

Gloria's Romance

By Mr. and Mrs. Rupert Hughes

The Floating Trap

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

FOURTEENTH INSTALLMENT.

"Thank heaven, nobody knows of your escapade," Pierpont Stafford was just saying to his daughter Gloria. She had declined to be frightened by his scowl and had almost won him to a smile across his breakfast coffee cup when his eyes fell on the headlines of the morning paper. He nearly went over backward. The butler, who was stealing a glimpse of the headlines over his master's shoulder, nearly went over forward.

Pierpont threw the paper down in a rage. Gloria picked it up, and what she read eased her mischievous smile with one whisk. This is what she read:

POLICE NET GLORIA STAFFORD

Millionaire's Beautiful Daughter, a Recent Debutante, Is Caught in Raid on East Side Dance Hall.

Dr. Stephen Royce Battered in Brawl.

Gloria was stupefied. She sat in a daze while her father went through the other papers. Equally hateful headlines or worse were in all of them. He pushed them before her. She pushed them to the floor. Then brother David came in, his hat and overcoat still on. He carried a bundle of papers, too. He was furious. Gloria meekly waived him and his papers away.

Pierpont glowered at her. David sat down and glowered at her. The miserable silence was invaded by the second man who appeared and reported:

"If you please, sir, there's an army of reporters at the door."

Gloria threw up her hands in surrender. David sprang to his feet. Pierpont pushed him back and stalked out in a towering fury. He ordered the newspaper raiders off. They bombarded him with questions. He had to take refuge in the house. He returned to the dining room livid with wrath. He ordered the servants out. He thundered at Gloria.

"Now you see what would have happened if you had told the police about your delirium!"

He stormed on, Gloria trying vainly to break in. At last he was exhausted and she spoke:

"But, daddy, it was no delirium. I saw poor Dick murdered. Last night proved it, for I saw the man who killed him. Why did the judge let him go. Why don't you want him captured?"

Pierpont stared at her, then took her to the window and pointed to the crowd of reporters. He shook the newspapers under her eyes, saying:

"My one and only reason for silence is this publicity. It is horrible!"

To one of Gloria's training and position the reporters were almost more perilous than the police.

Gloria apologized and tried to soothe her father by promising him that she would lead the most quiet of lives thereafter, though she made the mental reservation that nothing should stop her pursuit of her lover's slayer.

Suddenly she started and pointed out of the window at two forlorn, ragged figures strolling up the drive as if they had wandered from the slums and were lost. They were the waiter, Casimir, and his little boy, Stas, whom Gloria had befriended at the night court. She had forgotten them and now they arrived at the most inopportune moment. Casimir had Gloria's card in his hand. He saw the reporters and grew uneasy. He pushed through and rang the doorbell. Gloria insisted on their admission and greeted them warmly.

Pierpont stared at the shabby waiter in disgust. He looked at his watch. He started to go. Gloria nabbed him. She told him that she had promised the waiter a job. Pierpont said he had no jobs for waiters. Then he ordered Gloria to lunch with him at the Bankers' club.

"The very idea," she exclaimed. "Get Casimir a job there."

"In those clothes?" Pierpont exclaimed. "Buy him a new outfit," was Gloria's alarm.

Pierpont was enraged, but she had her way as usual, and he motioned the waiter to come with him. Casimir kissed Gloria's hand. The boy tried to follow him and hung to him in terror. Gloria knelt down and called to the boy, Stas, ran to her and let Casimir go with Pierpont.

Gloria led the child to the window. They waved good-by to their two parents, so different in character and estate. Gloria laughed aloud as she saw her father issue from the house with Casimir, brush through the gauntlet of reporters, and motion Casimir into his car. She was educating her father to be as democratic as she was.

The boy Stas looked about the room as if he were in heaven and Gloria the winged angel that flew there with him. He threw his arms around her again lest he fall back to earth. The butler in horror took the boy's dirty hand from Gloria's shoulder and tried to cleanse it on a napkin. It blackened the napkin, but the hand was not visibly bleached.

Gloria laughed, put the boy in a chair at the table, and called for finger bowls. The butler brought two. Gloria called for soap and a towel. This was appalling. The butler almost mutinied. Then she washed the child's hands with the soap in the finger bowls. They turned out to be surprisingly white.

She drew a wet towel down his cheek and it left a white canal. She laughed again, but more soberly. She pondered a minute, then made up her mind and motioned to the butler. "Griggs, what he needs is a bath. You may give him one."

Old Griggs muttered and shook his head. Gloria gave him one of the looks she ruled her father with. "Run along now, while I telephone for a complete trossouage for him."

could not possibly wait! She banged the receiver on the hook and ran through the telephone book until she found the number of a large men's furnishing establishment. A dainty gentleman answered the telephone. His voice revealed awe, then delight, when he learned who was addressing him.

"Send me several of everything a boy has to have," Gloria demanded. When the clerk ventured to ask what his measurements were, Gloria answered: "Measurements? How do I know? Do you have to have them?"

When he said he did Gloria called for her maid, a pencil, a tape measure, a piece of paper, and ran to the servants' quarters. She was about to enter one of the doors when she caught a glimpse that made her retreat.

Old Griggs, with coat off, sleeves rolled up, and a towel for apron, was just lowering the boy into the steaming water. He dropped the boy with a splash and, whirling, flung himself against the door. He spoke through it in a shocked manner, motioning the boy to hide in the suds. Gloria explained. Griggs opened the door a little and clutched the tape measure. He took the boy's dimensions and called them out to Gloria, who repeated them to her secretary-maid. Griggs had to thrust his arms into the water two or three times to reach the boy's knees and heels. He was most unhappy.

Gloria ran back to the telephone and resumed negotiations with the clerk. When he had transcribed the numbers, he promised to deliver the goods in a jiffy. A jiffy is a long time to a boy just out of a tub, and when Griggs explained to Gloria that Stas' entire wardrobe consisted of a Turkish towel and two safety pins, she had more thinking to do. She solved the problem by sending her maid to fetch a pair of her silk pajamas.

By and by there was a knock at the door, and Griggs carried in Master Stas. The pajamas were worlds too big for him, but he was almost unrecognizably improved—white and pink with curls of gold and the eyes of a cherub. The laundries do not always send things back better than they went, but Stas had gone in a grimy pauper and he came back a prince. Gloria embraced him, called to the maid for a pair of her satin mules for his bare feet, and took him in her lap and combed his curls. She was her new doll, and she wept a little into those curls to think that she would never have a child of her own.

She remembered her own childhood and the nursery where she and her brother had been indulged in every toy that money could buy or ingenuity invent.

She hastened up to the great room which she had not visited for years. Poor Stas had never had any nursery besides the streets or any toy except some pitiful makeshift. He did not really know how to play. Gloria had to teach him. He was an apt pupil with the horn and the drum. He pounded and blew until Gloria covered her ears. He tried to climb the hobby horse with the drum still on. He got off head first on the other side, but he soon mastered the fierce steed.

His attention was attracted by a picture of Indians on the walls. They were doing a scalp-tango about a white captive. Stas wanted to know all about it. He had thought Gloria an angel before, but she grew still more wonderful when he learned that she had never been honored by being tied to a stake. She saved herself a little by explaining: "I might have been worse than tied to a stake if I hadn't been rescued by Mr. Fre— I mean, Doctor Royce."

Then she fell into such a deep meditation that Stas could hardly recall her to finish the story. It was not yet ended when the butler and the second man marched in with two trunks of pasteboard boxes—Stas' trossouage had arrived.

Now there was excitement, indeed, and Gloria and Stas forgot the mere Indians in the thrill of dressing and being dressed. Gloria began to fear that she had adopted a hopeless fool when she saw how Stas strutted in his finery. In his knickers and frilled shirt, his starched collar, silk tie, patent leather shoes, and derby hat, he looked like a pocket Beau Brummel. And then her rapture turned to alarm. The boy began to cough, to turn red and purple in the face, and to shake with paroxysms.

"O, dear! O, dear!" Gloria moaned: "he's had a bath, and it's given him pneumonia. The doctor! Quick, I must get him to the doctor!"

Dr. Stephen Royce was trying to practice the proverb, "Physician, heal thyself." He was dressing the wounds of battle he had received the night before in Gloria's defense. He was plastering his fist and approving it for its good work when a caller found. She had repented of her affair with the dead Freneau and was trying to live it out. Idleness was both temptation and distress. She wanted to know if there was not some work she could do. Royce told her that there were always poor people in plenty and lonely sick. He gave her the address of some of his patients who would never pay, but whom he treated with none the less care.

As she was leaving she met Gloria coming in with the boy. Royce was disgusted because Gloria looked angry. He should have been delighted at the hint of possible jealousy. Gloria coldly informed him of the boy's bath and its terrible consequences. She made the boy cough for the doctor. Royce did not seem to be as much impressed as Gloria had been. He set the boy to laughing and got him to put out his tongue by making faces at him which the boy mocked. Then he said:

"It's nothing. Just a little tickling in the throat, eh?"



IN THE MAJESTIC BLUE DINING ROOM OF THE BANKERS' CLUB GLORIA FOUND CASIMIR ALREADY INSTALLED.

twice. You fought for me then, why against me now?"

He answered sadly, "I am not fighting against you, Gloria. Some day you will know it, but not from me."

Gloria went out sadly and Royce indulged in a little delirium of his own, cursing his luck in managing always to have his devotion misunderstood. He was glad that Lois repeated his liaison with Freneau, but he wished that she had chosen some other person for father confessor or some other time to call.

In the majestic blue dining room of the Bankers' club, Gloria found Casimir already installed. Pierpont's influence had secured the engagement for him and money had provided the neat costume that changed Casimir almost as much as Stas had been changed on a chair for Stas and motioned Casimir to lift him into it. Casimir had not yet recognized his own boy, disguised as he was with a bath and rich men's clothes. But Stas recognized his father and hugged him with vigor to the amazement of Aunt Hortensia, who had been invited to the luncheon so that she and Pierpont might agree on some new interest for Gloria. They agreed to postpone the task till after luncheon. By that time Gloria had flown, and she never did learn what Aunt Hortensia meant to propose.

As the luncheon neared its last course, Casimir was beckoned out by an anxious-looking waiter. When he returned he was evidently suffering a great emotional strain. He made blunders and was so excited that when Pierpont rebuked him Gloria took pity on him and asked him what the trouble was. The captain was agast. For a waiter to have personal troubles during a meal was as bad as for a soldier to stop a battle to write a letter home. But Gloria was "she who must be obeyed."

Casimir told her that he had just received word that his wife had been sent back from the hospital. He broke down and clung to the weeping Stas.

Gloria could not understand. She said: "But I should think you would be glad to have your wife sent back."

"No, no," sobbed Casimir. "Poor people who are going to die are sent away from the hospital so they will not die there."

Gloria was furious. She proposed to investigate the hospitals and turn out the fiends in charge. Meanwhile she insisted on going to Casimir's home and talking Casimir with her. She paid only to telephone Doctor Royce to meet her there. He was difficult to understand as a man, but as a doctor he was ideal. So Gloria dashed away with Casimir and Stas, while Hortensia and Pierpont held up their hands in despair of her.

When Gloria's chauffeur and footman heard the address she gave them they thought they had misunderstood. She repeated it in most positive tones. They raised their eyebrows in a way that insinuated, "What next?"

Coincidences do happen now and then in real life—not quite so often or so gracefully as in fiction, and coincidences make life what it is. And so it chanced that the murderer of Dick Freneau, whom Gloria had followed from the night court, had found a hiding place in the same block where Casimir lived.

Gloria recognized the region as her limousine turned into it. She recognized the saloon and dance hall where she had found and lost her man. But she did not recognize the murderer's daughter in the crowd that gathered about the unusual limousine when it drew up along the garbage cans.

Nell Trask was looking for her father, and she paused to see the fine lady descending from the palace car. In Nell's arms was the child of Richard Freneau, a beautiful creature like its father, Gloria, hurrying through the crowd, could not help pausing to admire the baby and to tweak the little finger it upheld. There for a moment the two women paused with Dick Freneau's child between them; and neither dreamed that the other had ever heard of him. Gloria passed on into the tenement and Nell went to seek her father.

When Gloria was led up and up a gloomy staircase to the one dismal, barren room which Casimir and his wife and their child had had to call home, she felt that she had no right to complain of any woes that had befallen her.

not to lose this precious chance. She obeyed impulse.

Without pausing to inform the chauffeur, Gloria opened the door, dropped out, and ran after the Trasks. She picked them up again after a while. She saw a policeman. She resolved to order him to arrest the criminal. As she hesitated, she saw Trask stop and tenderly relieve the weary Nell of her baby's weight. He fondled and nuzzled the child with a grandfatherly foolishness. Gloria turned away from the policeman.

She followed at a little distance, wondering what to do. The best thing would be, she felt, to find out where he lived. She followed for blocks. The Trasks climbed the stairs of the elevated. Gloria went up after them. She took the next car on the same train. It seemed that they would ride on forever. Far uptown they got out. Gloria got out. She trailed them at a greater distance now be-

cause the streets were sparsely populated. The street sloped sharply down to the river. Moored to the wharves were a number of huge, cumbersome barges. To one of these the Trasks clambered. They went down into it through a cabin door.

Gloria was in a plight. She had traced her fugitive to his home. But his home was about to move. A tough-looking tugboat with a tough-looking crew was already fastening a towline to the barge. There was no policeman in sight anywhere. The men loitering about the barges did not appeal to Gloria as desirable Samaritans to ask for help.

Another of Gloria's impulses stirred her feet almost against her will. She ran along the wharf, crossed a plank to the Trask barge, and went to the cabin hatchway. She heard voices of anger coming up. The girl was upbraiding her father for deserting her and accusing him of a further crime. She was crying hysterically:

"You killed him. He is dead and you killed him!"

The old man denied the charge with frenzy. He laughed at it, swore that he was innocent. The girl was already persuaded and this so enraged Gloria that she darted down the steps and cried out at Trask:

"You did kill him. I saw you."

(To Be Continued.)

ried couple could not arrange to go with them. Any other course would result in unpleasant comment, which, I am sure, you would all prefer to avoid.

Dear Miss Fairfax: Would it be considered correct for a girl to visit a man suffering from injuries and confined to a private ward in a hospital? And in the way of a token or her sympathy what might she bring him. PUZZLED.

There is no reason why you should not visit a sick friend, just as you would go to see a girl who was suffering. A book, flowers, fruit, or better still, a little bit of home cookery would be perfectly appropriate offerings.

Dear Miss Fairfax: A cousin of my fiancée is soon to be engaged to a young man who used to pay attention to my fiancée before I met her. For some reason my fiancée gave this young man up and he promptly started to court her cousin. He is very friendly whenever he sees my fiancée. I protested against this friendship, but my fiancée does not like to give up seeing her cousin (and this young man who comes to see his friend very often). I am sure my fiancée loves me, but it makes me unhappy to hear about them or see them, and we both therefore suffer a lot, and quarrel.

You are unreasonable, selfish and jealous—a bad combination, don't you think so too, now that I have put it bluntly? Why shouldn't your fiancée see her former friends? If you have so little faith in the woman you love, you will make a nightmare of your marriage.

Dear Miss Fairfax: A certain young man's club, consisting of six men, has rented a bungalow for the summer at one of the seaside resorts and have invited some of their girl friends to visit whenever they feel inclined. These people are all very friendly, having known each other's families for at least four years. Would it be proper for these girls to go to the bungalow on a week-end party over Saturday night, the bungalow to be occupied only by the girls? PERPLEXED.

It would be highly improper for the young women of whom you speak to visit these boys at their bungalow unless they are chaperoned. I can see no reason why the parents of some of the young people or a mar-

Advice to Lovelorn

Marriage Announcements.

Dear Miss Fairfax: We have been secretly married for almost two years and are now desirous of announcing our marriage. Can you advise just how to do this? Is there any form of announcement which could be sent to friends, together with "at home" cards? IN DOUBT.

The bride's mother or nearest living relative is the one to announce the marriage. Any stationer will give you the proper form of engraved announcement. Send them out as if the marriage had occurred just now, but, of course, date them properly. At home cards may be included.

Inane Jealousy.

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Chaperones Are Needed.

Dear Miss Fairfax: A certain young man's club, consisting of six men, has rented a bungalow for the summer at one of the seaside resorts and have invited some of their girl friends to visit whenever they feel inclined. These people are all very friendly, having known each other's families for at least four years. Would it be proper for these girls to go to the bungalow on a week-end party over Saturday night, the bungalow to be occupied only by the girls? PERPLEXED.

It would be highly improper for the young women of whom you speak to visit these boys at their bungalow unless they are chaperoned. I can see no reason why the parents of some of the young people or a mar-

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