

FLORIZEL

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649532933

Florizel by Isabel McReynolds Gray

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ISABEL MCREYNOLDS GRAY

FLORIZEL

FLORIZEL

BY
ISABEL McREYNOLDS GRAY

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
1910

THESE HAVE BEEN FIVE HUN-
DRED COPIES OF THIS BOOK
PRINTED OF WHICH THIS IS NO.

101

101-101

Copyright 1916, by
Isabel McReynolds Gray

961
G 779
flo

TO MY SON
HARRY McREYNOLDS GRAY

M567328

THE FIRST CHAPTER CONDUCTS
THE READER TO THE GARDEN,
WHICH IS TO BE THE SCENE OF
MANY PLAYS, BOTH SAD AND GAY



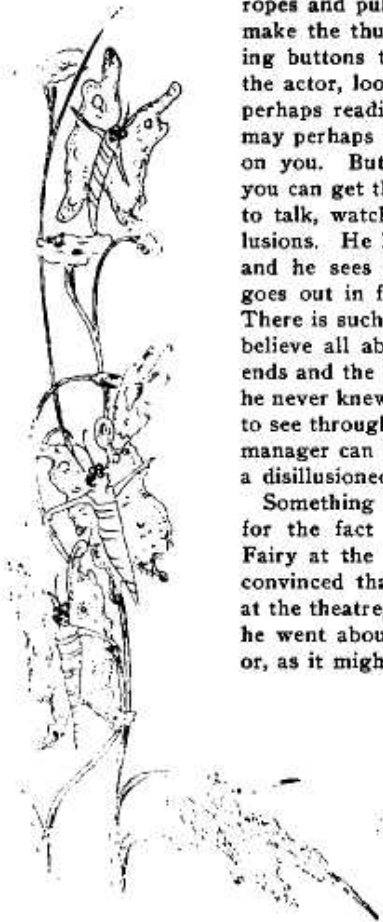
BILLY WRIGHT JR. was a Fairy.—
Perhaps you have never been a
Fairy; but we hope you have.
Maybe you are one and don't know
about it, or have forgotten.—Billy
Wright Jr. had been a Fairy for two seasons. He
was one of the flower-sprites who popped out of
the big red lilies in the fairyland scene of that
year's greatest comic opera success. You re-
member how they smiled at you when the flowers
opened? And poised for a moment with the
dainty tips of their toes on the shiny petals. And
then went sailing off into the beautiful scenery.
More than likely someone explained to you that
the flower-sprites were not flying—just moved
by wires. But it was pretty to see, anyway, and
glorious to do. Billy Wright Jr. loved it, and
he was a Fairy with all his heart and soul and
body, whether he flew with his own gauze wings,
or on wire ropes.

Possibly you may be of the opinion that play-
ing at being a Fairy, in a theatre, is a very poor
substitute for the real experience. You have
heard people say that the stage-world is an illu-
sion—the scenery, the lights and the snow storm



and the horses galloping up from the distance and the door bells and the wind,—all illusions. And the actors, just people who make believe at anything, the same man playing at being a king one week, and a pea-nut man the next. Now, let me tell you. It is all just as they say. The stage is an illusion. And if you go behind the scenes you will see the wrong sides of things, with ropes and pulleys and a barrel full of old iron to make the thunder. And a man at a desk punching buttons to make the sun set. You will see the actor, looking rather like an ordinary person, perhaps reading some scraps of papers. And you may perhaps not see any illusions. It all depends on you. But they are there. If, after a while, you can get the actor to notice you, and he begins to talk, watch his eyes, and you will find the illusions. He lives on the wrong side of the stage and he sees them make the thunder. Then he goes out in front and helps with the deceptions. There is such a mixture of the real and the make-believe all about him that he forgets where one ends and the other begins; or if he is a real actor, he never knew. Other people grow wise and learn to see through any make-believe that the cleverest manager can think up. But did you ever know of a disillusioned actor?

Something of this sort will probably account for the fact that after two seasons of playing Fairy at the Tivoli, Billy Wright Jr. was firmly convinced that he was indeed a Fairy; not only at the theatre, but everywhere and always. When he went about with Billy Wright Sr., his father, or, as it might happen, with his mother, who was



Mrs. Billy Wright, or Mlle. Mabelle Villiers, according to where she was, at such times, I say, the young man turned to account the moments that others spent in foolish conversations. He turned the people he met into animals, or other amusing things. This has been, as you know, a favorite and profitable pastime among Fairies ever since there were such. I had never seen anyone whom he had altered in this way; neither had Billy Wright Jr., because he never followed them to see how they liked their new shapes. But I was with him one day in the motor car, and some people came to speak to Mlle. Mabelle Villiers who talked to them all at once, except a very fat man, whom she seemed not to like. And I suppose that Billy Wright Jr. didn't like him, either. For when the very fat man made a face and winked at him, Billy Wright Jr. said quietly,

"I have turned you into a suet pudding." Just then Mlle. Mabelle Villiers finished her conversation with all the others and we whirled away. And the last I saw of the very fat man, he was looking surprised and quite like a suet pudding.

"It was less trouble to do that." Billy Wright Jr. told me when I asked. "He looked so wet and puffy. My Grandmother makes them. They have raspberries and red currants inside." I said that any very fat man should be contented with that.

That evening, after the third act, when Mlle. Mabelle Villiers was touching up her make-up, and, as Mrs. Billy Wright, was having tea served in her dressing room for Billy Wright Sr. and his friends, Billy Wright Jr. came in, in his pink

tights and gauze wings of a Fairy, and perched on his mother's dressing table. He rumbled my hair with the toe of his slipper—and—

"Apollo," he said—he calls me Apollo because his mother does, and I shall always think, that in spite of being very charming, she is just the least in the world vindictive—"Apollo," said her son, "I don't think I'll change you into anything. You are more useful as you are." For which I thanked him, being gladder of the certainty of Mrs. Billy Wright's tea in this state, than of any possibilities in another.

Miss Maidie Manders, very long and slim, but high-priced attraction of the Tivoli, was telling a story to which everyone listened politely. And when she had finished and everyone had laughed nicely and she was feeling sweet, Billy Wright Jr. leaned forward and said,

"I have changed you into a clothes-hanger." And then, I suppose, because nobody seemed pleased, and she least of all, he added tactfully, "A nice shiny one." When Miss Maidie Manders had gone away, Mrs. Billy Wright placed a gentle hand upon her son's forehead.

"My precious," she complained, "I'm afraid this is going to be too much for you. You are feverish." Then she kissed him. Then he squirmed away, though I saw that he would have stayed if no outsiders had been there. And Mabelle Villiers, touching up her lips, laughed and said,

"But that is exactly what she is like!" I leave it to you, what she meant. Billy Wright Jr. curled himself up in a chair near the door and