

# 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 remission of your very own.

## CURTISS CRITICIZES SALLIE'S ACTIONS

We were alone in our suite of rooms at the hotel. The excitement of playing roulette, of seeing Ellie again and the little "frisk" at Ciro's had had a stimulating effect. It was impossible for me to go to sleep. However, I undressed and slipped into bed preparing to meditate upon the stirring events.

A slight tap at the door and Curtiss, in dressing gown and slippers, came into my room and, ensconcing himself in a cozy chair beside my bed, began to talk. His face was in the shadow cast by the small reading light but I noticed that he looked weary and depressed, an unusual condition for Curtiss, whose keenness for life ordinarily gave an animated expression to his face.

"What's the matter, sweetheart? Didn't you have a good time at Ellie's little 'frisk'?" It noticed you didn't dance."

"No, I might as well be frank with you, Sallie, I had a perfectly rotten time. To begin with, I'm not at all enthusiastic over Ellie you know. She's too loud and it didn't make me any more comfortable when you turned me down flat to dance with Barrington Pierce."

"Whee!" I exclaimed, I'm so glad. Now, I've had my revenge! Barrington Pierce! Then you did remember his name, didn't you dear?"

Curtiss looked at me as if he thought most certainly I was losing my mind.

"What on earth are you talking about?" he asked, "I don't understand what's so remarkable about my remembering Pierce. He didn't take his eyes off of you the entire time. But, what, I ask you, is so unusual about recalling a name? I know you put me on the shelf tonight but I didn't think you had quite relegated me to the Lethian stage!"

I giggled one full moment, in spite of his gathering sarcasm and then I explained my delight.

"You see, darlin'," I began, "you had forgotten that awfully nice Dr. Gaines who danced with me every night on the boat and I was peeved, especially since he's so awfully well known. So tonight before dinner I told you I'd make someone notice me so much that you'd at least remember his name."

In spite of himself, he smiled. "Sallie, you ARE a child! But just the same, some day you're going to drive me to distraction with your tantalizing ways. Let me see if I've got you right. Just to make me jealous you deliberately flirted with Pierce."

"Yes," I nodded, "partly and partly because I found him most entertaining. So there!"

"What does he do?" Curtiss showed his disapproval in a slight

frown between his eyes, "I'll wager not much of anything at all."

"Again you show that your education along artistic lines, has been sadly neglected. Barrington Pierce is one of our foremost composers of the age. Furthermore he is an accompanist of no little ability and has toured in concert with some of the most famous prima donnas both in America and abroad. And," breathlessly pausing at the end of my argument, "don't you think he's interesting looking?"

"Hell-no!"

"Curtiss! I'll have to ask you not to swear."

"I beg your pardon" he apologized, "but Sallie, I can't bear to have you so friendly with men. Besides,—besides, these musicians and artists are dangerous people."

Compared with their pretty love-making a husband's sincere compliments are merely prosaic. For instance he told Mrs. DeWight, with me listening, mind you, that your costume was like 'Anitra's Dance in the Mountain'."

"Anitra's Dance, Oh yes! I know that weird lovely thing—by Grieg, I believe, I used to play it. That was a most unusual thing to say. I love it!" I mused a while, then resumed the conversation. "But honey, Barrington Pierce is one of the most sought-after men in Paris. Ellie's mad about him and so is that exquisite Ellen Daniels—the Grand Opera singer. Now you aren't really jealous of poor little me—are you Mr. Fogey?"

"By Jove, I don't know. I felt tonight though that the whole scheme of things had toppled over. Mrs. DeWight kidded me about being so absent-minded and I asked her forgiveness on the grounds of being hopelessly luxurious."

"Thanks. That's a pretty compliment. You see, you, yourself, improve with competition."

Again a smile played over his face though he was trying desperately to be serious about the whole matter.

"There's another thing, Sallie. About the Casino," he continued. "I know," I interrupted, "I lost three times as much as I'd promised. And I'm sorry. Please don't be cross with me, honey."

"It isn't a question of being cross," he responded, "I would have given you more if I thought that reckless gambling could make you happy, but I know it won't, Sallie."

"Oh, but it did, Curtiss, I got a tremendous kick out of it!" I interrupted. "There's a difference between happiness and 'kicks'" he answered, "and its to save you from ever knowing heartache that I would have you understand the difference. Don't think I'm preachy and old-fashioned. It's

just that I can't understand the way you reason. You see you voluntarily promised me upon your word of honor, that you were not going to risk more than a hundred dollars and you ended up by losing three hundred. When you break faith with yourself like that what do you do to square things with your conscience? It wasn't as if I'd exacted a promise from you but you said voluntarily that you wanted to place a limit. Its not a big thing, Sallie, but it's the principle involved that causes me to stop and wonder."

"Your ideals are perfectly glorious, Curtiss, you live up to them too and I know it. For instance you couldn't do a thing like I did tonight and yet I could without the slightest twinge of conscience."

"But how do you do it?"

"Oh, it's quite simple. By arguing with myself that life is short and that we are only human and that youth is fleeting. You know, the same old story." I concluded with a grimace, "I'd like to be dependable and fine like you are, dearest," I added.

"Nonsense," he broke in, "when it comes right down to human charity and bigness of spirit I can't even touch the hem of your garment. These other things, as I've said before, are comparatively little, it's just that they mean more to me because, I've learned by hard knocks that one can't go on being a character procrastinator and get real, big things out of living. Sooner or later you'll see the value of what

I'm saying. In other words, beloved, we must strengthen the fibres of our moral intellect just as surely as we achieve mental fineness or physical prowess. The latter two are developed by exercising our thought and also our bodies, the former by doing the things that we know are helpful in character building."

"I see exactly what you mean, Curtiss and I am going to try to keep from being so inconsistent. Really."

The subject was closed and with a few words of endearment he kissed me tenderly and retired.

Long after Curtiss had gone to his room I lay awake thinking over the fine philosophy that he had made his own by just living. High-principled himself, it was remarkable that he showed such tolerance towards my shortcomings. It had evidently annoyed him because I had accepted the attentions of Barrington Pierce and yet some primitive instinct in me rejoiced in the knowledge that I was still able to be attractive to men . . . an inhibition no doubt of less civilized days when man was the pursuer and woman the pursued.

I drifted on through waves back to my wedding night. What was it the dapper little friend of father's had said? "The butter-

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fly type. Something that's incapable of change. Either one is or one isn't. Matrimony won't make you temperamentally . . . it will only add piquancy and charm."

And Marjorie Chenoweth. What was it she had said? "Things are always going to happen to you, Sallie, and it's not your fault. You can't help it if you're not a vegetable, you know."

Were they right? Was Curtiss justified in being hurt? I wondered.

These and many other chaotic thoughts played hide-and-seek until the Goddess of Sleep took them in hand and skillfully wove them into dreams.

(To be Continued)  
 Next week, Sallie and Curtiss arrive in Paris and—(?).

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