

SOCIETY MODEL BROUGHT ARTIST DEADLY PERIL

MR. Harrison Fisher's Adventure with a Young Woman Whose Shoulders, Neck and Arms He Is Painting When a Jealous Sweetheart Shoots Through the Studio Door

She had therefore declined to cease the posing. She would inform her fiancé of the real condition of the family and follow some more conventional occupation. However, I wasn't worrying much as to these things. I am sure, I was, thinking about the illustrations. Footsteps came up to the door and paused. I heard them pass away again and descend the stairs. Occasionally some one would knock, but I continued my work. I was conscienceless. As I said, I have worked for the newspapers.

Battering the Door.

Then came other steps; more insistent steps. There was another knock, and there could be no mistake about its character. It was the knock imperative. There was no pause between the footsteps and the knock. No heed had been devoted to my unpretentious placard. I owed no one money; I didn't fear the visits of the police, but I looked up at that knock. My model looked up too, alert, intent, perceptibly shaken by premonition.

There was a pause of a moment and then the knock came again. Do you know that strange feeling which comes to you when a person is said to be walking over your grave? I had it then; I don't know why. There was a knocking again, but its character had changed. This time it was the knock furious. It was followed by a voice, a raised, insistent voice; an unpleasant voice when you begin to suspect who its owner was. "I know you're inside there!" it shouted. "Open the door at once!"

The girl had gone white. The mother eyes became

the eyes of fear. Her hand went up to her face, which she followed with that move. I could see her shaking on her chair.

The knocking was followed by a rattling of bolts. "Open the door! Open the door!" came the voice. It was now stark, furious, implacable. "Open the door of I'll break it in, by God! It's no use. I know you're there, Edith. Open the door!"

The last door mentioned was qualified by adjective unsuitable for Sunday reading. The man's voice was shaking with passion. He beat the door incessantly. The girl had her lower lip in and her teeth over it, and she gripped the chair as if it had been a dentist's.

If I hadn't known who the man was I'd have known how to deal with him, of course. As it was I had to consider the girl. The man was obviously furious and would not understand. So I shouted:—"Stop that racket and go away. I'm busy; I won't see any one to-day."

The only reply was an attempt to break down the door. The man was butting at it with his shoulder—propelling his whole force at it. Between the thumpings he gasped, "I know she's in here. It's no use; I followed her. I will get in. Let me in, damn you, or I'll kill you!"

I never want to go through such an experience again. The girl, almost fainting, was trying to shuffle her blouse on. The butting was furious and continued. The door indicated collapse. I walked to it softly and put my weight upon it. That door wanted more than moral support.

By this time I was becoming angry myself. Even the illustrative worm can turn. "If you don't stop that at once," I shouted, "I call up the police station."

I meant it, too; it seemed the only solution. He continued his active siege. I went to the telephone book and found the number. "I'm going to ring!" I shouted. "I'll kill you both if you do!" said he. I rang the bell and a shot cracked out. The bullet came through the door and flattened against the wall. I made a dash for the girl and pulled her over to the wall which enclosed the door. I went back to the telephone and asked for the police station.

The Flight.

There came another shot, and another. There were noises of feet upon the stairs, and then the sound of furious footsteps running from my door. I heard them making madly down the stairs, three or four steps at a time. The fiancé was an energetic gentleman, whether in assault or retreat. I ran to the studio window and opened it. Almost as I opened it the fellow came forth like a bullet. He disappeared around the corner like a shot, which should be equally fast.

The girl was quaking and fumbling at her hat. I helped her with her coat. "Now, beat it!" I said. There are moments when slang satisfies a long felt want. Then I opened the door and explained that a particularly demented friend of mine had been playing a particularly crazy practical joke. The tailors' assistants who had gathered there wondered. I shudder to think of their opinion of the whole artistic tribe. I heard one fellow murmur "Bughouse," as he walked slowly away. It did seem rather to sum up the situation.

After that I rang up the models' club and went to work again. In the evening, however, I thought about the matter. Artists can think, notwithstanding a discouraging public impression. The whole thing, though thoroughly ridiculous, yet possessed its serious aspects. The fiancé, becoming suspicious of the girl's regular absences, had followed her to my studio. He had drawn his own unjustifiable conclusions. The girl was thoroughly blameless. It seemed obviously my part to explain things. I would call on the girl, get from her the fiancé's address, and become the diplomatic expositor.

Next morning I went down to Eighth street, where she lived. It was one of those old red brick houses, in a quiet section of the street, which a bustling modernity seemed to have passed silently by. A neat woman of housekeeperlike appearance answered my ring. I asked for—well, say Miss Merrion.

"Miss Merrion?" said she. "Miss Merrion left last night. Her mother and father went, too. They left rather suddenly. They left no address."

It was a strange incident, wasn't it? And the strangest part of it remains. I've heard no more of Miss Merrion or her decided fiancé from that day to this. You would think she would have written me a line, wouldn't you?

BY HARRISON FISHER.

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It happened about five years ago—that most thrilling incident of my life. A woman was responsible for it. Indeed, you will find that women are responsible for most of the thrilling incidents of this life. This woman presented herself at my studio one day as I worked. She was a majestic creature—a creature of satisfying curves and dark mother eyes—the kind you see in the madonnas which the old fellows painted.

She had Titian red hair, but not the sort that can be purchased. She had the kind that God gives you, free, when you are born. She wanted to know if I would take her as a model. Now, you don't get the mother eyes and the Titian hair—unbought—and the curve of neck and waist of a peculiarly satisfying subtlety every day. I entreated her to a chair. She had none of the stent indications of the professional models. Professional models, as of course you know, are almost invariably very worthy persons, but they bear upon them the marks of their particular gyves—just as we all do. This woman was different.

Her story was not unusual in these days of expansion and financial prestidigitation. Her family was one well known and well born. If its frequent mention in the weeklies which minister to society be an indication. It had been what is known as "wealthy," but its head had become possessed of the spirit of the age. He had experienced the seductions of Wall street. He came, he saw, but he did not conquer. The result of his financial experiences was such that neither his name nor that of his kin continued to appear in the chaste columns dedicated to society. He went to work as clerk in the accommodating business house of one of his acquaintances. His wife was not strong, and the amount which he earned was not great. It was naturally much less than when he had appeared in a purely decorative capacity. The girl feared for the comfort and health of the mother and had heard of fabulous sums which illustrators were supposed to pay to desirable models. So she had visited me.

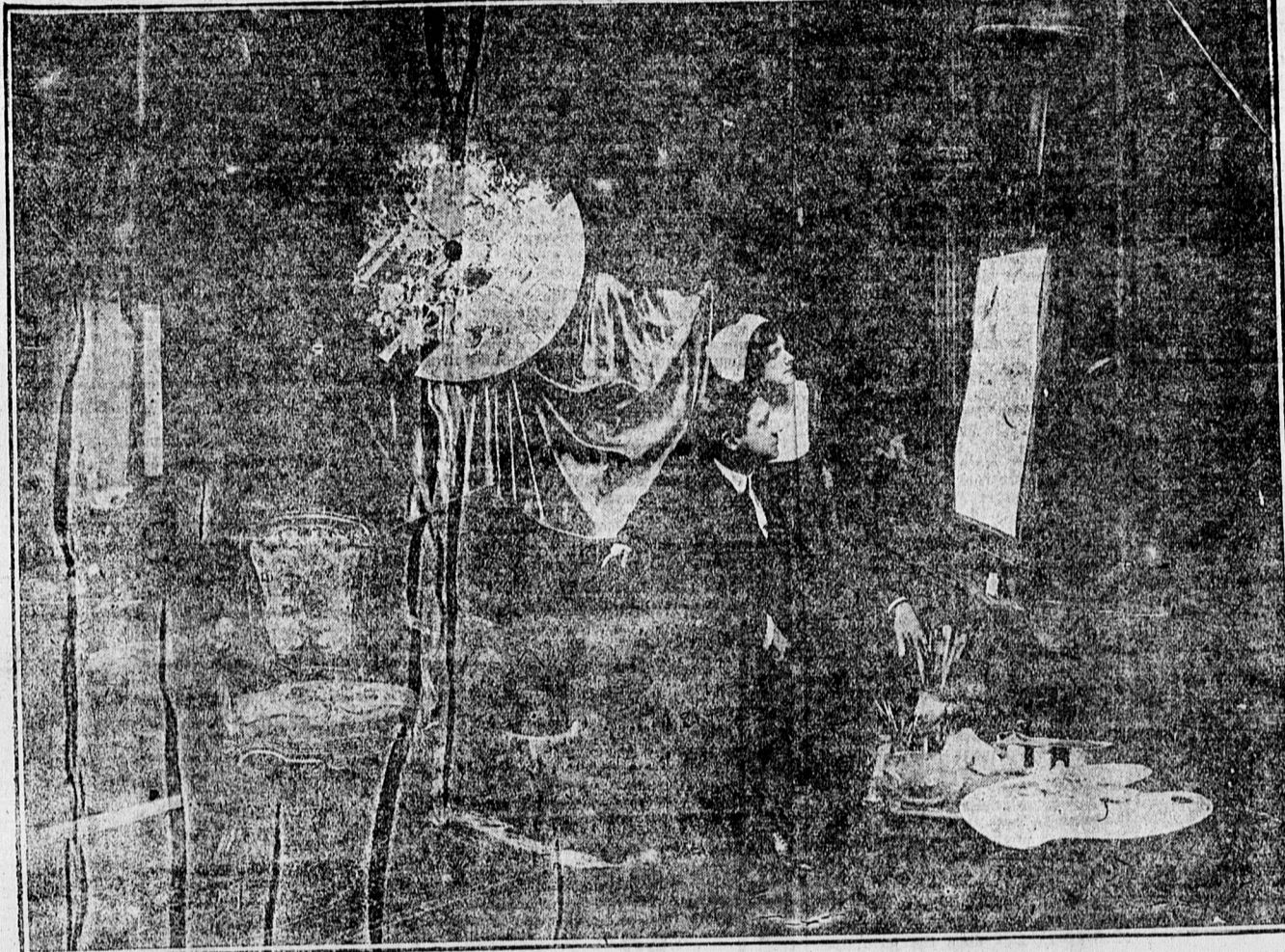
I corrected her expansive conceptions as to payment, but accepted her services as model. I arranged that she should come to my studio each day at two o'clock, and returned to my motions—well, let us call them covers.

After that she came regularly. I sketched her from two to five. She was a splendid model and a charming girl—witty, sympathetic, sensitive. We would often chat as I drew, and we became great friends. She had travelled in the days when her father was decorative, and we spoke of strange peoples and new skies. We talked of the acquaintances we had met. We placed them upon the metaphorical dissecting table. When people do these things they are on the way to confidence. So even did we become confidential in a certain hearty fashion. That is how I came to know her little romance.

She Loved a Man.

She was to be married. She loved the man. He, too, loved her, though that went without saying. She had met him on an ocean liner during what she referred to as her "palmy" days. He was young, rich, handsome—everything, in fact, which would indicate him as desirable in the market for matrimony. All this, I know, is purely conventional. It would naturally occur in any popular novel. Now, however, commences the romance. You will not have to wait long.

He was jealous. Love may be blind, but my model's mother-eyes were not blind to that. This was the commencing complication. He knew of the family reverses, but he did not know that she was posing. Her fiancé was a good American, but he would have been shocked at the idea of his sweetheart posing as a model. As I said, he was a good conventional American. This suggests development in complication.



Mr. Fisher at Work in His Studio.

Her confidences thus begun, there was no stopping my charming model. I was her repository of doubts and fears. She was nervous. Her fiancé had rung her up on several occasions during the afternoons on which she inspired art. Her mother, of course, answered the telephone and gave soothing answers; mothers have aptitude when they so desire. She thought that these answers were satisfying, but she wasn't sure. She fancied his manner remained unchanged, but she was not certain. She was distinctly nervous, however—but, of course, I said this before.

One afternoon I was dreadfully busy. I don't like to advertise my industry, but on this occasion it is necessary. I had placed a notice upon my studio door. "Will not be back to-day"—you know the kind. I had to switch my young lady from the heroine illustrations for which I had engaged her to other and more urgent business illustrations. One of them called for a ball dress scene. Now, I had no ball dress in the studio. Well appointed studios have most things, but mine did not possess a ball dress. Time was passing and I couldn't stand for one. So I asked my model if she would mind taking off her blouse. My model thus drew her neck and shoulders and arms.

MEETING COUSIN CARLOTTA.

WILLIAM ARMSTRONG and his cousin, Carlotta Blake, are not good friends. Carlotta lives in Albany. Last week she visited the Armstrongs. William did not know his cousin. Nevertheless, he undertook to meet her at the station. This is how he did it. He approached a young woman in the car who sat near the book stall and asked:—"Are you Miss Carlotta Blake?" "No," said the young woman. "I am not." "I hope you will excuse me," William explained. "I am here to meet a Miss Blake. She is my cousin. I have never seen her. My sister Jennie is the only member of our family who does know her. Jennie intended to meet her, but she burned her face on a steam pipe this morning and doesn't look fit to come out of the house, so I had to come. She told me I would know Carlotta because she is so pretty. 'She is the prettiest girl you ever saw,' said Jennie. 'You can't make a mistake. Just pick out the prettiest girl in the station and you'll be sure to strike Carlotta. So that's what I did. I hope you are not angry. You really are, you know.'"

The young woman blushed. William sighed. "I'm sorry," he said. "I don't know whom to ask next. There doesn't seem to be anybody else in the whole shooting match that comes up to Jennie's description. I guess my cousin Carlotta didn't come." A tall girl in brown sat beside the girl in blue. She got up and glared at William Armstrong. "Yes, she did," said the girl in brown. "Oh, Lord!" said William. "Are you?" "I am," said the girl in brown. "And of course, nobody could expect a girl to be friends with a man after that."

THE RECOGNITION.

By Katherine J. Murray.

WHERE have I seen your face? In what forgotten place Of long departed race, In days gone by? Blue eyes, and jetty hair Crowning that face so fair, Whose proud smile lingering there Shows spirit high.

WERE you that Irish maid Who, in Partholan's raid, With her young beauty paid Some scoldier's hire— Drove her knife through his side; Shrieked, laughing, as he died; Laughed as her bonds I tied, At death by fire?

WHEN Rollo's fleet of yore Of Norway's rugged shore (I chained to galley oar) Rocked on the foam, Were you the princess proud Smiling upon the crowd Whose shouts and cheerings loud Welcomed him home?

AH! Memory serves at last! In Rome's arena vast You with the martyrs cast, A soldier I; The hungry lions roar, Slow I unbar their door, You turn your face once more And smile and bow!



The Girl (Almost Fainting) Was Trying to Shuffle Her Blouse On.