

SERIAL STORY

When a Man Marries

By MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

Author of *The Circular Staircase*, *The Man in Lower Ten*, etc.

Copyright 1926, by the Bobbs-Merrill Co.

15

SYNOPSIS.

James Wilson or Jimmy as he is called by his friends. Jimmy was reticent and looked shorter than he really was. His ambition in life was to be taken seriously, but people steadily refused to do so. His art is considered a huge joke, except to himself. If he asked people to dinner everyone expected a frolic. Jimmy marries Bella Knowles; they live together a year and are divorced. Jimmy's friends arrange to celebrate the first anniversary of his divorce. The party is in full swing when Jimmy receives a telegram from his Aunt Selina, who will arrive in four hours to visit him and his wife. He neglects to tell her of his divorce. Jimmy takes Kit into his confidence, he tries to devise some way so that his aunt will not learn that he has no longer a wife. He suggests that Kit play the hostess for one night. Mrs. Wilson pro tem. Aunt Selina arrives and the deception works out as planned. Jim's Jap servant is taken ill. Bella, Jimmy's divorced wife, enters the house and asks Kit who is being taken away in the ambulance? Bella insists it is Jim. Kit tells her Jim is well and is in the house. Harbison steps out on the porch and discovers a man tacking a card on the door. He demands an explanation. The man points to the placard and Harbison sees the word "Smallpox" printed on it. He tells him the guests cannot leave the house until the quarantine is lifted. The guests suddenly realize their predicament and the women are led to the men's quarters. Harbison solves the matter. After the lifting of the quarantine several letters are found in the mail box undelivered. One is addressed to Henry Jewell, Iquique, Chile, which was written by Harbison. He describes minutely of his incarceration, also of his infatuation for Mrs. Wilson. Aunt Selina is taken ill with a gripe. Betty acts as nurse. Harbison finds Kit sulking on the roof. She tells him that Jim has been treating her outrageously. Harbison fully believing that she is Mrs. Wilson, tells her that she doesn't mean the things she is saying about her husband. Kit starts downstairs when suddenly she is grasped in the arms of a man who kisses her several times. She believes that Harbison did it and is humiliated. Aunt Selina tells Jimmy that her cancer, breastpin, and other articles of jewelry have been stolen. She accuses Betty of the theft. The following morning Jimmy was in a rage. The papers printed a story about the incarceration of the party, and that one of the guests had attempted to escape by means of laying a board across the roof to the adjoining house, but was frustrated by a detective who fired a revolver at him.

CHAPTER XII. (Continued.)

"I wish you would all go out," I said wearily. "If every man in the house says he didn't try to get over to the next roof last night, well and good. But you might look and see if the board is still lying where it fell."

There was an instantaneous rush for the window, and a second's pause. Then Jimmy's voice, incredulous, awed:

"Well, I'll be—blessed! There's the board!"

I stayed in my room all that day. My head really ached and then, too, I did not care to meet Mr. Harbison. It would have to come; I realized that a meeting was inevitable, but I wanted time to think how I would meet him. It would be impossible to cut him, without rousing the curiosity of the others to fever pitch; and it was equally impossible to ignore the disgraceful episode on the stairs. As it happened, however, I need not have worried. I went down to dinner, languidly, when every one was seated, and found Max at my right, and Mr. Harbison moved over beside Bella. Every one was talking at once, for Flannigan, ambling around the table as stilly as he walked his beat, had presented Bella with her bracelet on a salad plate, garnished with romaine. He had found it in the furnace room, he said, where she must have dropped it. And he looked at me stealthily, to approve his mendacity!

Every one was famished, and as they ate they discussed the board in the area-way, and pretended to deride it as a clever bit of press work, to revive a dying sensation. No one was deceived: Anne's pearls and the attempt at escape, coming just after, pointed only to one thing. I looked around the table, dazed. Flannigan, almost the only unknown quantity, might have tried to escape the night before, but he would not have been in dress clothes. Besides, he must be eliminated as far as the pearls were concerned, having been locked in the furnace room the night they were stolen. There was no one among the girls to suspect. The Mercer girls had stunning pearls, and could secure all they wanted legitimately; and Bella disliked them. Oh, there was no question about it, I decided: Dallas and Anne had taken a wolf to their bosom—or is it a viper?—and the Harbison man was the creature. Although I must say that, looking over the table, at Jimmy's breadth and not very imposing personality, at Max's lean length, sallow skin and bold dark eyes, at Dallas, blond, growing bald and florid, and then at the Harbison boy, tall, muscular, clear-eyed and sunburned; one would have taken Max at first choice as the villain, with Dal

next, Jim third, and the Harbison boy not in the running.

It was just after dinner that the surprise was sprung on me. Mr. Harbison came around to me gravely, and asked me if I felt able to go up on the roof. On the roof, after last night! I had to gather myself together; luckily, the others were pushing back their chairs, showing Flannigan the liqueur glasses to take up, and lighting cigars.

"I do not care to go," I said jeily.

"The others are coming," he persisted, "and I—I could give you an arm up the stairs."

"I believe you are good at that," I said, looking at him steadily. "Max, will you help me to the roof?"

Mr. Harbison really turned rather white. Then he bowed ceremoniously and left me.

Max got me a wrap, and every one except Mr. Harbison and Bella, who was taking a mass of indigestibles to Aunt Selina, went to the roof.

"Where is Tom?" Anne asked, as we reached the foot of the stairs. "Gone ahead to fix things," was the answer. But he was not there. At the top of the last flight I stopped, dumb with amazement; the roof had been transformed, enchanted. It was a fairy-land of lights and foliage and colors. I had to stop and rub my eyes. From the bleakness of a tin roof in February to the brightness and greenery of a July roof garden!

"You were the immediate inspiration," Dallas said. "Harbison thought your headache might come from lack of exercise and fresh air, and he has worked us like niggers all day. I've a blister on my right palm, and Harbison got shocked while he was wiring the place, and nearly fell over the parapet. We bought out two full-sized florists by telephone."

It was the most amazing transformation. At each corner a pole had been erected, and wire crossed the roof diagonally, hung with red and amber bulbs. Around the chimneys had been massed evergreen trees in tubs, hiding their brick-and-mortar ugliness, and among the trees tiny lights were strung. Along the parapet were rows of geometrical boxwood plants in bright red crocks, and the flaps of a crimson and white tent had been thrown open, showing lights within, and rugs, wicker chairs, and cushions.

Max raised a glass of benedictine and posed for a moment, melodramatically.

"To the Wilson roof garden!" he said. "To Kit, who inspired; to the creators, who perished; and to Takahiro—may he not have expired."

Every one was very gay; I think the knowledge that tomorrow Aunt Selina might be with them urged them to make the most of this last night of freedom. I tried to be jolly, and succeeded in being feverish. Mr. Harbison did not come up to enjoy what he had wrought. Jim brought up his

The result was, naturally, that the old lady wouldn't let Bella out of her

sight, except to go to the kitchen for something to eat for her. That very day Bella got the doctor to order ale for Aunt Selina (oh, yes; the doctor could come in; Dal said "it was all a coming in, and nothing going out") and she had three pints of Bass, and learned to eat anchovies and caviare—all in one day.

Bella's conduct to Jim was disgraceful. She snubbed him, ignored him, tramped on him, and Jim was growing positively flabby. He spent most of his time writing letters to the board of health and playing solitaire. He was a pathetic figure.

Well, we went to bed fairly early. Bella had massaged Aunt Selina's face and rubbed in cold cream, Anne and Dallas had compromised on which window should be open in their bedroom, and the men had matched to see who should look at the furnace. I did not expect to sleep, but the cold night air had done its work, and I was asleep almost immediately.

Some time during the early part of the night I awakened, and, after turning and twisting uneasily, I realized that I was cold. The couch in Bella's dressing room was comfortable enough, but narrow and low. I remember distinctly (that was what was so maddening: Everything thought I dreamed it—I remember getting an elderdown comfort that was folded at my feet, and pulling it up around me. In the luxury of its warmth I snuggled down and went to sleep almost instantly. It seemed to me I had slept for hours, but it was probably an hour or less, when something roused me. The room was perfectly dark, and there was not a sound save the faint ticking of the clock, but I was wide awake.

And then came the incident that in its ghastly, horrible absurdity made the rest of the people shout with laughter the next day. It was not funny then. For suddenly the elderdown comfort began to slip. I heard no footstep, not the slightest sound approaching me, but the comfort moved; from my chin, inch by inch, it slipped to my shoulders; awfully, inevitably, hair-raisingly it moved. I could feel my blood gather around my heart, leaving me cold and nerveless. As it passed my hands I gave an involuntary clutch for it, to feel it slip away from my fingers. Then the full horror of the situation took hold of me; as the comfort slid past my feet I sat up and screamed at the top of my voice.


Of course, people came running in all sorts of ways. I was still sitting up, declaring I had seen a ghost and that the house was haunted. Dallas was struggling for the second armhole of his dressing gown, and Bella had already turned on the lights. They said I had had a nightmare, and not to sleep on my back, and perhaps I was taking gripe.

And just then we heard Jimmy run down the stairs, and fall over something, almost breaking his wrist. It was the elderdown comfort, half-way up the studio staircase!

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

WASHINGTON GOSSIP

Illinois Is Ahead in Absenteeism



WASHINGTON.—Illinois still holds the national championship for long distance statesmanship in congress. The complete congressional record for the last session just issued establishes the state's claim to this distinction beyond any doubt.

No other delegation even approaches the mark set by Illinois in the number of congressmen absent at all times, the number of roll calls missed by each and the total number of days each was away during the session.

While none of the Illinois representatives achieved the distinction of representing his district without once appearing at the capital, there were several who outdid all former feats and approached remarkably close to this goal. Unfortunately they were handicapped by the provision of the law for the payment of mileage.

A member may draw his salary of \$7,500 a year, his \$1,500 allowance for clerk hire, and \$125 for stationery without coming to Washington, but it is necessary for him to appear at least once in order to receive his traveling allowance of 20 cents a mile.


It is doubtful if an absolutely perfect record of nonattendance ever will be made even by one of the Illinois champions, unless this irksome requirement of the mileage provision should be modified. The generous allowance makes it a real object for a congressman to come to Washington at least once each session.

Unsupplanted persons may suppose representatives who attend a session of congress only a few days of the entire period refrain, as a matter of propriety, from drawing their entire salary, or perhaps return it to the treasury.

For the information of such be it stated the cashier in the office of the sergeant at arms was asked if any member of the house had not drawn his salary for the last congress or had refunded it for any reason.

"Members of the house refund salary!" exclaimed the official. "Never knew it to happen, and I've been here sixteen years."

President Loves Innocent Jest



"Two dollars," replied the young lady in charge sweetly.

Plunging into his spacious trousers' pocket, the presidential right hand brought forth two one dollar bills, which he passed to the ticket seller, and nodding to his trio of companions, he entered the hall.

"Lend me two dollars, Jack," whispered Captain Butt to Wheeler, "left my money at home."

"So did I," mourned Wheeler. (The party were attired in dress suits.)

"Never mind, I'll take care of you both," hastily offered Jimmie Sloan, with becoming magnanimity. The others breathed a sigh of relief as he approached the desk. "Three tickets, please," he announced calmly, producing a crisp five-dollar bill.

"Another dollar, please," gently remarked the young lady at the booth.

"Another dollar! H—how m—much did you say those tickets were?" demanded James.

"Two dollars each."

Jimmie was blushing a rosy red when Wheeler came to the rescue. A passing bell-boy was taken by the collar and a few of the morning's tips were removed from his inside pocket. Then four silver quarters were placed triumphantly upon the table, and the three passed inside.

As Breeding Ground for Alaska




AN odd plan is on foot to make the Colorado mountains a sort of proving ground for agriculture in Alaska. Of course, there are a good many kinds of agriculture in Alaska that do not need proving. They are already an established success, both scientifically and commercially. Hundreds of tons of potatoes, oats and cabbage are grown and sold in the territory each year and there are a dozen other successful crops.

But Alaskan nights are too cool to mature string beans and corn, for instance, and the question is whether hardy, cold-resistant varieties could not be produced by selective breeding that would give Alaskans all the fresh luxuries from their garden that the states have.

There are farms in the Colorado mountains near Denver that have an elevation of nearly 10,000 feet and the conditions at this altitude in Colorado are almost identical with condi-

Lack of Horses Alarms Officers



Army officers and department of agriculture, doubt is expressed on the subject. The army type is said to be scarce and hard to obtain.

Capt. Conrad recommends legislation by the states generally to prevent the breeding of unsound horses.

In 1908 the government established the system of remount depots for the army. Under this system the government buys the horse young, at three to four years old, and after breaking them issues them to the troops. This system has been found preferable to purchasing the animals when matured. But what the army officers want, and also the department of agriculture, is a system of government supervision of the breeding of horses for the army.

Chief George M. Kimmel of the animal husbandry division of the bureau of animal industry, has devised a plan whereby from 2,000 to 2,500 well-bred animals would be available for the army every year. This would about supply the demands in time of peace.

It is proposed to divide the country into four districts and to rear Morgans, thoroughbreds, standardbreds and saddle. In time the best type would be discovered.



SOLD THE WORLD OVER

PE-RU-NA
THE GREAT TONIC

A Country School for Girls in New York City

Best Features of Country and City Life

Out-of-door Sports on School Park of 35 acres near the Hudson River. Full Academic Course from Primary Class to Graduation. Upper Class for Advanced Special Students. Music and Art. Summer Session. Certificate admits to College. School Coach Meets Day Pupils.

Miss Sings and Miss White, Riverside Ave., near 73rd St., West

WHO IS TO BLAME

Women as well as men are made miserable by kidney and bladder trouble. Dr. Kilmor's Swamp-Root the great kidney remedy promptly relieves. At druggists in fifty cent and dollar sizes. You may have a sample bottle by mail free, also pamphlet telling all about it.

Address, Dr. Kilmor & Co., Binghamton, N. Y.

STILL IN HIS POSSESSION

Remarkable Coincidence in Sum of Money That Rastus Had in His Pocket.

Rastus was on trial, charged with stealing seven dollars and eighty-five cents. He pleaded not guilty, and, as he was unable to hire an attorney, the judge appointed Lawyer Clearam as counsel. Clearam put up a strong plea in defense, and Rastus was acquitted.

Counsel and client met a few minutes later outside the court room.

"Now, Rastus," said Clearam, "you know the court allows the counsel very little for defending this kind of case. I worked hard for you and got you clear. I'm entitled to much more pay than I'm getting for my valuable services, and you should dig up a good-sized fee. Have you got any money?"

"Yes, boss," replied Rastus, "I don't got seven dollahs and eighty-five cents."

Too Fresh.

"Will you promise to support my daughter in the style in which she is accustomed if I consent to your marriage?" demanded old Skinfint, when Dobby made his formal proposal.

"Well, I—I'll promise to be tolerably close with her, Mr. Skinfint," said Dobby, "but you know, I'm a soft-hearted cuss, and I'm afraid she'll be able to wheedle a few things out of me that you were strong enough to refuse her."—Judge.

The errors of a great mind are more edifying than the truths of a little.—Borne.

It is not the quality of the meat but the cheerfulness of the guests which makes the feast.—Lord Charendon.

COFFEE CONGESTION
Causes a Variety of Ails.

A happy old lady in Wisconsin says:

"During the time I was a coffee drinker I was subject to sick headaches, sometimes lasting 2 or 3 days, totally unfitting me for anything.

To this affliction was added, some years ago, a trouble with my heart that was very painful, accompanied by a smothering sensation and faintness.

"Dyspepsia, also, came to make life harder to bear. I took all sorts of patent medicines but none of them helped me for any length of time.

"The doctors frequently told me that coffee was not good for me; but without coffee I felt as if I had no breakfast. I finally decided about 2 years ago to abandon the use of coffee entirely, and as I had read a great deal about Postum I concluded to try that for a breakfast beverage.

"I liked the taste of it and was particularly pleased to notice that it did not 'come up' as coffee used to. The bad spells with my heart grew less and less frequent, and finally ceased altogether, and I have not had an attack of sick headache for more than a year. My digestion is good, too, and I am thankful that I am once more a healthy woman. I know my wonderful restoration to health came from quitting coffee and using Postum." Name given by the Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

"There's a reason," and it is this. Coffee has a direct action on the liver with some people, and causes partial congestion of that organ preventing the natural outlet of the secretions. Then may follow biliousness, sallow skin, headaches, constipation and finally a change of the blood corpuscles and nervous prostration.

Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkg. "There's a Reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.