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SMART SET

True Stories from Real Life

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True Stories from Real Life

We Want to Take This Opportunity to

Thank You!

SMART SET got off to an amazing start with its new policy last month. That is the one thought which runs through our minds as we go to press with the second issue.

I wonder if you realize how much it means to us to know that we have pleased you? We have been straining night and day to put out a magazine which would gain your approval. When it went on the stands last month we all held our breath and waited; perhaps we even prayed that you might like it.

Two days passed. The newsdealers gave us wonderful displays all over the country. We appreciated that. Three more days slipped by and the newspapers began to quote from our feature articles. We appreciated that still more, for it was a mark of approval on the part of the editors.

Then your letters came, one or two a day at first, then scores of them, telling us how much you approved of our new policy. We cannot thank you enough for your comments.

We have worked hard but your approval is all the reward we ask. We are working now with redoubled effort and a new vision. Our faith is being justified.

This issue is better than the last one. We are sure of that. We know YOU will like it better. The stories show a wonderful view of life as it is everywhere. We do not claim that these are written as perfectly as the masterpieces of great authors but we do say that they are just as interesting, and they are true. They represent life as we know it to be.

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Gabrielle

of the Red Kimono

The Author Wants You To Write To Her

Here is a Telegram from the Author

EDITOR, SMART SET
NEW YORK, N. Y.

CERTAINLY GABRIELLE'S STORY IS EVERY WORD TRUE. I REPORTED THE CASE AND HEARD ALL THE TESTIMONY. I FOLLOWED UP THE LATER EVENTS AND THEY ARE TOO TRAGIC TO BE FORGOTTEN.

ADELA ROGERS ST. JOHN
LOS ANGELES, CAL.

FOR twelve years I have wanted to write the story of Gabrielle of the red kimono.

But it is such a bitter story. Each time my heart has failed me.

And still it goes on demanding to be told—demanding.

I do not know where Gabrielle is now. Wherever she is, if she should happen to read this story, perhaps she will know that every hand was not against her, and that all women are not like Louise Fontane. There were many who would have tried to help her—if they had known in time. If they had known in time.

(MRS.) ADELA ROGERS ST. JOHN.

ABE MAXWELL, the little fat jeweler, bald and perspiring in the heavy heat of mid-afternoon, pulled out the tray of wedding rings and placed them carefully on the counter. His smile was knowing, ingratiating, a little sentimental—the smile he always wore when selling wedding rings. Wedding rings were an important part of his trade, in the little Main Street jewelry store, and Abe Maxwell had a sense of the fitness of things.

The blond young man ignored his advances with a cold, deliberate eye. In the dimness of the little store—surely it was unnecessary to burn electricity in mid-afternoon—his blondness had a remarkable quality of brightness. The golden shine of his carefully brushed hair, the red and white of his freshly shaven cheeks, the glint of his light blue eyes, made for a type of good looks not unknown to Abe Maxwell.

A prosperous looking young man, as well as a handsome one, the jeweler noted with approval. The cut of his elaborately belted, excessively pleated coat, the richness and color of his silk tie, the wide stripes of his silk shirt, spoke of money lavishly spent. A good customer, surely, though there was something in the hard set of the lips that warned Mr. Maxwell not to raise the scale of his price, as—to be entirely truthful—he had been known to do at the sight of wealthy patrons.

Mr. Maxwell was placing several of his very best wedding rings on a small square of purple velvet, where they shone to the best advantage, when a lady came quietly through the open door.

Business was good this afternoon. Mr. Maxwell began to make beaming and apologetic little bows in her direction. First, a blond young man wearing a six dollar tie, and now a lady in a sealskin coat. He was torn between the two of them. Elegant sealskin it was,

Gabrielle

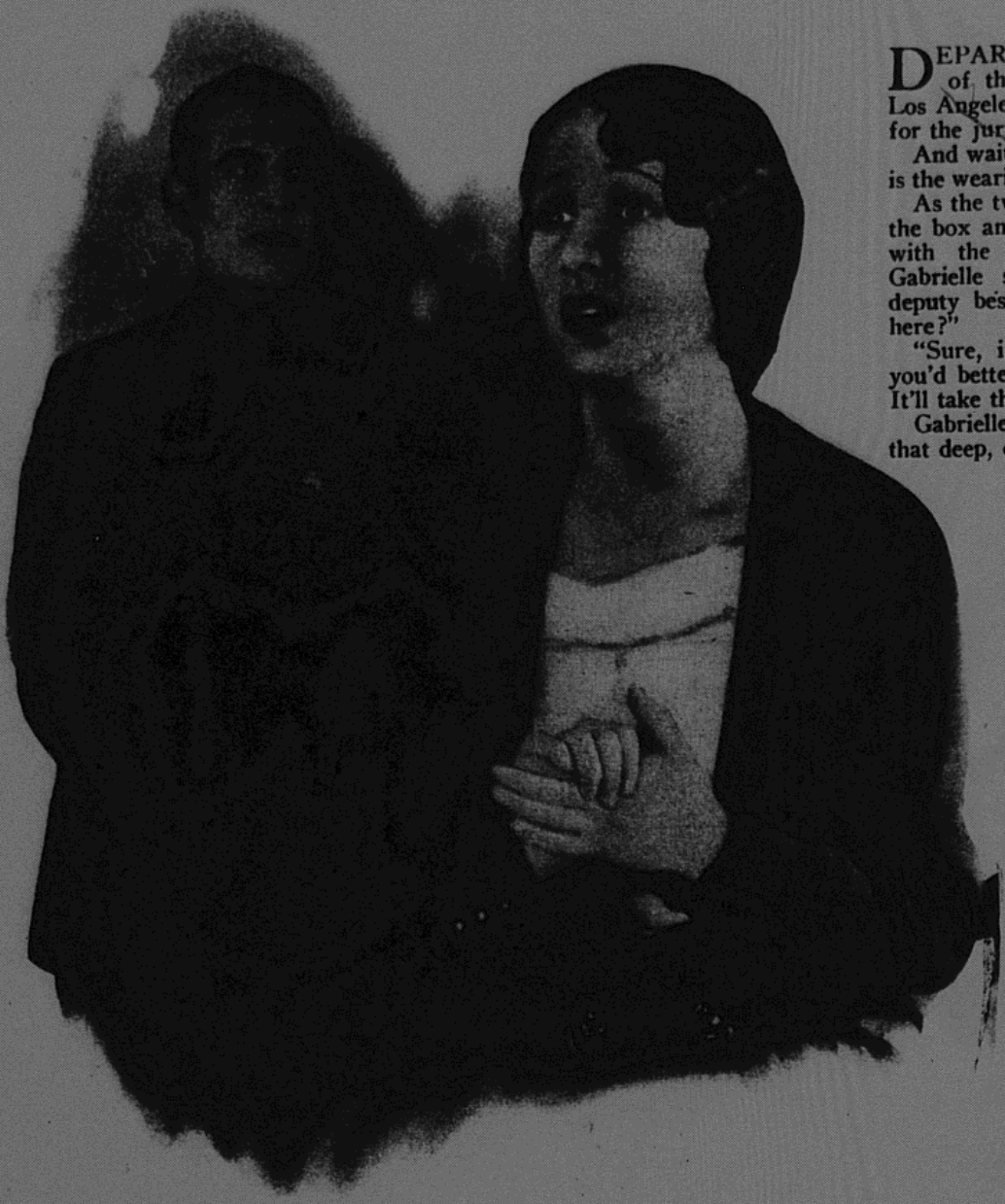
too, the best skins, lavishly used, but of an old-fashioned cut. And the big, flat black muff—expensive also, but out of date.

Fortunately, she did not seem in a hurry. She stood very calm and still, her strange, long, somber eyes resting quietly upon Mr. Maxwell's other customer, who had slipped a wedding ring on his little finger and was admiring it. Still, the jeweler caught a glimpse of large diamond earrings under the shadow of her dusky hair. Diamonds were more profitable than wedding rings.

Just then the lady spoke, quietly, in a rich, expressionless voice. One word escaped her lips—"Howard."

The man turned with incredible swiftness. "You——" he said, and made a slight movement with his hand.

The woman never moved, but something tore a jagged hole in her sealskin muff, sang through the air and disappeared in the blond young man's vest just above his watch fob. The muff dropped and the little black automatic showed in all its ugliness, spitting death—twice three, four, five, six times. The hand that held it was



"I shot him because he was going to be married and go on living on my money."

DEPARTMENT Seventeen of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County was waiting for the jury.

And waiting for a murder jury is the weariest work in the world.

As the twelve men filed out of the box and into the little room with the ground glass door, Gabrielle said to the grizzled deputy beside her, "Can I stay here?"

"Sure, if you want to. But you'd better go back to the jail. It'll take them quite a while."

Gabrielle looked up at him with that deep, dimpled smile of hers.

"How long you think it going to be, Señor Auguerre?"

"Can't tell."

"Come on now," said Gabrielle, patting his open hand on the big table. "Tell me how long it was last time you have this kind of trial here?"

"Three days."

Gabrielle wilted in her chair, her full breast lifting on a long, quivering breath of panic.

"Three — days? Waiting to know? Oh, they must not—they must not do that to me." She began to tremble.

"You'll get used to it," said the old deputy, spitting tobacco juice accurately into the big, shining cuspidor.

"Anyway, it ain't going to be that long with you. Don't you get all worked up. Never knew a jury to convict a pretty woman yet." His wrinkled old face, like fine parchment, smiled down at her.

bare but Mr. Maxwell, frozen behind his counter with a nauseous fear, saw—as a man sees trivial and incongruous things upon his death-bed—the glitter and glint of diamonds upon it.

Main Street knows shots when it hears them. Less than twenty yards away, a traffic cop on his corner heard those six swift reports and moved with great rapidity.

But there was no hurry. The blond young man, propped against Mr. Maxwell's counter and ruining his imitation Persian rug, was beyond anything that a traffic policeman could do. The woman in sealskin was running the muzzle of her empty automatic through a tray of wedding rings, her face still calm beneath an icy blanket of tears.

As soon as the policeman appeared, Abe Maxwell began to gibber. His mind was circling like a wounded pigeon. One thing was within his comprehension—she had certainly spoiled the sale of a wedding ring for Abe Maxwell.

THIS time it took longer for Gabrielle's smile to come. But she managed it at last. "Well," she said, "I am glad you think so."

He went away, bawling at the people who still lingered about, staring at the round, black figure sitting alone at the big table. Quite alone. They began to struggle out, looking back over their shoulders at her. Through the open windows, the murmur of the crowd that packed the street for a block each way could be heard like the distant murmur of a mighty sea.

The clock above the dirty water cooler said twenty minutes past two. A man came out of the judge's chamber, laughing loudly, and in the instant that the door was swung wide, Gabrielle saw the old judge within, his fat face red with laughter, his tufts of white hair standing up in wild disorder. In one corner, the assistant district attorney—the one who had denounced

her so bitterly in his speech to the jury—stood idly smoking a cigarette.

Gabrielle's great eyes—strange eyes of a deep topaz that grew wholly black as the pupil dilated—rested on him, darkening, narrowing. She hated him. He wasn't fair. To stand up and say things like that about her when she dared not speak. To attack a woman when she was down. Gabrielle made a swift little prayer that he would be eternally damned. And then her eyes dropped and she took it back.

He didn't understand.

He felt her eyes on him and shuffled nervously.

Gabrielle looked toward the glass door of the jury room. Her heart stopped beating. A grotesque shadow had appeared upon it—a distorted arm raised, a gigantic finger pointing. Gabrielle cowered in her chair. What was in that room? Some demon. Holy Mother, what were they doing in there?

Deciding whether she should live—or die. A weary bitterness descended upon her face. Well, she didn't want to live. That was sure enough. But she did not want to be hanged—hanged by the neck until dead.

One of her dimpled hands went up and touched her young, firm throat. She buried her head for a moment in her hands, then flung it up. She would not let that man who had called her vile names see her afraid. But she was afraid.

She closed her burning eyes and tried to pray. God was above all these people. God was above that judge. Let God look into her heart.

After she had prayed a long, long time, she looked at the clock. It was half past two. Three days. She could not.

Someone sat down beside her, and she looked up, suspicious, defiant. Then her quick, soft smile came. It was one of her lawyers, the young one, with the nice, round face.

"See here," he said, with his boyish, embarrassed smile, "why don't you go back to the jail? No good waiting around here. We'll send for you as soon as we know anything. Those old codgers will have to talk and stew just so long. Mr. Dennison thinks they'll be out about two hours."

He mentioned the name of his chief, the criminal lawyer who had defended her, in an awed voice.

. . . . . .

At that very moment, over a green topped bridge table, three exquisitely gowned ladies were loudly admiring pretty little Mrs. Dennison's lovely new rings. Such fine, white stones. Mrs. Dennison beamed proudly. Her husband had given them to her. They were beautiful, weren't they?

. . . . . .

"Well," said Gabrielle, "I do not want to go back alone to that jail. It would be worse. Please, you let me stay here? I will be good and quiet and not bother anyone."

The young lawyer nodded, flushing.

What nerve! He wondered what he would be doing if that jury were settling his fate And how beautiful she was. He marvelled, as he had marvelled every day during the two weeks of the trial, at the soft, undulating charm of her dimpled arms and neck, her lovely figure. The pupils of her eyes had contracted again, and they glowed at him, all golden, soft—pleading, cozening eyes. Beneath the thick mop of her hair—and oddly there was no gold in her hair, it was all black, black and warm—her face was oval and olive-tinted, with a round, impudent nose, and a firm chin. Her

As they looked . . . the shadow of a hand fell on the glass of the door of the jury-room.

upper lip had real beauty, where it curved down and rested on the full lower one.

He was a very young lawyer, and when Mr. Dennison had taken the case and had told him baldly who and what manner of woman Gabrielle was, he had pictured a plump blonde person in a red kimono, and very high heeled red slippers. Of course he realized that she wouldn't wear her kimono in court. That was figurative.

True, she wore her clothes—a plain, dark blue suit and a still plainer white shirt waist—awkwardly, as though it were an unaccustomed garb. But there was a soft, pleading, gentle something about her that he did not understand.

He looked at the clock. A quarter to three. The jury couldn't be long. While Gabrielle was on the witness stand, under cross examination, the young lawyer had seen his chief give two or three quick nods of satisfaction. After that he lost interest in the case.

"She's won her own ball-game," he said crisply.

During direct examination she had been so quiet, so sad. When she faced the jury, she dropped her eyes, so that only the satiny lids showed, but the tears crept from beneath them, one by one, and slipped unheeded down her cheeks.

BUT the district attorney had taken it into his head to browbeat her. What a fool he was. But of course district attorneys were seldom good lawyers. A good lawyer couldn't afford to be district attorney. This one had a particularly unfortunate, aggressive manner and a nasty temper, not too well under control. He resented Gabrielle. He resented the strange, pathetic sort of impression she had made on people. After all, the woman was what she was. Because she happened to be good looking was no reason for trying to make a Joan of Arc of the creature. He intended to show them plainly enough what a decent man thought of that kind of women.

"Your name?" he snapped at her.

"My name is Gabrielle."

"Well, what's the rest of it?"

"I—I am not sure, señor. In New Orleans, they call me Gabrielle d'Or."

"Your business?"

For the first time Gabrielle raised her eyes, all the gold of them on fire. "You know well enough what my business was, señor. It has been told often enough in this courtroom. And anyway, probably you recognize it without I tell you."

Her rich, husky voice, with its liquid Spanish note, was beginning to ring out.

"You admit that you shot Howard Blaine?"

"I shot him. I shot him. I say so many times."

"And you shot him because you found out he was going to marry another woman, didn't you?"

"No, that was not the reason."

DENNISON looked up quickly, under his knit, intent brows. But Gabrielle was not looking at him. She was looking straight at the district attorney, and her eyes were entirely black now and blazing. Once, in a circus the young lawyer had seen a leopard turn on its trainer, a tame, obedient leopard it had been, but when it turned its eyes looked exactly as Gabrielle's eyes looked now.

"What *was* the reason?" The district attorney spat it at her contemptuously. Every intonation of his voice gave the lie to her words. But Dennison smiled suddenly. He would not have asked that question, had he been the district attorney.

"I shot him because he was going to get married and go on living on my money. He was buying that wedding ring—for her—with money I earn for him."

The courtroom stiffened to attention.

"Look here, my good woman." Gabrielle's face went a slow, dark crimson, for the first time in all those weary days. "Let's get at the truth about this thing. I know it's hard for a woman like you to tell the truth."

The young lawyer looked sidewise at Dennison. Wasn't he going to protect his client from that sort of insult? But Dennison was smiling a pleased smile behind his hand.

"As a matter of fact, didn't you know that Blaine intended to leave you? Didn't you know that he left New Orleans to get rid of you? And isn't it true that jealousy prompted you to empty every bullet in your gun into him when you caught him?"

GABRIELLE leaned forward, her face close to his, a terrible scorn in her eyes. "No, that is not true. Not one word. The truth? I tell you the truth, you man. He did not intend to leave me. He came to Los Angeles to get married so I will not know it. But he was coming back."

"What makes you think so?"

"If he was not coming back, he would have taken my diamonds with him."

"Then, if you were so sure he was coming back, Miss Gabrielle, why did you follow him and kill him on sight, without a word? What difference did it make to you—in your business—whether he was married or not?"

The answer came low and [*Turn to page* 102]

Is Marriage An Aid to Success?

Should a young man make a success before he marries?

Or should he marry and let his wife help him succeed?

Does early marriage help him, or does it hold him back?

What do you think?

How are you working out your problem? Are you doing it alone? Or did you marry the only girl in the world so you could work your problems out together? Or did you marry a butterfly and find her holding you back?

Did you marry a rich man? Are you happy? Are you a part of his life or just a fixture in his home?

Did you marry a poor man? Are you a part of his life? Do you help him carry his business worries. Have you helped him to get ahead? Has the struggle drawn you closer together?

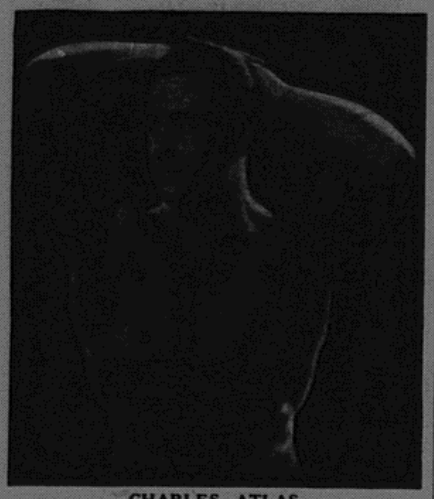
We do not want to treat this question in a general way, but we want you to write us your own opinion and tell us what your experience has been.

We will publish one story each month by one of our readers telling what his or her experience has been and what conclusion should be drawn from it. These stories are sure to be interesting. We will pay fifty dollars for each story of not more than 2,000 words accepted for publication.

What is your opinion?

What Kind of a Man Are You?

Look Yourself in the Mirror



CHARLES ATLAS

Winner of two thousand-dollar FIRST prizes and a DIPLOMA as the WORLD'S MOST PERFECT MAN in contests officially conducted by Bernarr Macfadden at Madison Square Garden, New York. My amazing new discovery in Physical Culture has created a startling sensation. Thousands of men are grateful for my Marvelous, Scientific methods of QUICKLY and PERMANENTLY building Radiant Health, Strength and Personality. I make young men into Apollos and give old men Youthful Vigor and Glorious New Health, adding many years to their lives.

You Cannot be a Weakling and Win

Did you ever see a weakling leading a crowd? The weak, timid man is afraid, he lacks the courage, the strength, the daring. He has no poise, no self-confidence. His nerves are unsteady and he cannot be relied upon. There is no need for YOU to remain a human cypher when by a few weeks' scientific training under my expert guidance YOU can change your weakness for **strength**, your diseases for **Health**, your timidness for dauntless **courage** and daring.

Be a Man—Not a Manikin!

Quit wishing and wanting and waiting for Health, Strength and a Perfect Physique. Hook up with me and I'll carve out of your body a mighty, powerful Herculean development with far more energy and strength than you ever dreamed possible. Thousands of others just like you are benefiting by my Course. In fact, many of my pupils are more perfectly developed than some of the physical instructors are. If you have any vigor and vim and vision lose no more time, but get started immediately and develop the Giant within you, so that YOU, too, can be a POWER among men and an inspiration to others.

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FREE *Everyone who writes me will have an opportunity of securing 7 large photographs of myself absolutely FREE. Also write at once for full particulars about the big cash prizes, expensive trophies and beautiful Diplomas I am giving away to pupils free.*

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Gabrielle of the Red Kimono

[*Continued from page 34*]

quiet, but no one in that courtroom had ever heard before a voice so loaded with outrage, with pain, with wild anger, as the voice that vibrated against the dingy walls.

"Since I am fourteen," said Gabrielle, "and I am nineteen now, I have lived for him. I was willing to go on—but not if he had a wife. Don't you see. Don't you see?" The seething tide of her heart flooded out now, through her throat in a passion of words, through her eyes in a torrent of tears.

"He was something every man spits on. He was bad. I know that. He had done every bad.

"But I loved him."

THE wail filled the courtroom. And suddenly, without knowing why, the eyes of the judge and the jury and even the hard-boiled reporters at the press table, were wet with tears.

"He was mine. What else had I to love? And he was good to me. He was gentle and kind. Back of my—my little house, there was a garden. A little bit of a garden. We would sit there, sometimes, and watch the birds hopping under the bushes. That doesn't seem much to you—maybe.

"And when I thought—of that other woman—the one he would marry—and that he love her, and with—my money—he make her a little home, and come to me only with—more dregs, like the others—I cannot stand it. If he would have left me alone—but I know him. I make too much money. I am very popular—in New Orleans. He would not leave me while——"

She shuddered, frightened, her anger dying. The district attorney succeeded at last in breaking into the wild flood of her words.

"If it wasn't revenge and jealousy that prompted you to kill this man—and it isn't the jury's business what kind of a man he was—why did you shoot *six* times?"

"I wanted to be sure," said Gabrielle, softly, "that he die quick and do not suffer."

With a start, the young lawyer came back to Gabrielle beside him; her eyes fixed on him wistfully. "I am getting very tired," she said. "What is it—that takes them so long? Don't they know what they think?"

"Sometimes they disagree."

"What does that mean?"

"Well, if they can't reach a verdict—they say so, and we try the case over."

"Oh, no. No. I won't do that. What do they think I am? I rather hang quick. Oh, you won't let them——"

She was silent. He noticed how her hands were clasped together, as though for comfort. It must be pretty tough for a woman to be alone, at a time like that.

He glanced around, suddenly wondering where Mrs. Fontane was.

IN THE more exuberant daily journals, they called Mrs. Fontane the angel of the county jail. The more prosaic ones referred to her as a philanthropist.

But Mrs. Fontane didn't like being called a philanthropist.

"It sounds so cold," she said, with her radiant smile, blinking her round brown eyes very quickly. "I'm nothing so impressive. I'm—just a worker for humanity."

She was a round, plump woman, with very curly brown hair, and a smile of miraculous sweetness.

And she had established herself in the early days of the trial as Gabrielle's patroness. She had her picture taken innumerable times with Gabrielle. Day after day, as the trial progressed in all its sordid detail, she sat beside Gabrielle, holding her hand, patting it gently, and smiling.

A rap sounded upon the ground glass of the door.

Gabrielle's heart began to beat, not quickly, but with an icy, terrible slowness, as though it would never reach the next beat. Drop by drop, the color drained from her cheeks, leaving them a pale yellow.

THE bailiff disappeared into the jury room. In less than a second, he reappeared. Instantly, all was action. The crowd swept back from the corridors. The district attorney came over from his office, breathing loudly from his hurried trip. The judge, ponderous and heavy, ascended the bench.

The jury filed in, awkwardly, stumbling over each other. One juror still had on his derby hat. He took it off hurriedly.

Silence fell. A human life was at stake. And no matter how old the story, the gigantic thrill of it tingled through the air.

"Gentlemen of the jury," said the judge, and stopped to blow his nose with a great noise, "you have reached a verdict?"

The foreman rose, a shambling man, his Adam's apple working furiously up and down. "We have, your honor."

"What is your verdict, Mr. Foreman—guilty or not guilty?"

"We find the defendant not guilty."

Gabrielle got up, swaying. She held out her arms. She tried to run toward them. But her legs would not move. "I—oh, I thank you, I thank you so," she cried, in a husky, trembling voice.

People crowded about her. A reporter said, "And now that you're free, Gabrielle, where are you going? What are you going to do?"

Gabrielle looked at him. Behind her eyes, he had a glimpse of something, peeping from her thoughts, that was like a ghost of fear.

"Well," said Gabrielle, tossing her head, "I tell you, I don't know where I'm going but I'm on my way."

It had just come to her, with a great and terrible shock, that Howard Blaine was dead.

GABRIELLE stood in the center of the narrow jail cell that had been her home for months. The slanting afternoon sun left the palest light on the east windows, and the black bars merged into a gray pattern. Once Gabrielle glanced out at the alley below, the endless dirty walls, the white slab of the Federal building.

Then she looked around at her cell. On the table was a pot of white hyacinth someone had sent her.

Gabrielle stood, trying to calm the rising panic in her breast.

The matron came in, a thin, dried-up little woman, with quick, blue eyes. In her hand she carried a worn suitcase.

"Here you are," she said, laying it on the cot. "Will you be here for dinner? I expect not. You'll want to get out as quick as ever you can."

Gabrielle opened the suitcase. Then, when she thought her voice was fairly steady, she said, "Mrs. Barker, where am I to go?"

"Haven't you got any friends?"

"Not here."

"What about the place you come from—New Orleans?"

The girl raised her head and looked at

her. "I do not want to go back—there."

The matron sat down on the cot, tapping the tips of her fingers together in a nervous way she had. "Well—I suppose not. Didn't you ever do anything else?"

"No. But I—I would like to. Only I—I do not know——"

"How much money have you got?"

"I have," said Gabrielle, and suddenly she began to laugh, "I guess I got about two dollars."

The matron frowned.

"You're a sweet, kind, good-natured girl, Gabrielle," she said slowly. "Of all the women I've had in here, I never had one that was less trouble. You've got a mighty easy-going disposition. I don't take much stock in—reformations, but I've got an idea you told the truth at the trial when you said it wasn't ever your own choosing and that you'd like to do different."

"Do you think anyone—lives that way because they—like it?" said Gabrielle. A violent shuddering seized her.

She was unpacking the suitcase. In her hands, she held a red kimono, a bedraggled thing, its cheerfulness crumpled and stale. Her eyes met the matron's, eyes full of a horrible remembrance.

FOLKS talk an awful lot," the matron remarked bitterly then, "but we've discovered up here most of them don't *do* much. Words are a sight more plentiful than work. You been getting flowers and poems and truck. I'd like to see somebody step up with a job."

"What can I do? I could—cook—maybe. I am very awkward. If only they don't—know who I am. Nowadays, they don't put no scarlet letter on you, like one woman I read about, but they might as well. They put your picture in the paper until everybody knows you."

She went and stood by the window, overcome with terror. The world outside semed very large and strange and terrible to her. She knew so little of it, she who knew so much. What would happen to her out there, without money, without friends, with the brand of a murderess and worse stamped upon her face?

Oh, she could go back—back to New Orleans. She had friends there—such as they were. She could go back and put on her red kimono, and earn more diamonds. At the thought, a wave of nausea brought a cold sweat to her forehead. Well, she did not have to go back. Howard Blaine was dead.

The doorbell rang, with its harsh, metallic clatter. In the men's tanks, she heard a negro singing. In the dining room beyond, the clatter of dishes, and a smell of food. The matron got up and went out. But Gabrielle did not turn. There was something horrible to her that this cell seemed home—shelter—peace—protection. She had always been in prison. She was afraid to go out alone.

Mrs. Fontane's voice broke in upon her and she started. She did have a friend. Life rushed back to her heart, warmth to her cheek.

IN ANOTHER moment, two arms were around her, and a sweet, enthusiastic voice said, "My dear child, I am so happy for you. What must you think of me that I wasn't there to support you in the hour of your greatest trial? But I was needed elsewhere. Unfortunately, there's only one of me. But you know, there's no one happier than I am at your freedom and your vindication."

The matron spoke behind her, rather dryly. "Gabrielle hasn't any place to go, Mrs. Fontane. And she hasn't any money."

"No place to go?" Mrs. Fontane threw

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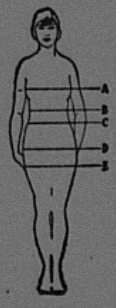

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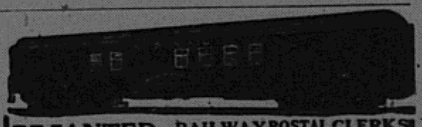

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up her fluffy head indignantly. "Of course she has. She's coming home with me."

The matron did not evince any particular enthusiasm. She was folding up the things Gabrielle had laid on the bed. "Maybe," she permitted herself to say, through narrow lips, "maybe she'd be more comfortable if you got her a little room somewhere and a job."

"All that in good time," said Mrs. Fontane, smiling. "But she must rest first, after this dreadful experience, and find some sunshine in life."

"She's been resting quite a while," said the matron, "and she's pretty anxious not to go back to—what she's been doing. Gabrielle'd be a good girl, if she had a chance."

"And she shall have her chance," said Mrs. Fontane, triumphantly.

At the door, Gabrielle went back, on an unexplainable impulse.

She put her arms around the dried-up little matron. "You have been good to me," she said. "I thank you. Pray for me."

And she went out, trembling and not very brave, into this unknown, strange world, only hopeful in that broken heart of hers that now at last she was going to have a chance to be a good girl.

Because, in her simple, primitive way, Gabrielle had always wanted to be a good girl.

THE Fontane mansion, on one of those exclusive Places that cut into Wilshire Boulevard, was marked by an elaborate stateliness. The sight-seeing buses stopped outside, to point it out as the residence of "Ex-Senator Fontane." Done in the style of the French chateau, surrounded by a park of fine old trees, it had an air of cold and elegant wealth.

The air in the dining room, where Mrs. Fontane was breakfasting with her husband, was tense this morning. The butler, when he went out to get the Senator's eggs, said to the chef, "The old man's got his dander up this morning. Someday he'll really land on the madame, and she'll wonder what struck her."

The housemaids, sipping coffee in the alcove, laughed.

Unaware, apparently, of impending storm, Mrs. Fontane went on slitting open letter after letter from the pile at her plate. Her secretary always brought them in before Mrs. Fontane came downstairs.

The Senator rattled his paper violently, set his coffee cup down in its saucer with unnecessary vehemence, and finally said: "Look here, Louise, I'm a very reasonable man, and I dislike to interfere with your notions of charity. But will you be kind enough to tell me what you are going to do with this—this woman you've brought into our house? Sometimes I think you've lost what little sense you ever had. Here it is all over the front pages of the morning paper that you've brought this—this lady of easy virtue to live in my house. I'll be kidded to death at the club."

Mrs. Fontane finished the letter she was reading, then she smiled sweetly at her husband. "My dear, I'm sure you're too big a man to let a little ill-bred joking stand in the way of the reclamation of a human soul. This girl must be shown that she is just as good as any other woman—if she acts accordingly. She must be taught that there is a place in the world for all who care to redeem themselves. That's the first thing to do."

"I am having a tea for her tomorrow afternoon," Mrs. Fontane went on. "I want her to meet the worthwhile women—the women who are doing things. And I want them to meet her, and have a chance to study this social sore at close quarters." She went on reading again.

Senator Fontane was unable to speak for several minutes. When he did his language was unprintable in the extreme.

"What are you going to do with her?" he said at last.

"She wishes to become a trained nurse."

"All right. Make her a trained nurse."

"I shall—in time," said his wife, checking a list before her with the little gold pencil hung about her neck. "First, I must buy her something fit to wear. In the meantime, be polite to her. The poor thing has suffered enough through men as it is."

"I hope I am always polite to women," said the Senator.

"Except, possibly, your wife," said Mrs. Fontane, with her famous smile.

MRS. FONTANE'S tea for Gabrielle was well attended.

When it was over, Gabrielle went up to her bedroom on the third floor and flung herself on the bed.

Never in her life had she known that such a thing could happen. Never in her life—her life of shame—had she felt so ashamed, so degraded, so vile. Her soul shuddered within her.

Their questions—their ugly, insinuating, brutal questions. Their terrible curiosity—stirring up the very dregs Gabrielle was beginning to forget.

What was going to happen to her, in such a world? There was no one to tell her, no one to explain, no one to lead her to the women who in quiet and dignity battled gloriously with problems such as hers.

For an hour she stormed her angry hurt into the pillow, cried the ache out of her heart, and prayed at last, in exhaustion, that she might learn to forgive them.

Then followed days. That was all they were to Gabrielle. Day after day, day after day. Nights—night after night, night after night.

In the daytime, the big house was very still and cold. Mrs. Fontane was a warm-blooded woman. She laughed at people who were cold, in California, even in the winter. If the furnace was on, she suffocated. So the furnace was not often on. And Gabrielle's room—a lovely, exquisitely furnished room it was, too, with a big cushioned chair, and many, many pictures—was often chilly. The chill crept into Gabrielle's blood.

Gabrielle was afraid to venture out of her room. Mrs. Fontane had told her to make herself at home, but then Mrs. Fontane was gone from early morning until late at night, and the servants were not cordial to Gabrielle. And when Mrs. Fontane was there, she had company. Gabrielle did not want to meet any more company.

All day she sat in the big chair, looking out at the cars that drove past, or the gardeners working among the flowers. If the Senator did not want her there, perhaps she had better not go out. It might shame him.

Sometimes they brought her her lunch on a tray. Sometimes, though, they forgot.

Mrs. Fontane was presiding over a convention. She presided better than anyone else. And she put up a great deal of the money. Naturally, the glory must be hers. She came up, almost every day, kissed Gabrielle affectionately, and said, "Now, my dear, amuse yourself, and rest. Don't try to do anything. And just as soon as I feel it's time—we'll see what is to be done for you."

ONE afternoon, Mrs. Fontane sent her car back to take Gabrielle for a ride.

Gabrielle had never ridden in just such a car. The butler sniffed as he opened

the door for her. He was a dignified soul.

When they had gone a little way, the chauffeur turned around. His name was Freddy, and he had a nice, ugly face, with little twinkling blue eyes.

"Wouldn't you like to come up here with me?" he said.

At the beach, they rode on the roller coaster, and the merry-go-round, and they ate hot dogs and drank strawberry soda. Gabrielle had never had such a good time in all her life.

That part of it hadn't been in Mrs. Fontane's orders. But Freddy felt sorry for the kid. She looked so scared and white, and her big eyes held a shadow as though she expected him to hit her. Freddy was an unmoral little person, but he didn't like women to look like that. After all, she hadn't done anything. Freddy knew something about how girls start that sort of stuff. Some are all bad, of course, and take the quickest way. But with most—it just happens. As for shooting that beggar Howard Blaine, she ought to have a medal for it. All his kind ought to be shot.

If Gabrielle had a good time, so did Freddy. He had blown a lot of dames to a day at the beach, but never one who laughed and glowed and thanked him as did Gabrielle. They got to be pretty good friends, before the afternoon was over. She was so awful pretty, with those big, soft, golden-brown eyes. Freddy began to think if he had half a chance he might fall for her—in earnest, too. It wouldn't be fair to do the kid any more dirt.

Besides, she was quick on the trigger. He chuckled.

AFTER that, for a day or two, Gabrielle didn't mind so much. She had something to remember. And that afternoon was almost the only thing she could remember that she wanted to.

And then, one morning, when she had made her bed carefully, dressed herself in the blue silk dress Mrs. Fontane had bought her, and coiled her brown hair as neatly as she knew how in the back of her neck, the black-garbed housemaid who brought up her meals came in with a letter.

Gabrielle winced. There was menace in every new, strange thing in this house.

"Well," said the girl—she was not a pretty girl— "here's a letter madame left for you."

"A letter?" said Gabrielle, putting her chin in the air, and looking at the girl steadily. She wasn't going to be bullied by a servant. That was too much.

"Yep—she's gone on one of those famous lecture tours of hers. Fine lectures she must give!"

"But—what about me?" Gabrielle had gone very white.

"Did you believe in that stuff she was handing you?" said the housemaid, with a grin. "She's always starting something, that one, but I never yet saw her finish nothing. Take it from me, most of these rich women are the bunk. Why not?" And she went out, still grinning.

Gabrielle read the letter. Mrs. Fontane had been called away suddenly—an imperative need at Sacramento—fearfully important—a law that would come up about the father's responsibility to his illegitimate children. She was going to make speeches about it, before a lot of women's clubs. But she was enclosing a letter to the superintendent of the County Hospital. They would put her to work at once.

GABRIELLE breathed then. She was glad Mrs. Fontane was gone. Glad. She had never felt comfortable with her. Now she would go to work. Work.

She found her hat—a black velvet, with a soft, black quill about its brim.

At the big hospital, Gabrielle presented her letter. The long bare corridors, the strange hospital smell, the impersonal coldness of the great institution overwhelmed her for a moment, but she grasped wildly at her courage. Two nurses passed, in probationers' uniforms.

The superintendent was still reading the big, lavender, crested note when Gabrielle was ushered in. He was a small man, with piercing, regal black eyes, and a great beaked nose. He glanced at her, impersonally, and said, "Sit down, please. Mrs. Fontane writes that she wants me to put you on here, in the training school. Do you want to be a nurse?"

"Yes, sir," said Gabrielle, scarcely breathing.

"H-mm. You look strong. What's your name?"

Gabrielle gasped. Hadn't Mrs. Fontane told him? What should she say?

The superintendent was watching her. "Take off your hat," he said sharply.

Gabrielle took it off.

"Aren't you that Gabrielle girl who was tried here a while ago for murder?"

Gabrielle nodded, dumb, stricken.

"Good Lord, that Fontane woman is a fool. She knows I couldn't put you in training here. There'd be an awful rumpus. Why didn't she send you to some private hospital? You go back and tell her to take you—not send you—to her own doctor, and have him take you to his hospital and personally recommend you. Maybe, if the nurses don't kick up a fuss, they'll take you."

Gabrielle stumbled out. Her brain, worn with the weeks of strain, with the anguish of her trial, the loneliness of these past days, seemed to have stopped. She wanted to die, but she could not kill herself. That was the greatest sin of all. She did not want to sin any more.

SHE walked back to the Fontane mansion, her eyes set and strange.

The butler tried to shut the door at the sight of her, but she put her hand out and held it. "Where—is Freddy?" she asked.

"He's gone with Mrs. Fontane, my girl, and what's more he's a good lad and don't you be up to any of your tricks with him."

At the barred entrance to the jail, she asked for the matron. The deputy didn't recognize her, and she stood outside, looking in, her heart sick and cold.

Mrs. Barker wasn't there. She had gone on her vacation. The deputy, a new one, was harsh. He thought he had Gabrielle's number, all right.

In the street below, Gabrielle leaned against the cobbled wall. She couldn't stand this.

A man spoke to her. Gabrielle looked at him blindly. "Can you tell me the way to the telegraph office?" she said.

Bill Smith, who worked for the Southern Pacific, said that evening to his wife:

"Say, Ruth," he called, "what'd you think. Remember that girl Gabrielle—you know the one was tried for murder?"

His wife answered from the kitchen.

"Well, I sold her a ticket today to New Orleans. I recognized her from her pictures the minute she came up to my window. New Orleans was the place she came from. And she was going back. Pretty, you bet your life. But she looked kind of peeked, like she didn't much care what happened. I guess they all go back in the end."

He sat down at the table. His wife carried in the dinner, her slight figure quivering with fatigue.

"Yep," said Bill Smith, complacently helping himself to the potatoes, "I guess they all go back in the end."

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