

THE HOUSE OF MOHUN

By GEORGE GIBBS

Author of "Youth Triumphant" and Other Successes

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Are Flappers as Bad as They're Painted?
Are Girls Boys All Limbs of Satan?



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WHO'S WHO IN THE STORY
CHERRY MOHUN, up-to-date girl, rich and charming, of one irritated and attracted by

BRUCE COWAN, young American ethnologist and war veteran, enraged by changes in manners and customs brought out by the war, but interested in Cherry. His modest funds are invested with his mother,

MRS. MOHUN, a self-made financial lady. Too busy to think of his children he leaves them to

MRS. MOHUN, who has successfully cultivated the social side of life.

BRUCE COWAN, a motorcyclist, man-of-the-world type of whom Cherry immediately is enamored.

JOHN CHICHESTER, whom Mrs. Mohun would like to call son-in-law.

Aliefs Revives

Cherry remembered the name of the famous "lover" of many pictures, thrilling gently as Ellie did, and entered the sanctum of the great man with some apprehension. McKnight was tall and thin, with a hooked nose and a sharp chin. He smiled politely, exhibiting golden teeth.

"And still they come," he said, "Mrs. Swift, Miss—er—"

"Mohun," put in Ellie. "Miss Mohun—bodily hair—sun—doubtless—got any photo?"

"I didn't bring any."

"Things are very slow, Miss Mohun. Nobody doing anything now."

"I thought, Mr. McKnight," said Ellie, "you might be willing to give her a test."

"Oh—well, yes, it might be managed."

Mr. Swift glanced at Cherry through his long eyelashes and then glidedly at his watch. He was a very great person, she knew, and his movements must be very precious.

"Oh, say, Nelly," he said with an apologetic air, "aren't you got something else?"

"Just five minutes, Ellie wants this. Can't refuse Ellie. Come along."

He led the way out into the studio with the mistress Harold. Cherry, greatly disturbed, followed him. Ellie had to think about it. There were no other people looking.

Ellie made up Cherry's face while McKnight gave her her instructions—which were, in brief, finally ending in "Stay together" with these loves of many women who stood temptingly before the eyes of the people of Philadelphia upon his face.

Cherry moved into the place in front under the glare of the lights with Harold Swift beside her and stood waiting for the entertainment, aware of the sound of the machine. Other people were looking. Cherry's blood turned to water. She knew that she was poor. She was conscious of her hands, of her feet. They were leaden objects which she moved with difficulty. Beside her the ingenuous Harold busily waited to be instructed. She put her hand timidly upon his shoulder and looked up into his face. He put his arm around her shoulder and she knew that she was whisked blind. She tried to think of Ellie and all that she had done for her, but the sound of the clicking engine overrode all else, all grace.

In the "lounging" which followed she tried to smile, to show patience to those various emotions. Harold Swift had asked if she should have had her dress done because she knew that she was in trouble.

She read in Ellie's plastered face, Knight's blunt expression in the corner Swift's sudden exit from the room which she saw in the little comedy scene finished.

"No experience," was McKnight's verdict. "A year or two in stock is what you need, Miss Mohun," he said kindly. "But you can come around to the production room in a few days and we'll fix you right."

Cherry thanked him and went into the dressing room where Ellie waited and washed the grease paint from her face. She gave a quiet smile.

"I was rotten," she said. "You were as good as Miss Savage." Ellie loyalty. "You can do better, I know you can. But you were sorta stiff, Cherry. I wish they'd let me first. You've got to get used to it. You'll be all right the next time."

"I don't believe there will be any next time," said Cherry with a tiny laugh.

When she went out of the dressing room Ellie left her up to a friend to make plans for the following night and Cherry was about to turn into the studio when she met Bruce Cowan face to face. For a moment he did not recognize her, but she spoke his name.

"Hello, Bruce!"

"Well, Cherry! What are you doing here?"

She told him, and the probable results of the experiment. He listened. He had a slightly superior air, not so condescending as Mrs. Swift's which would come in later. She knew that he wished her to understand that since they had last met he had become a man of some consequence. At intervals, if she had not heard of it, that he was going to make a success of the miseries in which he had at first.

He had only been doing it for two months. I was with the Circle Company then. They picked me out, and took the extra and money part. Last week McKnight saw me and made me a big offer to come to Menlowood. I've only been here a week. But I'm going great. Says in a few months I'm going to buck Harold off the map."

"I'm glad, Bruce. I do hope you'll succeed. You've always been beautiful to sell me."

The friendly irony passed over his head. He believed that what she said was true.

"Oh, I photograph good. And I always wanted to be an actor. It's been a real joy. I've got some other stuff, too. We're going to White Plains for that. That's where I put it over Harold."

His egotism was as ever colossal, but with this new background of "success" it was somewhat impressive.

"Miss Savage is very pretty," said

"Oh, yes. She's all right, isn't she? Then, with an air of sudden abstraction, "Well, I hope you got a good test," and, as in shock hands, "Say, Cherry, you're looking kind of thin and peaky, Bruce up. The first thing you do is look the last test. Well, I've got to go, darling, you know."

Cherry watched him disappearing back with mingled feelings. Of the Bruce Cowan that she thought she had known the traces were negligible. The most telling impressions that he had conveyed was his absorption in a very important and triumphant career. It was as though she had been shown his ambitions as a leader to replace any tendencies on Cherry's part which might lead toward a recurrence of their semi-adventure. He might have spared himself that anxiety! The blood rushed hot to her face as a wave of humiliation swept over her. She saw him with

wildering mazes of thought. It was true that John Chichester had never proposed to Cherry. And she realized that had always been her mother who had entreated him into this part of her general campaign for her daughter's social career. Cherry could not believe, even now, that her mother had been actuated by any other purpose. But the frequency of Mrs. Chichester's visits and the importance which she had in the society of the other had become more and more disturbing. At the very least, her mother's heedlessness was unendurable and unbearable; at the most, insensible and disobey, in spirit, if not in letter,

to the sick man. Cherry realized for the first time, with a strange qualm, that her mother was some years younger than her visitor, a fact quite evident when they were seen together. To be continued tomorrow

ELECT KIWANIS OFFICERS

Allentown, Pa., Dec. 15.—The Allentown Kiwanis Club has elected George E. Horle, United States Commissioner, president and Dr. S. C. Wartz vice president. The directors are Ernest Ashley, D. F. Heintzelman, Dr. George W. Shoemaker and Elwood S. Thomas.

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You will read in *THE LITERARY DIGEST* this week, December 16th, how the reduction in government expenses has been effected, what activities have been curtailed, and what the probable effects upon the taxpayer may be. Other instructive news-articles in this week's issue of *THE DIGEST* are:

Misgivings as to Progressive Bloc's Intentions

Uncle Sam's Prosecutor Prosecuted Christians Ordered Out of Turkey

Hidden German Arms

Japan's Exit From Siberia

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Why Do Radio Waves Hug the Earth?

The Degradation of Christmas

The "Esprit" of France's "Old Tiger"

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