

Marriage of Barry Wicklow

By RUBY M. AYRES

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(Continued in The Bee Tomorrow.)

Barry controlled his voice with difficulty. "I only heard—this afternoon—that you had left your cousin. I went there at once—to find where you were." He looked round the room, it was expensive and tastefully furnished. "Whose flat is this," he demanded. Her eyes widened.

"It's mine. Whose do you suppose it is? Delia and I quarrelled; she told me that she did not want me any longer; besides—she paused, and shrugged her shoulders. "Anyway, I should not have stayed there, as you were paying her to have me."

"She told you that?"

"Yes."

His eyes wandered over her dainty little person; it seemed impossible that this was the Hazel whom he had watched making cakes and pastries in the kitchen at Cleave Farm—the little girl in the blue pinafore who had once loved him.

"And—what is she paying you now?" he asked her, hoarsely.

She raised her head with a touch of dignity.

"Mr. Greaves is paying me a salary. I am quite independent. He is going to send me on tour next month."

She spoke quietly, but there was a faint look of anxiety in her eyes.

"He is not," said Barry.

She moved back a step.

"I don't know what you mean, but if you have come here to bully me again, it's no use. I am going to live my own life, I don't interfere with

you, you are free to go where you like and do what you like."

"And you are not," said Barry again. "And I shall not leave this flat till I take you with me."

She cried out in anger.

"You must be mad—you've no right to come here at all. I never meant you to know where I was. How dare you speak to me like this!"

He went and looked down at her angry face with unhappy eyes.

"I know you hate the sight of me," he said thickly. "But that doesn't matter. I love you, whether you believe it or not. I love you in spite of everything, as I did in the past, and I shall always love you. That's why I'm here, to prevent you from ruining your life."

There was a tragic silence when he had finished speaking. Hazel's eyes were fixed on his face; she was twisting her fingers together childishly; presently she tried to laugh.

"It all sounds very fine, but . . . There was a tap at the door."

"Mr. Hulbert," the maid announced, "the next moment Hulbert walked into the room."

He came forward with outstretched hands.

"Well, my dear," then he stopped short, saw Barry and frowned. "You, Wicklow?"

Hazel came forward.

"Mr. Wicklow, just going—he only called to see my new flat."

Barry squared his shoulders.

"I am not going," he said obstinately. "Unless you come with me."

Hulbert flushed dully; he looked from one to the other in heavy amazement.

"But—good heavens!" he began helplessly; Barry cut him short.

"I am sure you will understand, Hulbert, when I explain things a little," he said, controlling his voice with an effort. "Possibly I owe you an apology for not having told you before—that this lady—Hazel—is my wife."

CHAPTER XXV.

After the first moment of utter incredulity, Hulbert burst out laughing. "Oh, I say, Wicklow," he protested. "You must think of one better than that! You and Hazel married, that's good, that's . . ."

He broke off as Barry took a threatening step forward; he was crimson in the face, and the veins stood out like cords on his forehead.

"I tell you it's true," he said savagely. "And I'll thank you not to call my wife by her Christian name."

It was no longer possible to disbelieve him. Hulbert fell back, he

looked at Hazel, he half held his hand to her.

"It is true? Why don't you deny it?" he stammered. "Is it true that you and Wicklow's wife?"

"Yes." The monosyllable seemed forced from her. Suddenly she gave a little cry of rage, she looked up at Barry with passionate eyes. "I never wanted anyone to know, you know that. I'll never forgive you for this; you sent me to do all you can to make me hate you. Why couldn't you have let me alone, I was quite happy."

Barry did not answer. He stood with his hands thrust in his pockets, his jaw set in forbidding lines. There was a moment's unbroken silence, then Hulbert turned to the door.

"Well, I'll say good-bye," he said constrainedly. "I can only apologise for having intruded; had I known the truth I should certainly have stayed away." Hazel followed him.

"But it won't make any difference. He won't make any difference. I'm just the same—I can't help being married."

Barry laughed a grim sort of laugh with no real mirth in it.

"You married me of your own free will," he said.

"And you flashed back at him: 'And you married me because you were paid to. Why don't you tell Mr. Hulbert the truth, that you did your best to ruin my life. Surely you might leave me alone now, and give me a chance to do something for myself.'"

Hulbert came back a step. Then he met Barry's eyes and stopped. For a moment the two men looked at one another silently; then Hulbert shrugged his shoulders and, turning, walked out of the room.

Barry crossed to the door which the other had left open, and shut it with a little slam; then he came back to Hazel. He took both her wrists, drawing her hands down from her face.

"Now we're going to have this out between us like this longer. You're my wife; I've been a fool not to insist upon everybody knowing it before. Hulbert will take care that everyone hears about this, and if you leave this infernal place and come

to my rooms or anywhere else you like—"

"I'm not going anywhere with you. I didn't want anyone to know that I married you. I'm not proud of it. I was just beginning to be happy again. I know I should have made a success with Mr. Greaves; he won't want me if he knows about you."

"Greaves is no good to you, and you'd be sick to death of the stage in a month. You're not meant for that sort of life. You may think you are, but I know better. You're not the type of woman to be able to stand the life. You'll be 1,000 times happier with me."

Hazel stood quite still; and her silence encouraged him.

He went on with passionate eagerness:

"Let us wipe out the past and start again. These last weeks have just been a bad dream. I'll make you forget them; I'll teach you what happiness really means. I love you so much."

She raised her eyes to his face.

"And I don't think I ever really loved you," she said, slowly.

"Hazel!" he cried out, as if she had struck him. "You don't mean that; you're just trying to hurt me. I won't believe it. I know I deserve that you should punish me, but surely I've had enough."

"You were engaged to another woman when you came to Edmund—"

"I was not."

"You've been out with her since—you've been out with her many times since."

"That's your fault. I've been nearly mad; you wouldn't let me come near you. Take me back, Hazel, give me a chance."

"No." Her voice was hard. "It's no use. I don't want you any more. I want to live my own life. I want to be free. Mr. Greaves thinks I can make a name on the stage—it's what I've wanted all my life."

"You said once that all you wanted

was to be my wife." She flushed painfully.

"I said a lot of silly things I didn't mean. I didn't know what sort of a man you were then."

"I'm the same man I was then; I love the very ground you walk on, Hazel—if you're trying to break my heart."

"I'm not; I only want you to leave me alone."

He let her go violently.

"Leave you alone!" he echoed, passionately. "Leave you alone so that you can have Hulbert and that rotten lot hanging round here. How dare you let them call you by your Christian name? How dare you have them here to visit you? You talk to me as if I were a cad and an outsider. Wait till you get to know them better, and see what they are. If it's their money you like, they've got plenty of that I know, and I haven't a bob in the world—but you knew that to start with."

"It would have made no difference if—if you'd really cared for me. It wasn't money I wanted when I married you."

He went down on his knees beside her, encircling her with his arms. "I do care for you. I'd give 20 years of my life if I could undo all that has happened. I want nothing in the world but you, Hazel . . . Hazel . . . For God's sake . . . let me take you away!"

Hazel looked away from him; she was trembling all over. Something in his voice and the touch of his arms took her back forcibly to that night when he first said he loved her and just for an instant she wavered.

Then she broke out:

"I can't. I can't forgive you—give me a little time—leave me alone for a little—"

Barry lifted his white face.

"I've kept away from you for weeks, and it's done no good. You're learning to do without me."

It was the truth, and she knew it. Her life had been filled to overflow-

ing since she came to London. The flattery and promise of Greaves and his friends had pleased and excited her.

Ambition had crowded love out of her life. A veneer of worldliness seemed to have grown about her heart.

She remembered the story of her own mother's marriage, and she dreaded that her life would echo it. Barry would soon tire of her, so Delia declared; had done so already.

Hazel was easily influenced; though she had quarrelled with Delia, she believed that Delia was right to her worldly knowledge of men. She believed that she herself was only one of the many women whom Barry had loved in his life, and the knowledge terrified her.

She broke out desperately:

"If you'll give me a week, just another week, that isn't asking very much. I want to think it over, I want a little time."

She looked at his white face and quickly away again.

"I promise you, if you'll leave me alone, just for a week, that I'll tell you then—if . . . if I can . . . ever do what you want."

"You don't mean to come back to me," he said hoarsely.

She shivered.

"Oh, I don't know what I mean to do. It's your fault. I wanted to marry you and be happy with you, you know I did. I can't help it if you've made me change." Her voice broke. "Give me just this week, Barry—please! please!"

He walked away from her, and stood looking down at the fire, then he turned, and coming back, took her face in his hands.

"Very well—if you'll tell me something first."

"Yes."

"There isn't, there isn't—any other man?"

She did not understand.

"Any other man?" she echoed.

"Yes, anyone who's cut me out—Norman, or that brute Hulbert," he asked hoarsely. "If I thought you cared a damn for either of them

"Barry!"

"I'm sorry, but lately, somehow the greatest dread in his heart. He rushed on: 'At the end of the week, if I'm very patient, what will you tell me then?'"

But she only shook her head.

(Continued From Yesterday.)

Cigar and Gasoline Mix;

Broken Bow Judge Burned

Broken Bow, Neb., Aug. 10.—(Special.)—Judge J. M. Sullivan was seriously burned about the head and upper part of the body when his clothing caught fire while he was filling his car with gasoline. The fumes from the gas were ignited from a burning cigar.

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\$1,000 Box Car Robbery

at Alliance Fails

Alliance, Neb., Aug. 10.—(Special.)—What officers declare to be the biggest attempt of a boxcar robbery in this section of the state in recent years, is being investigated by county and railroad officials, following the finding of approximately \$1,000 worth of stolen merchandise strewn along the Burlington right-of-way, between Girard and Marsland.

Scattered along the right-of-way for nearly a mile, the officers found 25 automobile tires of various makes and a large number of cartons of cigarettes and tobacco. An automobile, abandoned by the thieves when frightened by a farmer, is being held. It bears a Box Butte county license number.

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NO COAL!

Why Not Burn Oil?

A coal shortage this winter is certain. The government is making frantic moves to end the strike. But even a complete settlement now cannot prevent a shortage. The headline over a Washington dispatch sums up the situation: "Digging of Coal to Come Slowly Is Expectation—With Prospect of a Serious Scarcity of Fuel and Higher Prices."

Read what Omaha coal men say in the World-Herald of July 25th: Clarence Kirkland says, "If the strike is not settled in 30 days Omaha will experience a very acute coal shortage." Randall K. Brown says, "If the strike continues we will have to ship coal from New Mexico and Colorado which will mean a higher price." "The local supply is very small," says Louis Nelson. L. Bailey says, "We have ten days' supply of coal on hand, and if the strike isn't settled soon I don't know where we can get any more." Many large users of coal plan to burn oil.

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We are conducting a special two weeks' drive on The Automatic Washer. Our aim

is to sell one hundred of them. To do it, we have made unusually attractive terms, \$5.00 down and \$5.00 a month. Cash price of washer, \$98.50; on terms, \$103.50.

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