

MARY MARIE

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY
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SYNOPSIS

PREFACE.—"Mary Marie" explains her apparent "double personality" and just why she is a "cross-current" and a contradiction; she also tells her reasons for writing the diary—later to be a novel. The diary is commenced on a page.

CHAPTER I.—Mary begins with Nurse Sarah's account of her (Mary's) birth, which seemingly interested her father, who is a famous astronomer, less than a new star which was discovered the same night. Her name is a compromise, her mother wanted to call her Viola and her father insisting on Abigail Jane. The child quickly learned that her home was in some way different from those of her small friends, and she puzzled them. Nurse Sarah tells her of her mother's arrival at Andersonville as a bride and how astonished they all were at the sight of the dainty eighteen-year-old girl whom the sedate professor had chosen for a wife.

CHAPTER II.—Continuing her story, Nurse Sarah makes it plain why the household seemed a strange one to the child and how her father and mother drifted apart through misunderstanding, thus too proud to in any way attempt to smooth over the situation.

CHAPTER III.—Mary tells of the time spent "out west" where the "perfectly all right and genteel and respectable" divorce was being arranged for, and her mother's (to her) unaccountable behavior. By the court's decree the child is to spend six months of the year with her mother and six months with her father. Boston is Mother's home, and she and Mary leave Andersonville for that city to spend the first six months.

CHAPTER IV.—At Boston, Mary becomes "Marie" and is delighted with her new home, so different from the gloomy house at Andersonville. The number of gentlemen who call on her mother leads her to speculate on the possibility of a new father. She classes the callers as "prospective suitors," finally deciding the choice is to be between "the violinist" and Mr. Harlow. The condominiums are overheard between her mother and Mr. Harlow convinces her that it will not be that gentleman, and "to violinist" seems to be the likely man. Mrs. Anderson receives a letter from "Aunt Abigail Anderson," her former husband's sister, who is keeping house for him, reminding her that "Mary" is expected at Andersonville for the six months she is to spend with her father. Her mother is distressed, but has no alternative, and "Marie" departs for Andersonville.

CHAPTER V.—The diary takes a jump of twelve years, during which Marie (always Marie) and her mother have less and less affairs inseparable from girlhood. Then she meets THE man—Gerald Weston, young, wealthy, and already a successful portrait painter. They are deeply in love and the wedding follows quickly. With the coming of the baby, Eunice, things seem to change with Marie and Gerald, and they are married after a year. When Eunice is five years old, Marie decides to part from Gerald. Intending to break the news to her mother, she is reminded of her own frequently unhappy childhood and how her subject Eunice to the same humiliations. Her eyes opened, Marie gives up her idea of a separation, and returns to her husband, her duty, and her love.

CHAPTER VI.—At Andersonville Aunt Jane meets her at the station. Her teacher is away somewhere studying an epoch of the moon. Marie, however, now—inevitably—completely disappears. Aunt Jane, prim and severe, with her beautiful, dainty mother, much to the former's disadvantage. Aunt Jane disapproves of the dainty clothes which the child is wearing, and replaces them with "serviceable" serge and thick-colored shoes. Her father arrives home and comes surprised to see her. The child is soon brought to notice that she is at school seem to avoid her. Her father appears interested in the life Mrs. Anderson leads at Boston and asks many questions in a queer manner which puzzles Mary. She finds out that her schoolmates do not associate with her on account of her parents being divorced, and she isuseless over her by her long-suffering mother, who is in a crying spell which her father's unexpected appearance interrupts. She sobs out the story of her unhappiness and in a clumsy way he comforts her. After that he appears to desire to make her stay more pleasant. Her mother writes asking that Mary be allowed to come to Boston for the beginning of the school term, and Mr. Anderson consents, though from an expression he lets fall Mary believes he is sorry she is going.

CHAPTER VI.—Mary is surprised at the tenderness her father displays when he puts her on the train for Boston. She discovers "the violinist" making love to her mother's maid, Theresa, but says nothing. Later, however, she overhears him making a proposal of marriage to her mother, and she writes the same to "The violinist," who is dismissed. An unaccountable change in her mother astonishes her. The child is given to understand she is being taught self-discipline and she has less good times and fewer pretty things to wear. As the time for her return to Andersonville approaches, Mrs. Anderson equips her in plain dresses and "sensible" shoes—"Mary," things, the child complains.

CHAPTER VII.—At the Andersonville station Mary is met by her father in a new automobile, and finds instead of the prim and angular Aunt Jane a young and attractive woman who she learns is "Cousin Grace." Marie writes her mother of the change, and is astonished at the many questions she is called on to answer concerning her father's new housekeeper. Mary decides that he intends to marry "Cousin Grace." In a moment of confidence she asks him if that is not his intention. He tells her it is not, but is disengaged. She informs him that she has written to her mother telling her of the situation. A few days later Mary goes back to Boston.

CHAPTER VIII.—Mr. Anderson visits Boston to deliver a lecture. Mrs. Anderson and Marie meet and have a talk with him. Later that day Marie finds her mother crying over some old finery in the attic, and she learns the things were connected with Mrs. Anderson's first meeting with her divorced husband. At a reception tendered Professor Anderson Marie leads her mother to a corner and she regrets the separation, and Marie is sure from her observations that her mother still loves him. She suggests that he call at the house and she will arrange for her mother to meet him without first knowing who the visitor is. Marie is confident that if they meet, a reconciliation will follow. Her intuition is correct, but misinterpretations are explained, and the two, who have really always loved one another, are remarried.

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They're going to be married. It's tomorrow. They'd have been married right away at the first, only they had to wait—something about licenses and a five-day notice, Mother said. Father fussed and fumed, and wanted to try for a special dispensation, or something; but Mother laughed, and said certainly not, and that she guessed it was just as well, for she positively had to have a few things; and he needn't think he could walk right in like that on a body and expect her to get married at a moment's notice. But she didn't mean it. I know she didn't; for when Father reproached her, she laughed softly, and called him an old goose, and said, yes, of course, she'd have married him in two minutes if it hadn't been for the five-day notice, no matter whether she ever had a new dress or not.

He didn't say anything, not anything, for such a long time I thought he hadn't heard me. Then, with a queer, quick drawing in of his breath, he said:

"I think—little girl—if—if I ever got the chance I would say—a great deal more than I said to you tonight."

"Good!" I just crowed the word, and I think I clapped my hands; but right away I straightened up and was very fine and dignified, for I saw Aunt Hattie looking at me from across the room, as I said:

"Very good, then. You shall have the chance."

He turned and smiled a little, but he shook his head.

"Thank you, child; but I don't think you know quite what you're promising," he said.

"Yes, I do."

Then I told him my idea. At first he said no, and it couldn't be, and he was very sure she wouldn't see him, even if he called. But I said she would if he would do exactly as I said. And I told him my plan. And after a time and quite a lot of talk, he said he would agree to it.

And this morning we did it.

At exactly ten o'clock he came up the steps of the house here, but he didn't ring the bell. I had told him not to do that, and I was on the watch for him. I knew that at ten o'clock Grandfather would be gone, Aunt Hattie probably downtown shopping, and Lester out with his governess. I wasn't



At Exactly Ten o'clock He Came Up the Steps of the House Here, but He Didn't Ring the Bell.

so sure of Mother, but I knew it was Saturday, and I believed I could manage somehow to keep her here with me, so that everything would be all right there.

I did it, and five minutes before ten she was sitting quietly sewing in her own room. Then I went downstairs to watch for Father.

He came just on the dot, and I let him in and took him into the library. Then I went upstairs and told Mother there was some one downstairs who wanted to see her.

And she said, how funny, and wasn't there any name, and where was the maid. But I didn't seem to hear. I had gone into my room in quite a hurry, as if I had forgotten something I wanted to do there. But, of course, I didn't do a thing—except to make sure that she went downstairs to the library.

They're there now together. And he's been here a whole hour already. Seems as if he ought to say something in that length of time!

After I took out this, and began to write in it. And I've been writing ever since. But, oh, I do so wonder what's going on down there. I'm so excited over—

ONE WEEK LATER

At just that minute Mother came into the room. I wish you could have seen her. My stars, but she looked pretty!—with her shining eyes and the lovely pink in her cheeks. And young! Honestly, I believe she looked younger than I did that minute.

She just came and put her arms around me and kissed me. And I saw then that her eyes were all misty with tears. She didn't say a word, hardly, only Father wanted to see me, and I was to go right down.

And I went.

I thought, of course, that she was coming, too. But she didn't. And when I got down the stairs I found I was all alone; but I went right on into the library, and there was Father waiting for me.

He didn't say much, either, at first; but just like Mother he put his arms around me and kissed me, and held me there. Then, very soon, he began to talk; and, oh, he said such beautiful things—such tender, lovely, sacred things; too sacred even to write down here. Then he kissed me again and went away.

He came back the next day, and he's been here some part of every day since. And, oh, what a wonderful week it has been!

They're going to be married. It's tomorrow. They'd have been married right away at the first, only they had to wait—something about licenses and a five-day notice, Mother said. Father fussed and fumed, and wanted to try for a special dispensation, or something; but Mother laughed, and said certainly not, and that she guessed it was just as well, for she positively had to have a few things; and he needn't think he could walk right in like that on a body and expect her to get married at a moment's notice. But she didn't mean it. I know she didn't; for when Father reproached her, she laughed softly, and called him an old goose, and said, yes, of course, she'd have married him in two minutes if it hadn't been for the five-day notice, no matter whether she ever had a new dress or not.

I bring it to the end.

I'm sorry that it must be so sad and sorry an end. But there's no other way, of course. There can be but one ending, as I can see. I'm sorry. Mother'll be sorry, too. She doesn't know yet. I hate to tell her. Nobody knows—not even Jerry himself—yet. They all think I'm just making a visit to Mother—and I am—till I write that letter to Jerry. And then—

I believe now that I'll wait till I've finished writing this. I'll feel better then. My mind will be clearer. I'll know more what to say. Just the effort of writing it down—

Of course, if Jerry and I hadn't—

But this is no way to begin. Like the little Mary Marie of long ago I am in danger of starting my dinner with ice-cream instead of soup! And so I must begin where I left off, of course. And that was at the wedding.

I remember that wedding as if it were yesterday. I can see now, with Mary Marie's manuscript before me, why it made so great an impression upon me. It was a very quiet wedding, of course—just the members of the family present. But I shall never forget the fine, sweet loveliness of Mother's face, nor the splendid strength and tenderness of Father's.

And so it's all settled, and they're going right away on this trip and call it a wedding trip. And, of course, Grandfather had to get off his joke about how he thought it was a pretty dangerous business; and to see that this honeymoon didn't go into an eclipse while they were watching the other one. But nobody minds Grandfather.

And I'm to stay here and finish school. Then, in the spring, when Father and Mother come back, we are all to go to Andersonville and begin to live in the old house again.

Won't it be lovely? It just seems too good to be true. Why, I don't care a bit now whether I'm Mary or Marie. But, then, nobody else does, either. In fact, both of them call me the whole name now, Mary Marie. I don't think they ever said they would. They just began to do it. That's all.

How about this being a love story now? Oh, I'm so excited!

CHAPTER IX.

Which Is the Test.

ANDERSONVILLE. TWELVE YEARS LATER

Twelve years—yes. And I'm twenty-eight years old. Pretty old, little Mary Marie of the long ago would think. And, well, perhaps today I feel just as old as she would put it.

I came up into the attic this morning to pack away some things I shall no longer need, now that I am going to leave Jerry. (Jerry is my husband.) And in the bottom of my little trunk I found this manuscript. I had forgotten that such a thing existed; but with its laboriously written pages before me, it all came back to me; and I began to read; here a sentence; there a paragraph; somewhere else a page. Then, with a little half laugh and a half sob, I carried it to an old rocking-chair by the cobwebby dormer window, and settled myself to read it straight through.

And I have read it.

Poor little Mary Marie! Dear little Mary Marie! To meet you like this, to share with you your joys and sorrows, hopes and despairs, of those years, long ago, is like sitting hand in hand on a sofa with a childhood's friend, each listening to an eager "And do you remember?" falling constantly from delighted lips that cannot seem to talk half fast enough.

It was almost dark when I had finished the manuscript. It was written on the top sheet of a still thick pad of paper, and my fingers fairly tingled suddenly, to go on and cover those unused white sheets—tell what happened next—tell the rest of the story—not for the sake of the story—but for my sake. It might help me. It might make things clearer. It might help to justify myself in my own eyes. Not that I have any doubts, of course (about leaving Jerry, I mean), but that when I saw it in black and white I could be even more convinced that I was doing what was best for him and best for me.

So I brought the manuscript down to my own room, and this evening I have commenced to write. I can't finish it tonight, of course. But I have tomorrow, and still tomorrow. (I have



And the Way He Drew Her Into His Arms and Kissed Her.

so many tomorrows now! And what do they all amount to? And so I'll just keep writing, as I have time, till

look for it! What a sentimental little piece I was! How could they have been so patient with me—Father, Mother, everybody!

I think the first real attack—the first that I consciously called love, myself—was the winter after we had all come back to Andersonville to live. I was sixteen and in the high school.

It was Paul Mayhew—yes, the same Paul Mayhew that had defied his mother and sister and walked home with me one night and invited me to go for an automobile ride, only to be sent sharply about his business by my stern, inexorable Aunt Jane. Paul was in the senior class now, and the handsomest, most admired boy, in school. He didn't care for girls. That is, he said he didn't. He bore himself with a supreme indifference that was maddening, and that took (apparently) no notice of the fact that every girl in school was a willing slave to the mere nodding of his head or the beckoning of his hand.

This was the condition of things when I entered school that fall, and perhaps for a week thereafter. Then one day, very suddenly, and without apparent reason, he awoke to the fact of my existence. Candy, flowers, books—some one of these he brought to me every morning. All during the school day he was my devoted gallant, dancing attendance every possible minute outside of session hours, and walking home with me in the afternoon, proudly carrying my books. Did I say "home with me"? That is not strictly true—he always stopped just one block short of "home"—one block



All During the School Day He Was My Devoted Gallant.

short of my gate. He evidently had not forgotten Aunt Jane, and did not intend to take any foolish risks! So he said good-by to me always at a safe distance.

This went on for perhaps a week. Then he asked me to attend a school sleigh-ride and supper with him.

I was wild with delight. At the same time I was wild with apprehension. I awoke suddenly to the fact of the existence of Father and Mother, and that their permission must be gained. And I had my doubts—I had very grave doubts. Yet it seemed to me at that moment that I just had to go on that sleigh-ride. That it was the only thing in the whole wide world worth while.

I can remember now, as if it were yesterday, the way I debated in my mind as to whether I should ask Father, Mother, or both together; and if I should let it be seen how greatly I desired to go, and how much it meant to me; or if I should just mention it as in passing, and take their permission practically for granted.

I chose the latter course, and I took a time when they were both together. At the breakfast table I mentioned casually that the school was to have a sleigh-ride and supper the next Friday afternoon and evening, and that Paul Mayhew had asked me to go with him.

"A sleigh-ride, supper, and not come home until evening!" cried Mother. "And with whom, did you say?"

"Paul Mayhew," I answered. I still tried to speak casually; at the same time I tried to indicate by voice and manner something of the great honor that had been bestowed upon their daughter.

Father was impressed—plainly impressed; but not a. all in the way I had hoped he would be. He gave me a swift, sharp glance; then looked straight at Mother.

"Humph! Paul Mayhew! Yes, I know him," he said grimly. "And I'm dreading the time when he comes into college next year."

"You mean—" Mother hesitated and stopped.

"I mean I don't like the company he keeps—already," nodded Father.

"Then you don't think that Mary Marie—" Mother hesitated again, and glanced at me.

"Certainly not," said Father decidedly.

I knew then, of course, that he meant I couldn't go on the sleigh ride, even though he hadn't said the words right out. I forgot all about being casual and indifferent and matter-of-course then. I thought only of showing them how absolutely necessary it was for them to let me go on that sleigh ride, unless they wanted my life forevermore hopelessly blighted.

I explained carefully how he was

(To be continued next week.)