

The WOMAN

A Novel by
Albert Payson Terhune

Founded on
William C. de Mille's Play
Illustrated with Photos from the Play
and Drawings by V. L. Barnes

SYNOPSIS.

Congressman Standish and the woman, believing themselves in love, spend a trial week as man and wife in a hotel in northern New York under assumed names. The woman awakens to the fact that she does not love Standish and calls their engagement off. Standish, protesting undying devotion, Wanda Kelly, telephone girl at the Hotel Kawick, Washington, is loved by Tom Blake, son of the political boss of the house. He proposes marriage and is refused. She gives as one of her reasons her determination to get revenge on Jim Blake for ruining her father, Congressman Frank E. Kelly. Congressman Standish, turned insurgent, is fighting the Mullins bill, a measure for the interests of the railroad. The machine is seeking means to discredit Standish in the hope of pushing the bill through. Robertson, son-in-law of Jim Blake, and the latter's candidate for speaker of the house, tries to win Standish over, and telling threats to dislodge him into his past. Jim Blake finds out about the episode of five years back at the northern New York hotel. He secures all the facts except the name of the woman and proposes to use the story as a club to force Standish to allow the Mullins bill to pass. Jim Blake lays a trap to secure the name of the woman. He tells Miss Kelly that he is going to have a talk with Standish, and that at its conclusion the letter will call up a number on the telephone to warn the woman. He offers Miss Kelly \$100 for that number. At the conclusion of the interview with Blake, Standish gets a New York wire and calls Plaza 101. A few minutes later Robertson tells Miss Kelly to call Plaza 101 and get his wife or one of the servants on the phone. Miss Kelly refuses to give Jim Blake the number called by Standish. Blake has a story of the Standish episode prepared ready to send out as soon as the woman's name is learned. Blake's daughter Grace arrives with her husband, Governor Robertson. Miss Kelly calls on Grace to warn her that her good name is threatened by impending exposure of Standish and is implored for her aid. Grace appeals to Standish to give up the fight in order to protect her name. He refuses. Grace sends for Miss Kelly's assistance. Wanda declares she will never betray the woman. The machine attempts again to force Standish out of the fight without success. He calls up the Associated Press to cut off the publication of the story, but is out of communication is restored too late to get the story into the morning papers. Robertson attempts to force Miss Kelly to reveal the woman's name. She is threatened with imprisonment for cutting off Blake's conversation with the Associated Press because of her refusal to give the number called by Standish. Grace admits that she knows the name of the woman and her husband's name and she tells it.

CHAPTER XXI.

Jim Blake, Loser.

And so for an instant they stood. It was an odd tableau: Grace, helpless, shaking, dumb; Wanda, her arms clasped protectively about the unheeding woman, who did not so much as realize their presence nor feel the warm sympathy of their embrace; Mark, his triumph tinged with impatience at his wife's hesitation; Blake, still gripping the telephone and glowing in angry surprise at the lawyer; Van Dyke grim, alert, master of the moment, his lean face set in lines of unwonted sadness.

And it was Van Dyke who broke the brief silence. His precise dry voice was tinged by a note of something almost solemn as he addressed Robertson.

"Mark," he said, "Miss Kelly has told us that she promised the woman not to tell. When did she make that promise?"

"What does that matter now?" snapped Mark.

"The never heard of the affair until early this evening. So it must be since then that she talked with the woman about it. Miss Kelly has been on duty downstairs ever since six o'clock. She has not left this hotel. How could she have communicated with the woman?"

"By telephone. If—"

"I think not," denied Van Dyke, the cold sorrow in his voice now apparent to every one. "The woman is here in this house."

"So much the better!" declared Blake, again picking up the telephone. Van Dyke, in gloomy wonder, turned on his chief.

"You have often boasted, Jim," said he, "that you owe your success to the fact you see things just a second sooner than other people. Don't you understand—yet?"

"No," growled Blake, "I don't. Out with it, man! What are you trying to get at? Don't beat about the bush. You're wasting time that we haven't got."

Van Dyke faced Robertson; his lean face working.

"Mark," he said, tapping the duplicate telephone list, "your house in New York is charged here with two calls. We thought it was a mistake."

A wordless gurgle from Jim Blake interrupted him. The telephone was set down by a hand that shook as though from palsy. For a single instant the heavily-lidded eyes were wholly, starkly unvelled in a glare of unbelieved horror. Then they turned steadily upon Grace who bowed her head in a spasm of hysterical uncheckered weeping before the panic query in their gaze.

Wanda Kelly wound her arms tight-

er about the heavy body. But Grace neither felt the contact nor heard the whisper of eager futile comforting. Blake stared open-mouthed, his face greenish and flabby, the stern jaw loose, the keen eyes bulging. Mark Robinson was still frowning perplexed at Van Dyke.

"Don't you understand?" pleaded the latter.

"No, I don't," returned Mark. "What have the two phone calls to my home got to do with—?"

"Suppose the second call were not a mistake?" hesitated Van Dyke.

Robinson's face went purple. The big veins near his temples swelled grotesquely. He took an involuntary step toward Van Dyke. The latter raised a protesting hand.

"Mark," he said, dithering not at all before the bloodshot fury in the husband's little eyes, "we are here as lawyers, making an investigation. At last we have struck the right trail. I am sorry it leads where it does. I—"

He got no further. At a stride Robertson was beside his wife.

"You hear what this man insinuates?" he cried thickly. "I don't ask you to foul your lips by denying it. I'll attend to him later. But give me the right to do that by telling the woman's name at once."

"Grace!" croaked Blake, his throat galled with a horror that he would not confess, "don't you hear what they're saying, girl?"

In his harsh eagerness, Mark forcibly lifted his wife's bent head and forced her eyes to meet his.

"What's the matter?" he demanded sharply. "Why don't you speak? Tell Van Dyke he lies. Tell him he lies, I say! Oh!"

His fierce appeal broke off in a cry of pain. He had at last raised her face and had read it. For the briefest moment he stood stupefied, expressionless.

"Why, Grace!" expostulated Blake, in pitiful bravado. "You're crazy! You don't know what you're implying—what you're letting them think. I won't believe it. Not a word of it. It's a trick to—to—"

She caught his shaking hand and murmured a broken incoherent syllable or two amid the passion of her sobs.

"Almighty!" Blake's legs gave way and he sprawled inert into a chair, his head on his breast. He had all at once grown old—very, very old. Meantime, Robertson had forced his own dazed brain back into a semblance of its former strong control.

"Van Dyke," he said as calmly as if he were giving a routine order, "you

Gathered Her Into His Arms as Though She Were a Baby.

will have every trace of this story destroyed tonight. It must never get beyond this room. I can count on you."

"Certainly," agreed Van Dyke with equal coolness.

There was no hint in his voice or in his manner that Mark's command entailed the defeat of a bill, the collapse of millions of dollars worth of stocks, a probably panic on Wall Street and the money interests' total if temporary loss of power in Congress. For the moment, the great corporation lawyer chanced to be also a man.

"I'd dickered with fellows before and I made up my mind to use a little diplomacy."

"See here, friend," I said, "we are strangers here and we have only a modest amount of money to get through on. We want to be fair; you've served us well and we appreciate what you've done for us, but don't you think now—as between man and man—that \$15 is just a little steep? Come, now, let's be fair."

The man looked from Ed to me, as if puzzled to understand what I was driving at, and then took off his hat and scratched his head, unmindful of the rain.

"I guess you musta mistook me," he said slowly. "I said 15 cents, but if it's too much—"

"I couldn't get my dollar out quick enough, and when I put it in his hand and thanked him, he protested against the munificence of the compensation, and even followed after us, urging that we take some of it back."

An old coquette has all the defects of a young one, and none of her charms.—Antoine Dupuy.

On his way from the room, Van Dyke paused beside Blake's chair.

"Jim," he said hesitatingly, "I'm going over to the capitol. Shall I tell Mullins to let the bill come to a vote?"

"Yes," answered Blake, without stirring or so much as looking up.

"Yes," he said again, and his voice was dead. "Yes—I'm—I'm licked."

As Van Dyke opened the door, Wanda made as though to follow him.

"If you don't need me any further, Mr. Blake," she said gently, "I'll go."

Blake lifted a palsied hand in negation.

"In there," he muttered, pointing toward the door that led to the inner rooms. "I must speak to you—afterward."

When the old man raised his eyes, Mark and Grace alone were left in the room with him. Robertson was standing motionless, his face ashen, his hands clenched in his fists, as he fought weakly for self-control. Blake crossed over to her. She rose at his approach.

"Daughter," said Blake, almost timidly, "they've all gone. None of them will tell. But there's one thing we've got to know. I'm with you, no matter what you've done. But—but—tell me—that—that this was all over and—done with—before you married Mark!"

"Father!"

The woman faced him in dry-eyed horror. Every trace of weeping was seared away by the flame of sudden indignation. And, at the sight, Jim Blake gave a great wordless cry and gathered her into his arms as though she were a baby.

"Oh, my little girl!" he choked.

"Dad's own, own little girl! We've been tearing your poor heart to pieces and your old father was the bitterest against you. It's all right, I tell you, girl. It's all right. Dad'll see you through. You shan't be bothered there, there! Oh, don't cry like that, darling. Don't!"

His voice grew husky. Leaving her abruptly, he crossed to Robertson.

"Mark," he faltered, avoiding his son-in-law's eye, "you promised to protect her. This is the time to do it. It was—for better, for worse. If that vow is any good at all, it's a good for 'worse' as for 'better.' Mark—be gentle with her, boy."

Slowly, with bent shoulders and dragging step, Blake made his way to the big room's farthest end. There, in the window's embrasure, out of earshot, his back to the others, he halted.

Drawing aside the curtains he glanced out into the night. The gloom of the sleeping city was below and around him. But, in one black mass, tiers upon tiers of garish lights

glowed. There, in the capitol, the Mullins bill was coming to a vote. There, Matthew Standish, freed by a miracle from the toils that craftier men had woven about him, was winning the victory which was to clear for him the pathway to the very summit of political power.

But he found his subconscious self straying from the picture he was so ruthlessly drawing. His mind would not fix itself on the lighted capitol and the wreck of his life-work; but crept over back into the dim room behind him. Even his tongue tricked him.

For when he would have made it recite further the tale of his losses, it muttered brokenly:

"My own little girl! Dad's own, own little girl!"

CHAPTER XXII.

The Hour of Reckoning.

Mark Robertson and his wife, left alone, together, in the other end of the great library, faced the situation for which Grace had so long been preparing and for which her frightened years of preparation had proved so useless.

Mark strove for speech. But for the first time in his roughly aggressive career, suitable words were denied him. Alternately he longed to tell her in naked terms what she was and how utterly he despised her. Again, a gush of self-pity urged him to reproach her for the wrecking of his ideals, the blasting of his happiness. Vanity coming part way to his aid, he framed—and left unspoken—a curt sentence of farewell. And, in the end, all he could say was:

"Why didn't you tell me?"

It was not what he had intended to say. It was banal. It expressed none of the stark moods that seethed in him. Yet as she did not answer, he found himself asking once more:

"Why didn't you tell me?"

And now, unknown and unwished for, there crept into his bald question a note that was almost of entreaty.

"Tell you," she echoed. "Oh, if you knew how I've wanted to!"

"Then—"

"I didn't dare. I didn't dare."

"Truth and honor surely—"

"Your love meant more to me than truth and honor. I sacrificed them to keep it. I would sacrifice them and everything else to get it back. Is that shameful? Perhaps. The truth is, I was never able to forgive you. You know you wouldn't. If I've wronged you—"

"If you had loved me as a true woman loves, you would have told me. You would have had to. You could not

have deceived me like this. Love doesn't feed on lies. It was my right to know everything, so that I could decide my own course. Instead, you have led me into this trap. There is no escape now. And it is too late to reproach you or to try to make you realize what you have done. You say your love for me kept you from telling? Believe that, if it is any comfort to you. I—"

"You say I don't know what true love is," she laughed bitterly. "I'm afraid I can never learn it from you. So your love has died? Love can't die, any more than God can die. You have never loved me."

"Never. I see now that you didn't. For you don't know what love means. I lived for you. Every thought and word and act of mine was shaped for you. And for you alone. I knew you."

"Haven't I Paid? Won't You Say We're Square?"

I knew your faults, your follies, your brute savagery. And I loved you for them as well as for the good that was in you. But what was it you loved? The woman you married—or a snow-white saintly reputation? If you cared only for the reputation—that is gone forever. But if you loved me—the woman I am—then I've been everything you thought I was and wanted me to be—ever since the first moment you had the right to think of me at all. I gave you my life, from that time on and forever. And it has been all yours. Before then, it was mine."

"And yet you let me believe it was everything—your whole life—your first love."

"It was. All that was worth the giving. All that had ever been worth the giving. It was my self. Oh, can't you see that a woman's body and heart and soul belong not to her first lover but to her first love? No woman can even guess what love is until she has found it. And I found it only when I knew you. I gave you everything."

"I'm trying to make it easy. We've never had a real quarrel, you and I, Mark. So don't let us wind up our married life with one, now. You are in the right. I am hopelessly in the wrong. I have cheated you. I admit it, and I'll accept the consequences. It is in the blood. There is much in heredity. My father is a politician. I don't know who my grandfather was. And if he had been worth knowing about, I'd know. There is a bad strain running through the family. It cropped out in me. Yes, I have cheated you. You had the right to demand in our bargain the hard-and-fast terms the world has decreed: All of a wife's life in exchange for a frayed and battered remnant of her husband's. I can't meet those terms, though I tried to fool you into believing I could. So I must meekly give up the love whose price I can't pay. Don't let's make it harder by having a scene over it. Good night. I'll stay with father until you can decide just what you want to do and on what basis we're to separate. If it would do any good to ask your forgiveness I'd ask it. That's all. Good night, Mark."

"She held out her hand with a shy wistfulness. He was staring straight into her tortured eyes and did not see the gesture. The hand dropped back limply to her side, and she moved to rejoin Blake."

But at the first step, Mark barred her way. She looked at him in tired wonder. His face was set and hard. He made no move to touch her. His voice, when he spoke, grated like a file, as he forced it between his unwilling lips.

"Grace," he began, "I've told you my love is dead. And I lied when I said it. I planned to put you out of my life. And, even while I planned, I knew I couldn't do it. It doesn't matter what I want to do or what I ought to do. Out of all this hideous tangle, blazes forth just one thing that I must do whether I want to or not. I must go on loving you with all my strength and life."

"Do you mean," she panted wildly, "do you mean that you can—that you will—"

"The winter sun was butting its way over the eastern skyline. The dawn was bitter-cold, mercilessly clear. And into the track of the first white glittering rays walked a tired man. A man who that night had won a mighty victory. A victory that foreshadowed the richest gifts his country could bestow. Before him the future stretched bright as that winter's dawn. As dazzlingly brilliant, and as cold and starkly empty."

In Matthew Standish's ears, as he returned toward the loveless abode that he hated to call home, still rang echoes of the pandemonium that had broken loose in the house when the Mullins bill had gone down to defeat.

"There is only one lasting victory," he muttered dispiritedly to himself, as he moved onward in the dazzling ice-cold trail of light. "At the last, it won't be the world's applause that the world's great men will remember. It will be the love smile of a woman. And—I shall never have known that memory. What is the rest worth?"

(THE END.)

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Victor?

"They didn't seem exactly to be hankering after my society in there," observed Wanda Kelly, "so I came back."

Jim Blake turned from the window at sound of the telephone girl's purposefully raised voice. Just within the threshold from the inner rooms of the suite, Wanda, with elaborate care, was shutting the door behind her.

Blake glanced quickly about the room.

"Yes," said Wanda, answering the question in his look and jerking her pretty head back in the direction of the rooms she had just quitted. "In there, I wouldn't worry if I were you."

Jim Blake's grim face took on a light as incongruous as the play of sunset rays on a mummy. The mask of age and defeat seemed to melt beneath it. He took an eager step toward the inner door.

"Just a minute," Wanda halted him. "You asked me to wait. If you don't need me here any longer—"

"Yes," hesitated Blake, trouble flitting across the new light in his eyes. "I wanted to ask you—to not to let Tom know about this. His sister—"

"I'll never tell him," she promised.

"I sent him away so he wouldn't find out."

"You're white, clear through," grudgingly admitted Blake. "Will you do one thing more?"

"What?"

"Bring him back to me."

"If I meet him again," she assented primly, "I'll send—"

"I didn't say 'send,'" corrected Blake. "I said 'bring.'"

"That's different. I—"

"I'm out of politics. My own game has broken me at last. I'm old. I know it now. I never did till tonight. I'm old and I want my children around me."

"I'll tell Tom," she agreed, softened despite herself by the new suppleness in a voice that had never before been turned to the uses of entreaty. "I'll tell him. I'm sure he'll come back to you—when he understands. Good night, Mr. Blake."

"There's another thing," he broke in roughly, staying her departure, "a thing that isn't easy to say."

"Then, why say it?"

"Because," he growled, "like all things that aren't easy to say, it's a thing that's got to be said. Miss Kelly, hasn't tonight pretty nearly squared the old debt between you and me? You and yours have suffered a lot at my hands. But, after what's happened here this evening, I guess you'll admit as far as suffering goes, you haven't got much on me. Haven't I paid? Won't you say we're square?"

"We're—we're square, Mr. Blake," she returned in a tone she could not make wholly steady nor impersonal.

"And," pursued Blake, "and—Tom?"

"That's different, too," she faltered.

"The jangle of the telephone interrupted her. Blake, who was beside the desk, picked up the instrument.

"Hello," he called into the transmitter. "Ye—yes—she's here. Who wants her? Oh! Yes, put him on this wire."

He lowered the telephone.

"Some one to speak to you, Miss Kelly," he reported.

Mechanically, she took up the receiver, and, by long habit, her voice took its professional drone:

"Hello!" she called.

Then, turning on Blake, in surprise, she cried:

"Why, it's Tom!"

"Yes," drawled Blake. "So I gathered from the name. I'm glad. Glad clear down to the ground. For both of you. Tell him so, won't you?"

PEARLS THE ONE ORNAMENT FOR THE DEBUTANTE

JUST why pearls and girlhood are so associated in our minds is not yet fully explained. But we all recognize that pearls belong to the maid before she may wear other jewels with any degree of fitness. Except for pretty hair ornaments of ribbons and made

brown haired or blond girls, but is not so pretty for the girl with very dark hair or for her who has the splendid "Titan" locks. Although very dark hair, and what is called red hair, are so unlike, the same styles of coiffure are suited to them both. They must do the hair in soft masses, insist upon its being glossy and refuse to consider fluffiness or anything approaching frizzes.

But no matter what the hue of her hair or eyes or skin—the maid may wear pearls. They look well and more than that on youthful heads of any color.

ABOUT THE HOLBEIN FIGURE

Women Must Accept the Unrestricted Natural Lines of the Body in New Clothes.

In connection with the discussion of the so-called corsetless figure, it may be noted that the lines of the natural, supple figure are more noticeable in the evening gowns than in the street togs. Women may refuse to adopt the Holbein figure for the street, but they will be forced to accept it in effect in the majority of the new evening frocks. The couturiers have been advising the boneless tricot corsets for the evening for several seasons, but this winter they have taken a more advanced step—they have forced them on their customers by designing frocks that give the effect of a lightly corseted figure. There are many ways of leading a woman in the way one would wish her to go, and few are unknown to the wily French couturier.

Chenille Flowers.

Chenille flowers are used for corsage bouquets now. They are made of strings of chenille, in heavy, soft quality, looped into petals, and mounted on green chenille stems, stiffened with wire. Brilliant but at the same time soft shades of red and blue and violet and green and yellow are used. These little flowers have a charm all their own, and are especially effective worn on the dull, gloomy days for which November is famous.

Money may represent power, but the less money a man has the sooner a doctor will cure him.

This hair dress is appropriate for

Stately and Graceful Gown



FROM the salon of a gifted designer

In Paris comes this stately and graceful gown. It is worth much study as an exposition of present styles, without any departure from beautiful outlining of the figure and the best management of fashionable fabrics with brocaded surfaces. Any of the dark rich colors of the season—taupe, corbelle, paprika, wood and golden browns, sapphire blue.

The skirt is in two pieces, with the uppermost cut away from the knees downward in a "V" shape. It is draped with three small plaits to give it the fashionable slant, and posed over an under piece that is also caught up a little at the front. This under piece is not closed at the back, and by this arrangement the skirt, which seems to hang in so closely about the ankles, still gives room for easy walking.

There is no attempt at even hanging about the bottom of skirts these days. They are correctly draped when the uneven-hanging caused by drapery is allowed to speak for itself as a part of the play. There is a bodice of brocaded silk under a small coat of cloth like that in the skirt. It has a graceful neck round, with a narrow "V" cut out at the front. A fine net gumpie is worn under it, which is round at the neck. The long sleeves of this bodice are set in at the arm, but not close fitting in the upper arm. A fine frill of point d'Esprit

gives a perfect finish to the sleeves.

Providing the long shoulder, the small coat blouses over the belt line at the sides and back. It has a long narrow basque sloping away over the hips and falling almost to the knees. It is finished with a very wide and heavy fringe and is wonderfully effective.

Similar coats slope away to a panel at the back, finished at the ends with a broad band of fur or plush. This finish has proved more popular than the fringe.

A hat with some width of brim is fitting with a gown of so much character, and that is what was chosen. It has the small, soft crown, which almost effaces itself, and the simple trimming which characterizes the season. Two short full ostrich heads or a fancy ostrich ornament are curled over the brim in models of this kind, and the brim usually shows an indentation at one side.

The front of the under bodice is arranged to fall out over the waist line and is a novelty in arrangement that is noteworthy. Altogether this is an achievement in designing so good that it will outlive less beautiful models and look well for two seasons or more. The life of pretty gowns, most of them costing considerable time and some money, should not be so brief that the time spent in making them is not worth while.

JULIA BOTTOMLEY.

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