

THE BROKEN WING.—BY FREDERICK PALMER

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"It's a beautiful day," said Appleton—who always stated the obvious in a confidential way—after they were started for the station.

"Perceptibly so," Alice Adamson responded absently.

She was convinced that if any one said again that it was a beautiful day she should scream.

Then she heard him saying:

"We'll be away from New York just in time to escape the heat. Summer in Europe always, I should say, and fall and winter on the Hudson, wouldn't you?"

It was talk quite characteristic of their world—a world gifted in the pleasant uses of wealth. Now, for reasons she could not explain to herself, she was rebelling against the diet of a lifetime. She wished that Mr. Edwin Shepperson Appleton—and she could think of him only by his full name that morning—had done something worth while. She wished, in her own words, that he were an italicized man, even at the expense of his delightfully languid manner.

His mother and her own father and mother had overplayed their parts in behalf of the future of an only son and an only daughter.

When the parental party went ahead in the tonneau and left the objects of their planning to follow in the runabout, this piece of characteristic strategy had revealed prophetically a line of torments yet to come. In prospect was a three months' tour, tied to a string of European hotels, under the chaperonage of three old conspirators. She was lost unless something happened to prevent their catching the Limited which connected with the steamer at New York.

She was about to make some irrelevant answer when the whirl of a motor rising in cadence at double railroad speed attracted their attention. At the top of the hill which the

runabout was ascending they recognized a sight not unfamiliar in the year 1912. An aeroplane, its great wings flashing a shadow over their faces, its propellers making a frothy swath of beaten light, swept by.

"I wish I were aboard!" Alice thought wildly.

"Whew! Must be the Bolt!" said Appleton. "Going too fast to be any other."

The Bolt was Rodney Sharp's aeroplane, and she felt a peculiar interest in Rodney Sharp's career.

It was twelve years now since they had met. From her carriage she had watched him, a youth of eighteen, take an ignominious tumble on the hillside back of the Methodist church to the guffaws of the local population. She had spoken to him and he had smiled in answer to the little girl who was with her governess. The picture he made as, flushed and determined, he stood beside the wreck of his machine facing ridicule, had a romantic place in her memory. Soon afterward he had left Thomsonville. And now "that queer Sharp boy" had made the continents and the seas—for he was the first to cross the ocean—a moving picture under his feet.

From the Bolt she looked back at Appleton, who was about to take up the conversation where he had left it. It occurred to her that he was positively inane. Must she dine with him, walk with him, talk with him all her life? She asked herself. Good heavens! They might even live to celebrate a golden wedding!

The prospect of that golden wedding to her over-wrought nerves played a controlling part in the events which followed. Ahead on the silent road a man on horseback was approaching. Evidently he was in a hurry while he crossed the culvert over a small stream. As Appleton slowed down, Alice suddenly saw to the situation the means to miss the