

THE ORDEAL

By Victor Radcliffe

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"Five hundred!" announced Rolfe Maitland. "Half the price of my happiness in that little wallet," and he placed a \$50 bill on top of nine others of equal denomination, closed the precious receptacle and carefully pinned it in an inside pocket, the customary hiding place of his heart's treasure.

But first he kissed reverently a photograph upon which the little heap of bills rested. It was that of Eunice Copley, to Rolfe the fairest face, the most cherished being in all the wide world!

How vividly there came back to him the last evening he had spent with Eunice in her humble home in the quiet little village of Compton! They had loved each other for over a year. There was no chance for money-making in the quiet town and Rolfe had determined to go to the city.

"I will work till I have a thousand dollars ahead," Rolfe told Eunice. "Then I will come back and start a small business with that capital and we will settle down modestly, but happily."

Then he had folded her in his fond sheltering arms and they had repeated for the thousandth time their mutual vow of unalterable fidelity.

And now at the end of a year's exile Rolfe regarded his cherished savings, every dollar of which had been wrought out through his fidelity and devotion to Eunice.

One thing troubled him somewhat! About a month previous he had received a letter from Eunice, which indicated that events had transpired at the home village that had brought a new and animated interest into her quiet life.

She wrote that a former partner of her father in a northern iron mine that had turned out a disappointment

had appeared. He had become rich and this Mr. Grant in the goodness of his heart had sought out his old business associate.

"Nothing will do, Mr. Grant insists," wrote Eunice, "but that we must take a trip with him and enjoy life outside the humdrum one we lead here. He has been very liberal to father and made him accept \$2,000, which he says is really due him from the sale of the old mine. I may be



A Splendid Machine Flashed By.

away for a month with father, but I will write you every week."

Which Eunice had not done, and because of this Rolfe felt somewhat disappointed and depressed. It was not because he feared that the glamour of wealth and enjoyment would ever win Eunice away from him, but he realized that the contrast might make her dissatisfied with the humble life that must be theirs through the first years of married experience.

"I will be glad when this flare is