

WHEN ELIZABETH SCORED

Or a Case of Too Many Lovers.

By AGNES G. BROGAN

In all his trying experiences as an editor Richard West had never faced so peculiar a situation. The two young men had burst in upon his privacy, accusing and gesticulating in an incoherent manner. After much questioning their cause of complaint was found to be the recent publication of the following astonishing communication:

Mr. Robert Wells and Mr. John Glegg of Woodborough announce their engagement to Miss Elizabeth Thornton of this city.

Twice the perplexed editor read the paragraph, then rubbed his eyes. "This is out of my province," he remarked at last, "but I'll see the society editor about it."

"No use," snapped Robert Wells. "We went to her first, and she says the clipping was inadvertently copied from the Woodborough Suburban. Any joke goes in that town paper, but how a thing like that could get by in a responsible daily—"

"Such blameless carelessness might bring a pretty suit against your paper," hotly interrupted John Glegg; "made things hot enough for us in Woodborough, but it was rather too much to have it repeated when we came to the city."

In a spirit of relief the managing editor turned to answer his telephone: "Editor Daily News?" questioned an aggrieved feminine voice. "Well, this is Mrs. William Thornton. I called up to ask explanation of that vulgar notice regarding my daughter which appeared in last night's paper. Yes; unfortunate mistake no doubt, but I will call to see you personally this afternoon—at 4 o'clock."

Viciously Richard West banged the receiver into its hook. "So there is a Miss Thornton!" he exclaimed.

"There is indeed," Mr. Glegg remarked feelingly.

"And you have both, perhaps, been paying her attention."

"Well, rather," this from Mr. Wells.

"I can only express, then, my regret for the occurrence and suggest a public contradiction."

"Contradiction," growled the blond one of the two. "Good heavens, it's been rubb'd in enough now!"

"If anything of the kind happens again," vaguely threatened his companion, and the door closed with an eloquent slam.

Suddenly the editor's annoyed expression changed to one of irrepresible amusement. The smile still lingered as he returned to his work. But as the hour of 4 drew near and his clerk announced a visitor he glanced apprehensively toward the door and arose stiffly. It was only a girl who confronted him, however, not the dreaded Mrs. Thornton, whose important name figured so largely in social circles—just a slip of a girl with appealing blue eyes and a sensitive mouth.

"Are you the editor?" she asked naively and, unalarmed, settled herself in the editor's chair. "I came about that engagement notice. Had to get here before mother, who will probably make a fuss. I am Elizabeth Thornton."

"Bewig, the editor waited. "It was I who wrote the announcement," she calmly stated.

"Yes!" He swung about in disbelief. The girl nodded.

"It was one of my jokes," she said ruefully. "They always turn out the wrong way." She leaned forward confidentially. "Do you know what it means to have reckless impulses, Mr. West—doing or saying a thing you are bound to be desperately sorry for next day? Well, that's me. Let me explain about that foolish announcement. Miss Thornton's suddenly embarrassed gaze sought the top of her foot.

"You see, I have known those two boys, Bobbie and Jack, for some time, and we've gone around a lot together, more or less. One afternoon unexpectedly 'right out of a clear sky'—Bobbie asked me when we were going to be married. Why, I'd never even thought of such a thing. When I tried to tell him so he insisted quite stubbornly that the marriage question had always been understood between us; said when he talked about it I had never contradicted him." Miss Thornton raised aggrieved eyes to the editor. "Now, wasn't that unreasonable," she demanded, "to be expected to marry a man just because one had not gone round denying being engaged to him? And that very evening—she paused impressively—"Jack Glegg comes walking over to ask me when I'm going to marry him; declared I knew all along that the house he was building was for me."

"I had encouraged Jack in the building," Miss Thornton admitted, "because he's naturally idle, and I like to see him busy. But it seems Jack had told me the roof would never go on his house until he had the promise of a wife to occupy it, and, of course, just one would have advised him to put on the roof. So," she sighed, "I ceded to both boys accusing me of faintly leading them on while being snared to the other, and when I emphatically denied this to each they settled back comfortably, believing me to be still their own betrayed."

"Miss Elizabeth Thornton laughed.

"It was all so perfectly ridiculous," she continued, "that I decided to give them enough of the subject and wrote that silly notice, hurrying it off to their home town paper to greet them when they arrived. Woodborough enjoys publishing amusing personalities, and I expected the affair to end in a laugh." She regarded the editor ec-

cusingly. "But, oh, when the awru thing came out in your paper!" Miss Thornton threw out her hands. "Now I'm afraid—for you," she said.

Richard West followed the girl to the door and then surprised himself by continuing to follow into the elevator and on down to the street, where he stood an unnecessary length of time assuring her of his regret and of his ability to soothe the ruffled feelings of her mother. Again, in his office he stooped to pick up a bunch of faded violets which had fallen from the girl's belt and to place them carefully in his desk. Then he leaned back in his chair, falling into a pleasant reverie. Each fragrant breath from the violets seemed to bring back in an indelible way the piquant charm of the girl's presence—that one laughing gleam from her bluebell eyes. And so for days the winsome face haunted his memory.

Richard West formed a habit of gazing eagerly down at the passersby or of falling into brown studies before his desk. Then, one day, the girl's well remembered name caught his eye, seeming to stand out in glowing letters upon the social column of his own paper. When he had read the passage a second time he summoned the social editor.

"Let me know," he requested, "if this announcement has been duly authorized." The social editor peered through her glasses.

"The engagement of Miss Elizabeth Thornton to Mr. Robert Wells," she quoted. "Oh, yes, that is correct! The notice was copied by request from a Beechwood paper. Miss Thornton has been a guest at the Balmoral, returning this week, as the notice says, to be married in the city. I will send you the original copy."

"Swiftly the editor's practiced eye scanned the bold signature. "Authorized for publication by Robert Wells." Undecidedly his hand went out toward the telephone. Then, as if in answer to his thought, the office door was opened to admit a small figure.

"May I come in?" asked a diffident voice. Richard West's heretofore well behaved heart beat a rapid tattoo as the vision in blue advanced to his side.

"I did not think you would do it again," she reproached him. In silent exoneration he handed to her the original signed slip of the disturbing announcement, watching in vast relief as rebellious color flooded the girl's indignant face.

"It is just as I thought," she cried. "Robert Wells wrote the wretched thing for revenge."

"And the fact stated is not true?" Miss Thornton scorned the eager question. "I was having such a lovely time," she said—"dancing, driving, tennis! Now he has spoiled it all. If I had leprosy I could not be more avoided." Returning to be married in the city," she mocked. "I'll never be married as long as I live. This time you are not to blame, and I came down to acid you."

"One might be driven to second offense," he told her, "for the pleasure of seeing you once more."

"You may see me again sooner than you expect," she laughed, and her prophecy came true.

It was a flushed and beautiful young woman of flashing eye who burst in upon him one gloriously memorable morning.

"I hope I'm in time," she began breathlessly and waving aloft a paper. Grandmother read it last night in the *Furn Gazette*.

With that glowing face so near his own, it was rather difficult at first to grasp the significance of this latest message, but presently Richard West realized that "Miss Elizabeth Thornton was again reported engaged, Mr. John Glegg this time figuring as the fortunate bridegroom elect."

"Isn't it contemptible!" Miss Thornton glanced distractingly through a floating strand of hair. "You see, they have agreed together to get—even. Oh, I wish—!" The resolute voice broke tremulously as the girl turned to the window.

Richard West followed, shaken, between a desire for deep sympathy and a desire for helpless laughter, wondering at the mighty emotion which surged within him at the sight of two very genuine tears creeping down the girl's averted cheek. Tightly his hand closed over hers.

"It has all been so childishly foolish," she murmured.

"Perhaps it has," the man answered gently, "but I'm afraid that I cannot be sorry, Elizabeth—he paused, and the name was allowed to pass.

"I can't be sorry because the foolishness brought you to me, and I can't be quite sorry for your tears. Tears prove the existence of a heart, and if you have one—if I have—I want it to keep forever, Elizabeth."

Silence in the office while the telephone bell rang unheard; then Richard West rushed over to his desk to pen a hasty line.

"There," he cried triumphantly; "that goes into the paper tonight, and I think, dear, you've scored the boys there."

Glancing over her lover's shoulder the girl read aloud: "The engagement is announced of Miss Elizabeth Thornton to Mr. Richard West. Wedding to take place next month."

Tendently her eyes sought those of the editor. "Authorized for publication by Elizabeth Thornton," she said.



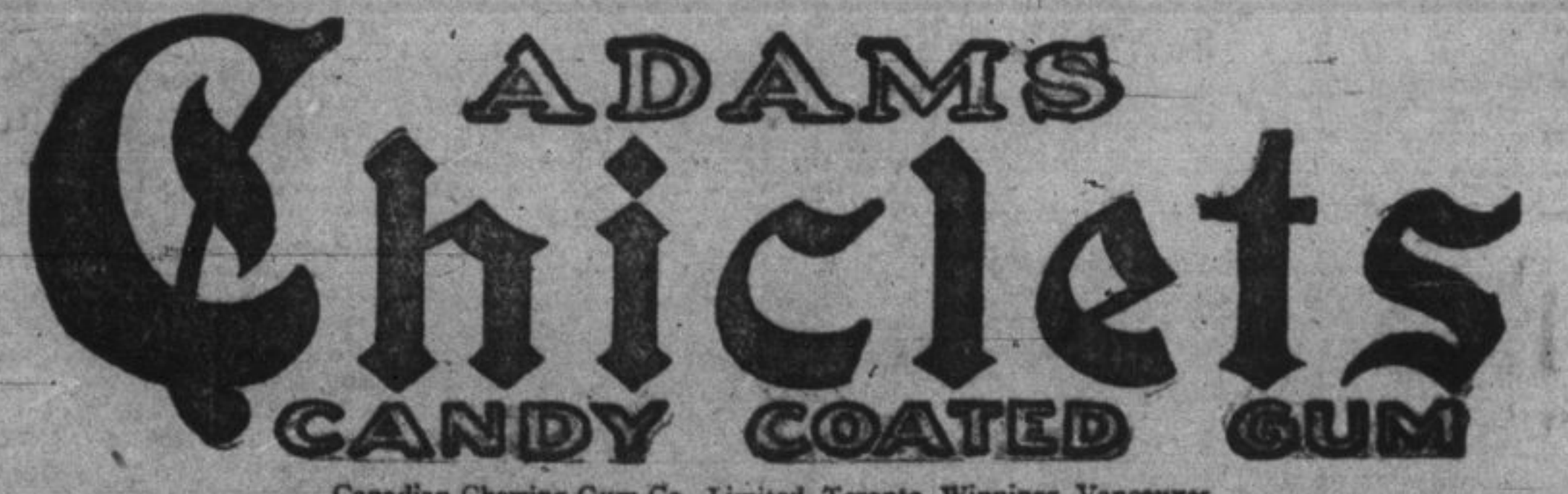
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DEATH AT WILTON.

Mrs. O. C. Storms Passed Away After Long Illness.

Wilton, Nov. 20.—A sad death occurred on Friday last, Nov. 14th, when Mary Parrott wife of Orange C. Storms, passed away. Deceased had been ill for several months and bore all her suffering with a patient fortitude. She was of a bright and cheerful disposition and always had a smile and welcome for her many friends. She will be greatly missed in her home by her family and a large circle of friends. She leaves to mourn her loss, her husband, Orange C. Storms, one daughter, Mrs. C. V. Asseltine, one brother, Milton Parrott, two sisters, Mrs. John Carr and Mrs. Guy Simmons, all of Wilton. The funeral was held at her late residence on Saturday afternoon.

A Pittsburgh Wedding.

A pretty wedding was solemnized at St. James Church, Pittsburgh on Wednesday November 13th, when Winnifred Eliza, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Duffe of Kingston Mills, became the bride of Frederick Lorne, eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Keeler, Joyceville. Rev. W. Gratton performed the ceremony in the presence of a large number of friends. While the wedding march was being played by Mrs. Gratton, the bride entered the church leaning on the arm of her brother, James, who gave her away. The groom was assisted by his brother Gordon. The bride was attended by Miss Anna Keeler, sister of the groom. The bride looked charming in a navy blue suit with hat to match. The bridesmaid wore a purple suit with hat to match.

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Bellrock Bulletins.

Nov. 20.—The weather man seems to be in better humor than usual today. The cheese factory is closed for this season. The Smith Company of Massachusetts, U.S.A., have been testing some of their mines in this section. They found good samples of spar in several places. Mrs. James Meeks has returned home from visiting friends at Parry Sound. Miss F. E. Rolke spent Sunday at her home at Tamworth. Mr. and Mrs. W. Moore have returned to Kingston, their former home. Mr. and Mrs. F. L. Ames and Mrs. H. J. Goner Bailey called on friends here last Sunday.

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