

# Gloria's Romance

By Mr. and Mrs. Rupert Hughes

## Hidden Fires

Novelized from the Motion Picture Drama of the Same Name by George Kleins. FEATURING THE NOTED STARS, MISS BILLIE BURKE. Copyright, 1916, by Adelaide M. Hughes.

### SIXTH INSTALLMENT.

The sudden and perilous illness of Gloria Stafford threw her official lover, Freneau, also into a sudden and perilous situation. He and his partner, Mulry, had counted on using Freneau's engagement to the daughter of the great Pierpont Stafford as a kind of collateral at the bank. When the girl was stricken down with pneumonia, Freneau's heart was wrung as well as his purse. He was genuinely in love with Gloria. It was not hard to love so beautiful, so rich, and so infatuated a girl. But he had not counted on death as a possible rival.

And there was another, a more certain rival—Dr. Stephen Royce—whom Gloria's brother David had called in to take charge of the case. Royce had loved Gloria before Freneau ever saw her. It was Royce who had actually saved her from the Seminole Indians. Royce despised Freneau and had told him so. Royce would not even permit Freneau to enter the sick room, where he was master.

Freneau was permitted to send up flowers, but he could not be sure that they reached her. He wondered what Royce was saying about him to Gloria and whether she believed it.

He did not know that Royce had been discouraged to make even what protest he might have given voice to. When he first entered Gloria's room Royce saw on the little table near her bed a silver-framed portrait of Freneau. Gloria was too delicious to see how his lip curled with scorn. But her father saw it, and when Royce said, "This fellow is a scoundrel," Pierpont answered, sternly: "I called you to treat my daughter's health, not her heart."

Freneau did not know that he had such an ally in the family. But he knew that he had an enemy of a peculiar sort, an enemy who loved him not wisely, but too well. And that was Lois, the wife of David Stafford.

The poor Don Juan of a Freneau had never dreamed when he began his casual flirtation with Lois that she would prove so desperate a worshipper. He had expected that she would let him go with a sigh or a smile, as his other sweethearts had done when they realized that his heart had wings and used them. He was to learn how seriously Lois took his attentions and to learn it at a most inconvenient time. He had respected Pierpont's wish that the engagement to Gloria should be kept secret, and had told no one but his partner, Mulry. He had most decidedly not told Lois. He was planning to discard her as gracefully as possible before the news broke.

Mulry had chuckled with joy at the news of the engagement. But he grew as glum as an owl when he learned of Gloria's illness. At length he said to Freneau:

"My boy, you've got to go and borrow of your papa-in-law to be, or we've got to close the bank. Our branch offices are howling for their back pay, and we've got to pull down some cash somewhere or pull down the blinds. Go talk to Pierpont and show him the books. Show him the big killing we're going to make in the street if he'll tide us over. Go on, and come back with the bacon, or don't come back at all."

Freneau would almost rather have gone to the electric chair, but needs must when the devil drives. So he took a big bouquet and a big ledger and a taxicab to the Stafford house. And whom should he meet as he was ushered in but Lois telling Pierpont good-by. And what should Pierpont say but, "I am here to tell you a great secret, Lois. Dick, here, is engaged to Gloria. Don't tell anyone."

Lois had no more self-control than to topple over. Freneau was disgusted with her more than ever now. She had enough presence of mind to blame her collapse on the heat of the room and her alarm for Gloria. And the excuse sufficed for old Stafford, but as she left she gave the sadly shaken Freneau a look that said, "Oh, no, I won't tell anyone, but I'll tell you something."

That was what her eyes said, while her lips said: "Congratulations to you both. I'm sure you'll be very happy, Goody."

Freneau's heart fluttered still more when he broached the subject of the loan to Pierpont—broke to Pierpont the unpleasant news that his new son-in-law's first act was to borrow money. He put it on a business basis, but Pierpont, like most other millionaires, hated to be sponged on and he shook his head in answer to Freneau's proposition.

Freneau was in a pitiable plight. He was about to sink away in despair when he happened to think to say: "You offered me a reward for the rescuing of Gloria from the Indians. I refused the money then, so I thought that now—perhaps—well—I thought—"

"That's true," said Pierpont. "That suggests a way out of it. Your proposition does not appear to be a business sense, but I can do this. I'll pay you double the reward with compound interest for five years. That will square us up."

Freneau smiled with a renewal of hope and Stafford wrote him an important check.

Freneau thanked him, promised to return the money and left the bouquet for Gloria. As he made his way out of Gloria's room, Freneau hated the sight of Royce for many reasons. He usually hate people we have wronged. He managed to ask how Gloria was. Royce said she was better, but not yet out of danger. A curious look came over his face as he added:

"Look here, Freneau, I don't like you a little bit, but Gloria loves you a lot. I don't see why, but she does. Women are peculiar. Now, I'd rather break my own heart than hers. She wants you for a husband, and if you'll play fair and walk straight from now on, I'll do nothing to interfere with your plans. But if you play false with her, I'll—well—there's nothing I won't do to save her from you."

Freneau promised glibly that he would be an ideal lover and a "model" of loyalty. Royce said: "I hope so, without much hope, and 'You'd better' with rather too much emphasis. Well, Freneau had the check in his pocket, and he went back to his office with false bacon. Mulry made him so certain that he forgot other troubles



"BEAUTIFUL," GROANED DR. ROYCE. SHE WAS TOO HAPPY TO HEAR THE SORROW IN HIS VOICE. SHE MERELY EXCLAIMED: "HURRY UP, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, AND GET ME WELL."

in the radiance of the new business plans.

But his promise to Royce was put to the test at once, for that very afternoon, when he reached his apartment, Lois appeared there. She was heavily veiled, but Freneau's valet seemed to know her. He backed out discreetly. When Lois threw off the shroud her face was terrible in its resolution.

"You shan't marry Gloria, Dick," she said. "You shan't throw me over—not for her! You shan't marry her of all the people in the world."

Freneau was tired of Lois and tired of interference. He forgot to be gentle. He laughed.

"No! And how are you going to stop me?" Lois' cold, hard answer bowled him over. "Even Gloria can't be so crazy about you that she would marry you if I Freneau stared at her aghast. He could not quite be sure of her meaning till he saw a little phial in her hand. He leaped for it. But she dodged round his desk and put it to her lips.

"Don't you come near me or you'll wish you hadn't," she cried. "If you take another step I'll swallow this."

Freneau had to temporize with the mad woman. He surrendered weakly and dropped into a chair.

"Listen to me, Lois," he pleaded. "I went to her father to borrow money. I've got to have his support or go bankrupt. If I do that I'll blow my brains out. Of course, I don't love Gloria. My heart is yours. But I can't marry you. If I marry her she won't interfere with your love and mine. We shall be all the safer. If you love me, you won't ruin me. If you don't love me, give me the phial and I'll get out of your way."

She was in so insane a mood of jealousy and longing that she believed him. She made him swear that he spoke the truth, as if an oath or two meant anything to him. Then she suffered herself to remain his dupe, and he took her down to a taxicab, feeling sure that he was well rid of her.

When she had gone he breathed more easily. He even laughed. He had everybody working for him. His rival, Royce, was toiling to save Gloria's life. His ex-flame, Lois, was in league with him to keep up the deception. Gloria's father was lending him money. He was plainly a child of destiny.

He was so reassured by his luck that he made a holiday with Mulry, who had planned to start off at once on a round of the different cities where they had branch offices for the convenience of victims who lived far from New York.

Ignorance may be bliss, but it is not preparedness. Freneau was blissful in his belief that Lois was quieted. He did not dream, nor did she, that David Stafford was now awakened. When Freneau took Lois to the taxicab, she lowered her veil, but a veil is only a partial disguise at best, and it may attract attention. Neither Freneau nor Lois noted that a certain Mrs. Coleridge was passing, or that she stared hard. Mrs. Coleridge was one of the prettiest faces in Freneau's pack of discarded. She was a sort of female Freneau, but in Freneau she had met her match, because she allowed herself to be more thrilled than thrilling. He had passed on without a long pause before her shrine.

Mrs. Coleridge had seen Freneau with Lois at various tea dances and she recognized Lois all the more readily for her veil. She was outraged in her finest sensibilities. She felt it her duty that Lois was punished. She did not want to appear as a complaining witness, but her righteous indignation carried her to a large hotel in whose writing room she found pen, ink, paper, envelopes and secrecy. She dashed off a little note to David advising him that his wife was showing more interest than he might approve in a certain heart-breaker. Mrs. Coleridge neglected to sign her name.

In fact, she rather disguised her handwriting, though this made little difference, since David did not know it, anyway. She dropped the little letter into a mail box with the innocent glee of an anarchist slipping a bomb with a time fuse under a millionaire's automobile.

The United States postoffice authorities carried the loaded letter to David's office for her. He opened it and read it, but could not understand it. He read it again and understood it, but could not believe it. He was about to toss it in the wastebasket, where such messages belong. He read it again. It threw him into a black pit of agony and consternation.

Now, he could, but would not, believe it. He wondered who the "heart-breaker" might be. He remembered that Lois had been fond of Freneau years before. He dismissed this suspicion with contempt. He loathed the letter. Only cowards and mischief-makers write such letters. He threw this one from him as if it were something unclean. Yet the anonymous poison gnawed away in his brain. He clenched and unclenched his hands and paced the floor, beads of perspiration dripping down his face.

At last he fought it out with himself and decided that he would trust Lois till she was proved unworthy. However, the letter seemed to whisper to him, "A little test will do no harm."

Of course, Lois was guiltless, but perhaps she had been careless of appearances. It would be better to wait and rebuke the indiscretion when it occurred. He had been talking of a trip south to a meeting of a board of railroad directors on which his father had placed him. It was not necessary for him to go. But he might pretend that it was and tell Lois goodby and pretend to leave and then— He dared not put the scheme into words. But he dared not let the chance go past to make sure.

That evening when he went home Lois greeted him with her usual warmth. Before he had quite decided what to do he had told her that he was called south for ten days and he had not urged her to go with him. She did not ask to go. In fact, he thought that she took the bad news with just a little too much philosophy. He was tormented with shame and suspicion.

The next day, when he went to his office, he bade her goodby as if he were the criminal and she the saint. He could not have imagined that Lois would wait his departure to fling on her hat and her veil and speed to Freneau before he should leave for his own office.

She found him and she gave her a cold welcome. When she told him that David was to be in the far south for a week, he did not seem to be interested. When she rejoiced that now they could be together without the annoyance of David's presence, Freneau solemnly reminded her of the danger from gossips and servants. He must walk warily, now that he was betrothed to a bank account like Stafford's.

To this Lois made the astonishing answer that if New York was too full of spies, she would go elsewhere. She reminded him of a beautiful village in the Catskill mountains, and declared it her intention of paying it a visit; also she advised Freneau to happen there at the same time—his fiancée, Gloria, was too ill to see him, anyway, and he could give a business trip as an excuse.

Freneau was indignant, but Lois was dangerous. She threatened him again with the awful weapon of suicide, against which there was no defense. He realized that he was the prey of a kind of blackmailer. He had once thought of Lois as a conquest to be proud of; now he saw that he himself was the victim and she the tyrant. With one rash act she could not only destroy herself but all Freneau's plans.

Again he surrendered. Surrender

was becoming a habit. He made one condition, that they should take along the letters they had exchanged and destroy them. He wanted no written evidence of his past to imperil his future. Lois consented, and hurried away, rejoicing.

She left Freneau in a mood of black rage and remorse. The quality of his remorse was shown in his meditations. He thought of the many women he had dealt with lightly, and he wondered if any more of them would arise to threaten his security as a son-in-law of Pierpont Stafford.

That very day the most pitiful of his conquests appeared. Nell Trask had learned from a newspaper that her father had been knocked down by an automobile and taken to a hospital. She visited him there. His bodily injuries were not serious, but he was brooding so bitterly over Freneau that Nell began to fear for his reason. He told her that he had seen Freneau and had denounced him and Freneau had struck him in the face. Old Trask was not of the sort that conceals a family dishonor; he burned to avenge it. He whispered to Nell that he would reach Freneau yet and strangle him like a dog. She feared both for her own father and for the father of her dead child. She thought of writing Freneau to warn him, but that might only lead him to persecute her father. Perhaps if she begged him to marry her he would be rich enough now. She found out Freneau's address with little difficulty and appeared at his door soon after Lois had left him, in an ugly mood. The apparition now of so humble an incident in his past as the daughter of a bargeman was too disgusting to endure.

When the valet opened Freneau's door Nell slipped past him and ran straight to Freneau. He could not even pretend the ordinary courtesies. He would not listen to her. He ordered his valet to bundle her out and to take his own two-week's notice.

Nell had no more fight in her than a violet. Like a violet, she bloomed to be trodden on or plucked for a moment and tossed aside. She drifted back to the shabby barge moored at the dock and waited for her father to return "home."

Freneau, raging and calling himself a fool, drove his arms into the overcoat his man held for him and left for his office, wondering whether he was to be compelled to close up the office because of the follies he had committed. He agreed that flirtation was a poor business.

All this while Gloria lay in her bed



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steam radiator without even rumpling my frock, and there I found Dick so lonely and forlorn as never was. When he saw me he nearly expired of joy.

Then I took him by the hand and floated with him through the wall and across the roof to the darlingest little church. The darlingest little minister floated through the pulpit and then—dog on it!—I had to go and wake up. But wasn't it a beautiful dream?"

"Beautiful," groaned Dr. Royce. She was too happy to hear the sorrow in his voice. She merely exclaimed: "Hurry up, for heaven's sake, and get me well."

And, like a dutiful young physician, he promised. But he wondered whether it was kindness or not to restore her to the world where dreams do not often come true—unless they are bad dreams. (To Be Continued.)

## Girl Workers Who Win The Movie Actress Achieves Success

By JANE M'LEAN.

Margaret was like hundreds of other girls carried away by the spirit of the times. She was determined to be independent and she wanted her independence to glitter with romance and team with excitement. In short she wanted to go into the movies.

Now, if Margaret had been young and foolish her longing for excitement might have brought her much in the way of unpleasant experience. But Margaret was fairly level headed and not easily carried away by affairs of the heart.

She was rather a striking looking girl, with a beautiful complexion and the well-groomed appearance which is so obvious among the better class of New York girls. Therefore she had two assets in her favor toward success, and she was determined to try her luck.

Margaret's mother was plainly worried. The idea of a daughter in the movies looked rather alarming to her, but she did not oppose the matter when she saw that Margaret had made up her mind. She was a tactful mother and said very simply:

"If you make good in that field it is just as good as any other."

Margaret's mother hardly believed what she had said, but she knew her daughter very well, and was determined not to oppose her. Margaret herself beamed in response.

"Of course, it's a good field, mother. I know that it must seem strange to you and dad, but every girl can't teach school or learn to make hats. I want to do what I am called to do, and it seems that I simply must make good in the movies."

Down at the moving picture studio Margaret was only one of a hundred other pretty girls. The one thing that distinguished her from the rest was her daintiness, and the fact that she refrained from giggling a lot and talking in rapturous tones about the star. She looked like a girl who meant business, and was in consequence one of the supers chosen for a banquet scene.

"Four of the tallest girls at this table," yelled the director from the end of the long room. "The girl with the hair, will you come up, please, your hair ought to register well; sit here, please," and Margaret, cheeks flushed and breath coming hard, sat at the first table and ate make-believe dishes and drank make-believe wine to the click of the moving picture camera as the picture was filmed.

"You're a new girl here, aren't you?" said the director, pausing by her side some time later. "Do you think you'll like the movies?"

The man made the remark to be kind, and Margaret seized her opportunity with both hands. "I know I shall like the movies," she said promptly. "I have determined

to make good. Will you give me a chance?"

"Never had any experience before?" "No, but we all have to begin some time," she answered.

"Well, I might try you. There's a small part in a picture we are taking tomorrow. You'll have to go in rags and play a gray-haired mother."

The man was watching her narrowly. He expected her to back out gracefully, as they all did when they found that all acting in the movies does not necessarily mean a satin gown and a handsome lover.

"I'll be only too glad to," said Margaret promptly, "and thank you so much."

"Just a minute, young lady. I'm going to try you, and if you make up your mind to stick you'll make good. The thing to do in this world is to choose a profession and then stick to it through thick and thin. If you think this is your profession, stick to it. You'll find plenty of people to help an earnest worker. All right, 9 o'clock tomorrow. Don't think me, just work hard, keep cheery and, above all, act naturally."

And Margaret walked home with her feet on the earth and her head in the clouds, sure that she could make good in the field she had chosen.

## Advice to Lovelorn By Beatrice Fairfax

An Engagement Reception. Dear Miss Fairfax: My engagement reception will be held in a ball room of a hotel, from 3 in the afternoon until 6. Would it look well not to have dancing? Kindly let me know what is proper to wear, an evening dress or an afternoon dress? And about my fiancé, does he have to wear full dress? Could I wear a hat in the ball room, and is it proper for me to carry a bouquet, or shall I only wear a corsage bouquet? V. B.

Even in this modern day, when the world has gone dance mad, I think an engagement reception is much more dignified if there is no dancing. However, let your inclination decide the matter for you. The question of propriety is not involved. As a general rule the bride-to-be wears an evening dress even at an afternoon reception. With this no hat is worn. I think an armful of flowers looks rather prettier than a corsage bouquet. Your fiancé must not wear a full dress suit—full dress is reserved for evening occasions. Frock coat and striped trousers is the regulation costume.

Formal Dress for Men. Dear Miss Fairfax: Please tell me the proper dress for the bridegroom, best man and music guests at a wedding on Sunday at 4 in the afternoon? H. E.

Frock coat, striped trousers, patent leather shoes with cloth tops, wine collar and pale gray Ascot tie are the proper costume for men on any formal afternoon occasions. Be this should be applicable to groom, best man and wedding guests.



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