

ANTHONY'S TEMPTATION

By CHANNING POLLOCK

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"What is it?" inquired Stella Mat-
thew, stopping in the middle of her dish-
washing and "The Good Old Summer
Time." "What is it? A check?"

Anthony, who had come to be known
in publishing circles as "Stella Mat-
thew's husband," did not answer at
once. His face turned a shade redder,
and he examined the envelope which
the postman had given him into the re-
cesses of his inside pocket. Stella then
went down the dish rack and thrust herself
into the doorway between the kitchen
and the combination dining room and
library. "Did you get a check?" she
persisted.

"Do I ever get checks?" Anthony re-
turned sulkily, yet with a note in his
voice that inspired pity. "Returned
with thanks. Rejection does not neces-
sarily imply lack of merit. That's the
way it is."

Stella looked at him for a moment
and then she turned away. She had
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Decade," he told her. "I'll be right
back."

But he didn't come "right back."
Once the envelope had been dropped in
the box his soul thrust away its mask
and rose to free him. He realized as
suddenly as the temptation had come
to him that he was a thief. The pul-
sary expanse through which he had looked
at his act melted under the glaring
eyes of an accusing conscience, and he
saw in the reader's gaze of the
magazine the "great heavens, what have I
done?" he asked himself as he stood
at the corner, and "What have I done?"
he kept repeating as the elevated hur-
ried him along to his work.

All through the day new phases of
his plight persistently crowded into his
mind. What if the editor of the Decade
recognized Stella's style in the sonnet
and wrote to ask questions? What if
he failed to keep her from seeing the
special number of the magazine in
which the poem was published? In ei-
ther of these events what would she
think of him? Would he be altogether
satisfied with the result? Anthony
wiped the perspiration from his
brow at the thought. She might
even come to love him.

It was a hard eight hours for the city
editor of the afternoon paper which
paid for the Matthews' livelihood. It
was a harder evening work which he
did when he was going home and her
half-hour inquiry. "What took you away so
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FLORINE'S AMULET

By INA WRIGHT HANSON

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I found Florine by the tea table on
the veranda gazing dreamily into her
cup. She wore my roses in her hair
of her white gown and in her bronze
hair. For some time I had not dared
to approach Florine without being pre-
pared with disagreeable speeches; offi-
cious. I should have been guilty of
proposing to her. Considering that her
monthly income was quite equal to my
annual one, a proposal of marriage from
me would be palpably absurd. I
sighed, and my sigh aroused Florine.

"Oh, I'm glad it's you!" she said
brightly. "I saw a visitor in my tea-
cup."

I frowned and took a chair on the
other side of the table.

"I wish you wouldn't," I said.

"Wouldn't what? Give you a cup
of tea? Well, you needn't drink it. Are
you afraid it will hurt your complex-
ion?"

Her tone was bantering, but her
eyes had a hint of concern in their
violet depths. I looked away as I an-
swered.

"The other night at pit you turned
your chair around three times, and
then when you lost you attributed it to
the misplacing of your rabbit foot."

"I did make a mistake," she said
gravely. "It wasn't the rabbit foot;
it was the day. Wednesday is my un-
lucky day."

"If you keep on folks will think you
are unwell," I continued, keeping my
gaze carefully from the danger-
ous charm of her face. "I have actual-
ly heard it said that you wear an amu-
let."

Florine was silent so long that I
was compelled to glance at her. She
was regarding me with what might be
termed a complex look. Her mouth
was dimpled with smiles, her lifted
brows were derisive, but her eyes were
troubled. I ignored the eyes.

"This superstition business detracts
from your real worth," I went on re-
lentlessly. "It is the flaw in the dia-
mond, the blemish in the rose, the—"

"Fly in the ointment," she suggested
politely.

"To have it told around that you
wear an amulet?" I reiterated in firm
seem.

"Oh, Florine laughed. When Florine
laughed—"

"You poor old dear!" she exclaimed
as soon as she was able. "I don't be-
lieve you have the ghost of an idea
what an amulet is!"

I was solid on that score, for I had
just learned the definition from the
dictionary.

"An object, usually a peculiar bit
of stone, metal, bone, paper, wood or
the like, worn by superstitious people
as a protection against witchcraft,
bad luck, disease, accidents, etc. A
charm."

"Oh, don't!" she choked. "You are
too absurd!" Then she went off into
another gale of laughter.

"I don't see where the absurdity
comes in," I retorted. "If that isn't
an amulet, then what is it?"

I supposed my tea with dignity while
Florine recovered herself.

"I knew a girl once who wore an
amulet," she said at last. "It was the
—well, the picture of somebody she
liked."

"Picture—ah! To be sure, I wasn't
an Adonis, neither was I afraid of
breaking the camera, but for one rea-
son or another I had had a photo-
grapher. Picture, was it? Was she the
girl?" I wondered.

"It wasn't bone, metal, stone, paper
or wood," she went on. "And she
didn't wear it as a protection against
anything. She just wore it because
she liked it, because she liked the man
whose picture was in it."

"It wasn't an amulet then," I said,
settling down my cup.

"It was an amulet," contradicted
Florine. "Unhappy folks get their
definitions out of the dictionary. Other
people—"

"How about a walk?" I interrupted.
I couldn't even pretend to be disagree-
able any longer; neither could I man-
age up determination enough to leave
her lovely, laughing spirit that she
was. Perhaps there was less danger
in walking.

"But I am going to have another
caller," she declared.

"Do you see him in your teacup?"
I asked.

"No," I see him at the gate," she
laughed, "although he may be coming
to see mamma. He is very fond of
mamma. Possibly I shall be at the
summer house soon."

It was clearly a dare, and I took it.
I went to the summer house. Around
the summer house are trees and flow-
ers, in front is a miniature lake, in
beautiful place, but a dangerous one
when a man has no right to tell what
sometimes dims his eyes and impedes
his speech.

As I sat down something at my feet
caught my eye. I picked it up. It was
a heart shaped locket set with rubies.
The stone in my hand, disclosing
two scraps of white cloth. I exam-
ined the pieces with some interest, es-
pecially as I noticed that my mono-
gram graced the upper one. They were
two corners from one of my handker-
chiefs evidently. Anyway it was
another piece of evidence which I
thought I should keep. The real
thing is in my hand, disclosing
two scraps of white cloth. I exam-
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gram graced the upper one. They were
two corners from one of my handker-
chiefs evidently. Anyway it was
another piece