

The GIRL WHO HAD NO GOD

MARY ROBERTS RINEHART AUTHOR OF "THE MAN IN LOWER TEN," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

Ward brought her a cup of coffee, and stood by with satisfaction while she drank it. In his eyes there was a glimmer of depression and joy. The parish house was gone, and this girl before him was to marry another man, for they would build another parish house, and who knew—

"If I had burned a teneament full of people—" "A man was nearly killed. He was on the ridge-pole of the church and they turned the full strength of the water on him. I saw it. I—almost fainted." "You saw it?" "I was there," said Elinor quietly. Huff rose angrily. "You were there! And who was it who almost fell off the roof? Your person, I suppose."

Talbot silenced the boy. It was Lettbridge who took up the argument. He understood her position and sympathized, he said. The fire was a mistake. But now that it was done—He spoke of Boroday's critical condition, of their safety that depended on his, and finding her attitude to be unyielding, took refuge in her father's memory.

"If anything comes out, it will all come out," he reminded her. "It seems to me, Elinor, that you owe it to your father not to interfere. This isn't a new plan. Four or five years ago when the parish house was first built, we talked it over here. And it isn't as though we mean to hurt this fellow Ward. It will be three to one; he'll make no resistance."

"Yes," she said. "Three to one. That is the way we fight. Oh, I'm one of you. I know that—but it sickens me, sometimes." The men were astounded, frankly uncomfortable.

The conference got nowhere. Elinor acknowledged their duty to the Russian, offered all her jewels, in fact, for his defense. But she stubbornly refused to countenance the attack on Mr. Ward. Huff lapsed into sullen silence, his eyes on her. The other men found every argument met by silence, except for one passionate outburst.

"He is my friend," she cried. "I have never had any friends, except once, years ago, a girl. It was Boroday then who used my friendship for her. It was the Rutherford matter. Walter would not remember, but the rest of you—I tell you, I won't do this thing."

Talbot tried a new method. "It's a wealthy congregation," he explained. "It is not much for them, and it's safety for us. If we let Boroday go up, and he thinks what he will about us, he can make it bad for all of us." Elinor turned on him.

"I don't care a rap for the congregation. Do you think he will let that money go without a struggle? The moment it goes into the offertory it comes to be money and becomes a divine trust to him. He'll fight and—someone will be killed."

"I dawning even on cannot enter a time that her solicitude was for none of them. When he realized it, at last, he sat back with folded arms and frowning brows. Here was mockery, for sure; old Hilary's daughter, reared on pure violence, and in love with a person—old Hilary's daughter and successor, defying the hand in its hour of need, and quoting a divine trust, in extenuation!"

In view of her attitude, there seemed to be nothing to do. "We'll give it up, of course," said Lettbridge, after a pause. There had never been any drinking in old Hilary's house. Only abstainers were ever taken into the band. But it was the custom of the two older men to remain at the table over their cigars, giving Walter and Elinor a half-hour together. That night, when Elinor rose from the table, Huff, although he rose with the others, made no move to follow her. She looked back from the doorway, a slim, almost childish figure, with beseeching eyes.

REPRODUCTION OF CARD TO BE USED IN THE REGISTRATION OF WOMEN OF ROCK ISLAND WHICH WILL BEGIN MONDAY OF NEXT WEEK UNDER THE DIRECTION OF 500 REGISTRARS

Form for registration of women, including fields for name, address, age, occupation, and education.

- List of occupations and professions for registration, including Agricultural, Industrial, Professional, and Public Service.

CHAPTER VIII.

Saturday evening it was the custom of the Brantons to entertain the rector at dinner. Now, in his absence, it was the assistant rector who dined in the paneled Jacobean dining room of the Brant house, swallowing much unctuous diatribe as to church policy with his dinner.

"Not that Ward was mild. But he had an easy way of listening to the advice of his various influential parishioners and then going ahead and doing as he liked. In nonessentials he always yielded. To him the church was so much bigger than his ritual."

That evening Mrs. Bryant had taken up the question of women in the choir. "Frankly, Mr. Ward," she said, ignoring her fish. "I do not approve of it. It's the feminist movement, I tell you. Before long they'll want to be on the vestry."

Ward glanced up, half smiling. The pear-shaped pearl, which usually hung at his bosom's withered throat, was, naturally, not there. From the pearl to the parish house, from the parish house to Elinor—thus in two leaps of Ward's mind he was far from the subject in hand.

"As president of the Chancel society," said Mrs. Bryant, "as honorary president of the Woman's guild, I protest against women in the choir."

"Back to the choir with a jump came Ward's errant mind. 'I wonder,' Ward reflected, 'whether a matter of tradition and custom will prevent women from singing in the heavenly choir?'"

Mrs. Bryant stabbed at her fish. But she had not finished. There were many things about Saint Jude's that did not please her. The burial of old Hilary Kingston had been one. She seized on that.

"A non-communent," she snapped. "An infidel, an atheist! The daughter is living alone up there at this minute. It isn't respectable. It's a bad example to the girls in the village. The house is full of men all the time."

"That must be a mistake." "It is quite true. Servants talk, you know. What can you expect? Raised out of the church, with no belief, and, of course, no moral instruction."

gave her the prayer book open at the service. On her knees then went Elinor and listened to Ward's fine voice, echoing through the empty building. The morning was warm and the windows open. The odor of burned wood from the parish house crept in.

"Lord have mercy upon us and incline our hearts to keep this law." "Thou shalt not steal," Ward read from the Decalogue, and the people said:

"In the palm of her left glove Elinor had the Bryant pear-shaped pearl. Ward had not seen her. He went through the service reverently, with an impressiveness of voice and bearing that showed how good it was to him. And in his voice, reading, exhorting, commanding, there were reader notes that caught Elinor's breath in her throat.

When the service was over, she rose from her knees and dropped the Bryant pearl into the alms-box by the door. The congregation, small and scattered, was still kneeling. The doorway and the alms-box were in twilight.

Drawing down her veil, she went quickly out into the sunshine. At the eleven o'clock service Ward announced the burning of the parish building.

"It is not my intention to make an appeal," he said simply. "The parish house was built to fill a great need; that need still exists. If our church is to be an element in the daily lives of the people of this town, we must have a meeting place for them. For the worship of our God, the church building is sufficient, but if religion is to you the thing it is to me, the broader religion of universal brotherhood, the church building is not enough."

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Seventy-eight thousand dollars was taken up in the collection at Saint Jude's that morning. Over fifty thousand was in checks, the rest was in cash.

Walter Huff, sitting alone in the back of the church, had watched Ward intently through the service. Unlike Elinor, Huff had been raised in a Presbyterian household. He had come to jeer, to watch with his thirteenth eyes the offertory piling into the silver plates. But the service told on him somewhere down in his violent young heart there crept a sense of shame. It was only when he looked at Ward that his eyes hardened.

This man who had come between him and his girl—this white-handed, surprised, prayer-reading priest, who in a dozen words could compel the people before him to lay a fortune at his feet—Huff ground his teeth together. But something of unwilling admiration was mixed with his scorn. This was

no mean adversary, this Ward, a man every inch of him. He would beat him out if he had to kill him to do it. Huff stayed in church after the service. He accosted Mr. Bryant, one of the vestrymen, as the congregation filed out.

"I don't like to ask you to talk business on Sunday," he said, "but I think it's going to be mighty inconvenient until you get the new building." "Horrible," said the vestryman. "No fire is ever convenient, but this—"

Huff drew a business card from his pocket. "I thought perhaps you might be willing to talk about a temporary building," he said. "We specialize in things like that. Wood, you know, and weather-proof, but inexpensive."

The last word caught Mr. Bryant's ear. "Seems to me," Huff went on, "the choir boys need a place to dress in. You couldn't ask them to put on their surplices at home and walk over here."

"We had thought of a tent," Mr. Bryant said uncertainly. "But if you care to look around—"

"Never mind about me," said Huff largely. "I'll just glance over the place myself. You'd better attend to that fortune you took up in the collection this morning."

"The assistant rector has taken charge of that," Mr. Bryant observed, and after that for half an hour he and Huff talked board floors, tar-paper roofs and electric installation in the temporary headquarters.

Huff made careful notes in his pocket notebook. They included the length and breadth of a temporary building, the residence of the assistant rector, a stove in the temporary structure for cold days, the amount of collection, and the time at which evening service was over on Sunday night.

(Continued Next Wednesday.)

ALEDO AT A GLANCE

Methodist Dedicate Organ. The Methodist Episcopal church dedicated its new organ last evening with a recital. The organ was played by J. Clifford Thompson of Duluth, Minn. Miss Eva Carnahan, soprano, of Monmouth, assisted in the program, which was as follows: Offertoire in D Minor... Durban Pastorale... Thomas Gavotte from Mignon... Thomas Theme (varied) in E Flat... Faulkes Theme, Resoluto, Allegro... Milore Chanson Triste... Tschallowsky March of the Magi Kings... Dubois Hozaana... Handel Largo... Lemmens Fanfare... Lemmens Prayer and Cradle Song... Gullmann Minuetto... Gullmann Andante Seraphique... G. Debat Pouson... Tschallowsky Coronation March (Le Prophete)... Meyerbeer

Personal Mention. Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Tree and daughters, Merle and Florence of Haydock, Neb., came Friday to visit here at the home of Mrs. Tree's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Otis Whan. They are moving to Chicago and Mrs. Tree will remain for several weeks. Mr. Tree will visit a few days.

Mrs. Nettie Butcher left Friday for Lincoln, Ill., where she will visit with her daughter, Miss Edna Butcher. Mrs. Mary E. Bronson went to Champaign Friday to attend the conference in the college of agriculture at the University of Illinois.

Ed Noonan went to Peoria Friday to spend a few days on business. J. P. Berg was a business visitor Friday to New Windsor. J. O. Whiteside and Leonard Day were in Alpha Friday.

Mrs. Eugene Winger went to Moline Friday morning to spend the day with W. B. Frew, who is ill in the Tri-City sanitarium. Mrs. E. H. Carroll and Mrs. Guy Carroll visited in Rock Island yesterday.

W. Egbert went to Rock Island Friday to attend the district meeting of the stewards of the Methodist-Episcopal church. C. P. Morrison visited in Burgess Friday with his daughter, Mrs. A. M. Durlap. Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Nesbit visited in Davenport Friday.

S. B. Bolton and Ross Foote were in Rock Island Friday. Oscar Lindroth was a business visitor Friday in Rock Island.

WANT PUNCH AND JUDY. Paris—A group of artists organized under the name of "Friends of Paris" has petitioned the under secretary for fine arts to devote the gardens of the Palais Royal to children's entertainment. They suggest that merry-go-rounds be installed and that Punch and Judy shows and moving pictures suitable for children be given there, and that the business establishments surrounding this historic square be devoted to the sale of toys and articles made by mutilated soldiers.

The Palais Royal arcades have lost a great deal of the animation of the days when they were the center of the fashion and frolic of Paris. The dealers in jewels and other luxuries have nearly all gone to the Rue de la Paix and the Avenue de l'Opera.

A Great Responsibility.

THE responsibility attached to the preparing of a remedy for infants and children is undoubtedly greater than that imposed upon the manufacturer of remedies for adults whose system is sufficiently strong to counteract, for a time at least, any injurious drug. It is well to observe that Castoria is prepared today, as it has been for the past 40 years, under the personal supervision of Mr. Chas. H. Fletcher.

What have makers of imitations and substitutes at stake? What are their responsibilities? To whom are they answerable? They spring up today, scatter their nefarious wares broadcast, and disappear tomorrow.

Could each mother see the painstaking care with which the prescription for Fletcher's Castoria is prepared; could they read the innumerable testimonials from grateful mothers, they would never listen to the subtle pleadings and false arguments of those who would offer an imitation of, or substitute for, the tried and true Fletcher's Castoria.

Advertisement for Fletcher's Castoria, including a product image and testimonials from various mothers.