

If only the dear people who write to me, or try to see me, would remember that I have oceans of work to do, films to think about and songs to learn. You have to oil a machine to make it go . . . an artiste must be oiled with new ideas, or her "act" will be "phut." And I don't want to retire yet. I want to go on singing songs and making pictures.

I might manage to find peace if I ran away to a desert island again, I tried it once, but it didn't work. I went abroad for a much-needed rest after a strenuous time on the stage and in the studios. And letters followed me even there, asking for personal souvenirs—frocks, gloves, locks of hair. It may sound a bit unkind to refuse such a simple thing

as a lock of hair, but I should have been bald long ago if I had sent them all! (Can you fancy me in a wig?)

I'm not "high hat," you know that . . . but sometimes I do envy Greta Garbo and her solitude.

*Please everyone, I don't want to sound ungrateful. I am not. No one owes more to British "fans" than I do, and I want to go on giving you of my very best . . . Won't you please understand that somewhere under the greasepaint there is a very tired woman who wants to be left alone—just sometimes?*

After all, I'm only a "lassie from Lancashire." Please don't make me change by overwhelming me with demonstrations of affection; don't make me run away and hide.



Photo: Topical Press Agency Ltd.

*Gracie and her favourite "Peke."*