SERIAL STORY

THE GIRL *from* HIS TOWN

By MARIE VAN VORST

Illustrations by M. G. KETTNER

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SYNOPSIS.

Dan Blair, the 22-year-old son of the fifty-million-dollar copper king of Blairtown, Mont., is a guest at the English home of Lady Galorey. Dan's father had been courteous to Lord Galorey during his visit to the United States and the courtesy is now being returned to the young man. The youth has an ideal girl in his mind. He meets Lily, Duchess of Breakwater, a beautiful widow, who is attracted by his immense fortune and takes a liking to her. When Dan was a boy, a girl sang a solo at a church, and he had never forgotten her. The Galoreys, Lily and Dan attend a London theater where one Letty Lane is the star. Dan recognizes her as the girl from his town, and going behind the scenes introduces himself and she remembers him. He learns that Prince Poniotowsky is suitor and escort to Letty. Lord Galorey and a friend named Ruggles determine to protect the westerner from Lily and other fortune hunters. Young Blair goes to see Lily; he can talk of nothing but Letty and this angers the Duchess. The westerner finds Letty ill from hard work, but she recovers and Ruggles and Dan invite her to supper. She asks Dan to build a home for disappointed theatrical people. Dan visits Lily, for the time forgetting Letty, and later announces his engagement to the duchess. Letty refuses to sing for an entertainment given by Lily. Galorey tells Dan that all Lily cares for is his money, and it is disclosed that he and the duchess have been mutually in love for years. Letty sings at an aristocratic function, Dan escorting her home. Dan confronts Galorey and Lily together. Later he informs Letty that his engagement with Lily is broken, asks the singer to marry him, and they become engaged. Ruggles thinks the westerner should not marry a public singer, and endeavors to induce Letty to give him up. She runs away, fearing she is not good enough for Dan, and Ruggles makes the latter believe she has abandoned his love. Finally Dan finds Letty in Paris, where he is persistent in pressing his suit.

CHAPTER XXVII.—Continued.

She made him take a table in the corner, where she sat in the shadow on the sofa, overlooking the brilliant room. Maxim's was no new scene to either of them, no novelty. Poniotowsky scarcely glanced at the crowd, preferring to feast his eyes on his companion, whose indifference to him made his abstraction easy. She was his property. He would give her his title; she had demanded it from the first. The Hungarian was a little overdressed, with his jeweled buttons, his large boutonniere, his faultless clothes, his single eye-glass through which he stared at Letty Lane, whose delicate beauty was in fine play; her cheeks faintly pink, her starry eyes humid with a dew whose luster is of the most precious quality. Her unshed tears had nothing to do with Poniotowsky—they were for the boy. Her heart sickened, thinking where he might be; and more than that, it cried out for him. She wanted him.

Oh, she would have been far better for Dan than anything he could find in this mad city, than anything to which in his despair he could go for consolation. She had kept her word, however, to that old man, Mr. Ruggles; she had got out of the business with a fatal result, as far as the boy was concerned. She thought Dan would drift here probably as most Americans on their wild nights do for a part of the time, and she had come to see.

She wore a dress of coral pink, tightly fitting, high to her little chin, and seemed herself like a coral strand from neck to toe, clad in the color she affected, and which had become celebrated as the Letty Lane pink. Her feathered hat hid her face, and she was completely shielded as she bent down drawing pictures with her bare finger on the cloth. After a little while she said to Poniotowsky without glancing at him:

"If you stare any longer like that, Frederigo, you'll break your eye-glass. You know how I hate it."

Used as he was to her sharpness, he nevertheless flushed and sat back and looked across the room, where, to their right, protected from them as they were from him by the great door, a young man sat alone. Whether or not he had come to Maxim's intending to join a congenial party, should he find one, or to choose for a companion some one of the women who, at the entrance of the tall blond boy, stirred and invited him with their raised lorgnons and their smiles, will not be known. Dan Blair was alone, pale as the pictures Letty Lane had drawn on the cloth, and he, too, feasted his eyes on the Gaiety girl.

"By Jove!" said the Hungarian under his breath, and she eagerly asked: "What? Whom? Whom do you see?"

Turning his back sharply he evaded her question and she did not pursue the idea, and as a physical weakness overwhelmed her when Poniotowsky after a second said: "Come, cherie, for heaven's sake, let's go"—she mechanically rose and passed out.

Several young men supping together came over eagerly to speak to her and claim acquaintance with the Gaiety girl, and walked along out to the motor. There Letty Lane discovered she had dropped her handkerchief, and sent the prince back for it.

As though he had been waiting for the reappearance of Poniotowsky, Dan Blair stood close to the little table which Letty Lane had left, her handkerchief in his hand. As Poniotowsky came up Dan thrust the small trifle of sheer linen into his waistcoat pocket.

"I will trouble you for Miss Lane's handkerchief," said Poniotowsky, his eyes cold.

"You may," said Dan as quietly, his blue eyes like sparks from a star, "trouble me for hell!" And lifting from the table Poniotowsky's own half-emptied glass of champagne, the boy flung the contents full in the Hungarian's face.

The wine dashed against Poniotowsky's lips and in his eyes. Blair laughed out loud, his hands in his pockets. The insult was low and noiseless; the little glass shattered as it fell so softly that with the music its gentle crash was unheard.

Poniotowsky wiped his face tranquilly and bowed.

"You shall hear from me after I have taken Miss Lane home."

"Tell her," said the boy, "where you left the handkerchief, that's all."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Such Stuff as Dreams.

Dan was in his room at the hotel. He woke and then slept again. Nothing seemed strange to him—nothing seemed real. It was three o'clock in the morning, the rumble of Paris was dull; it did not disturb him, for he seemed without the body and to have grown giantlike, and to fill the room. He had a sense of suffocation and the need to break through the windows and to escape into ether.

The entrance of Poniotowsky's two friends was a part with the unreal naturalness. One was a Roumanian, the other a Frenchman—both spoke fluent English. Dan, his eyes fixed on the foreign faces, only half saw them; they blurred, their voices were small and far away. Finally he said:

"All right, all right, I can shoot well enough; this kind of thing isn't our custom, you know—I'd as soon kill him one way as another, as a matter of fact. No, I don't know a darned soul here." There was a confab incomprehensible to Dan. "It's all one to me, gentlemen," he said. "I'd rather not drag in my friends. Fix it up to suit yourselves."

He wanted them to go—to be alone—to stretch his arms, to rid himself of the burden of sense and be free. And after they had left, he remained in his window till dawn. It came soon, midsummer dawn, a singularly tender morning in his heart. His mind worked with great rapidity. He had made his will in the States. He wished he could have left everything to Letty Lane, but if, as Ruggles said, he was a pauper? Perhaps it wasn't a lie after all. Dan had written and telegraphed Ruggles asking for the solemn truth, and also telling him where he was and asking the older man to come over. If Ruggles proved he was poor, why, some of his burden was gone. His money had been a burden, he knew it now. He might have no use for money the next day. What good could it do him in a fix like this? He was to meet Poniotowsky at five o'clock in a place whose name he couldn't recall. He had seen it advertised, though; people went there for lunch.

They were to shoot at twenty-five paces—he might be a Rockefeller or a beggar for all the good his money could do him in a pinch like this.

His father wouldn't approve, the old man wouldn't approve, but he had sent him here to learn the ways of the old world. A flickering smile crossed his beautiful, set face. His lessons hadn't done him much good; he would like to have seen good old Gordon Galorey again; he loved him—he had no use for Ruggles, no use—it had been all his fault. His mind reached out to his father, and the old man's words came dinning back: "Buy the things that stay above ground, my boy." What were those things? He had thought they were passion—he had thought they were love, and he had put all on one woman. She couldn't stand by him, now that he was poor.

The spasm in his heart was so sharp that he made a low sound in his throat and leaned against the casing of the window. He must see her, touch her once more.

The fellows Poniotowsky's seconds had chosen to be Dan's representatives came in to "fix him up." They were in frock coats and carried their silk hats and their gloves. He could have laughed at them. Then they made him think of undertakers, and his blood grew cold. He handled the revolvers with care and interest.

"I'm not going to let him murder me, you know," he told his seconds.

They helped him to dress, at least one of them did, while the other took Dan's place by the window and looked to the boy like a figure of death.

The hour was getting on; he heard his own motor drive up, and they went down, through the deserted hotel. The men who had consented to act for Dan regarded their principal curiously. He wasn't pale, there was a brightness on his face.

"Partons," said one of them, and told Blair's chauffeur where to go and now to run. "Partons."

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Picture of It All.

As far as his knowing anything of the customs of it all, it was like leading a lamb to slaughter.

Villebon, lovely, vernal, at a later hour the spot for gay breakfasts and gentle rendezvous, had been designated for the meeting between Dan and Poniotowsky. There in his motor he gave up his effort to set his thoughts clear. Nothing settled down. Even the ground they flew over, the trees with their chestnut plumes, blurred, were indistinct, nebulous, as if seen through a diving-bell under the sea. Fear—he didn't know the word. He wasn't afraid—it wasn't that; yet he had a certainty that it was all up with him. He was young—very young—and he hadn't done much with the job. His father would have been ashamed of him. Then all his thoughts went to Her. The two men in the motor floated off and she sat there as she had sat yesterday in her marvelously pretty clothes—her little coral shoes.

He had held those bright, little feet in his hands on the Thames day; they had just filled his great hands.

Then Letty Lane, too, spirited away, and the boy's thoughts turned to the man he was to meet. "The affairs are purely formal," he had heard some one say, "an exchange of balls, without serious results."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

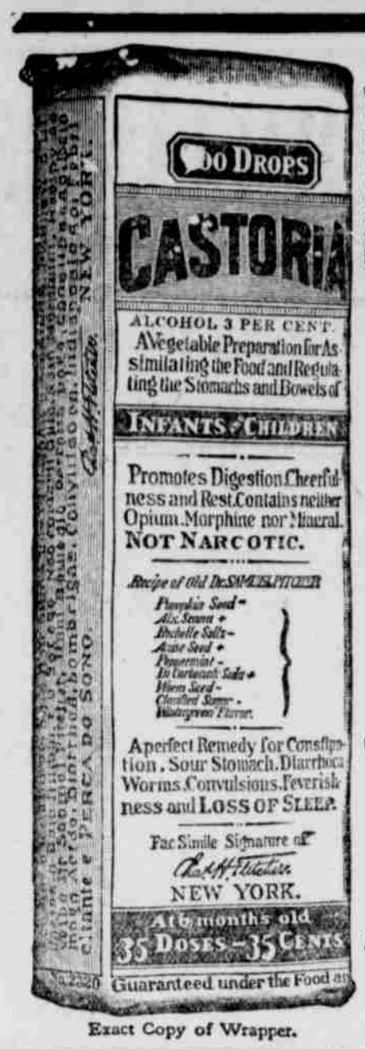
The Boy Flung the Contents Full in the Hungarian's Face.

Stronghold of Wasps.

An extraordinary nest of wasps was discovered lately on the Bedfordshire (Eng.) estate of Lord Ampthill, where a man, using three wire wasp traps, has caught over 4,000 wasps. The nest consisted of six tiers, which stood six and a half inches high, and measured eight and a half inches across. The cells contained grubs and young wasps in different stages of growth.

The Fool Abroad.

Whenever a fool gets away from home he seems to be afraid some body may pass him without noticing his foolishness.—Chicago Record-Herald.



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Auto Suggestion.

"To Show how unconsciously a man's business may be be in his mind at all times, I took a financial operator to a fancier's to select a dog, and what kind of a dog do you think he asked for at once?"

"What kind?"

"A water dog. Said he had heard it was a good stock proposition."

Murders It.

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Jewett—No; he is a regular slaughter house of the English language.

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An Ananias.

"G. W. Smith says he loves to live in the suburbs in winter."

"Humph! And the rascal was born on Washington's birthday and named after him, too."—Judge.

The Situation.

Knicker—What is the matter?

Bocker—The cook has divorced us and wants alimony.—Harper's Bazar.

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FOR THE WOMAN WHO THINKS AND FEELS.

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MRS. DONA M. MARTIN, of Auburn, Nebr., Route 1, Box 84, says: "I thought I would write you in regard to what your medicines have done for me. I have used them for thirty years for female trouble and general weakness with the very best result, and they have saved me hundreds of dollars in doctors' bills. I buy the 'Favorite Prescription' and 'Golden Medical Discovery' and take them together. I never was disappointed in your remedies and take pleasure in recommending them to any suffering lady. I am now almost fifty years old; at forty-five I took your medicines, both kinds, and I passed that period very easily and left me fat and healthy. I feel like a young girl.

"If any lady cares to write me, I will gladly tell her more about the good work of your medicines."

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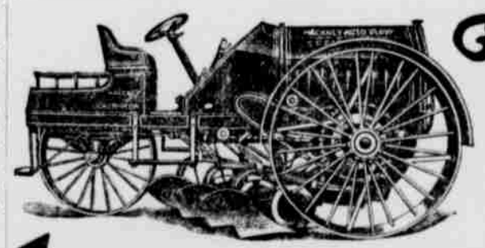

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