

WAITING.

Serene, I fold my hands and wait
Nor care for wind, or tide, or sea;
I rave no more 'gainst time or fate
For lo! my own shall come to me.

UPSTAGE.

(Concluded from last week.)

"Gracie, deah—will you gaze?"
Miss Mallard's wide, wondering
orbs, accompanied by Grace's, turned
toward the door. Sallie MacMahon
had just entered, resplendent in spring
outfit.

Now they would stop laughing at
her!
Now they would treat her with respect!
Yea—weep for her, ye wise ones!
Sallie's day had come. She had fallen
from grace.

And having recklessly started at
high speed, she could not stop. She
had no desire to. Ridicule she might
have gone on enduring, but nightly to
sit opposite Mr. James Fowler Patterson
in his perfectly tailored clothes,

"But I—I couldn't, Jimmie."
"But if I ask you? I'm crazy about
you, Baby. Never was so keen on a
girl in my life."

Sallie gulped hard and without looking
at it unclasped the clinging circlet.
"Please," he protested as she handed
it back. "Please—dear!"

With large indifference Sallie handed
over the necklace and watched the
blue eyes widen. Not hers to inform
the lady that it had been purchased at
a near pearl establishment guaranteeing
that "Our pearls rival the real."

At the curb that night she found a
gray roadster barking its haste to be
off like a pert Pomeranian. Mr. J. F.
Patterson stepped out, then stopped
short with a gasp as he took in the
glory of her. She gave him her hand
—and waited. To her amazement he
said not a word, merely helped her
into the car. It snorted and raced up
Broadway. Still not a word! She
snuggled into the low seat, turned to
look up at him. He was frowning.

"What's the matter, Jimmie?"
"Nothing."
"Something is."
"Nothing, I tell you!" His tone was
brusque. The frown settled deeper,

"Why didn't you ever come in it
before?"
"Is this a new car, Jimmie?"
"No."
"Is this a new car, Jimmie?"

"I think I want to go home."
"Just as you say."
"Jimmie—what—what's wrong?"

His eyes scanned the beauty of her,
steel buckles, silken dress, rose laden
hat. They ended on the glossy pearls
and his lips which had opened for
speech snapped shut.

"Jimmie—please—please don't act
that way."
"What way?"
"So—so queer."

The following night Mr. Patterson
was late for the first time. He swung
round the corner just as Sallie appeared.
She was wearing a violet suit,
fluffy lace collar and cuffs, and a hat
of violets. They made her eyes the
same color. During a night of tearful
and bewildered groping, she had arrived
at a conclusion. Jimmie hadn't
liked the way she looked! He wasn't
pleased with her dress or hat or something.

But the violet, apparently, made no
more satisfactory impression than the
blue. He handed her almost roughly
into the car. They shot like a cannon
ball into the darkness.

There were no stars. The moon
had reached the full, dwindled and
slipped round to smile upon the other
side of the world.

"Jimmie, tell me about yourself.
You never have told me much."
"Nothing to tell."

"How does it feel to have so much
money?" she proceeded for want of
something better to say.
The effect was electric. He turned
on her. The car jerked to the other
side of the road. "You ought to
know!"

"I? Stop kidding!"
"Yes, you!"
"But—"

"Look as if you'd come into a Rock-
efeller income!"
"Well, I haven't."
"No?"
"You know it!"

"I don't know anything about wom-
en."
"Well, you ought to know all about
me."
"Yes—I ought to." He gave the
same ugly laugh of the night before
but in his eyes was real pain. "But
who knows what to expect of a chorus
queen?"

"Jimmie!"
"Oh, what's the use?" came in husky
desperation. "Let's be merry!"

Sallie stared, choked and bewildered,
into the darkness. She didn't know
how to answer, how to act. This new
Jimmie, this—this nasty one! He was
a stranger. Small teeth settled into
her lower lip to halt its trembling.

For three nights they followed the
same program—she bewitching in a
new costume chosen tearfully to conciliate
the mysterious male—he taciturn,
unresponsive, answering her labored
conversation with husky mono-
syllables or hard cynicism that hurt
without enlightening. Twice during
those three days it drizzled, and instead
of suggesting supper in the
neighborhood as had been their habit
in bad weather, he drove the short
ten blocks to the weary brownstone house
and left her there.

blinding glare. "Gad, what an ass
I've been!" it spat out.
"Don't talk like that—don't."
"I mean it—a saphead! Swallowed
that diamond yarn whole—hook, line
and sinker."

"It wasn't a yarn!"
"You'll tell me next your mother
bought the pearls, too."
"No—I did."
The volcano roared a warning.
"God!" A pause while his breath
caught.

"It's true, I tell you! I bought them
myself—they're imitation."
He flung back his head. His laugh
frightened her.
"Oh—won't you believe me?"
"No!"

"And I put you above them—way
on top." The volcano erupted with
thunderous crash. "But you're like
the rest of them! Price—a string of
pearls—a diamond! Sit down! Sit
down, I say! I'll get you home soon
enough."

White and terrified, she subsided.
Words rushed to her lips, clung there.
He crashed on.
"But you did put it over! Had me
going so that I'd have staked my life
on you. Got me with the baby stare
stuff. 'Baby—huh! It's a lesson—I
won't be such a damn fool next time!'"

"Jimmie—the voice struggled to
keep steady—"I swear to you—"
"I wouldn't believe you on a stack
of Bibles! Down on your luck—
thought you had an easy mark. Then
something better—pearls!—came
along—"

"Jimmie—I—I'll never forgive—"
"That's right! Injured innocence."
"I—I could die this minute!"
"Is it tough, though—when the first
time a man really—cares—more than
he ever thought—" The words halted
painfully.

"Oh, won't you listen? Jimmie—
you—you had so much—and I—"
"But the other fellow's got more!
Like all the rest—"
They stopped with a jump that
made the roadster snort in protest.
"You—you don't understand," the
sobs clamored to her lips. "Tomor-
row—please—please listen—"

She sprang out of the car and up
the steps, clinging to the iron rail.
But tomorrow when she hurried out
of the stage entrance, eyes darting to
the curb, Mr. James Fowler Patterson
was not there.

"My deah—what has become of the
orange motah?" Miss Mariette turned
her round stare on Sallie.
"Oh! He—he's out of town."
"Mr! Been 'out' some time, I take
it."

"F-four weeks," Sallie found it
impossible to talk these days without
a quiver. And the wells that had been
her eyes were wept dry.
"When does he return, my deah?"
"Oh, s-son now, I guess."

"H'm!" Merciless blue eyes took in
the small white face, listless shoulders
and drooping mouth, while their owner
hummed low and languorously,
"When I Come Back to You." After
which she proceeded, "and the cob-
bles?"

"What?"
"The dog collar, my deah."
"Oh—I—I put it away."
"Ah—"
"I—it—I thought I'd better not
wear it round all the time."

After a moment of slow scrutiny
Miss Mariette cast her eyes heaven-
ward. "You were wise, child, not to
let him get back the diamond, too,"
she drawled.
"I d-don't know what you're talking
about."

"Oh—d-don't you? My deah, do I
look as easy as that? It's plain he's
gone his merry way tra-la."
Like a whip Sallie snapped back at
her. "He hasn't!"
"Tra-la, tra-la-la!"
"Don't you dare—"
"Then where's the car, tra-la?"
"I told you—"
"The car he was giving you, I
mean."

Grace, who had entered in time for
the last words, tittered with all the
old enjoyment.
"Poor little car skidded on the way,
Gracie, deah," announced Miss Mal-
lard.
Sallie's throat closed in a hard knot.
Her head almost dropped on the table.
But not quite. Pride kept it up.
Pride and the determination never to
let them know how right they were.

Yet Miss Mariette Mallard, having
resumed her tactics of warfare, allowed
to slip no opportunity for attack.
She teased and tormented and tra-la'd
with purring delight, sharp little tal-
ons inflicting new wounds.
Sallie began to sink into the dress-
ing room as if to hide from insinuat-
ing smiles, and coming out of the
stage door she fairly tore round the
corner to escape the torturing vision
of that line at the curb.
The pearls she had recklessly let go.

After what he had said, she couldn't
bear to touch them. The necklace
curled in her hand like some wrig-
gling reptile. Her first impulse had
been to toss it into an ash can, but
eventually she found herself back at
the near pearl shop. A suave sales-
man after much fingering and testing
reminded her that they did not refund
on merchandise but added that he
might be able to resell at a loss if she
cared to leave it. Sallie even hated
the money—something more than half
the amount she had paid—that his
smooth hands finally counted into hers.

One thing though she did determine
in the long nights. There must be a
car! Never must they be certain that
Jimmie had gone for good! But cars,
like Pegasus, soar winged in the
clouds and June had come gliding into
the arms of May while Sallie suffered
and waited, lived on bread and milk,
and hopelessly priced the cheaper
makes.

Other lips, mustached, clean shav-
en, young and not so young, answered
Sallie's plea of "Won't you smile at
me?" Sallie did not hear them. Other
eyes sought hers from motors at
the curb. Sallie did not know they
were there.

She was in her room balancing ac-
counts at eleven-thirty p. m. When she
did sleep, figures whirled through her
dreams, figures and Jimmie's face.
Then in the murky dawn of one
June day came an inspiration. Yester-
day she had seen a second-hand
runabout painted a beautiful blue for
only two hundred and fifty dollars
with a week's trial before buying.

Her diamond! She could get enough
on that! A few months in which to
tear up to the curb and spring out, to
display the shining body to startled
eyes, to make them believe he had
come back. Jimmie—who never
would! She gazed out through the
streaky window pane and for a time
the car was forgotten.

When the chorus had assembled for
the Wednesday matinee, a ring drop-
ped tinkling to the dressing room
floor. Sallie picked it up, proclaimed
that the stone had come loose and
wore it no more.

Later behind a window barred like a
prison, Sallie MacMahon's lips clung
together and she looked away as her
most precious possession passed into
other hands—probably for all time.

At last the night arrived when the
girls sighted at the curb a little car
blue as the heavens. One of them stepped
lightly from the stage entrance,
fetched a key from her bag, bent
down, paused, then sprang in and took
the wheel as though running a motor
were a daily pastime.

Miss Mallard stopped in the center
of the pavement.
"I'll tell the world!" she breathed,
forgetting Fifth Avenue. "She wasn't
lying, Grace—she wasn't!"

Sallie MacMahon smiled upon them,
put her foot on the self-starter, heard
the cheerful chug chug of the engine
responding, and with terror chasing
down her spine, spun round the cor-
ner.

As she disappeared, Grace's reply
wafted on the breeze:
"But he's a piker, anyhow. It's as
big as a minute!"

Up Broadway, eyes starting with
fear, heart pounding, went Sallie. And
every instant's progress petrified her.
Buildings descended. Motor trucks
loomed up. Trolleys tore, gigantic,
within an inch of the blue mite that
held her. It was completely, totally
swamped. For the first time alone in
it, she clung wildly to the wheel while
all Broadway danced.

Never had she traveled a distance to
equal those ten blocks. Never before
had the thought of the sagging brown-
stone house been a welcome one. A
century later she reached her own
street, turned in. Then something
snapped. The runabout stood stock
still. Sallie tried to recall the varied
instructions of the garage man who
had taught her to drive it. Without
his guiding hand, they were Greek.

She fled in the direction of a pass-
ing policeman, caught his arm.
"Please, would you mind? Something
has happened. It—it stuck."
He grinned as he took in the blue
mite. "Better go and phone your gar-
age, Miss. I'll take care of it till you
get back."

Sallie dropped his arm.
"Why, I—I haven't any—"
"What?"
"Garage."
"What do you do with it at night?
Take it to bed with you?"

"N-nothing. It—it's new. I—I
never thought—"
"Then find some place to put it—
quick. They'll send you a man—"
Sallie stood stock still as the car,
then turned on her heel and dashed in
(Continued on page 7, Col. 1.)

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