

The Heroines of Fiction

By W. E. Hill

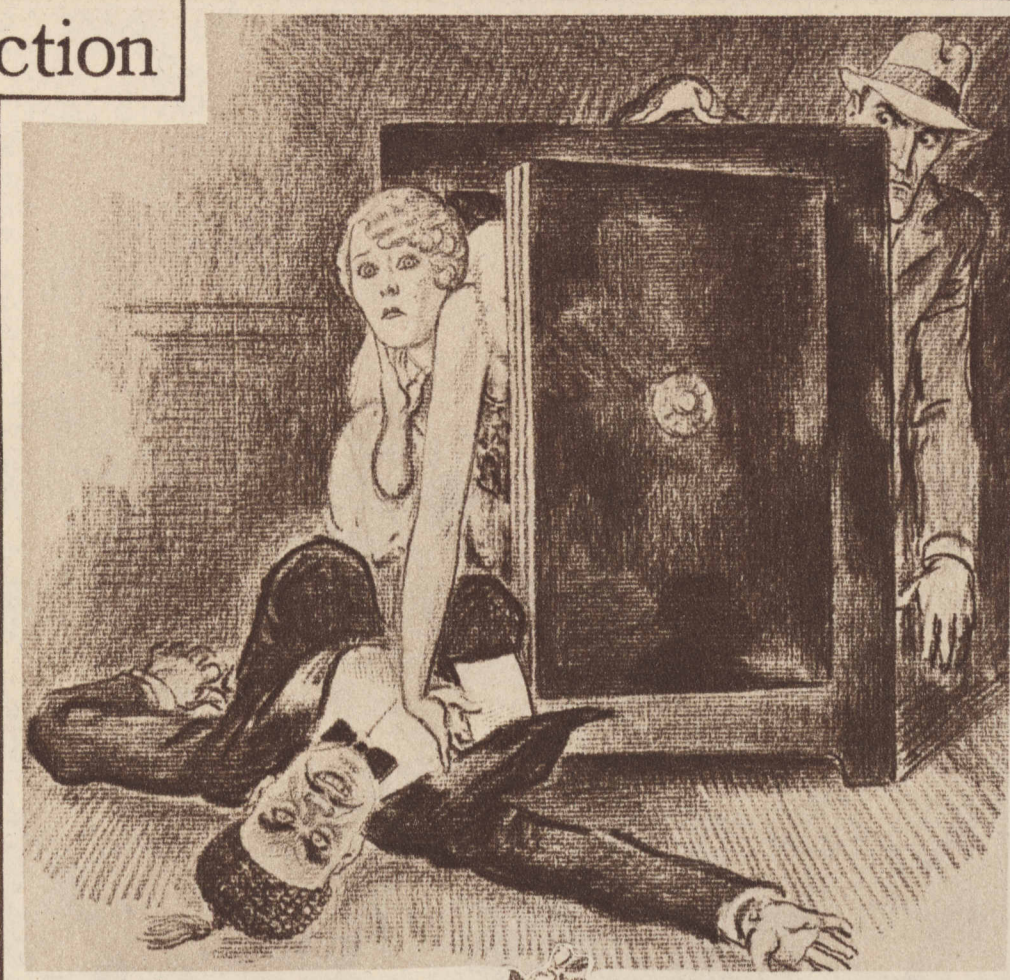
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The heroine of the small town story. Thisbe Perkins lives with her ma and pa in a small Iowa community where everybody is very rude and unrefined. Night after night, with no one to love her but her parents, who are napping in their chairs, Thisbe sits in the parlor longing for life and love and beauty. When she can stand it no longer, she walks out to the Lutheran cemetery and buries her face in the rich upturned loam and wonders why she was born, and if it would be all right to pass the time of day with the big, hairy garage helper at the Elite gas station on Main street, seeing that they have never been introduced. Very tragic.



The censored heroine. "Tides of the Soul" is one of those delightful English novels which, on account of the censor, are barred from the U. S. A., and are consequently in great demand from New York to San Francisco. Rhoda, the heroine, is one of twenty-eight daughters of an English curate, with a great many very up-to-the-minute views. Rhoda finally leaves the home ties and sets up house-keeping in London with a girl friend whose views are even more advanced. Pages and pages of introspection.



The mystery story. Things certainly did look black for Lady Diana Dalrymple-Croop when she was discovered by Jimmy Rockbottom, the cleverest man in Scotland Yard, rifling the pockets and safe of the murdered ambassador of Akbar. Inspector Rockbottom knew that Lady Diana must be innocent, even though there was the reek of exploded cordite in her curls, and he set out to prove it. It all comes out right, and the bogus prime minister of Tunasia confesses to the murder.



The biography. "A Queen of Deception" is really a true story, because, the jacket blurb says, it is based on the tragic loves of Louida, deposed empress of Schlitzen-Schlotzen, and mistress of the reigning king of Sodaberg from 1521 to 1688. The book is full of choice anecdotes that have to do with the historically great. Once, on a bear-baiting party in the woods of Nussel, Louida met Alfred the Fingerless, incognito. "Wouldst be afraid to ride with me, kiddie?" said Alfred. "Nein," said Louida, "I've never walked home yet!" It was Louida who is said to have remarked on her death bed, "Love is certainly the bunk!"



Scandinavian prize novel. Ingebord, the beautiful Finn, works in a barnyard and meets Olaf among the pigs, heifers, fertilizer, and such. Of course, it is love in the end, but at first Ingebord pretends to love no one but the pig, Helma, and Olaf is mad with jealous rage. Very literary. Not so hot for those who like their girl heroines a la Hollywood.



The Confessions Magazine. "After baby came I decided to look for a job, and as I had always sung in our choir in Garske, N. D., I thought I could get work with the Metropolitan Opera company in New York City. I was alone and friendless, and when I met Rolf on the train, I told him all my hopes and plans. When we got to the city, Rolf told me he was none other than Gatti Cazazza, the impresario, and I, in my simplicity, believed him. He was so big and strong, and he told me he would take me right up to the opera house, where they were rehearsing 'The Giddy French Flirts,' and that probably I could have Jeritza's part, as they were giving her the air that week. O, if I had only had a mother to guide me! Again I had been cruelly deceived!"



The newsprint column heroine. "Dear Embarrassing Moments Editor: Not long ago my boy friend took me to a symphony concert, and our seats were in the front row of the gallery. Resisting his advances during a largo, I unfortunately pushed him over the rail and he fell into the orchestra. Of course, I had told all my girl friends we were to sit in a box, and when they found I was sitting in gallery seats I was very embarrassed. I never had such an embarrassing moment. Vida Prang (Mrs)."



Where the west begins. The boys who do pictures for the western stories love dearly to show the heroine looking out over the canyons and the arroyos, while the wind does the prettiest things to her curls. Just for a change, here's a heroine with her curls blowing all the wrong way. Wild west girls are usually named Vaughn, or Shirley, or Dawn, and they usually marry strong, grim, determined men who are tender as the dove underneath hard exteriors.



The juvenile tale. Little Roberta Bear, heroine of "How Granny Bear Saved Wee Wee the Otter from a Bad Scolding," is out with her granny. They are going to call on Uncle Roy Bear.



The serial heroine. "With a catch in his throat, Larry gazed astoundedly at the vision of Diana Bellingham slowly descending the onyx stairway. 'Valesquez must have painted her,' he murmured at length." Larry Van Foule and Diana Bellingham are the high lights in "Diamond Clasps," one of those serials of the expensive higher society type. Everybody is very beautiful and fearfully rich, and there are Palm Beach bathing parties, yachts, cocktails, bridge, dukes, and Park avenue pent houses. The swell heroine, becoming bored with the rich wasters, marries a poor man with only ten million, and they live happily in a forty room bungalow at Piping Rock.