

# **A GIRL NAMED MARY**

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A Girl Named Mary by Juliet Wilbor Tompkins

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**JULIET WILBOR TOMPKINS**

**A GIRL  
NAMED MARY**





"It may be romantic to marry on two thousand."

# A Girl Named Mary

*By*

**JULIET WILBOR TOMPKINS**

*Author of*

THE SEED OF THE RIGHTEOUS  
AT THE SIGN OF THE OLDEST HOUSE  
ETC.

*With Illustrations by*

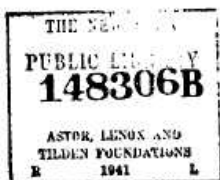
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## A GIRL NAMED MARY

### I

**S**HE came homing through the wintry blackness, head and shoulders pressing ahead of her steps, her eyes fixed above the dark crowds and the trodden snow on the warmth and shelter and beauty waiting to take her in. The massed shoulders pressed aside to let her through, dirty hands holding out their "Lady, for the love of God—" fell away before the sure aim of her purpose and her oblivion of all else. She went like one who has earned her right to oblivion, acknowledging only the wind. It was heavy with sleet, but she breathed it eagerly, taking it down like a purification for body and spirit. She was turning from the crowds and the slime to the more serene streets, where the snow was still white, when voices spoke at her elbow.

"Well, so long, Mary!"

"So long!" was called back.

As though the summoning word had been

spoken, the oblivious spirit sprang to attention. The one they had called Mary was disappearing into the crowds behind, but could still be overtaken. Swiftly and adroitly she followed, keeping the red cap in sight until a delay at a crossing allowed her to get a step ahead and look, as though by chance, into a girl's face, lifted heartily to the storm. The corner lights showed it broad and ruddy, with big, foreign, black eyes. Then the crowd flowed between, bearing them in opposite directions; but the older woman walked slowly now, as though very tired, and her eyes searched the passing faces with an air of old habit.

"Mrs. Jaffrey will be down directly," said Hannah in the tone of patient acceptance she kept for such guests, and, lifting a portière of heavy black and gold silk, she motioned them into a big and beautiful room, flushed with fire-light.

The two girls took the extreme edges of their chairs, but, for all their rigid decorum, they were secretly examining the room as any primitive creature examines a new locality before trusting it sufficiently to relax. Little sniffing noses could not have gauged more thoroughly

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