

sober.

transferred to their respective owners.

There was no answer when he rang

at Lilas Lynn's apartment; the hall-

boy volunteered the information that

the occupant had just gone out with a

gentleman, Miss Knight? Yes, she

was upstairs, he supposed. Bob was

surprised at his wife's apparent self-

control when she let him in. Except

blue eyes, she might have just come

from the theater. Those eyes, he not-

ed, were very dark, almost black, un-

der this emotional stress; they ques-

"We got him home all right," he told

"Oh, yes. He says he's not badly

"I'm glad. When you rang I thought

"It will get out, I'm sure. Such

He eyed her gravely, kindly, with an

"Then-we'll face it together." he

After a moment her glance drooped,

"You must lie down and sleep, and get

to be yourself again- We can't tell

what may happen now at any mo-

"It's the reaction, I suppose. I'm all

She shook her head. "I couldn't sleep

if I tried. I feel as if I'd never be able

CHAPTER XVI.

expression she had never seen upon his

never left him alone if we'd thought--'

tioned him, mutely.

"Will he live?"

-it was the police."

things always do."

out."

face.

said.

ment."

in. And you?"

and-wait."

in the tiny living room.

SYNOPSIS. -10-

Peter Knight, defeated for political of-fice in his town, decides to venture New York in order that the family fortunes might benefit by the expected rise of his charming daughter, Lorelel, A wellmight benefit by the expected rise of his charming daughter. Lorelei A well-known critic interviews Lorelei Knight, now stage beauty with Bergman's Revue, for a special article. Her coin-hunting mother outlines Lorelei's ambitions, but Sicsson, the press agent, later adds his information. Lorelei attends Millionaire Hammon's gorge-us entertainment. She meets Merkle, a wealthy dyspeptic. Bob Wharton comes uninvited. Lorelei dis-covers a blackmell plot against Hammon, in which her mother is involved. Merkle covers a blackmail plot against Hammon, in which her mother is involved. Merkle and Lorelei have an auto wreck. The blackmailers besmirch her good name, Lorelei learns her mother is an unscru-pulous plotter. She finds in Adorse Dem-orest a real friend, and finds Bob Whar-ton is likable. Lorelei leaves her family and goes to live alone. Lorelei and drun-ken Bob Wharton are tricked into mar-riage. Lins shoots and wounds Ham-mon acriously. on seriously

#### ........................

Adoree Demorest, the dancer, and Campbell Pope, the critic, once more. He is the man who told all New York through his dramatic column that she was the most shameless woman on the stage. Really a good girl, che naturally despises him for thus beamirching her. Well, they meet at dinner. How the barrier between them is broken and how they begin a friendship is told in delightful manner in this installment.

### ............................

Hammon has been shot. The problem is to get him home unseen. Bob Wharton rents a hack and drives it himself.

### CHAPTER XV-Continued.

Bob reined in and leaped from his box. Merkle had the cab door open and was hoisting Hammon from his seat.

"Have you got the key?" Bob asked, swiftly.

"Yes. Help me! He's fainted, I think."

They lifted the half-conscious man out, then with him between them struggled up the steps; but Hammon's feet dragged; he hung very heavy in their arms.

Merkle was not a strong man; he was panting, and his hands shook as he fumbled with the lock. The key escaped him and tinkled upon the stone

"Hurry! Here comes the watch-

# this she answered:

"Yes, to dinner, Please, please come." Lorelel was not quite sure that Bob would cossent to dine in the modest little home, but under the circum- But-Jimminy! Married!" When Lorestances idleness was maddening, so she lei led her into the Ladroom to iny off from what she had expected, buteverything was different. Once the marriage had become known to Bob's exclaimed, in a whisper-"billions! 1 people and he had thoroughly sobered don't know how to talk to him-or you, down, once she had withdrawn from for that matter. Shall I call you 'my the cast of the Revue, their real life would begin.

when he arrived, but Lorelei saw that he suffered only from the effects of his previous debauch He was extremely laughed. self-conscious and uneasy in her presence, though he kissed her with a Bob walked toward the Elegancia with brave show of confidence.

a feeling of extreme fadgue in his "I galloped into the bank just as they limbs, for the effort to conquer his inslammed the doors," he explained, "but toxication had left him weak; he dimly my bookkeeping is rotten."

realized also that he was still far from "Are you trying to tell me that you have overdrawn?"

"Exactly. But I drew against the old gentleman, as usual, so on with the dance. What's the-er-idea of the apron?

"It's nearly dinner time."

Boh's eyes opened with surprise. Why, we're going to Delmonico's." "I'd-rather do this if you don't for the slim hand pressed to her bosom mind." She eyed him appealingly. "I and the anxiety luring in her deep don't feel equal to going out tonight. I'm-afraid."

His glance brightened with admiration, "Well, you look stunning in that get-up, and I'd hate to see you change It. Do you mean to say you can cook?" "Not well, but I can fry almost anyher, when they stood facing each other thing. Mother has a maid. I couldn't afford two."

"I love fried things," he assured her, with a twinkle. "And to think you're hurt, and Merkle agrees. Lord! We'd going to cook for me! That's an experience for both of us. Let's have some fried roast beef and fried corn on the cob with fried salad and cheese."

"There, there!" he said, comfortingly, "Don't tease," she begged, uncertainseeing her tremble. "I won't let any-"I hardly know what I'm doing. ly. body hurt you. I was terribly drunkand I thought this would keep me busy things are swimming yet-but all the until theater time."

way across town I couldn't think of He extended a hand timidly and anything, anybody except you and patted her arm, saying with unexpectwhat it would mean to you if it got ed gentleness;

"Please don't worry. It was a tera dream. I saw Merkle. He got back to Hammon's house ahead of the docthe Street is in chaos, and all of Hamstrain."

a faint color tinged her cheeks. "I-"Shouldn't you have been at busiwouldn't dare face it alone. I couldn't. ness on such a day?" but you're tired-sick." He nodded.

Bob shrugged carelessly. "I'm only to sleep again. I-I'll sit and watch | night."

had expected. "So have I," she said.

"I thought it might be pleasanter for you," he explained, a bit awkward-

for the evening meal. In view of all the best girl in the world, and you're-" the claptrap music of the day. Once same time he had become more and Adoree hesitated, and continued to be had found a means of occupying more unapproachable. Unlimited power stare, round-eyed. "I didn't think himself, Pope surrendered to his Im- had forced him into the peculiar isolayou'd-I didn't think she'd-I don't pulse and in a measure forgot his sur- tion of a chief executive; he had grown know what I thought or didn't think. roundings.

Adoree roused herself slowly.

'Lordy!" she whispered. "I'd give both

play like that. The mean little shrimp!"

"You've been away for some time,

"What was it this time? Mining?"

"No. Poultry." Adoree pricked up

"You went West, ch?" pursued Bob.

"No. East-Long Island. I saw a

"Ducks!" breathlessly exclaimed

Campbell Pope's features shone with

Miss Demorest giggled audibly; she

"Why didn't you fence them in?" she

Pope eyed her for a fleeting instant,

"I fenced in the whole pond to begin

"A duck shouldn't have much water.

"Plymouth Rocks, or Holsteins, or

The critic frowned argumentatively.

'What is a duck for if he isn't to

swim? What is his object? We had

six on my father's farm, and they

"Naturally they didn't do well--"

Bob Wharton signaled frantically to

Jersey Lilies—anyhow they were

had lost all interest in her food; she

was tingling with excitement.

then his gaze wavered.

What kind were they?"

"White Pekins!"

many, but-"

with. It nearly broke me."

the gentle light of a pleasurable re-

process of flaying him.

went to raising ducks."

went unnoticed.

her ears.

asked.

white."

from the kitchenette to find Adoree being. fell to work. This was very different her wraps the thunderstruck young Demorest poised, a salad-bowl in one woman had more nearly recovered herself. "Why, he's worth millions," she beatifude. lic?" inquired Lorelet.

lady' or 'your honor.' or- I didn't dress for dinner either; I suppose I Bob was pale and a bit unsteady should have worn the crown jools." "You're going to wear an apron and help me scorch the dinner," Lorelel

As Lorelei explained the reasons for

haven't you?" Bob was asking. grand little business man." membrance, "It was lovely and quiet out there. The local inhabitants were shy but friendly; they did me no harm. But-it was no place for ducks; they swam all over the pond. They swam all their fat off, and I had the pond dredged and never found an egg."

## "That-Viper?" She Cried.

ulous droop of her lower lip. Seizing Lorelei by the shoulders, she held her off as the target for a searching gaze.

him?" she inquired, fiercely. It was plain to whom she referred.

"Whew! I'm glad to hear that. You ove him, don't you?"

The answer came readily enough, and the blue eyes did not flinch, but swam all the time. Of course, six isn't the smile was a trifle fixed and the cheeks remained colorless. "Why, of course. He's very nice." "Lorelei!" Miss Demorest's fingers

his wife, but there was no stopping the tightened; her voice was tragic, but she discussion that had begun to rage back had no chance to say more, for Bob and forth. It lasted until the conclucalled just then from the Hving room: sion of the meal, and it was only with "Hurry back, girls. There's somean effort that Adoree tore herself away.

thing burning, and I can't find the She was in her element, and in a little emergency brake." time had won the critic's undivided at-When Adoree finally came forth in tention; he listened with absorption;

one of Lorelei's aprons--really a fetchhe even made occasional note

hard, suspicious, arbitrary. Even to A short time later Lorelei turned his son he had been for years a ri tiots

It was not until the last conference hand, a wooden spoon gripped in the had broken up, not until the last forces other, on her face a rapt expression of had been disposed for the coming battle, that he spoke to Merkle of Bob's "Have you rubbed the dish with gar- marriage. Merkle told him what he knew, and the old man listened silent-

ly. Then he drove to the Eleganc.a. Bob and Lorelei had just returned legs to the knee and one eye if I could from the theater, much, be it said, against the bridegroom's wishes. Bob The embers of her resentment were had been eager to begin the celebration still glowing when the four finally seat- of his marriage in a fitting manner, and ed themselves at the table. A furtive it had required the shock of Hammon's tonight's program, Adoree saw for the glance in Pope's direction showed that death added to Lorelei's entreaties to first time the weariness in her friend's he was studiously avoiding her eyes; dissuade him from a night of hilarity. eyes, the pallor of her cheeks, the trem- she prepared once more to begin the He was flushed with drink, and in corsequence more than a little resentful

when she insisted upon spending another night in the modest little home.

"Say! I'm not used to this kind of a Pope nodded. "I hate New York. I place," he argued. "I'm not a cavewent as far away as I could get, and-I managed to return just two jumps dweller. It's a lovely flat-for a must ahead of the sheriff. It will take me der-but it's no place to live." six months to pay my debts. I'm a

"Don't be silly," she told him. "We acted on impulse; we can't change everything at a moment's notice."

"But-people take trips when they get married."

"I can't quit the show without two weeks' notice."

great opportunity to make money; so I "Two weeks?" He was aghast. found a farm on a lake, bought it, and "Two minutes. Two seconds. I won't have you dodging around stage doors." "Bergman won't let me go: if Miss Demorest; but her interruption wouldn't be right to ask him."

But Bob was insistent. "I intend to cure you of the work habit. You must learn to scorn it. Look at me. I'm an example of the uncarned increment We'll kiss this dinky flat a fond farewell-it's impossible, really-I refuse to share such a dark secret with you. Tomorrow we leave it for the third and last time. What d'you say to the sunny side of the Ritz until we decide where we want to travel?"

Just then the apartment bell rang. Bob went to the door. He returned with his father at his heels. Mr. Wharton tramped in grimly, nodded at his daughter-in-law, who had risen at the first sound of his voice, then ran his eyes swiftly over the surroundings.

"I hear you've made a fool of your self again," he began, showing his teeth in a faint smile, "Have you given up your apartment at the Charle voix ?"

"Not yet," said Bob. "We're considering a suite at the Ritz for a few days."

"Indeed. You're going back to the Charlevoix tonight."

Lorelei started. She had expected opposition, but was unprepared for anything so blunt and businesslike. "I think you and Bob can talk more free ly if I leave you alone." she said.

Hannibal Wharton replied shortly No. don't leave. I'll talk freer with you here."

It appeared, however, that Robert stood in no awe of his father's anger he said lightly:

"They never come back, dad. I'm a regular married man. Lorelei is my royal consort, my yoke-mate, my rib We'll have to scratch the Charlevoix." This levity left the caller unmoved to Lorelei he explained:

"Tell me, did they make you marry "No."

a 'Joke' broker. The governor thinks a firm name looks well on my cards. I hope he doesn't lose more than a million in this flurry-it won't improve his disposition. But-wait till he learns I've married a girl who can fry things- By the way-" Bob paused. "I invited a friend to dine with us to-

Lorelei was less dismayed than he

raised.

rible night for all of us. When I think of it I'm sure it must have been tor, and nobody suspects the truth. But mon's companies are feeling the

man." Bob was gazing over his shoulder at the slowly approaching figure.

A second but briefer delay, and they stood in the gloom of the marble foyer hall. Then they shuffled across the floor to the great, curving stairway. Hammon had assured them that there would be no one in the house except Orson, his man, and some of the kitchen servants, the others having followed their mistress to the country; nevertheless the rescuers' nerves were painfully taut, and they tried to go as silently as burglars; when they finally gained the library, they were drenched with perspiration. Merkle switched on the lights; they deposited the wounded man on a couch and bent over him.

Hammon was not dead. Merkle felt his way into the darkened regions at the rear and returned with a glass of spirits. Under his and Bob's ministrations the unconscious man opened his eyes.

"You got me here, didn't you?" he whispered, as he took in his surround-"Now go-everything is all Ings. right."

"We're not going to leave you," Merkie said, positively.

"No!" echoed Bob. "I'll wake up Orson while John telephones the doctor." But Hammon forbade Bob's movement with a frown. It was plain that despite his weakness his mind re mained clear.

"Listen to me," he ordered. "Prop me up-put me in that chair. I'm choking." They did as he directed. "That's better. Now, you mustn't be seen here-either of you. We can't explain." He checked Merkle. "I know best. Go home; it's only two blocks-I'll telephone."

"You'll ring for Orson quick?"

Hammon nodded.

"Rotten way to leave a man," Bob mumbled. "I'd rather stick it out and face the music."

"Go, go! You're wasting time." Hammon's brow was wrinkled with pain and anger. "You've been good; now hurry."

Merkle's thin face was marked with deep feeling. "Yes." he agreed. "There's nothing else for us to do; but tell Orson to 'phone me quick. I'll be back here in five minutes." Then he and Bob stole out of the house as quistly as they had stolen in.

They got into the cab and drove away without exciting suspicion. Merkle alighted two blocks up the avenue and sped to his own house; Bob turned his jaded nag westward through the sunken road that led toward the Elegancia and Lorelei.

The owner of the equipage was walt-

That afternoon Mrs. Knight, in a great flutter of excitement, arrived with Jim at the Elegancia Embracing her daughter in tremulous, almost tearful delight, she burst forth:

"You dear! You darling! Jim came home not an hour ago and told me everything. I thought I should swoon." "Told you - everything?" Lorelei flashed a glance at her brother, who made a quick sign of reassurance.

What with Lorelel's good fortune and Lilas' catastrophe Mrs. Knight was well-nigh delirious. She was still rejoicing garrulously when Lorelei burst into one of her rare passions of weeping and buried her face in her hands. "Child alive!" cried her astonished mother. "What alls you?"

Instantly Jim's suspicions caught

"Say! Has Bob welched?" he de manded, harshly.

The amber head shook in negation. "Isn't he-nice to you?" quavered Mrs. Knight.

"Yes. But-I'm sorry I did it. He was drinking; he didn't know what he was doing-'

"Hush!" Mrs. Knight cast a fearful glance over her shoulder. "It was all straight and aboveboard, and he knew perfectly well what he was about. Jim would swear to it."

Lorelel lifted a tragic, tear-stained face. "I ought to be hanged," she said. Jim laughed with relief. "There's gratitude for you! If I had your share of the Wharton coin I'd let 'em hang me-for a while."

As mother and son were leaving, Jim managed to get a word in private with his sister.

prompted his action. "Anyhow, he's "Don't weaken," he cautioned her. 'Lynn's gone, and it's all over. We've got the whip-hand on all of 'em-Hammon, Merkle, Bob, Lilas-everybody, We've got 'em all, understand? We've landed big!"

When she was alone Lorelei gave a sigh of relief, which changed to a sob clearly. as the sense of her helplessness surged over her again. She had deliberately sold herself; she wearily wondered where the new road led-surely not to

happiness. Toward evening Adoree Demorest telephoned, and with many anticipatory exclamations of pleasure invited Lorelel to dine.

"I can't," answered Lorelei, faintly. "Bother your engagements!" Miss Demorest's disappointment was keen. "I can't even explain, unless-you'll come here."

"To dinner?"

Lorelel decided swiftly, She dreaded to be alone with Bob; her constraint in known," she managed to say. ing patiently, and there still lacked his presence was painful, and he also, comething of the allotted hour when before going out, had appeared very ill Bob inquired. the exchanged garments had been at case. Ite had not even made plans

ly, "inasmuch as we're not very wellacquainted. I saw before I went out that you were-er-embarrassed-and they were expecting as the other guest. -and-" He flushed boyishly, scarcely conscious of the delicacy that had

ing garment, more like a house dress than an apron-Bob told her whom She paused with a bread-knife up-

"That-viper?" she cried. "Campbell isn't a viper; he's a cricket -a dramatic cricket," declared Bob.

Adoree began to undo the buttons at her back, but Bob seized her hands. "Let go. I'll blow up if I see that creature," she exclaimed, in a kind of subdued shout.

told her firmly: "You owe it to yourself, dear. And we won't let you go." The dancer ceased her struggles, her land shores and Adirondack camps, brows puckered.

"Seriously, now, Lorelei has told me The public has swallowed that royalty hoax, but there's no use deceiving him." Despite her show of bravery Adoree panic. was panic-stricken when the bell rang

and Bob went to the door to explain the change of plan and invite Pope in. He entered the living room with a hand extended and a smile upon his lips. then halted as if frozen. By the time he had been introduced to Adoree he had burst into a gentle perspiration. As for Miss Demorest, she took a grim delight in his discomfort, and prewither him with her contempt when their forces for a crushing assault. the moment came. Meanwhile she llstened as the two men talked, turning up her nose when Pope scored Broadway with his usual bitterness.

"He thinks that's smart," she re flected; but she, too, detested the Great with men who came and went with Trite Way, and his words expressed consternation written upon their faces. her own distaste so aptly that she biting to confound him. She dellb-"Campbell Pope; yes. I met him, and he looked hungry. He's coming his pose in the matter of dress, though undreamed of wealth. Since then the here at six." For almost the first time in frankness she had to admit that he older members of the original clique wore his gray sweater vest with an air had withdrawn one by one from active of genuine comfort and unconscious

> Pope was noticeably ill at ease. He was conscious of Miss Demorest's hoslack of repose, and offered no relief. At them quite differently. last Pope turned to the plano and fluttered through the stack of sheet music

"You look as if you did-you're kind of-badly nourished. Know any ragtime?"

As the two girls dressed hurriedly for the theater, Adoree confessed: "Golly! I'm glad I stayed. He's not bright; he's perfectly silly about some things, and yet he's the most interest-

he play a plano?"

CHAPTER XVII.

Hannibal Wharton arrived in New York at five o'clock and went directly to Merkle's bank. At eight o'clock Argument proved vain until Lorelel Jarvis Hammon died. During the afternoon and evening other financiers, summoned hurriedly from New Engwere busied in preparations for the

struggle they expected on the morrow. everything, and I want Campbell to During the closing hours of the market acknowledge his mistake," said Bob. prices had slumped to an alarming degree: a terrific raid on metal stocks had begun, and conditions were ripe for a

Hammon had bulked large in the steel world, and his position in circles of high finance had become prominent; but allve he could never have worked one-half the havoc caused by his sudden death. That persistent rumor of suicide argued, in the public mind, the existence of serious money troubles, and gave significance to the rumor that for some time past had disturbed the pared to blast him with sarcasm, to Street. Hammon's enemies summoned In this emergency Bob's father found himself the real head of those vast enterprises in which he had been an as-

sociate, and until a late hour that night he was forced to remain in consultation The amazing transformation which trust had raised many men from wellaffairs, and of the younger men only Wharton and Hammon had remained. Equally these two had figured in what was perhaps the most remarkable chaptile eyes, and the pointed manner in | ter of American financial history. Both which she ignored his presence was dis- had been vigorous, self-made, practical quieting. Bob appeared to enjoy his men. But the outcome had affected

> Riches had turned Jarvis Hammon's mind into new channels; they had opened strange pathways and projected him into a life that was in every way foreign to his early teachings. His duties kept him in New York, while Wharton's had held him in his old home. Hammon had become a

The musician groaned. After a mo- great financier; Wharton had remained ment he murmured, "I improvise a the practical operating expert, and, good deal." The instrument, perhaps owing to the exactions of his position. for the first time in its life, began to he had become linked more closely "Luck! You've both got it. She's vibrate and ring to something besides than ever to business detail. At the

"I want no notoriety, so all we need ing talker I ever heard. And-can't talk about is terms. You'll fare better



"You're Going Back to the Charlevolx Tonight."

by dealing directly with me than through lawyers-I'll fight a lawsuitso let's get down to business. You should realize, however, that these settlements are never as large as they're advertised. I'll pay you ten thonsand dollars and stand the costs of the divorce proceedings."

"You are making a mistake," she old him, quietly,

"Not at all! Not at all!" Mr. Wharton exclaimed, irritably. "I know real sentiment when I see it, and I'll foot the bill for this counterfeit, but I'm too tiled to argue."

### 

Do you believe that Lorelei can be bought off for any sum of money? Would she consent to a divorce? Has Sob won her regard?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

in Bob's society Lorelei laughed out "And I asked Adoree Demorest," she Bob grinned and then laughed with her. "Fine!" he cried. "Both members of this club. Really, this ought to make the best finish fight seen in New York for many a day."

Pransas

"Don't Weaken," He Cautioned Her.

gone home to put on a clean sweater."

"You don't mean you asked-?"

and delight. Finally she sat down

"I-I'd have brought a present if I'd

"Are you going to wish us luck?"

said.

limply.

Adoree's surprise at finding Robert Wharton in her friend's apartment was intense, and when she learned the truth he found there. she was for once in her life speechless.

"Do you play?" inquired Bob "Yes. Why?" other, wavering between consternation

She could only stare from one to the

could think of no argument sufficiently followed the birth of the glant steel erately framed a stinging reference to to-do obscurity into prominence and