

### Second Installment

Remember Steddon, a pretty, unsophisticated girl, is the daughter of a kindly but narrow-minded minister in a small mid-western town. Her father,

Rev. Doctor Steddon, violently opposed to what he considers "worldly" things, accepts motion pictures as the cause for much of the evil of the present day. Troubled with a cough, Remember goes to see

Dr. Bretherick, an elderly physician, who is astonished at the plight in which he finds her. Pressed by the doctor, Remember admits her unfortunate affair with

Elwood Farnaby, a poor boy, son of the town sot. As Remember and Dr. Bretherick discuss the problem a telephone message brings the news that Elwood has been killed in an accident. Dr. Bretherick accordingly persuades Remember to go West, her cough serving as a plausible excuse; to write home of meeting and marrying a pretended suitor—"Mr. Woodville"—and later to write her parents announcing her "husband's" death before the birth of her expected child. Unable alone to bear her secret, Remember goes to her mother with it.

She said little, she carressed much. She confirmed Doctor Bretherick's prescription and joined the conspiracy, administering secret comfort to the girl and to the father.

And at last Mem was standing on the back platform of a train bound for the vast Southwest, throwing kisses to her father and mother as they watched the train dwindling like a telescope drawn into itself.

They turned back to their lives as if they had closed a door upon themselves.

But Mem, as she returned to her place in the car, felt as if a port-culis had lifted. Before her was All-Outdoors.

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The wheels ran with a rollicking lilt beneath the girl's body, throbbing likewise with a zest of velocity. Through her head an old tune ran: I saw the boat go round the bend, Good-by, my lover, good-by!

The deck was filled with traveling men.

Good-by, my lover, good-by!

aisles, swept her face and her form with glances like swift, lingering hands that hated to let her go. This was a startling sensation, a new kind of nakedness for her inexperienced soul.

The eyes of the women flung along the aisle also widened and tarried as they recognized in her a something she had not yet found out: that she was very, very pretty—attractive, compulsive.

She was plainly dressed and had never been adorned. Only her neatness kept her from shabbiness. But she had beauty and appeal. On the train Mem had expected to find on the journey leisure for contrition and the remodeling of her soul. But the world would not let her alone. Everything was new to her. Everything was a crowded film of novelty.

She knew the minimum of the outside sphere possible to a girl who had had any education at all. She had never been on a sleeping car before.

She had read no novels except such sweetened water as the Sunday-school library afforded. She had seen no



She saw the gallant, was the tall youth who had crushed past her in the corridor.

magazines at home except church publications. She had never been to a theatre or a moving picture. She had never danced even a square dance.

She had never ridden a bicycle or a horse, and had never been in any automobile except some old bone-shaker that drowned conversation in its own rattle.

She had never gambled, or been profane or even slangy or disrespectful to her parents. She had never seen a cocktail.

She had never worn a low-necked, high-skirted dress. She had never seen a bathing suit or had one on. Girls did not swim in the river at Calverly. In fact, she had escaped all the things that moralists point to as the reasons why girls go wrong.

Yet she had, as the saying is, gone wrong—utterly, indubitably.

Yet no fast young men had led her astray, or so much as tried to lead her astray. She had never made the acquaintance of a fast young man. Her betrothed lover was slow and honorable and religious, everything a young man ought to be.

But, unfortunately, there seemed to be volition in neither of them; they had just floated together with a mysterious bewilderment.

The clanking uproar of the entrance into Kansas City filled her ears. Mem had never seen a great city, and this metropolis had a tremendous majesty in her eyes.

Remember, thinking to stretch her legs on the station platform, joined the passengers who choked the straight corridor along the row of compartments. One of the doors opened and framed a tall and powerful young man with a peculiarly wistful face. His eyes brushed Mem and he lifted his hat as he asked her pardon for squeezing past her.

He knocked at another steel door and called through, "Oh, Robina, bet-

ter come out for a bit of exercise."

While he waited, some of the passengers were twisting their necks to watch him, and nudging and whispering to one another. When the door opened and Robina stepped out there was such a sensation and such a boorish staring that Mem turned to look.

A young woman of an almost dazzling beauty came out, smiling and bareheaded. She noted the yokelry in the corridor, and her smile died. She stepped back into her stateroom, and when she reappeared, she wore a large drooping hat and a thick black veil.

"I envy you the privilege of the veil," the young man said. Mem walked up and down the platform as if her feet were winged. She felt a longing to buy something for the sheer sport of buying, and went so far as to buy two magazines devoted to the moving pictures.

One of the magazines slipped from under her elbow and fell to the ground and as she stooped to recover it her hand touched a hand that had just anticipated hers. She looked up quickly and her head knocked off the hat of the man who had tried to save her the trouble of picking up her hat; his eyes beat upon her like long beams. There was a kind of pathos in them, but also a great brightness, which, like the sun, he poured upon million alike. But Mem did not know this. She felt warmed and healed, and she bloomed a trifle as a rose does when the sun wilds it. With great calm and as much of a bow as he could make without a sense of intrusion, the young man solemnly offered Mem his own hat and laid her magazines on his head.

Then both of them laughed as he corrected the automatic mistake of his muscles. He blushed hotly, for he was not used to such blunders.

Mem found an amazing magnetism in his smile and in his eyes. She did not know that that sad smile of his was making a millionaire of him. He was selling it by the foot—thousands of feet of it. His smile was broad enough to circumscribe the world and his eyes had enough sorrow for all the audiences.

He turned back to the waiting Robina. Robina was evidently not used to being kept waiting. She had had little practice. She resented the slight with such quick wrath that Mem could hear her protesting sarcasm, a rather disappointing rebuke: "Don't hurry on my account, Tom."

Two young girls assailed Tom with shameless idolatry. One of them rattled.

"Oh, Mr. Hoby, we knew you the minute we laid eyes on you. You're our fave-rite of all the screen stars, and—You got no photographs with you, have you?"

Tom was indomitably polite, but the conductor's call, "All aboard!" gave Robina an excuse to drag him away from the worshippers.

One of the girls, in an epilepsy of agitation, wailed: "Say, looky! That lady under the veil is Robina Teele! Gee! and we didn't reco-nize her!"

The train was emerging from the retreating walls of the city before Mem felt calm enough to examine her magazines.

On the cover of one of them was a huge head of Robina Teele, all eyes and curls and an incredibly luscious mouth. Remember had never heard of her or seen her pictures, because her films were great "feature specials," too expensive for the villages.

There was a long article about her, and another about Tom Holby.

This was not so amazing a coincidence as it seemed to Mem, for both Robina Teele and Tom Holby had press agents who would have been chagrined if any motionpicture periodical had appeared without some blazon of their employers.

Mem stared longest at the various pictures of Tom Holby. She found him in all manner of costumes and athletic achievements, and she read the rhapsody on him first.

Having never seen a moving picture of anybody, she had never seen his. Mem forgot for a long while that she was a respectable widow—of a very poor sort, for it came to her in an avalanche of shame that she was neither respectable nor a widow.

But she was a fugitive now from her past and from such thoughts, and she caught up the magazines with a desperate eagerness, as if they were cups of nepenthe.

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After dinner Mem found her way to the observation car and wrote a letter home. She was sealing it when she suddenly remembered Doctor Bretherick's prescription. She was to take a lover on the first day! She had mentioned nobody that she had met. Now she must describe the important man that she would never meet. He was an imaginary, and therefore a quite perfect, character. She wrote:

Oh, I forgot! Whom do you suppose I ran into on the train? You'd never guess in a million years. You know when I went to Carthage to

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take care of you remember the awful church? name. Remember believe it, h it a small w kind and p church, as y how I feel m I'm sure yo religious, bu so, of cour night again.

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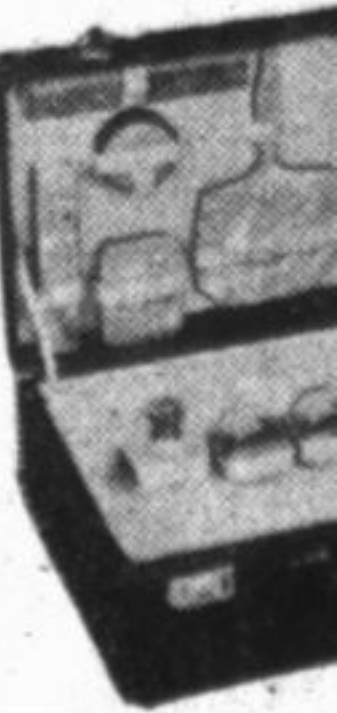
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