

Mr. and Mrs. Sallie

—being the Confessions of a new wife—

Illustrated by Paul Robinson

by Gladys Baker



INTRODUCTION

A modern chronicle of the bewildering situation which confronts the young married contingent of every village, hamlet and town—a straight-forward record of the flirtations, problems, adventures and romance that colour the crowded hours of America's youth.

The heroine is Sallie and through the fearlessness of youthful eyes she will bring to you the vivid experiences which daily beset her group of interesting young friends—interesting because among her laughing-loving comrades you will meet personalities with whom you are familiar in everyday life. In Sallie's coterie of friends you will recognize the characteristics and mental equipment of your own daughter perhaps, or again you will see the moral battles which at one time embarrassed some very dear friend, or, who knows but what as you follow Sallie's confession of events, you will come face to face with some inherent remissness of your very own.

SALLIE AND CURTISS, ON THEIR HONEYMOON

"Monte Carlo!"

We alighted in front of the Hotel de Paris and I gave a happy little sigh, signifying my delight at having arrived at the place which had always intrigued me more than any of the Riviera resorts, each of which annually draws devotees from all parts of the world.

Inside, our suite overlooked the Casino on the right and across the central square with its tropical palms and hibiscus blossoms was the Cafe de Paris, famous for its Continental atmosphere, its celebrated wine list and its small tables set in the garden under the stars.

I stood by the long, casement window watching the tourists as they walked from the Casino to the Cafe and back again. One woman leaving the Casino was pitifully uncertain as she descended the stairs. The brilliant light from the doorway mingled with that of the arc-lamps of the park and clearly illuminated her face.

"Look Curtiss, she's ill!" I exclaimed motioning him to my side.

"Probably drunk or doped," he replied, "you'll see many of that type and even worse," he added, "before we leave." This sounded uncharitable coming from Curtiss who was always kind. Himself above petty frailties of the flesh, he never sat in judgment on those who were less strong.

"Just the same I can hardly wait to try my luck," I avowed. "I wonder what I should wear."

"You are beautiful to me in anything and as far as the Casino is concerned, they'll never even know you are there." Softening his remark with a smile.

"I don't think I like the last part of that sentence," I complained, "do you think I'm so unattractive that I won't be noticed at all?"

"Of course not, little goose, you always cause a flutter when you enter any place, but over there they're too absorbed to lift their eyes from the business at hand. You'll see later what I mean."

Notwithstanding his reasoning I wore the gown of my trousseau which was most exotic and bizarre. It was an imported copy of one worn by an Egyptian princess and its colors were blended in odd tones of mauve and green. Gold sandals and a closely fitted headdress of semi-precious stones completed my attire.

"Well, don't you like me?" I demanded of Curtiss when I realized that he was not going to compliment my gown.

"Why, of course I do, sweetheart, I thought I had just finished a little speech having to do with my adoration for you in any

sort of gown—

"Oh, Curtiss, that's so vague. I would like for you to at least comment on some of the things I wear. I mean, of course if you really think they're—becoming."

"I guess you're right, but I feel as if pretty compliments were superficial now that you're mine. Persiflage between us seems so unnecessary—so empty for me to admire a certain gown when I see your beauty of character and soul which deliver my entire heart into your keeping more certainly than all the gowns in the Rue de la Paix."

"All right, old fogey-man. The famous Dr. Gaiñes told me each night on the boat how er, er, nice I looked—only he made it much stronger," I added.

"Dr. Gaiñes?" Curtiss raised his eyebrows and his tone was one of inquiry.

"You know, the famous surgeon from New York, whom everybody raved about. He asked me to dance every single night, I thought you'd be hopelessly jealous and especially on our honeymoon, and now you don't even remember his name! Damn!"

"Sallie?"

"Uh-huh?" absent-mindedly adjusting several bracelets.

"Don't swear, please."

"I didn't."

"Yes you did. You said 'damn'."

"Oh, yes, that's right, I did, but I haven't in such a long time. And you did make me mad."

"How mad?" playfully.

"Well, you'll see, sir. I'm going to make you notice some man paying attention to me before this night is over. At least he'll make enough impression on you so that you'll remember his name."

"All right, Miss Cleopatra. Better come along though, you won't have time to lose those two thousand francs, if we don't hurry."

I had voluntarily promised not to lose more than the equivalent of one hundred dollars.

"Oh, I'm so thrilled!" I squeezed Curtiss' arm as we entered the spacious hall of the Casino. On one side was the well-stocked bar, crowded by both men and women, sipping liqueurs, a necessary drink all over the continent, after dinner.

We approached the next room, but, without a special card, were not allowed to enter.

"Why all the red tape?" I inquired while Curtiss was giving the history of our lives in exchange for the magic card of admittance.

"So they'll know where to ship the body," he answered and it seemed to me that his tone was almost ill-humored.

I then recalled stories of suicides which had been committed in the gardens of Monte Carlo by those who had lost everything at the tables. I shuddered. But

my fear was gone in a moment. The outer rooms were filled with people intent on their several games and I started in the direction of the center roulette table.

"Wait honey," said Curtiss, "only the bourgeoisie play here. I also secured cards for the 'salon privee'. It's there you'll see the celebrated gamblers."

The private rooms were smaller than the first ones we had entered and were frequented by a class which was noticeably more exclusive. All the men were in full-dress or wore their Tuxedos and the women were in evening attire.

We walked over to the roulette table.

As Curtiss had predicted, not an eye left the green light's brilliant area. I saw an incongruous number of women with bobbed white hair and avid expressions. They smoked unceasingly and only left occasionally for a drink of cognac or brandy. I watched the men with their quiet drawn faces, many of them making painstaking records in little books of the winners.

"They're working out a system to break the bank," Curtiss whispered, "and have probably been doing it for several years," he continued.

Then only did the other occupants of the table give us a glance and it was more in the nature of a reprimand because we had broken the unearthly silence.

I took the only chair which was vacant.

Being a novice at roulette it

was only a question of a short time before I lost my hundred dollars.

"Next time stick to the colors," whispered a hard-faced woman, in French, whose eyes glittered with an unnatural light. In spite of my knowledge of French which I had gained at college, I failed to understand her. She repeated in English.

"You see, I've worked out a system by the law of averages and I know when to play the reds. Try it."

I looked for Curtiss. He was standing apart watching the room and its occupants with the lukewarm interest of an observer.

I motioned to him.

"Will you buy me some more chips? I feel like I'll win this time, surely."

"Broke already?" he smiled, "well your 2000 lasted twice as long as I thought it would at that." "If you want any more, I'll be over yonder," he added

indulgently as he placed in my hand twice the amount that I had declared would be my limit.

Not once did he remind me of my promise, though I knew he must have remembered.

Oh well, what difference did it make? I thought. It would probably be a long time before I got to Monte Carlo again and besides, I argued, life was so short, that one might as well have a little fun while it lasted.

"I'm going to bet it all!" I said

to the hard-faced woman.

"If you win—you get double." Because of the large amount placed on one color I was watched by even the most blase players.

The wheel turned. The ball cavorted around its unfathomable course and finally—bump-bump—bump it slipped silently into a number.

(To Be Continued)

Next Week—Sallie meets the most handsome man she has ever seen—and womanlike she—?

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