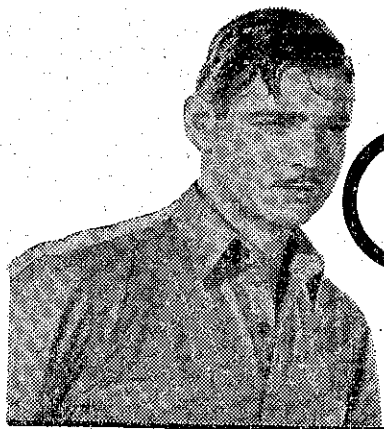




CHAINED

ADAPTED
FROM THE
METRO-GOLDWYN
MAYER PICTURE
by BEATRICE FABER



WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE.

Diane Lovering had been sent on a trip to Buenos Aires by her lover, Richard Field, forty-eight and wealthy, so that she might forget the scene that had occurred when his wife had found out about their love-affair. Striking up an adventuresome shipboard acquaintance with Mike Bradley, a rancher in Buenos Aires, her friendship with him had rapidly ripened into love. Arriving home, intending to tell Richard of her coming marriage to Mike, he confronts her first with a newspaper which tells her he is getting his divorce.

CHAPTER EIGHT.

"Your being away showed me I love you more than I ever knew. Every hour empty. Couldn't do a thing downtown. Bungled a couple of deals, just wondering about you and what you were doing—waiting for you to come back—" his arms went around her.

"Am I really that much of your world?" she asked helplessly.

"You're all of my world. If I ever lost you now I'd—well, we won't think about that."

Tears welled up in her eyes. Mike—Mike—was all she could think. Mike now irretrievably gone. Yet her hand patted Richard's shoulder almost maternally as he clasped her to his breast. She closed her eyes.

"No—we musn't think about that—ever again—" Her upper teeth came down sharply on her lip to stop the sob that would have escaped.

The next few days brought resignation and a humble resolution to make Richard happy. There were many tortured hours before she could bring herself to face the future without Mike, but once decided, she rose heroically to the situation; for she knew she was bound to Richard forever by the strong invisible chains of his love and need for her. She had wanted him to love her and now she must accept what that love had brought.

And in Buenos Aires, all unknowing, Mike went ahead with the new wing on the house. Workmen were putting the

finishing touches to it, and a truck-load of new furniture was being moved in.

Mike looked around the room. "Honestly, though, don't you think she'll like it, Johnnie?"

"It's perfect Mike, except for the fact that the gal deserves better."

"I'll say!"

"The post, Senor Bradley," It was one of the peon boys.

Mike snatched the bundle, thumbing through it rapidly. The letter he was looking for was there.

But his eagerness died slowly as he started reading. He scanned the rest of the letter, then his jaw set a trifle as he re-read it.

"Dear Mike, it's no use. I realize now that I am back home I never could go through with it. Your life down there just isn't made for me. And by the time you read this I will be married to the man I told you about. He can give me the security which I have come to need. Let's just put it down to what it probably really was—a shipboard romance, and nothing more, because I'm apparently being able to forget you rather easily and I'm sure you can do the same about me. Best to Johnnie and Chili Beans. Diane Lovering."

He slowly lowered the letter. "What's the matter?" Johnnie asked in alarm.

Mike tossed it to him. "It seems there is a chump and his name is Bradley." He eyed the furniture and the curtains, and then gave vent to a short sardonic laugh.

Johnnie read the letter and snorted disgustedly. "Hmph! They're all alike!"

"Most of 'em aren't so frank about the class of business they're in," Mike observed bitterly.

"I'd never have dreamed it about her. It's brutal—"

"And I thought it was the works," Mike mocked himself cruelly. "Furniture! A new addition! A little dove-cote!"

"I'm sorry, laddie."

"Why? Only thing I'm sorry for is that I didn't."

"Didn't what?"

Mike broke out vehemently. "Didn't find out what little girls were made of! It would have been doing her a great, big long, lasting favour, too, but what the—" His voice broke. Then he spoke between set teeth. "Get me a drink, will you Johnnie?"

"Sure fella." Johnnie slapped him on the arm and left, for a faint suggestion of moisture in Mike's eyes had told him that he wanted to be alone.

That winter was the most brilliant social season New York was seeing in some time for the depression had lifted and with it spirit soared. And there was no more royally entertained young matron in the city than the young and beautiful Mrs. Richard Field. Cholly Knickerbocker put into print what everyone was saying

"Among the couples noted at all the smartest and gayest functions of the season are Richard I. Field and his beautiful "new" wife, Diane. She has been accepted completely by Richard's circle of friends and those who should know speak of her strange but lovely reserve on all occasions."

All but one occasion that Mr. Knickerbocker had evidently not witnessed. Diane, resembling a satin-clad Galatea sat in the box with Richard and some elderly friends at the Madison Square Garden Horse Show.

There was a pure white hunter in the ring. Prancing restlessly, he managed to keep his rider busy.

Diane sat forward, her lips parted a little. Another white horse and another figure was what she was seeing in her mind's eye.

The horse suddenly wheeled and turned. Then right below them it missed its footing and stumbled. Involuntarily, Diane's hand went to her mouth, stifling a scream.

It was over in a second. The horse regained his balance and his rider took him gracefully over the hurdles. The rest of the party was amused, however, at what they thought was Diane's

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