

The Governor's Lady

A Novelization of Alice Bradley's Play

By Gertrude Stebens

Illustrations From Photographs of the Stage Production

Copyright, 1915, (Publication Rights Reserved) by David Belasco

[Continued from last week.] The hot blood surged up into Hayes' face. He was agitated at this peep into the soul of the woman he had thought was tender and dear and sweet. Her complete disregard of Mrs. Slade enraged him. "So this is what Slade has done!" His fists were clenched. "This is what he's after. This is what you want. I'm not surprised," he went on, bitterly. "It was always in you."



She Hesitated in Bewildered Fashion.

There's no type so low. You're bad to the marrow. London and Washington and Paris have done for you. You've butterflied all over the world till you're a heartless jade, junketing about from one embassy to another with all your pretty little cheating tricks and not a decent thought in your head. "I won't listen," she gasped, amazed at his denunciation of her. "You will listen!" "Don't, oh, don't say such things, Bob," she pleaded. "Why not?" he demanded. "You who plan to do such a devilish thing in the eyes of God and of men, can you be afraid to hear what it really is you plan? You will listen!" He took a step nearer. He caught her roughly by the shoulders. He buried his lips into the soft tendrils of hair around her ear as he almost shouted: "You are going to rob a poor little woman—step into her house and snatch away her husband—and the only excuse you can offer is that you want his money. Why don't you rob somebody outright and get away with it? It's more honest."

"You give me?" she asked coolly. "What can I give you?" he repeated. Then with a look of utter loathing in his eyes: "You contemptible little—" and he flung her from him. "You're going to sell what's mine to the highest bidder," he panted. "But Slade's not divorced yet, and before you get out of this dirty mire you'll regret it. You'll find yourself so deep in scandal—"

"I won't have a scandal," Katherine protested, vehemently. "I won't have a scandal," they'll say he's your lover," his rage turning into fury. Katherine looked at him as if she had been turned to stone. Then the real significance of what he had said lanced to a flame the rage that was burning in her heart—rage at him—at conditions—at everything! She gripped her fingers around one of the lovely roses at her belt and crushed it to a pulp. Then she ripped them from her gown—his roses—and threw them among the blazing logs in the fireplace. She turned to him with a bitter laugh. "I'm through with you—and your insults," and she fled from the room. Katherine did not go a moment too soon, for scarcely had the folding doors closed behind her when the door from the smoking-room swung open, and with noisy talk the few remaining members of the dinner party straggled in. In her agitated condition, even Katherine would have found it difficult to regain her composure sufficiently to meet these men.

Governor Hibbard was in a particularly happy frame of mind. The senator's excellent viands and the senator's choice wines and the senator's Havanas had succeeded in making him feel well satisfied with the world in general and with Slade in particular. His round face was flushed and his string tie a trifle awry. "Had a good time, senator," he said, removing his cigar, "but there were too many swallowtails here for me to-night. When I was governor of the state I never wore one. No, nor a plug hat, either." "I never wore one, and I never will," seconded Colonel Smith, a typical long, lean, lanky westerner, with the inevitable western cut beard and hair a bit too long. "Governor, you're right," and Strickland gave each man a resounding slap on the shoulder. "Colonel, stick to your guns. They're a nuisance. Now, boys, forget your homes and your trains. The others are all gone. Let us, the ringleaders, adjourn to the dining-room and over one of my punches—"

The governor patted his stomach tenderly. The mention of the senator's punch was all that was necessary to weaken his desire to catch a train. "Ah! Strickland's punch! I'm with you!" "Now, gentlemen," interrupted Merritt in a business-like manner, "before we split up tonight it's understood we're all Slade men?" "All Slade men!" was the unanimous shout from the colonel, the ex-Governor Hunt, pious old Pop Hart and Ingram. "And we're preparing to cope with Slade's domestic trouble should it come up, and it will," went on Merritt. "The devil, Strick!" broke in the colonel. "Can't it be patched up until after election?" "No, gentlemen." The senator was unctuous but firm. "We must take Slade as we find him or—drop him. We're in the hands of a peculiar and dominant personality. We can't make these big fellows to order."

"Hip! Hip!" began Merritt, when the door opened and the butler announced: "Mrs. Slade." The hurrah that had been on each man's lips died a sudden death. They looked at each other in consternation. "Mrs. Slade!" gasped Merritt. "Whew!" The eyes turned toward the door saw a tiny, gray-garbed woman, with



Slade's Eyes Darkened and an Ugly Scowl Appeared on His Face.

great, questioning brown eyes, hesitating in bewildered fashion as she found herself confronted by a roomful of men. Her gown with its tight basque and full skirt was dowdy and badly cut, in marked contrast to the fashionable, clinging gowns of the women who had graced the room a short time previous. Her white gloves were a fraction too short to meet her short sleeves, and left exposed thin arms and pointed elbows. But the tender face, with its sweetly expressive mouth, was unchanged. The lovely eyes were more appealing, as filled with wistful shyness. They gazed about the room. "I'm afraid it's a little late for me to come," she managed to say, as the senator came up to her with outstretched hand. "This is an unexpected pleasure," the senator assured her with an urbane smile. "Gentlemen, Mrs. Slade," Merritt greeted her effusively, "I'm glad to know that the reports to the senator have been exaggerated. Your health is now—"

CHAPTER VIII.

As the men filed out, Mary turned to meet her husband's angry eyes. "Well, Dan, I'm here," and she looked pleadingly up into the uninviting face. "I've given in," she went on. "It's been a struggle, but I'm here. Why, I've been thinking all this evening, while I was gettin' dressed, I'd give a dollar to see the look on your face when you saw me here, Dan, and know that you got your own way. Dan—I've—well—I've given in, father." And, turning to Rob with an expectant little smile, "Do I look all right, Rob?" "I think you do," Hayes replied, gravely. "Will you take Mrs. Slade home, Robert?" Slade broke in. "It's very late," Hayes pleaded as he put his hand lovingly on the little woman's shoulder. "Yes, I know it is," Mary agreed, still not realizing what a fiasco her first attempt to enter into social life was. "I've been outside for half an hour—just tryin' to make up my mind, but as long as you're here yet—why—"

"You'd better go," Slade finished for him, but not in his conciliatory tone. "But you don't understand," Mary objected. "He doesn't understand," she turned to Hayes in a perplexed way. "My being here tonight means I've given in," and she looked up searchingly into her husband's forbidding face. "I'm going out with you every night, all the time, whenever you want me, balls, parties, dinners, everything." "Will you see Mrs. Slade to her carriage?" Slade turned to Bob, ignoring his wife's detaining hand. "Yes, but," Mary began to object. "It's necessary that I join these gentlemen," Slade informed her coldly. "Take her at once," he commanded Hayes. Hayes started toward the door. "Call me when you're ready, Mrs. Slade. I'll wait in the hall," and he disappeared. Slade thrust his hands deep into his pockets and looked at his wife in a puzzled way. She was nervously pulling off her gloves and beginning to realize that her visit was, for some unexplained reason, scarcely the success she had planned it to be. "In God's name, what did you come here for, Mary?" Slade finally demanded.

"What did I come here for?" she repeated blankly. "What did I come here for? Why, to please you. I thought you'd be glad. I just can't stand it with you living out of the house, Dan. Lord, I haven't slept a wink since you left. Aren't you missing me?" and her voice trembled just the least bit. "Oh, Dan. It's all over now, ain't it, our life?" she began eagerly, catching his arm impulsively and pressing her face against his coat-sleeve, kissing the unresponsive broadcloth again and again. "We're making up; we'll go home together. It'll all be different after this, and I'll see you at the breakfast table mornings now," she finished joyfully. "Dan," she began again, "I don't believe you've had a decent cup of coffee since you left home. I'd like to make you a cup now, myself," and she looked reflectively around the senator's library as if she thought there might possibly be some opportunity to brew a cup of coffee right then and there. "Come on home, father," she urged, calling him by the name of the old, old days, when they had both dreamed of little ones in their home, and patting his arm lovingly, tenderly. "Mad at me yet?" she questioned. Slade winced under the gentle touch of her hand on his arm, and found it necessary to turn away from the face that was so sweet and penitent. "No," he stammered. "I'm not mad at you, only this is no place to talk about our troubles."

"Well, we'll go along home," she suggested. "No, I can't come now. You'd better let Rob take you home," and he started for the door. Mary started after him, clutching at his arm. "I've got to know what the matter is now—I must—I must," she declared vehemently. "Very well, Mary, as far as my plans go, I've arranged my life differently." "Differently? Differently? Haven't I given in?" "It's too late now. I'm sorry to say this, but you force me." "Wait a minute, Dan." She drew a long breath, as if nervously herself for an ordeal. "You're going to say something dreadful. Before you begin I want to say that I'll do anything to get things back just the same as they were before—anything. There's nothing you could ask me I won't do—and she sank weakly into a chair. "Look here," Slade was cruelly abrupt. "This separation is permanent. Nothing's going to change it." "Separation?" She gave him a blank, amazed stare. "Why, Dan, who's talking about separation? We can't be separated." "We can be—we are. When I left you that night it was for good and all, Mary. We can't get along together and I've made up my mind to it. It's settled."

"You mean to say you haven't missed yer home? You haven't wanted me to give in? You mean what's happened is for the best?" "Yes," he answered icily. Mary gazed at him in bewilderment. "You're not the man I talked to five weeks ago. I don't know you. It must be the people about you—or it's—"

Like a flash the possibility of another woman came into her mind. But she dismissed it as quickly as it had come. She would not insult him—or herself—or their love by such a suggestion. "I am another man from the one you married," Slade agreed, "but you wouldn't see it." "Is it my fault that I married a man who's turned into somebody else?" Mary argued, fighting, fighting for her life, her happiness—for him. "I married you, Dan. I married a poor young fellow who was hard worked and I helped him along. We started fair, Dan, but this ain't fair," lapsing more and more into poor grammar and dialect as her excitement rose. "You got beyond me, but it was because I worked and saved the pennies for you, while you went out and got help and learned. Cooking didn't learn me. I didn't even know I was behind the times or unsatisfactory until one day you—"

married because she cooked and worked instead of playing. It ain't just!" "Oh, what's the use, Mary?" Slade sighed wearily, as though he, and not she, were the injured one. "Dan," Mary lowered her voice and looked at him earnestly. "If I brought up a girl today and we were poor, would you advise me to say, 'Take piano lessons, learn languages, keep up to the times, never mind doing your share or being economical?'" "I'm not going to argue," Slade replied loftily. "Yuh can't, Dan," declared Mary with conviction. "There ain't no argument. It's one-sided. Suppose I'd changed and you'd stayed the same, what would all your friends say? 'Foor Slade, his wife's crazy—or bad—probably bad.' No, yer can't get me to see it."

"Well, whether you see it or not, that's just where we stand. You'd better let me call Robert to take you home."



"I Will Have It," Stormed Slade.

struggling hard not to break down—not to cling wildly to him and beg him not to give her up. She steadied herself finally. "Well, Dan, there's one thing you've got to be careful of—now that I won't be round to hold you back—now that I won't be with you any more," her voice quavered. "I'm the only one who tells you all the truth. Everyone else is afraid of you." "Don't let them flatter you," she said, with more maternal than wifely solicitude. "They can. I found that out. Father! You're an awful fool with your money. You never had but one real friend. That's me. You'll find it out." "I'll look out," Slade promised, and there was a note of relief in his tone at her change of attitude. "Do you want me to go away from our house right off?" Mary asked, as if the idea of actual leaving had just occurred to her. "Oh!" Slade hesitated. The details did seem rather cold-blooded. "But it'll be better when it's all settled—"

"A divorce—why, yes—a separation—what's the difference?" Slade was stooping now to deceive the little woman, who was herself the soul of truth and honor. "What?" the woman gasped. "A separation is the same thing as a divorce," and he lied shamefully. "Is it?" "It will be done quietly," he went on. "Why, Dan Slade!" She could not believe her ears. "Give up your name? Why, you might as well ask me to give up my eyes. I've got it now—you're looking for a younger. You can't have a divorce, Dan!" All her tears were dry now and a new fiber in her voice. "I will have it," stormed Slade, enraged because her mood had changed at the word "divorce," just when he had been congratulating himself that the difficulty was all nicely adjusted. "That's all there is to it. I will have it."

"Anything else, Dan. Anything else—not a divorce. You mustn't ask me to take the name I've carried all these years and throw it away. I'm giving in, but leave my name. I'm givin' up everything else." "You might as well stop!" he warned her threateningly. "You're going now, tonight, the first train East tomorrow. Go where you like, see what you like, do what you like, spend what you like. To what you have I'll add a million more, but I'm going to have this done in my own way." "Oh, Dan!" she shrank from his wrath. "I'm going home." "No, you're not, until this thing is settled. My mind's made up. I don't want to quarrel with you, and I should if you fought me." "I won't let you. You can't do it." "I can't do it, eh?" The word came as like a red rag to a bull. He stood over her with darkening face and shaking fist. "Don't you know better than to stand there and tell me that? Haven't I got to hear it from you? Have I got to see what happened to man, woman and child, all of 'em, who ever told me that to my face? I'll do it! I'll do it now, by God!" and he strode angrily up and down the room. The angrier her husband became, the calmer and more determined was Mary Slade. "Dan," she began very gently, but firmly, "you're stubborn, but you ain't a bit more stubborn than I am when I'm right, and now I am. "You can go ahead. Do all you like, but this time you won't conquer, because I'm going to fight you, father. I'm going to fight you, Dan." Then with head proudly erect, she walked to the door, threw it open and cried, just a bit hysterically in spite of her effort to keep her voice steady: "Robert! You can take me home now, please!" She turned back just once to the man gazing moodily into the fire. "I'm goin' to fight yer, Dan!"

HAVE LAUGH ON SNOBERLY

His Fellow Members of the Club Like to Indulge in Their Merriment for Some Time. Young Snoberly is very anxious to create the impression that he is a don't at French. A few evenings ago, at the club, he took a French comic paper, and for half an hour he pretended to be absorbed in its contents. Every once in a while he would smile feebly, as if he had been carried away by the jokes, and say, audibly, "Bon, tres bon!" There were several gentlemen at the adjoining table who had been noticing Snoberly's antics. At last one of them said: "See that Snoberly over there pretending to read that French paper? I am certain that he does not understand French. He is just doing that to impress the people with his knowledge as a linguist." "I suppose he must understand French," replied one of the party. "I'll bet a bottle of wine that he doesn't, and I'll prove it." "I'll take the bet." The gentleman who had made the bet walked quietly over to Snoberly, and said, "Monsieur, quelle heure est-il?" ("What o'clock is it, sir?") Young Snoberly smiled a Parisian smile, and gracefully handed over the paper!—London Tit-Bits. Leap-Year Advice. Here is the sage counsel which Miss Lucille Pugh, feminist, suffragist and lawyer—and also quite pretty—is quoted as offering to all bachelor girls, absolutely without fee, for their leap year guidance, says the New York Evening Sun. "Propose to the man of your choice, but look up his rating first." Short and to the point. By the recourse to Bradstreet's it is argued that women may avoid unhappiness frequently resulting from penniless marriages. Good!—as far as it goes. But what eminent counselor of the other sex will not stand forth to aid his trembling brethren? Such a one might well advise: "Accept the woman who proposes to you if you like her, but first look up her rating in the domestic arts." One prerequisite is as far as the other. For the woman: Do not marry for money, but love where money is; for the man: Do not marry to provide yourself with a cook, but while marrying you might as well marry someone who can make out of the place you live in a home. Something more than a liberal income is required to produce "comfortable circumstances" for two. —Subscribe for the WATCHMAN