

WHO PAYS? HOUSES of GLASS EDWIN BLISS

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SIXTH STORY

Ray Norris' law office faced Willard Fall's engineering office directly across the court of the same skyscraper in the city.

Ray Norris was a prosperous young attorney, clean cut, handsome, ambitious, and tenderly devoted to his wife.

Mrs. Fall on the other hand was thirty-five; encroached in her social duties, a self-imposed social monitor and guardian of the morals of her set.

"Lo Miss Foster. How're you this fine morning? I hope your father is better?" It was Norris talking to his stenographer.

"Good morning, Mr. Norris. He's some better, thank you." She was trying to be brave, and answered with an attempt at cheerfulness that set her head pounding violently.

"Oh, nothing," she answered, trying to make light of his concern—"leastwise, nothing that matters. Just a bothersome cold, and a little headache.

"This will never do," he said gravely, and with emphatic earnestness. And he repeated half aloud, half to himself, "never, never do. I'm afraid I've been a bit of a brute lately, what with the night work, Sundays, skipped lunch hours."

Willard Fall, across the court in his office, had seen Norris cross to where Myra stood at her desk beside the broad window, and an evil smile lighted his coarse features as he noted Norris take Myra's hands in his and hold them while he spoke solicitously to her.

He bowed with mock courtesy at her startled surprise at being apprehended, and spoke with more than his usualunction.

"So, my dear, spying on me, eh? Had I divined your coming, I might have made preparations so's not to disappoint your expectations."

"Your Mol seems to have clay feet. You indulge in the common fallacy of imagining that every man you have so intimate acquaintance with is a model of propriety. No, one who is acquainted with your reputation as the watchdog of society—such he glances—would never believe you to be so divinely unscrupulous. Why, it was only a short while ago, when glancing casually out of this window and across the court, I saw Norris

holding hands with his pretty stenographer."

Mrs. Fall recovered quickly from an involuntary expression of surprise, and casting a scornful, contemptuous glance at the man who justified his indulgence by calumniating another, turned and was gone.

Blindly, angrily, Mrs. Fall rushed from the building, and in Central Park, where she went for rest and air, she met Mrs. Norris. Forgetting that she lived "in a glass house," forgetting everything except that "misery loves company," she warned her against the pretty stenographer in her husband's office. By a few careless words the seeds of an awful suspicion were sown.

"All through, Miss Foster?" "Yes, wearily, "all through." "Has that vicious headache left you?"

"No, it's still with me," she replied with the ghost of a smile. "It's been such a constant comrade, lately, I don't wonder but I would miss it were it to leave."

"That's a shocking state of affairs, certainly. Tell me, does your father seem too great a care, lately? Do you find it difficult to give your work your best attention, with the worry of his ailing health on your mind? You know,"—whimsically—"you're too great a necessity here for me to allow anything to distract you from your work."

Her face, flushed with fever as it was, beamed softly as he mentioned her father, and connected that word with "too great a care." Her father too great a care.

"Father a care?" she answered half interrogatively. "You don't know father, Mr. Norris. He is the one joy of my life. For years before I was old enough or able to work, he was father and mother to me. Up with the sun each morning, he saw to it that my clothes were brushed, my pencils sharpened for school—made a warm fire and prepared my breakfast. Then, off to the frightful bleach factory where he got his cough, and at work all day, and sometimes part of the night, that I might have a pretty hair-ribbon, or a pair of new slippers. All my youthful hopes, desires, troubles were poured into his willing ears at night, and he was ever sympathetic with the extravagant fancies of my flighty, childish imagination, and always gentle in his reproaches for my many faults. No, father's no care to me. It gives me pleasure each morning that I have strength to go out to work,—that I am responsible for his comfort,—and it lightens my weariness each night that I may go home and try to anticipate his every unspoken wish."

"You love me, Ray?" Mrs. Norris asked the question of her husband. He had come home, his step light, his face expectant. He met a cold and unresponsive wife.



Norris Met a Cold and Unresponsive Wife.

The seed of suspicion planted by Mrs. Fall had taken root on fertile soil. And so she asked the question.

"Love you?—why what a question! I passionately adore you. You are the guiding spirit, the holiest inspiration of my life! Without you all the rest is a meaningless jumble. But,"—and here his voice took on a tone of bewilderment—"I didn't think you needed assurances!"

It was now tenfold difficult for her to go on; but she felt that this was no time to falter.

"Would you do anything, sacrifice anything in the whole world for me?" "Anything. Everything."

"Then send that girl away from your office—and get another one." "Send that girl away! You mean Miss Foster?"

"Yes." "But why?—this is absurd! Why send Myra Foster away?" "Because I wish it."

"But you must have some reason. This can't be mere imperative arbitrariness. You are not like that. Can't you tell me why? Myra Foster is my most able assistant. To send her away would be to disable me in my most important work. Besides, it would be unjust. She is a very worthy girl. She is the sole support of her aged father."

He felt the urgent sincerity of her request, and knew how deeply she was moved. But her concern was so obviously unfounded on fact that he could not help but believe it was a hysterical outburst that would be dispelled when her overwrought nerves were quieted, and reason returned. It would be ridiculous, wrong, to sacrifice Myra to this hysteria, so he decided to be firm, and make no rash promise. He spoke:

"Some old gossip has evidently been busy. We'll talk more of this when your nerves are quieter."

"No, we will talk of it now. Will you?"

"No."

She turned, despairing-eyed and limp, and walked dazedly from the room.

The next morning Ethel kept to her room. Ray left for his office, the usual spring coo from his gait, his face grave with the anxiety of the previous evening. He arrived in the city, and proceeded immediately to his work. Myra Foster was there, and her enervated movements as she went about her work showed only too plainly that her "bothersome cold and slight headache" had not improved overnight. He decided quickly upon his course with regard to Myra's case, and spoke to her:

"Miss Foster, you are ill. You're in no condition for work at the present time in this or any office, and I'm going to send you and your father away. I have a place down on the ocean, where you can get a breath of fresh salt air, and win back some of your old time strength and snap. So make ready, please. We can start just as soon as you can get your things together."

"Very well, Mr. Norris, and thank you. I—er—thank you—any words seem so inadequate, so inexpressive, in acknowledgment of such kindness. I'm afraid"—her voice grew soft and tender—"you'll have to take my thanks for granted."

"Forget it," he said, inelegantly, and turned to get his coat.

"Ha, ha!—Oh my!" He looked quickly over his shoulder at the sound of her mirth. "Gracious!" she said, half sadly, half amusedly, "we forgot the most important thing. It can't be done! How about old man Convention, his wife Scandal, and their daughter Gossip? What will people say?"

"Oh, that's all right—don't let that concern you. Your father will be there, and I'll tell my wife tonight."

Together they left the office, climbed into his machine, picked up her father, and in less than three hours were "down in his place by the ocean."

Ethel Norris came down from her room after her husband left, and her usually gay face was grave, and her eyes red and heavy. She ate no breakfast, and the servants had to speak to her many times over before she could comprehend their meaning. She dressed for the street about noon, and without, as usual, leaving word of her intended destination, left the house. She had spent a night of very hell, her spirit tortured almost beyond endurance at the thought of another coming between her and what was dearer to her than life. She would see. She would go to his office, and let her quick woman's intuition scent out the truth for her.

She reached his office and was about to go in when a cunning thought came to her. Why let them be aware of her presence? Why give them an opportunity to be on their guard? She turned back, her "cleverness" for the moment obscuring her, and making her fearless, clean face ugly with the blight of subtlety. She would go to Fall's office, make some slight pretext for her visit, and watch them from there. She knocked softly, and, getting no answer, pushed further open the slightly ajar door, and looked in. No one there. He must have stepped out for just a moment, or his door would be locked. So much the better. A moment would be enough, would, without her having to conceal that she was watching, be worth many minutes with his attention upon her. The window was open, and she went to it, keeping always in the shadow of the wall, so that she could see without being seen.

Mrs. Norris saw her husband's office was empty. What could it mean? She made bolder, stepped to the center of the aperture, and bent far out to peer into the office opposite. The sheer depth of the long shaft fascinated her and gave her a light hollow feeling of nausea. She drew in her head with a sharp jerk, and staggered back, her giddiness overcoming her. She would have fallen but for a strong arm around her waist. It was Willard Fall.

She turned her head toward him, half smiling, half apologetic, to thank him for his timely aid. But the words froze on her lips, her heart contracted, her entire body was convulsed with a shudder and an appalling fear was in her eyes.

In the doorway stood Mrs. Fall. Fate was now taking a hand, and the certain destiny started on its way by an evil-tongued man and a suspicious-minded woman, was hurrying the pawns to a swift destruction.

Mrs. Norris went to her mother, who calmed her fears and sent her to her home again, after a good night's sleep. Mrs. Fall applied for a divorce and then went to the seashore and sought her cottage on the beach—the same beach on which the Norris cottage stood.

Mrs. Fall arrived at the beach in time to enjoy the sea air for half an hour before dinner, and relaxed in her comfortable beach-chair alongside another occupied by a Mrs. Hunter. Mrs. Hunter, like Mrs. Fall, was one of the old guard of society, and the range of her "observation" was astonishing. Other people's affairs were, in effect, as a personal affront if society did not constantly furnish her keen scent with a fresh track. Just now she fairly fluttered with pleasure as

she struggled to arrive at an explanation all too plausible that would sustain and reinforce her horrible suspicions of yesterday.

The fear that she herself would be placed in a questionable position in the eyes of her husband had outweighed her fears for his fidelity to her. Her trip to her mother, and her mother's reproach for her lack of faith had resolved her to tell all and stake her future happiness on his belief in her in the face of obviously incriminating circumstances. Now that she had whipped her covering courage to a desperate, brave stand, and had made ready to stand or fall on the strength of his love for her—now came this filthy gossip scandal-monger with a tale which, if it were true—and it was only too plausible—would reawaken in her her initial doubt of his fidelity, strengthened and indorsed a hundred fold.

VI. In awakening that morning, Norris was again visited with his dread of the previous day, that Ethel should hear of Myra's installment in his cottage before he had an opportunity to tell her. This troubled him so, that he ate no breakfast, but hurried to his office, trusting the exertions of his business to take his mind from the annoying thought. He had a violent headache by eleven o'clock, and attributing it to the fact that he had neglected his breakfast, went to an early lunch. That was why, when Ethel called him at 11:30, he was out. His lunch gave him immediate relief.

He bought an "extra" from a newsboy, folded it carefully under his arm, and ascended to his office. As he threw the sheet on his desk it fell face upward, and the words "Attorney's Wife is Co-respondent in Divorce Suit," staring at him in big black type stretched clear across the page. Maybe it was someone he knew. He took the sheet up and carefully read the sub-headings: "Mrs. Willard Fall (Fall) is gaped" charges she found Mrs. Ray Norris and Mr. Fall embracing—

The sheet fell from his nerveless fingers and he swallowed hard a few times to moisten his throat and mouth, which had become suddenly dry. Then came a reaction from his nerveless realization; he felt a weak shaking throughout this whole body, and was conscious of his heart pulsing in great, uneven jumps. The monstrousness, the bold assurance of that staring type was incredible. It was hideous, foul. His wife and Fall! Why, they hardly knew one another!

The one event that distinguished the last few days from a year of happy, uneventful marriage was Ethel's insistent, hysterical demand to send Myra Foster away from his office. In explanation she had expressed an unwilling doubt (a doubt nevertheless) that his relations with the girl were all that they should be. He knew his relations with Myra Foster were simple, honest, businesslike, and that thought, combined with his wife's suspicion, suggested to him insidiously, but certainly, that her suspicion of him might be but a blind for her relations with Fall. Good God, what a hideous thought! He picked up his phone receiver, clicked the hook nervously many times, and after what seemed an unusual wait, was connected with his home.

"Hello, Mrs. Norris, please. This is Mr. Norris."

"Mrs. Norris is not in, sir. She left full an hour and a half ago, and left word she had gone to the beach cottage. Yes. Good-by."

She had gone to the beach!—a place he could never prevail on her to visit! Why? Had she heard of Myra Foster being there? He knew gossip could travel as fast, and faster, than that. But, if she were using his relations with Myra Foster as a blind to cover her own affairs (this damnable thought kept persisting), if she were, was it possible that she would have the temerity to seize on Myra's presence in the cottage as a justification of a suspicion she knew to be false? He cursed himself for his vile suspicions. But she had gone to the beach—if not for that, then for what?

The thought of Fall then entered his mind and took his whole attention, and he glanced hastily, searchingly across the court to see whether he was in his office. If this frightful thing were true—His lips met in a long, hard seam as he unlocked the bottom drawer of his desk and without looking hastily withdrew something and slipped it into his pocket. He rose, desperate, and leaving his office, crossed to Fall's.

Fall was not there. He questioned the porter.

"When will Fall be in?" "I don't know, Mr. Fall left word he had gone to the beach, but didn't leave no message when he'd be back again."

Ray started, shocked at the advice that Fall had gone to the beach. He said "all right" in a preoccupied voice that seemed even to him not to have emanated from his own throat, and walked unsteadily away, "a sorta quiet, wild look," as the porter afterwards told, "on his face." It was all very clear to him now—her "subtle trickery" under the mask of "injured innocence"—Fall with his unspeakable reputation—his discovery in a compromising position by Mrs. Fall, and the resultant divorce suit—and now both of them together at the beach!

Had the insanity which now possessed him taken a violent form he might have been apprehended and prevented from doing any harm; but it was visible only in his crafty eyes and unnaturally quiet bearing as he jumped into his auto and started for the coast.

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"stipped from every flower" and reeked not the coast; but this thing, copied by all the papers throughout the land, night, and very probably would, rain him.

He took an early train for the beach, where he endeavored to plant his wife and make her withdraw her charge; but she had ceased to think of him as a positive quantity, and was unmoved by his appeals.

When Ethel arrived she went straight to her cottage, which she found deserted. Myra and her father had gone to the shore. She drew in her breath sharply at her anxious eyes, after searching the living room for signs of his new occupant, fell on a large, floppy straw hat flung carelessly on a chair. She picked it up and examined it eagerly, her essential feminine blinding her for the moment to the indication and causing her to wonder what he could see in that; then, realizing its significance, she dashed it fiercely to the ground and started for the beach. She walked quickly, tirelessly in the soft sand, and was startled when after a sharp turn round a ledge of rock, she came upon Willard Fall. He was sequestered by his wife's refusal to listen to his entreaties, and was as dejected as his trivial nature would allow. He lifted his hat.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Norris. Thought you didn't like the seashore?" "Howdy-do, Mr. Fall. Oh, I come down occasionally."

"I've wanted ever since that frightful day, to let you know how sorry I am that you should have been placed in such an unfortunate position."

He said nothing, however, of the divorce suit, thinking she must already know. She wanted to be rid of him—wanted to fly on wildly—wanted to find them—wanted and feared to—feared every step that took her eager, urgent feet further and further along the limitless stretch of beach. He kept on talking, solicitously trying his utmost to assure her of his regret.

Racing, careening madly down the beach came Norris' auto, its flying wheels sending up a swirl of sand in their wake. It stopped within a few yards of them, and Norris, a strange, wild expression on his face, jumped out. He had seen them half a mile off, and the sight of them together changed his crafty, quiet look to one of terrible rage. Dashing wildly up to where they stood, he thrust the frightful headline under Ethel's eyes, his face twitching in frightful contortions.

"Is it true? Is it true? Is it—" he gurgled chokingly.

Ethel's eyes took in the glaring headline, and followed down to the subhead. She started back, gasping, realizing fully that what she had dreaded had come to pass—that he had learned from another source what she had not the courage to tell him—that he had doubted her as she him—that it was all a hideous misunderstanding.

British battleship Triumph sunk in Dardanelles by German submarine. British coalition cabinet announced.

British made further gains near La Bassee. Germans forced passage of the San River. Italians seized various towns in the Trentino.

British submarine sank Turkish gunboat close to Constantinople. Zeppelin bombarded Southern England, and later fell into sea.

Belgians repulsed two German attacks near Dixmude. Teutons forced another crossing of the San, broke through Russian lines near Stry and forced Russian back.

Russians won fights on Upper Vistula and near Oniezer marshes. Italian invasion of Austria continued; battles west of Pustozersk and at Plochen.

Allies in Gallipoli carried the lines of Turkish trenches with bayonet. British auxiliary ship Princess Irene blown up; 321 killed.

British battleship sunk by German submarine at Dardanelles. Allied aviators bombarded Ludwigshafen and Ostend.

Fierce fighting north of Arras. Russians drove Germans back across the San, but Austrians advanced far her. Italians occupied Monte Baldo and crossed Venetian Alps.

Austrians sank Italian destroyer and Italians sank Austrian submarine. Five allied steamers sunk by German submarines.

WHO PAYS? End of Sixth Story. The next story is "Blue Blood and Yellow."

The price of tin fluctuates very rapidly and widely. Paris will erect two plants for the purification of drinking water with ozone, each with a capacity of 9,990,000 gallons a day.

Despite an increase in the use of electricity, 25 factories in the United States are kept busy making incandescent gas mantles. In the last five years Germany, France and Russia have spent \$28,000,000, \$22,000,000 and \$12,000,000 in the order named for aeronautics.

The Right Attitude. "I see Mrs. Flubdub has had her pictures in all the Sunday papers." "The right spirit, I think it is unbecomingly to have children but if you have 'em make the most of it, say I."

One to Order. "Nurse, you must stop telling Tommy those hogbin stories. The child's hair is standing on end." "I thought you wanted to be pompador, mum."

THE EUROPEAN WAR A YEAR AGO THIS WEEK

May 22, 1915. British won north of La Bassee but were repulsed near Neuve-Chapelle.

Russians took offensive on lower San and captured four towns. Germans defeated Russians at Stry.

Austrians in Bukovina retreated. Norwegian steamer sunk by German submarine. German aviators dropped bombs on Paris.

General mobilization of Italian army ordered and martial law proclaimed in northeast Italy.

May 23, 1915. British advanced east of Festo-bert and French near Notre Dame de Lorette and Neuville-St. Vaast. Russians recrossed the San in effort to outflank the Germans. Germans defeated Russian right wing.

Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary. Austrian patrol crossed Italian frontier and was driven back. Turks repulsed allies at Sedso-Bahn.

Great Britain, France and Russia in joint statement, accused Turkish government of responsibility for massacres of Armenians.

May 24, 1915. Germans attacked British rear Ypres behind six-mile cord of gas gas. Russian movement upon Nalco compelled Mackensen to draw in his wings.

Furious German assaults south of Przemysl. Austrian artillery shelled Italian outposts in front of Rivoli.

Austrian vessels bombarded Italian coast towns. Turkish gunboat sunk by allied submarine. Austrian aviators bombarded many Italian towns.

Germans at Monso, Kameru, surrendered to French. Von Mackensen took six fortified villages north of Przemysl.

Russians won in Opatow region. Italians crossed Austrian frontier on 67-mile front.

American steamer Nebraska struck by torpedo or mine. Italy declared blockade of Austrian and Albanian coasts.

Austrians sank Italian destroyer. Allies bombarded many Asia Minor coast towns. British battleship Triumph sunk in Dardanelles by German submarine.

British coalition cabinet announced. May 26, 1915.

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SOME INTERESTING FACTS. Malaria is spread by a special quito. Fingers, flies and food spread cholera fever.

Forty-eight different materials used in the construction of a plane which come from no fewer than twenty countries.

Every day the River Thames sees 1,500 tons of earth from its banks. A full-grown elephant yields pounds of ivory.

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CURIOUS CONDENSATIONS

This new Stages Society, Ltd., \$500,000 attendance will be raised on one authority (the proprietor).

According to a Roman legend, the did use is simply fed to a horse in the amount of water in the human system.

Brian's Room, former governor general of the French province of West Africa, has been appointed governor general of Indo-China by the cabinet.

Engineers in India are trying the novel experiment of catching that country's heavy rainfall in reservoirs and using it to produce electric power.

Natives of a province in India have succeeded in breeding egrets in captivity and obtaining plumage four times a year without injury to the birds.

What will be the highest concrete structure of the kind in the world is a railroad viaduct being built in Pennsylvania, 242 feet above a stream and 2,350 feet long.

The Brazilian cotton crop is increasing in quantity and quality.

By the fumigation of incoming vessels in the port of New York it is estimated that 50,000 rats are killed annually.

Petroleum has been installed as fuel in Chile's great nitrate works, at a saving of more than 30 per cent of the cost of coal.

In connection with the production of coal in the United Kingdom there were 1,220 accidents, causing 1,753 deaths last year.

The Turkish cabinet has joined with foreigners and leading Turks in a movement to suppress the "white slave" traffic in Turkey.

The supreme court of Panama has sustained a recent law whereby the government reserves ownership in metal mines and deposits of coal and oil.

To guard against tree repair fakery, or quack tree surgeons, the Massachusetts Forestry association will inspect the shade trees belonging to its members, free of charge.

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