

# WAR AND WITCHERY

BY PETER M'ARTHUR.

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Gladys was superstitious. But she was also young and pretty and lovable, so this trifling folly only added to her charm and made her men friends feel brave and enlightened whenever she betrayed her weakness. As a natural consequence of this peculiarity she was always afraid to sit on a dark veranda alone and would never think of going for a walk in the evening without a fearless escort. She wouldn't open an umbrella in the house, walk under a ladder or pick up a pin that lay with its head toward her, and she wouldn't sit in a room that had three lamps lit in it at once, though she didn't object strenuously to that was more dimly furnished.

Of course she was laughed at a great deal for her foolishness, but she shook her head wisely and continued to carry lucky stones in her pockets and to perform the many little rites known only to the superstitious. Knowing these things about her, the following colloquy can be more readily understood: "I just knew something would happen that would be unlucky, and now we've gone and quarreled. I saw the

new moon over my left shoulder, and because he laughed at me I know I only bowed to it seven times instead of nine before I made a wish. But he needn't have been in such a hurry about getting formally engaged, for I'm sure I've been treating him just as well as any one else, and better too. He might have known that I think more of him than any one else, and he might have waited until I was good and ready. But he just thinks that because he was at Santiago and all the girls want to kiss him he should have his own way about everything. But, oh, I do wish we hadn't quarreled, for he looked so angry that I'm sure he'll never make up friends again." And the tears came to her eyes.

The fact is that Gladys was a flirt without the slightest intention of being one, and she couldn't understand the fierce jealousy that her conduct caused in her circle of admirers. Before Lieutenant Holloway had accepted the position of commandant in the military academy on the outskirts of the town she had never had any serious trouble with her retinue. But when he appeared on the scene he promptly began, after the manner of a hero, to charge the citadel of her heart as he had the block-houses in Cuba. Like all the rest of the girls, she had worshiped him for the dangers he had passed, but her worship was the only one that appeared to interest him. He took it seriously from the beginning, and when he began to offer his worship in return she was very much flustered and very happy, but she could not be expected to drop all her other followers at once. Lieutenant Holloway, however, insisted that they be mustered out without delay, and that he want that she must settle down as being engaged, a thing she had no intention of doing for at least another couple of seasons. So when he found he couldn't have his own way he retreated in good order and entrenched himself in a dignified military reserve. Whenever he passed by her window, as he was obliged to when going to the postoffice, his head was carried a shade higher than would be demanded by a martinet, and the set of his shoulders would have satisfied even the critical Mulvaney. He walked with "eyes front," though it is just possible that he noticed the fact that the curtains usually shook as if they were being moved aside a trifle by some one who was peeping from behind them.

A week of this masterly inactivity made them both very unhappy, and the lieutenant was showing signs of attempting conquests in other quarters before Gladys realized that something must be done, though she didn't exactly know what. Of course she couldn't send for him and tell him that she was now ready to become engaged, and, if he wouldn't come of his own accord, how could a protocol ever be agreed to? There were no open hostilities, it is true, but neither was there a siege. The little war of hearts was in danger of ending in inaction, without a victory for either and with a defeat for both, so Gladys thought it all over and racked her mind for some plan that would restore the status quo. It was then she remembered that one evening when Lieutenant Holloway was laughing at her superstitions he told of an old one that was very prevalent in the

time of Catherine de' Medici, when people found it necessary to sway others secretly to their will. He told her how the astrologers used to make figures of wax or any substance that would melt readily and then destroy the person piecemeal by piercing the effigy at whatever part they wished to affect. While she was thinking of this she was looking idly from her window at the boys of the military academy, who had erected a snow fort, on the top of which they had built a square shouldered snow man. When they completed the figure, they placed a military cap on its head and attached to it a placard bearing the name "Lieutenant Holloway." Here was a figure that would surely be melted in a few days, and it was ready to her hand! Of course she did not wish to destroy her hero, but she was very anxious that his hardened heart should be materially affected, and what she should do at once became clear to her.

On the following afternoon Lieutenant Holloway was passing the snow fort on his way to the postoffice. He stopped to view the fortifications, intending to give his pupils a lecture on military engineering, and presently he noticed the placarded effigy of himself. It was rapidly melting in the afternoon sunlight, and while looking at it he noticed something peculiar in its under the left shoulder just where its frosty heart should be. Stepping nearer, he pulled out an arrow which he at once recognized as one of half a dozen that he had made for Gladys' little brother, and finding it there he was perplexed. He knew that the little man was one of his most ardent admirers and besides not wishing to do him injury would not wish to lose his arrow. While he turned it over in his hand the truth suddenly flashed on him. He remembered having told Gladys about the superstition of bewitching by effigies, and the foolish little mix had evidently acted upon it. Laughing softly to himself, he put the arrow in his pocket and went his way.

That evening Gladys was both surprised and delighted when the servant brought to her Lieutenant Holloway's card. But of course it would not do to let him know that she was glad to see him. Anyway he was under the influence of the spell, and being sure of him, she could afford to punish him somewhat before consenting to make him happy. Summoning all her staidness she went to the parlor and bowed stiffly in response to her visitor's cheery greeting. He had been thinking the matter over ever since finding the arrow and was glowing with self satisfaction owing to the conviction that she really loved him after all. But her coolness disconcerted him a trifle. Of course the evidence was solely circumstantial, but still he didn't feel that he could possibly be mistaken.

"I thought that you had forgotten your old friends," she began. "Not at all," he replied. "I was simply waiting for them to show a flag of truce."

"Why, I thought heroes never waited, and that above all they didn't accept defeat readily and beat a retreat. But I am glad to see that you have evidently accepted the terms of peace and have modified your claims. For my part, since we were good friends before

HER COOLNESS DISCONCERTED HIM A TRIFLE, you developed imperialistic tendencies I am willing to let bygones be bygones."

"But I don't want bygones to be bygones. It was because I thought—"

"Dear me! How could you do such a thing? I always understood that soldiers were not allowed to think."

"Not when under orders," he replied, "but your orders were not quite tangible enough, and I thought it allowable to use my discretion."

"But I have been told that discretion makes men retreat instead of advance. But the orders I last gave you were surely definite enough."

"But I had reason to suppose that you had either countermanded them or wished to. And I didn't feel it could be possible that after having been so dear to another you could be so cruel as to throw me over simply because I wanted to have you all to myself and to have the right to let all the world know how happy I was."

"In short, you wanted to have the

right to make all the nice fellows of my acquaintance recognize your belligerency and not let me have any more good times."

"Now, please be in earnest, Gladys, dear. You know how much I love you even though I let anger keep me away for a week and make me utterly wretched. But I wouldn't be here to-night if it were not that I knew you wanted to make up."

"What on earth is the man talking about?" said Gladys, with a pretty affection of wonder.

At this point Lieutenant Holloway began to fear that he had allowed himself to fall into an ambush, and he prepared to defend himself.

"Why," he said, "I came because I thought you wanted me."

"Dear me! What could have put that into your head? I'm sure if you didn't come because you wanted to yourself I couldn't think of detaining you for a minute. I know you are expected elsewhere and that the town is simply full of reconcentrados who are dying for your company." And as she said this her tone was decidedly irritating. The lieutenant, however, was not used to warfare of this kind, and, as he was getting the worst of it, he

decided on immediate action. Taking the arrow from his pocket, he held it out to her.

"I thought you meant this to be a token that there was to be peace between us."

Gladys blushed crimson when she saw the little splinter of wood and tried to stammer that she didn't know what he meant. Her embarrassment proved that she understood only too well, and the soldier proceeded to deliver an ultimatum at once.

"Oh, give me time to think," she replied.

"Indeed I won't. I am tired of this manana policy and will agree to nothing but unconditional surrender." Seeing that her little folly had been found out and that the lieutenant was in deadly earnest in spite of his jesting words, Gladys surrendered.

After their differences were made up and the terms of the treaty agreed to Lieutenant Holloway said laughingly: "So you actually believed all that nonsense I told you that night about bewitching with effigies and tried to destroy my heart by piercing it with an arrow—just as if you hadn't pierced it long before."

"But why shouldn't I believe in it? It brought you back, didn't it?"

"Oh, nonsense! I would have come back anyway, for I could never have lived without you."

"You were managing pretty well," she said, with a pout.

"Not nearly so well as I appeared to be, or I wouldn't have accepted the message of the arrow so readily."

"But you couldn't help yourself. You were under the spell, you know."

"Spell nothing. I can hardly believe that you put faith in that old nonsensical mummy."

"But it brought you back," said Gladys, with a wise shake of her head. And, seeing there was nothing to be gained by arguing, the hero dropped the subject and made his prisoner as comfortable as possible, as became a generous conqueror.



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UNAWARES.

A song wailed up in the singer's heart (Like a song in the throat of a bird), And loud he sang, and far it rang, For his heart was strangely stirred, And he sang for the very joy of song, With no thought of one who heard.

Within the listener's wayward soul A heavenly patience grew; He faced on his way with a benison On the singer, who never knew How the careless song of an idle hour Had shaped a life anew.

—Alice Williams Bretherton in "Poets and Poetry of Indiana."

## LOVE'S TRAGEDY.

### How a Girl Was Won.

The girl was looking out of the window, humming softly, with a fine air of indifference. The man was leaning his back against the mantelpiece, gloomily observing the points of his boots.

They were good boots, but hardly worth the amount of serious observation he was giving them. To any person of moderate understanding the situation was obvious. To the two actors in it it was becoming embarrassing. The man moved first.

"You are sure your mind is made up, Georgie?"

The girl stopped humming abruptly and turned round.

"What is the use of beginning again?" she said, with an impatient movement. "You know one cannot serve two masters. I am going to give my life to my art."

"But, Georgie, you know what it means to me. I mean you know I could never change or forget."

"Why not?" she returned quickly. "That is just what I wanted to speak to you about. You see—and her proud head was raised a trifle higher—"you only want a wife who can see that you get a good dinner every day and sew the buttons on your shirts. You have known us all for years. Why do you expect me, the impractical one of the family, to snatch at the offer of this post? You would have shown more sense in asking Madge or Lillian, and I dare say one of them might have had you."

For a moment there was a dangerous gleam in his eyes, but it changed to a tender look of amusement as the girl flung herself viciously into a chair with the air of a sulky child.

"I suppose it would have been more sensible," he agreed, "only I don't love either Madge or Lillian. If you will only have me," he continued, a twinkle in his eye and abject humility in his voice, "I will do my best to overcome my disgraceful appetite and dine off a sentimental song if you deem it best. I will also look out for some patent shirt fasteners which will save you the trouble of sewing on buttons."

Georgie looked up quickly.

"You needn't try to be funny, Rex!" she said severely. "You know quite well I should have to become a domesticated woman if I married, and I won't. I am going to devote my life to music, and if I were to sacrifice that and marry you I should stop loving you in a fortnight and hate you in a month. There; that's all!"

Rex looked up quickly.

"You would stop loving me in a fortnight?" he asked. "Then I may infer you have begun already?"

"You may infer nothing, sir!" she retorted sharply, but her face was crimson.

"By Jove, that's the nearest I've ever got!" thought Rex. "I believe she does half like me, but must make her cave in before she'll respect me."

There was a moment's pause, then he said gently:

"I beg your pardon, Georgie. I believe you may be right, after all, though it is hard to think of giving you up." And he sighed softly, but resignedly. "If you are not too angry with me, will you tell me which you think it would be best for me to try to like, Lillian or Madge?"

"I am so glad, Rex, you are sensible at last! Really, I have thought it out carefully, and, though Lillian is awfully sweet and—and everything, I think Madge is the one best suited to you. You see, she cooks splendidly and knows exactly how everything ought to be done in a house and would be perfectly satisfied if you kissed her once a month or so and occasionally said the dinner was excellent. She really would, she is so easily pleased. While I— Well, you know what I am."

"Yes, I know what you are," he replied quietly. "You are very young."

She misunderstood him as he had intended she should, and assented eagerly.

"Yes, I am young—only 19—and you are nearly 30. Madge is nearest you in age, and I believe you could make her love you if you tried."

"Shall I try? Do you want me to?"

"Yes, of course I want you to. It is for your own sake. She would make you a better wife than I because I don't want even to be loved. I am satisfied with my life as it is."

"All right, Georgie. In a month I shall have made up my mind, and I will tell you. Goodbye."

"Goodbye," she murmured, vaguely afraid of what she had done. She tried to reason out the cause of her depression, but it seemed to have no cause, and with a lagging step she made her way to the sunny den which she shared with her sisters.

Madge was sitting there alone, sewing and singing gaily. She looked up, with a smile, as Georgie entered, and an unusual merriment danced in her eyes.

"Guess who's been here?" exclaimed Madge.

"Who?"

"Rex. And he's got a box for 'The Loves of Henrietta' tomorrow, and he's asked mother and me to go."

"I'm so glad," said Georgie, but with singular want of enthusiasm.

And Madge stole a furtive look at her, and the corners of her mouth quivered.

A month had passed. Once more Georgie stood at the same window, softly humming. She was waiting for Rex, and her face was very pale. It was the same face still, but there was a difference, the difference which marks every girl's face when she becomes a woman.

She had learned her lesson and borne her punishment in silence.

Today she had nerved herself for a supreme effort that she might do no wrong to the sister who had stepped into the place she had voluntarily resigned.

She had thought love not worth the sacrifice of art, and if art without love had turned to dust and ashes in her hand who was to blame but herself?

She was waiting for Rex—Rex, who had fallen such a helpless victim to Madge that he had had scarcely a look or a word to spare for her the whole month. It was this that had first taught her what she had lost and that had afterward nerved her to play her part for a week's experience had taught her that it was only a part—of careless indifference and entire absorption in her art.

When it seemed too hard for her, she reminded herself sternly of her own words, "I am satisfied with my life as it is."

"They shall never see I am not satisfied," she said and struggled on.

Today there was a set, stern look on her face, for this was to be the supreme ordeal, and at present there was no one to see her. But as she leaned her head listlessly against the window there came from the hall the sound of a familiar whistle, and instantly her expression changed. A smiling, expectant face greeted Rex as he entered, and she scrutinized him with playful anxiety.

"The funeral and wedding marches are side by side on the piano," she began, with an affected attempt at seriousness, "but I was waiting to choose between them till I have seen your face."

"What does my face tell you?" he asked.

She looked at him critically.

"That the momentous question is to be asked no later than this evening," she replied. "Good luck attend you."

"Wrong. Try again."

"Is it possible it is to be postponed till tomorrow morning?" And she held out her hand with a playful gesture of sympathy.

"Wrong again. I see I must tell you."

He had seized the hand she had offered and was looking her straight in the face.

"What do you say to the question having been asked already?"

"The last month had wrought many changes in Georgie. She had, for one thing, learned to keep her face under control, and only the slightest trembling of the eyelid showed that she was taken by surprise.

"My dear brother to be," she said, regarding possession of her hand, "I consider I have been grossly ill treated in having this fact sprung upon me so suddenly. I had heard of a delightful little book called 'The Right Word in the Right Place'—a help to those people born devoid of tact. I was going to purchase it in the assurance that I should find a paragraph entitled, 'What to say to that effect, and now you pounce upon me like this and crush me. I feel unfit for conversation. You had better go.' And she turned majestically away.

"I will. Only you must first allow me to make one remark. You did not ask what Madge said to me." He paused impressively. "She has refused me."

It was his trump card, and he was growing desperate. He took advantage of Georgie's back being still turned toward him, and, creeping softly behind her, took one glance at her face before she knew he had moved.

It was enough.

"Georgie," he cried, "hasn't the play gone far enough? I am tired of acting, and I want you, Georgie—I can't tell you how much I want you!" There was passionate entreaty in his voice.

"What did you mean?" she asked slowly, "by saying you were 'tired of acting?' I don't understand."

"No, I know," he answered guiltily. "I've got to tell you. Madge and I have been playing at being lovers during the last month. I have even asked her to marry me, and she has refused. It was the natural climax to the play, she said, and she told me to do it, because nothing else would put you off your guard. I had to know whether you loved me or not," he ended desperately.

"It was very cruel," she whispered at last.

"Ah, Georgie, don't!" he entreated. "I thought of that, but, honestly, would you ever have known you loved me if we had gone on in the same old way?"

There was a moment's silence.

"I should never have known I loved you," she answered softly.—Chicago Times-Herald.

Rest Your Eyes.

The moment you are instinctively inclined to rub the eyes that moment cease to use them; also it is time to give your eyes a rest when you become sensible of an effort to distinguish. Cold water is about the safest application for inflamed eyes. Never sleep so that on awakening the eyes shall open on the light of a window. Never read or sew directly in front of the light of a window, the better light being that that comes from above or obliquely or over the left shoulder. Too much light is an evil, just as is scant light. It creates a glare that pains and confuses the sight.

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