

## THE TEMPTER

Adam Didn't Wait For Eve to Offer Him the Apple.

By KEITH GORDON.

The girl on the porch laid her book face downward beside her, a faint, skeptical smile visible about her mouth. "How do you go about it?" was the question that her eyes asked of the radiant landscape. "It's all very well to say that a woman, if she has not a bump upon her back, may marry whom she will, but how would she go about it?"

The scratching of a match broke the stillness, and her meditations were suddenly precipitated from the general to the concrete. She glanced where a man's form bulked in one of the huge wicker chairs. With his hand forming a screen he was lighting a fresh cigar, seemingly oblivious to everything in life except that and a journal on engineering which lay in his lap.

He was her brother's best friend, and she had known him for years, not with much satisfaction, it must be confessed, since he was notoriously a "man's man," living in a man's world and regarding the rustle of feminine skirts with something of the same feeling that he did the humming of a mosquito.

But he was good to look upon—so good that a sudden, quick resentment shot through her heart at his indifference. It assumed the likeness of a personal affront, a sort of insult to her sex. It would serve him right if some girl should just make up her mind to marry him and do it, too, before he knew what he was about.

Meanwhile he had tossed away the match and picked up the journal again as imperturbably as if he were alone, a pair of half-indignant eyes watching him with a combination of pique and amusement.

It certainly would serve him right, her thoughts ran on, if some lady should just wind him round and round her finger, make him fetch and carry at her beck and call, reduce him to a perfect mush of sentiment. Something in her steady gaze caused him to move uneasily, then look up.

"Did you speak?"

"He had the perfunctory manner of a person who knows he must keep guard over himself or he will be guilty of some remissness. A heroic resolution to do his duty was visible in his face."

"No," she drawled, "I didn't speak. But if you don't mind very much I think I will. I'd like to ask you, for instance, if you have ever had a ladies' day?"

"A ladies' day?" he repeated helplessly, shaking off his eyeglasses with a characteristic movement, while his tormenter watched him as if he had been some sort of specimen that she had impaled upon a pin. Then a light dawned upon him.

"You mean such as they have at the clubs—a day when the place is given up to your sex and other matters go to the wall? Well, no. I don't know that I ever had."

"Don't you think it is time?" she ventured.

"Possibly," he admitted, but he still held the journal in a way that suggested a well-nigh unconquerable desire to return to it. She stretched out her hand. Reluctantly he handed it over.

"Did it ever occur to you," she asked blandly, "that the creature who tempted Adam so successfully, who is at the bottom of everything, as it were, must be as intricate as your old engineering problems?"

"I have always considered Adam weak, very weak," was his evasive answer. "Men aren't like that nowadays."

At these beautiful words a resolution that had been taking form in her mind became full fledged. She was inspired with the sense of a mission. Her neglected sex should find an avenger in her.

"You think you wouldn't have eaten of the apple, then?"

There was a new note in her voice. It was at the same time a challenge and an appeal.

As if it were something absolutely new it came to his mind that girls were delicate, helpless creatures, and a wave of tenderness for the sex swept over him. Still he was very positive that he wouldn't have eaten the apple, and something in the soft, babyish, yet dependent way in which she looked at him caused him to explain at great length why.

"Has talked fifteen minutes by the clock," she was thinking in high glee, but outwardly she was all deferential, honey-sweet attention.

"I'm sure he wouldn't have yielded if he'd been like you" was her earnest comment when he finished speaking, and at the words he was conscious of a pleasant expansiveness, a caressing sense of satisfaction as delightful as it was unusual. It was as if he were growing taller, broader and more severely strong before her very eyes.

"Go back to your reading. I'm not going to bother you another minute." She jumped up and, laying her hand on his arm, finished incensedly: "You don't mind my bothering you, do you? A girl gets so tired of woman talk! A chat like this is like a plunge in a cold stream." And she vanished into the house and scurried to her room, where she threw a kiss to her image in the mirror, with the remark, "You're doing well for a beginner, my love."

Down on the broad piazza the man

had returned to the closely printed columns before him, but after a half hour he gave up.

"I'm stale," he murmured, throwing the paper on the table. "Wonder where's she gone. Never before realized how interesting she is—for a girl. Had I ever had a ladies' day? Umph! That was funny!" And he smiled at the recollection of it.

For the next two or three days she avoided him as much as possible.

"I must give him plenty of love," she decided craftily, "and never let him suspect that he's taken the bait."

On the third day he proposed a long tramp to her.

"You don't want a silly thing like me," she protested, with modest self-depreciation. "I can't talk about bridges and buttresses and cutsons and all those interesting things that you know about. I shall only bore you."

"What was it you said the other day about the creature that tempted Adam?" was his laughing reply. "Perhaps I want to take up a new line of study."

"I just made him think I was the most dependent thing that ever lived," she confided shamelessly to her mirror that night. "My timid little feet could scarcely get over the ground without help, and as for climbing fences—"

She went off into a peal of laughter as she remembered how solicitous he had been about her getting over a fence that was in their way—and she who could turn a hand-spring as well as either of her brothers!

"Of course I couldn't do it if I really liked him," she murmured. Then the girl in the mirror averted her face quickly. "I'm just going to give him a much needed lesson, you know," she went on. This time the girl looked into her eyes for a moment. After that she threw herself on the bed and buried a hot face in the pillows.

As the weeks went by the startling conviction that there was one girl in the world who never bored him, never made him long to escape and get back to his own kind, came to be a certainty to the man. With the coming of this knowledge the world seemed a brighter, livelier place.

The idea of marriage, which had hitherto seemed as remote as that of suicide, came and lodged within his brain as if it were an old friend. He thought, with some scorn, of his former views.

They were standing under the big apple tree in the back garden. From the ground she picked up one of the round, smooth apples and began to eat it. Something in the action brought back to him the conversation they once had about Adam, and he wondered how he could ever have been so cross, so dense. He held out his hand.

"Please, Eve," he beseeched.

"But you are not like Adam," she began archly.

"No," he said meaningly. "He waited for temptation. I—don't intend to wait!"

And that night she whispered to the girl in the mirror, "What Thackeray says is true!"

### The Dispute.

A rabbit went out walking one day, and when he came home he found his burrow occupied by a weasel. He was greatly astonished at finding a stranger in his house.

"See here, Madam Weasel," he said, "what are you doing here? This is not your home. Please get out of my burrow."

"Your burrow, indeed?" cried the weasel. "I'll do no such thing. I am perfectly at home."

"Well, now," said the rabbit gently, "let's take the dispute to Grimalkin."

Now, Grimalkin was a cat, the judge of all controversies that came up in the forest, and so the weasel could do nothing less than consent to do as the rabbit suggested. They set out together and soon arrived before the judge.

"Come near to me, my children," said Grimalkin; "I am deaf."

They obeyed, not dreaming of any harm that might come, and the cat, casting out a slanted foot at each side, gripped them both, and settled the dispute by eating them one after the other.

Moral.—People often ruin themselves by lawsuits. It is better to come to an agreement out of court.—French of Perrin.

### Loading.

"I loaf and invite my soul," sang Walt Whitman in one of his "barbaric yappings" that has sounded "over the roofs of the world." And it is no doubt the best, profoundest and highest thing ever said or sung about loafing.

The soul—if we may be so fortunate as to have one in the real and high significance of the word—will hardly come to our mundane aid, no matter how often we may invite it, unless we loaf. We do not in our ordinary business of living give it a chance to visit us. Like the virtues of art, it demands a large leisure and far horizons. That is why the poets and thinkers possess "soul" and we ordinary mortals do not. Our life is too narrow, too "cubined, cribbed, confined." Soul escapes or slinks us while we grope in our huddled and cluttered existence. We must "loaf" and invite it.

Loading is good for us—now and then. As a habit it is very bad, but even a "good custom," as Tennyson assures us, would "corrupt the world" were it not for wholesome change and variety. And an occasional loaf, whether voluntary or enforced, may be salutary.—Columbia State.

A straight line is the shortest in morals or in mathematics.—Edgeworth.

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Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been, by the county court of Crook county, State of Oregon, duly appointed Administrator of the estate of George W. Barnes, deceased, and all persons having claims against said estate are hereby required to present the same, duly verified, to said administrator at the law office of C. C. Brix, in Prineville, Oregon, within six months from the date of the first publication of this notice.

Dated and published first time July 13th, A. D. 1911.

WILLIAM H. PARNES, Administrator of the estate of George W. Barnes, deceased.

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