

Bellefonte, Pa., April 21, 1916.

The Governor's Lady

A Novelization of Alice Bradley's Play

By Gertrude Stebensen

Illustrations From Photographs of the Stage Production

Slade watched his wife from under lowered lids as he ate. He feared that Mary knew everything. This calm, constrained atmosphere was more baffling than an emotional outburst would have been.



He Took Her Hand Eagerly and Held It.

"Why did you come, Dan?" Mary was rather enjoying his discomfort. "Oh, yes, I'll take my coffee now, if I may, good and strong."

"You know I'm kind of glad to see the place again, and you know, I like this stew," and he proceeded to busy himself with the matter of eating—anything to gain time under Mary's merciless, persistent questioning.

"Have a biscuit," suggested Mary, "and—tell me why you came out here."

Slade looked longly toward the window, as if he expected to find an inspiration for a suitable answer there.

"Why, the old rosebush out there yet, holding the fort!" he exclaimed.

"You go!" warned Mary.

"I must have a look at it," and leaving his dinner, he went over to the window.

Mary hurriedly refilled his plate with stew the moment his back was turned.

"I declare!" He was still enthusing over the rosebush. "Quite a bush!"

He was beginning to feel more at ease. He had the satisfied feeling that comes to every man when his stomach is full. He felt very benign toward Mary, even toward Katherine and Hayes.

"I'll tell you what I am going to do, Mary," he began. "You like this house—always did. Well, you can stay here. I won't oppose it. There's nothing in the world you want I wouldn't give you—nothing. Now, what can I do for you? What can I—"

"Why, Mary!" Slade was distressed at having his patronizing advances treated in such a manner.

"Oh, Dan, Dan!" Mary laughed, mockingly, unable longer to conceal her feelings. Slade realized in an instant that Mary knew everything.

"Well, I'll tell you one thing!" he blurted out. "I never cared a button for that girl—if that's what you mean! I swear I didn't!"

"Who said you did, Dan?" Mary's manner was provokingly calm. "I never did! I'm not that kind of a man, and you know it," he protested.

(dea now. The mere fact that you missed this time will keep you at it." "I've got enough," Slade saw that frankness was the only way out of it. "I'm not going to make a devilish fool of myself again."

"Don't let your coffee get cold," reminded Mary, tantalizingly. "Now, Dan, you wanted me to go away, and I will. I've made up my mind."

"But I don't want you to go away," Slade remonstrated. "We can arrange

everything right here and now. This termination of yours is pretty sudden, isn't it?"

"Not as sudden as your change of mind when you first came into this room today."

"Well, where are you going?" "Oh, I don't know," Mary replied, indifferently. "What does become of divorced women?"

"Now, Mary, don't talk like that; it ain't natural from you." This time Slade was doing the pleading. "You can't go off alone like this."

"Oh, can't I? I could a week ago, or an hour ago. Why can't I now? I can't wait to pack my things."

Slade gazed at his wife in amazement. If the patient rug on which he had thoughtlessly trampled so long had suddenly been transformed into a snarling animal, Slade could not have been any more surprised.

"Why, Mary, see here," he began, then stopped. "Oh, h—i, what's the use? You meet me half way in the way I want to live, and you'd better come home. We'll open the house in town again, and we'll make the best of things. There! We'll make the best of things."

"How can we?" argued Mary. "It was old-fashioned and behind the times and held you back a week ago, why wouldn't I now? Try as hard as I might, you said I couldn't help you. I'm just the same today as I was a week ago. I haven't changed a bit. I'm just the plain little dud I always was. What's true Monday is true Tuesday. We can't get back to where we were once."

"You meet me half way and I'll do my part." Dan had never known her to be obstinate like this before. Usually his slightest wish had been her keenest desire.

"Dan, you wanted that divorce?" The question was ominous, but Slade had to admit the point.

"Well, you're going to get it!" "But I don't want it now."

"You're going to have it, Dan Slade," and Mary's mouth set like a steel trap. "You're going to have it if I have to get it myself!"

"What do you want with a divorce when I'm willing to give it?" stormed Slade, losing his patience.

"How long have you been willing to give it, Dan? What did you come out here for?" She paused, but he did not answer. "You came to force me out of this house. Don't tell me you didn't, because I know. And I know why you didn't do it. You came in here and suddenly you got a look at that girl and me! And it staggered you! For once, something stung you off your feet! You knew then that I'd found it all out. You

knew I knew everything. And now you've been thrown over by that girl. She's thrown you over! Between the two of us—you're caught. And that's the real reason that you're not standing here shaking your finger in my face and telling me to go out, to get out, to go!"

Mary stopped for breath, and walked up and down the room before she proceeded with her bitter denunciation.

"And the worst of it is that after the girl's gone you actually ask me to take her back—to take her back—just as they all do. It's another man's come home to mother. Well, here's one woman that's not going to take her husband back! No, sir! If you pushed me aside for ambition, I might think it over, but you've pushed me aside for that girl's twenty-seven years of prettiness," and she pointed an accusing finger at the door through which Katherine Strickland had gone hand-in-hand with her sweetheart.

"That's what you've done—for twenty-seven years of youth, for twenty-seven years of figure and eyes and freshness and all the rest of it. You put me aside for a younger woman!" the very utterance almost lost Mary her courage, but she kept on. "You

"Oh, yes there is; you've got the

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