an operation was absolutely necessary."

Mrs. Alvina Sperling, of 154 Cleybourne Ave., Chicago, Ill., writes:

"I suffered from female troubles, a tumor and much inflammation. Two of the best doctors in Chicago decided that an operation was necessary to save my life. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound entirely cured me without an operation."

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