"PAPER ROSES"

By RUBY M. AYRES

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(Continued From Saturday)

Mr. Fergerson dropped back into into his deep chair; he looked rather grim. Rorie paced the cozy room with agitated steps; from time to time he glanced at the lawyer, almost suspiciously it seemed. Presently he came to an abrupt stand in front of him.

"Have you heard anything down at Bedmund?" he asked suddenly. "Anything fresh, I mean."

Old Fergerson met his gaze composedly.

"If you believe I am keeping anything from you why not go down and make your own inquiries?" he asked deliberately.

Young Briton turned away with an impatient gesture.

"I never want to go near the place again," he said, impulsively. "If it is possible to sell Four Winds I shall do so, and buy a place in London."

"It is not possible, unfortunately," intervened Mr. Fergerson smoothly. "The estate is entailed." His voice changed all at once; he rose to his feet and laid a hand on the young man's arm. "Roderick, when are you going to make something out of your life? When are you going to stop flinging your youth and money away, and do something in the world that is worth while? You told me that the poor little girl—your wife—made you ashamed because you whined to her; and I tell you now that such influence as hers is the thing you need. You want a woman—a brave, true-hearted woman—to show you the way—not a doll!—not a doll, with no mind above the things your money can buy her. Your hands are filled with opportunities, Roderick; are you going to let them fall to the ground?"

Young Briton had flushed a little, but he stood staring in front of him with hard eyes. He had never supposed that old Fergerson would "preach" at him—he resented it angrily—and it hit hard, too, that little reminder of Rosalie. Rorie winced under the blow.

How vividly that night in the godden field outside the huge canvas tent came back to him, and Rosalie in her flapping goloshes and ugly drab coat and paper roses!

She had shamed him then with her bravery and pluck—he wondered what she would think of him now, could she know!

He was conscious of a sudden tightening in his throat, as in a flash the scene of his memories changed. He was out in the country road leading from Bedmund, standing with Rosalie at the crossroads where he had set her down after their marriage. He could see her timid eyes raised to his—she had never shown fear of him before—feel the soft touch of her hands on his shoulders.

"Whatever happens, I shall always be glad you married me—whatever happens."

With a sudden wrench he freed himself from old Fergerson's kindly grasp.

"Let me go," he said roughly; "oh, for God's sake let me go!"

He dashed out of the room, slamming the door hard behind him. Old Fergerson listened to his flying steps on the stairs, in the hall—and the slam of the street door.

He stood for a moment, his kind eyes a little grave; then—

"I'll take the risk," said old Fergerson, softly to himself; "I think I'll take the risk."

CHAPTER XI

Young Briton went off down the road at a furious pace.

It was a mild evening—damp and still. Somewhere in the distance a brass band was playing. It reminded Rorie of the afternoon when the blare of the circus band had drawn him on to follow in the steps of the stilted clown; he shivered as if with cold at the memory. He wondered with a kind of desperation if memory would ever allow him to forget the mad folly of that one week.

A taxi creeping up the road overtook him. The driver, with an eye to a possible fare, leaned forward from his seat and hailed him. "Taxi, sir?"

Young Briton hesitated—then he turned.

"All right." He opened the door. "Where to, sir?"

Roderick did not answer for a moment, then he flung up his head with a sort of recklessness; he gave the address in a loud, defiant voice: "Forty-five Ildersley Gardens West."

The taxi sped off thru the warm night. Rorie leaned back in his seat and stared out of the window with unseeing eyes.

He did not know what impulse had made him give Lillian Fane's address. He knew it was unlikely that she would be at home; he was wearing morning dress, and great ceremony was always observed at Ildersley Gardens.

But somehow he did not care; nothing seemed to matter very much. He felt as he had done the day when his father's will had been read, when he had dashed off to find Rosalie, in his selfish desire to secure to himself one friend.

When he found himself on the Fanes' doorstep a sudden unaccountable nervousness seized him.

He had not seen Lillian since that night she kissed him good-bye when old Fergerson's wire had summoned him down to Four Winds to his father's deathbed. He had not answered her letter of dismissal; had not even told her of his renewed fortunes.

Remorse and respect for Rosalie had kept him away, when perhaps desire might have driven him; but he had often pictured their meeting—her abandon of delight when he told her that there was no longer anything to prevent their marriage.

Marriage! Memory was at her tricks again; had forced him back into the little out-of-the-way church, where the autumn leaves blew about the graves outside, and the chill raindrops pattered down on the tombstones like tears. He could feel the trembling of Rosalie's little hand in his, hear her timid voice, and the wheezy responses of the verger from behind. That had been his marriage, all binding; how could he even contemplate another, with the memory of that tragedy fresh in his heart?

He rang the bell with a furious hand. He felt somehow afraid of the night and the silent street. When the door was opened he stepped into the hall without waiting to be asked.

The servant knew him. She looked at him doubtfully. She admitted that Miss Fane was in, but would Mr. Briton please wait until—But Roderick would not wait; he crossed the hall towards the drawing-room. As he neared it the door opened and Lillian Fane herself stood on the threshold.

She fell back a pace when she saw young Briton. She gave a little cry—"Rorie!"

He followed her into the room, and shutting the door stood with his back to it.

"You did not expect to see me," he said, breathlessly.

His heart was racing—he was pale to the lips.

"No." She looked at him across the width of the room; there was a little frown between her brows. "You ought not to have come here. I explained in my letter."

"I know. It's not that I've come for, but to ask you a question. Are you engaged to Querne?"

There was a little silence. Lillian Fane let the silken wrap fall from her shoulders. It slipped to the thick carpet with a pleasant little soughing sound. She stood there with the shaded lamplight playing on her white bare throat and beautiful face.

She wore a clinging dress of palest amber silk and a cluster of yellow hothouse roses at her breast; there was a golden ornament in her dark hair, a magnificent diamond star gleamed in the lace of her low gown. Young Briton knew that star; it was one of the many extravagances he had lavished upon her in the early days of his infatuation.

She answered him a little haughtily:

"I don't know what you mean by coming here, and questioning me in this manner. What is it to do with you if I—"

He strode across the room, and seized her wrists.

"It's everything to do with me. I love you, and you said you loved me. Answer me! Are you engaged to Querne or not?"

He looked very fierce and masterful; and yet there was something almost pathetically boyish about him, too. Lillian Fane was years older than he in things of worldly wisdom; but for all her self-possession a sudden splash of color dyed her face.

"Rorie, you mustn't." Her voice shook a little—there is always something in a masterful man that appeals to the strongest woman. "You know you mustn't. Go away—go away."

"I will go when you have answered me. Are you engaged to Querne or no?"

She looked past him towards the door, almost timidly it seemed; then she raised her eyes to his face.

"Yes—I am."

There was a tragic silence. Then Rorie loosened his grasp of her wrists. He looked a little dazed, as if he had not quite understood. He forced a laugh.

Lillian looked down at her wrists resentfully. There was a red mark on the white flesh where his fingers had grasped her.

"You've hurt me," she said, complainingly.

Rorie made no answer. He turned towards the door.

She watched him from under her long lashes, and suddenly she thought of Bartlett Querne, who was neither young, nor tall, nor good to look at, as Rorie was, but—only a millionaire! and for a second her worldly heart contracted with an unusual pain.

"Rorie!" She spoke his name softly. She rose to her feet and crossed the room rapidly, catching his arm as he was about to open the door. "Rorie, don't go like that! I couldn't bear to be poor—but I do love you—you know I do!"

Young Briton stood quite still.

"If you did—you would not mind being poor," he said. Old Fergerson's words were coming back to him, with their sting of truth.

"I should." Lillian's soft fingers stole down to his hand. "And so would you! You wouldn't love me if I had to wear the same frock all day and every day, and cheap shoes and ugly hats. Oh, I know you think you would—that is what all the men say; but you wouldn't really! You're just as selfish as I am. I know how you must have hated it when you knew about your father's will. Oh, poor Rorie. I was so sorry for you. I cried myself sick with disappointment. I know what poverty is. I've had to live in it all my life. Mother and I are in debt for the very clothes we wear and the food we eat. We couldn't live at all if the horrid people didn't believe I was going to marry Querne. It was just the same before your father died. Rorie: they only trusted us because they believed I should marry you, and they knew you would be a rich man. When that dreadful will was known they came down on us like a lot of sharks. I had to encourage Querne in sheer self-defense. It's impossible, utterly impossible, for me to marry a poor man."

"But, supposing I was not a poor man?"

Rorie asked this question in an odd voice. He remembered that Lillian had not yet heard of the finding of the second will.

She dropped his hand, and shrugged her white shoulders.

"What is the use of 'supposing?'" she asked, with a touch of irritability. "We're not living in a fairy story." She glanced at him. "I wish we were," she added.

Rorie turned; he took her face between his hands and looked down into her beautiful eyes with sudden wistfulness in his own. The scent of the roses she wore mounted giddily to his head—real roses there, he told himself blindly, not faded paper imitations.

"And you don't love me well enough to do without the money?" he asked.

She tried to free herself; she found his gaze disconcerting. Beneath it she felt herself small and mean. But—"You don't understand," was all she said, restlessly. "You don't understand."

Young Briton let his hands fall to his side.

"I think I understand—too well," he said, in a choking voice.

He looked at her and thought of Rosalie Dean; she had been only too willing to face the prospect of hardship and poverty for his sake. For almost the first time he wondered if she had really cared for him; gratitude he knew she had felt, but had there been anything more than that in her child's heart? He could not bear to think of it; but all at once it seemed as if there was an impassable barrier between himself and this woman who was to marry Bartlett Querne. The rich Persian rug at their feet seemed to narrow down to the size and shape of a grave. Young Briton shivered as if with sudden foreboding.

"I think I'll be going," he said, uncertainly.

"But not like that, Rorie! Don't go away like that! Won't you—won't you just kiss me, Rorie?"

She came a step toward him. To his excited imagination she seemed to stand on the brink of that dividing grave. He flung out his hand as if to ward her off.

"Don't! Don't!"

"Rorie!" There was a sort of fear in her voice; his eyes looked so wild, his face so pale.

The door opened suddenly, and Lillian's mother came into the room. She stood quite still, looking from one to the other.

"Roderick! You here!"

Her voice was an odd mixture of surprise and doubtful pleasure. It sounded almost as if she were not sure whether she ought to be glad to see him or not.

DOINGS OF THE DUFFS — Their First Meal at Home — BY ALLMAN

FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS — Simply a Case of Misunderstanding! — BY BLOSSER

EVERETT TRUE — BY CONDO

OUR BOARDING HOUSE — BY AHERN

ADVENTURES OF THE TWINS

by Clive Roberts Barton

FLATFISH FLOUNDER

"Hey, there!" called out a voice, sharply

Away went the Twins thru the waves toward the bay where Mr. Fisherman had his big net spread out to catch as many of the Wiggle-fin people as he could. Nancy hadn't any trouble at all unhooking two of the corners and Nick shouldered the other two and swam away as easily thru the water as tho he were lifting the mosquito netting off the baby's bed.

"Hey, there!" called out a voice, sharply. "What are you doing? Where are you taking us? You are not the fisherman, are you?

The Twins looked back and were surprised to find that they had ever so many creatures prisoners in their net, shrimps, prawns, crabs and queer fish of all kinds.

The person talking was the queerest ever, a big flat fellow with a whip of a tail and two funny eyes on top of him. Really he was so odd looking that Nancy and Nick quite lost their voices with astonishment and did not answer at once. How would you feel, my dears, if the door-mat should suddenly address you? a sort of three cornered kite-shaped door-mat with one long raveling of a tail?

"I say," repeated the creature sharply, "you are not Mr. Fisherman, are you? And why are you taking his net away?"

"We—we are helping Cap'n Pennywinkle," stammered Nancy, for the creature looked so fierce she was frightened. "He wants the net."

"So do I," snapped the creature. "And you are taking my dinner with you. I eat a dozen shrimps and a dozen crabs and a dozen prawns for my lunch and you are preventing me from having them. I'm Mr. Flatfish Flounder."

He said it as importantly as tho he were announcing that he were the president.

"But how do you get in?" asked Nancy.

"Oh, that's easy!" answered the Flounder. "I know a way."

(To Be Continued)

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Seattle Star Story Book

By Mabel Cleland

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SUPPOSE THEY HAD!

(Chapter 4)

David tried not to look as disappointed as he felt when the father and mother of the minister-man got home.

But he couldn't, he just couldn't help thinking how much more interesting it would have been if Ed and little Charley had been left all alone that cold night.

His mind was hop-skipping along on a trail of its own and he was only half listening to the voice of the minister-man as he went on with the story, but he came to with a start when he realized that the danger part of the story was still to come.

"The river was freezed?" Peggy had exclaimed. "Then how could you ride on it in the little boats?"

"That was what made it so serious," the minister-man continued. "We couldn't ride on it in little boats.

"And nobody else could come up or down it in little boats. We were cut off, absolutely cut off from any other human beings.

"All night the snow fell thick and soft, and morning dawned cold and grey with the snow still falling. The ground was white and every tree wore a crest of the beautiful snow.

"The rough fences were turned into things of beauty and the rude outbuildings might have served for palaces for snow fairies.

"Father came stamping in just as we walked, with a very serious face.

"'The snow is 18 inches deep,' he said. 'And that makes it impossible for any of the cattle to graze. They'll have to be fed.'

"'Fed!' mother exclaimed, 'why so they will. How much hay have we dear?'

"'About three tons,' father answered, 'and with the river frozen over there is no chance of getting more even if some man has a ton or so to spare.

"'We can only hope and trust that this uncommon weather will last only a few days.'

"Well, we hoped. We hoped and we watched and still the snow fell at intervals till it lay four feet on the level.

"Every day or two brought a tragedy among the cattle, too. One after another died, frozen to death, till only 23 of the 50 were left and our own food supply was almost gone."

(To Be Continued)

WHEN A WOMAN TELLS

By RUTH AGNES ABELING

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CHAPTER XLV—I HEAR A SCREAM IN THE DAWN!

I had always believed that if once a woman had been one of the primroses blossoming by the way awaiting the touch of any hand in the dusk—she could not lift her face to the morning!

"If you could get the straight story from most erring women," said Grace, philosophizing on Mrs. Ames' conduct, "you would find that there is in the past of every one of them at least one man who has begged them to say that his love was the first!

"Some of them do lie—and some of them don't, probably because there was someone somewhere for whom they did care, and who failed them. And self-revelation is balm to their scorched souls—they do not want to lie about it.

"But women can come back, and they do, every day thru the medium of the wedding ring—if they will let the truth go untold," Grace added.

"Putting it that way, you have not made it quite clear whether you think coming back is a virtue or a vice," I said.

"It is simply a condition. And it isn't any different with men. I can't see that we really have a double moral standard, for when you simmer it down it is all the same. If a man confesses that he has a past, he has created doubt. If a woman confesses that she has a past, she has created doubt. And a man who is not believed in is just as unhappy as the woman who is not believed in. So this talk of a double moral standard is all rot!

"The big difference, as I see it," continued Grace, "is not in the way the world views either the man or woman, but in the way they consider themselves.

"A man loses the consciousness of his wrongdoing—while with a woman it sticks, and that self-contempt is worse than anything else.

"That is why I tried to spare Mrs. Ames—she will have enough of it when she does wake up. She will feel that every woman is pointing her finger at her—when in reality they will have forgotten."

"Why didn't you lie, Grace, when you met Tom, for instance?" I realized the cruelty of my words; yet I couldn't resist trying to learn more of what had passed between Tom and Grace.

"Because—he never asked me to tell it," she said frankly.

I caught the pain in her voice; yet her answer thrilled me.

"You will find, some day, Miss Sorensen, that there are men with ideals just as there are women—and Tom was one of them.

"Yes," there was a trace of bitterness in her voice. "I tried to vamp him, I tried every trick of my trade, but—he was trick-proof!" An odd smile curled her lips.

In the silence that followed I heard the front door bang shut and slow steps come up the stairs.

"Who is it?" asked Grace, strangely afraid,

"I don't know," I said. "But it isn't unusual for some one to come here—so why look so frightened?"

The words were no more than spoken when I heard a scream from Lila Ames' room.

(To Be Continued)

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She was a stout, rather overdressed woman, with a pucker of anxiety between eyes that smiled determinedly at a hostile world. She looked from Lillian to young Briton as if asking for explanations.

Roderick laughed.

"Yes, I'm here, Mrs. Fane; but I was just going. I am only sorry I ever came."

He went away without another word or look at Lillian—leaving the two women staring at one another.

Lillian was the first to move. She dropped into a chair, and began to sob shallowly.

"He's been saying such dreadful things to me, mother. He hurt my wrists. As if I could marry a man who has no money. It's all very well to talk about love, but love won't pay Louise's bill and that horrid man Ecclestein. I think life is simply hateful. Why can't Rorie have Bartlett's money?"

Mrs. Fane came forward into the circle of firelight. She looked at her daughter's bowed head.

"He hasn't told you, then?" she asked, rather sharply.

Lillian looked up. There were only very faint signs of tears on her face.

"Told me what?" she asked.

"Why, that there's been another will found, leaving everything to him. I only heard this afternoon myself. Heavens! Lillian, you'll be a nice sight if you cry like that," for Lillian was crying in earnest now—even if they were only tears of rage.

Mrs. Fane stood silent, nervously twisting a diamond chain which hung from her neck. She was wondering if, after all, Lillian had such a thing as a heart amongst her various possessions.

"Of course," she said presently, meditatively, "Roderick isn't as rich as Bartlett Querne, but he's rich enough, and Four Winds is a lovely old place—the pictures alone are worth a small fortune. Lillian! will you stop crying? You know we've got to go out directly. A nice object you'll look."

But Lillian would not be comforted.

"I have never loved anyone but Rorie," she sobbed, "and I know I never shall." She would have been highly indignant had it been suggested to her that her love had only grown to great magnitude during the last five minutes, since she had heard of the finding of that second will.

(Continued Tomorrow)

It's good, that's sure, 40c Supreme Blend Coffee. Hansen, 40 Economy Market.

Mother, bring home some of Boldt's Milk Bread!—Advertisement

It Is Easy to Lose An Unsightly Complexion

Have you ever exclaimed as you beheld your complexion in the mirror, "If I only could tear off this old skin!" And, do you know you can do that very thing? Not to actually remove the entire skin all of a sudden; that would be too heroic a method, and painful, too. The worn-out cuticle comes off in such tiny particles, and so gradually, it doesn't hurt a bit. Little by little the beautiful complexion underneath comes forth. Marvelous! No matter how muddy, rough, blotchy or freckled your complexion, you can surely discard it by this simple process. Just get an ounce of ordinary mercolized wax at your druggist's, apply nightly like cold cream, washing it off mornings. The result will surprise and delight you.

Wrinkles can be gotten rid of by an equally simple method. By dissolving an ounce of pure powdered saxolite in a half pint of witch hazel and bathing your face in the solution, every line will completely disappear. First the finer lines, finally all the deep crow's feet.