

Braves Death in the Jungles to Bring His Bride a Bird

Like a Knight of Old Artist
Tartoue Will Dare Again
the Perils of the
Wilds to Save
His

Madame Pierre Tartoue,
With Her Two Unique
Bird Companions, the Loss
of One of Which So Nearly
Broke Her Heart.

Lovely
Wife the
Sorrow of Losing
Once More Her
Rare
Song-
sters



Artist Tartoue, His Wife and the Birds.

IN the ancient days of the troubadours, when brave knights carried the colors of fair ladies into jousting tournaments, love was a term synonymous with devotion, bold deeds done for the favor of a dainty mistress, hazardous feats performed for no other reward than a smile from pretty lips.

When Saint George killed the dragon there were countless other knights who looked upon the deed as nothing they themselves would not have done if the inspiration had been the desire of a beloved one.

Nowadays, though, romance most often is jostled aside in the stress and friction of a practical age. Fair ladies there are just as many as ever, and of brave suitors there still is an equal number, but office hours now take up the time that used to be given to day dreams of love, and the evening fox trot and one-step represent the extent of the danger most young men are willing to court in pursuit of feminine preference.

How refreshing it is, then, to find a knight of to-day, a young husband whose romance has not dwindled with the passing of the honeymoon, but, instead, has deepened and expanded, embracing every hour of night and day, and become so great and wonderful a thing that a vagrant tear, falling from his young wife's eye, is enough to send him, heart a-beat, into far corners of the earth, into the midst of human cannibals and dread fevers, at enormous business sacrifices, that a whim may be gratified and the tear replaced with a smile!

This young husband, who might well inspire a paraphrase of the ancient query, "Was there ever so great a love as his?" is the noted artist, portrait painter and famous host at some of the most bizarre of social fetes, Pierre Tartoue, who came from France to settle in America a few years ago. Eighty thousand dollars is quite the usual fee for this portraitist to ask a doting mamma for the portrait of her debutante daughter, or a fashionable matron to pay him for her own pastel reproduction on canvas. Among his most famous subjects have been Cardinal Farley, Mrs. Edward B. Close and her children, Mrs. Joel Thorne, Mrs. Coleman du Pont de Nemours, "FIR" Widener, General Pershing and many others who gave their checks in five figures for the privilege of posing for him. It was not long ago that one of Mr. Tartoue's pastels, "The God of Happiness," an unfinished sketch of which is shown on this page, with Mrs. Tartoue sitting in front of it, was purchased by Mrs. du Pont de Nemours for \$600,000 after it had hung in some of the foremost exhibitions in America and France.

Mrs. Tartoue was the beautiful Claude Windsor, of California. The two were married but a few months ago. It was a romance of many interesting details—just the sort of courtship and marriage one might expect from a temperamental, successful young artist, courted by society as one of its most prized "catches," and a California heiress with whom the famous young painter fell in love at first sight.

There were those who whispered behind their fans when the marriage was announced, and when the artist brought back to the gay studio world of New York his California bride. Surely, said these whisperers, the gallant Pierre would never tie himself down to a love that consumed so much of his time and separated him from so many of those blithe little studio affairs for which the studio world is noted. He had been known as one of the most successful and original creators of impromptu entertainments in which color, luxury and the unique ran riot; his costly \$100,000 studio had been the centre of a bohemianism de luxe which made it one of the most charming rendezvous in New York. The introduction of a bride, even though she were wondrously beautiful, into such a life is not always a successful venture—and it wouldn't be in this case, said these whisperers.

Mme. Tartoue, from a Painting by Her Husband.

But time disproved these predictions. A new glow seemed to warm the canvases upon which Pierre painted his portraits. The eyes of his matrons and debutantes seemed to look out from their frames with a new piquancy. His brush, Pierre told his wondering critics, had found the skill with which to paint the ineffable flush of love—it was his realization of what feminine eyes which hold in dreamy fondness; what the cheek may tell when the heart is beating with a new rapture; how the lips unconsciously relax when the mind is attuned to kisses—it was this realization which had come to him out of his honeymoon and which struggled always for expression when his brush traced feminine features. So he explained the marvels in his new portraits to his friends.

The young bride fitted into the studio whirl—and became its leader. The honeymoon was in South America, where many of the wives of rich South Americans sat for the sojourning bridegroom.

There was a little excursion into the interior of Colombia, and as a souvenir of this visit the governor of an interior province presented the visiting bride two of the rarest and most beautiful singing birds in the world—the famous turpiale. The turpiale is a gorgeously colored songster, offspring in some mysterious past age of the thrush family, which has the rare accomplishment of being able to "carry the melody" of almost any song or instrumental music which is played for it and which it enjoys. Its song is brilliant and with a whistling resonance, and even its own characteristic bursts of melody are as rhythmic as the compositions of the masters.

Few of these birds ever have reached civilization. Their home is in the dense underbrush of the interior of the Atlantic Province of Colombia, where live the cannibal Goagira tribes, the cruellest and

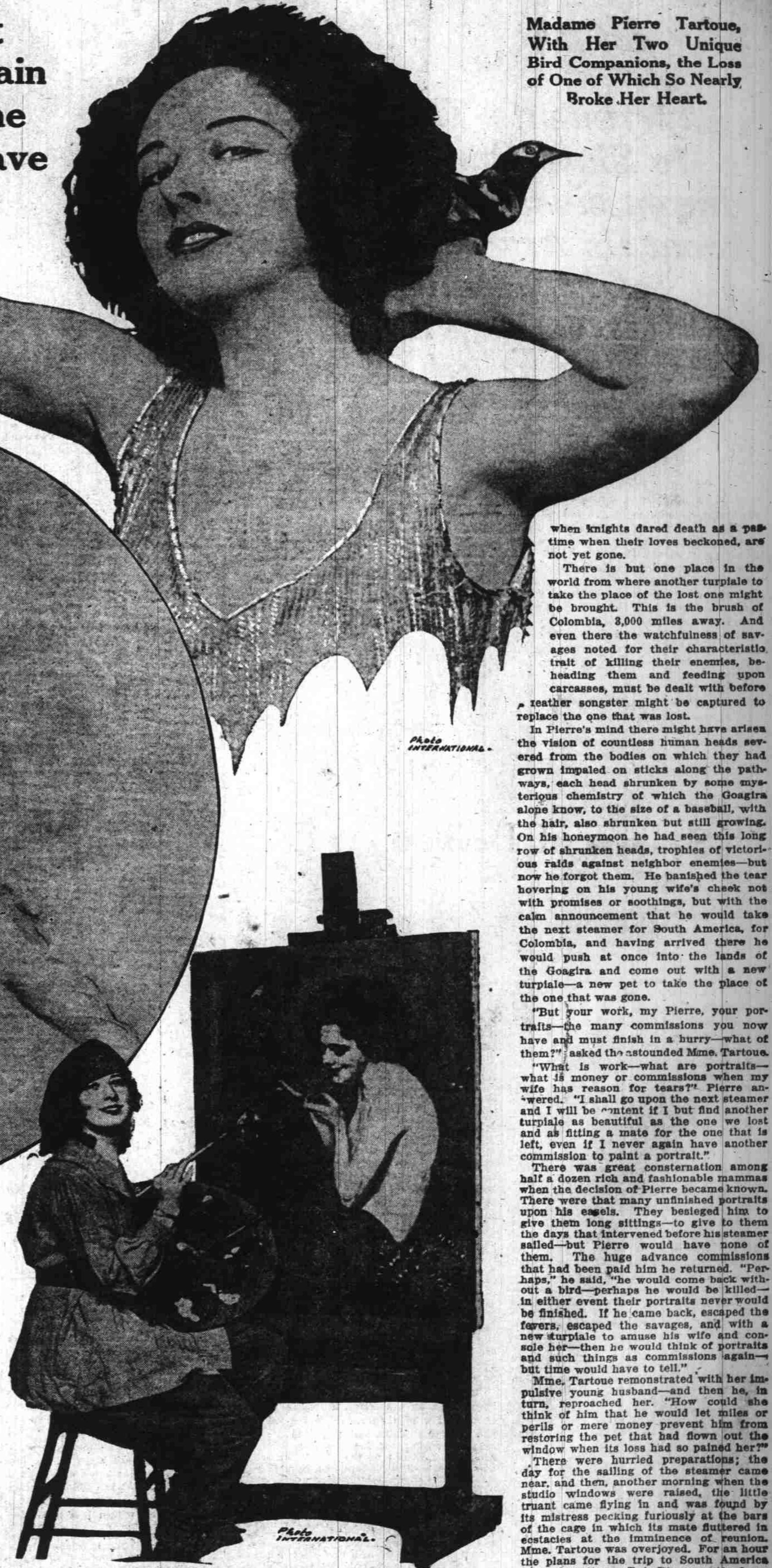
most primitive savages of the world. These birds have a superstitious religious significance to these savages, and it is seldom one of them is seen outside the brush.

Mme. Tartoue is an accomplished musician. The peculiar talent of the turpiale birds fascinated her. They became her pets. She taught them to sing arias of grand opera, and the two birds became so accomplished that it was necessary only for their young mistress to start the opening strains of a favorite song, or to have the phonograph play a few measures of it, when both birds would pick it up in unison and complete the song.

The presence of these rare and accomplished pets in the Tartoue studio was a nine days wonder in New York. Mme. Tartoue had dainty platinum chains made for them, with little clasps to snap around their legs, and with the chains attached to rings on her fingers she took the birds out as companions on her daily walks along Fifth avenue. In the fashionable hotel supper rooms the two pets were as familiar to the habitués as were the artist and his young bride themselves, and there was no entertainment in the Tartoue studio complete without them.

One morning, but a few days ago, there came a tragedy. The studio window was open; from the outside came the Summer time breath from Central Park but a block away. The youngest of the two birds, the female, was tempted. The windows had been open before but perhaps the lure of the outdoors, wafted in on Summer breeze, had never been so strong. There was a flutter of wings, a flash of color streaking across the studio—and the little turpiale was gone on a venture into the outdoors.

Mme. Tartoue was disconsolate. Her scream brought Pierre rushing from his workroom where a haughty matron, jealous of her time, was sitting for her portrait. In a burst of hysterical tears Mme. Tartoue



Mme. Tartoue in Studio Costume Before Tartoue's Famous Painting, "The God of Happiness."

told her husband of the desertion of one of her pets. Ignoring the restlessness of the rich patroness in the workroom Pierre flung on his coat and, with the bird's mate attached to his finger, dashed into the park. Throughout the day, and long into the night, Pierre and the lone bird wandered into the nooks and corners of the great park, Pierre whistling and the turpiale singing its call to its mate. But the quest was in vain.

When Pierre returned crestfallen to the

studio he found his young wife exhausted from grief and anxiety. The tears he grieved to see were on her cheek.

Now, what would the average husband of to-day—these days when there are supposed to be no more troubadours—do? He would take his wife in his arms, of course, but would he not content himself with soothing her hurt, with the promise that he would purchase for her another pet, a dog or a canary? Perhaps, but not Pierre. For Pierre the days of the troubadours,

when knights dared death as a pastime when their loves beckoned, are not yet gone.

There is but one place in the world from where another turpiale to take the place of the lost one might be brought. This is the brush of Colombia, 3,000 miles away. And even there the watchfulness of savages noted for their characteristic trait of killing their enemies, beheading them and feeding upon carcasses, must be dealt with before a feather songster might be captured to replace the one that was lost.

In Pierre's mind there might arise the vision of countless human heads severed from the bodies on which they had grown impaled on sticks along the pathways, each head shrunken by some mysterious chemistry of which the Goagira alone know, to the size of a baseball, with the hair, also shrunken but still growing. On his honeymoon he had seen this long row of shrunken heads, trophies of victorious raids against neighbor enemies—but now he forgot them. He banished the tear hovering on his young wife's cheek not with promises or soothing, but with the calm announcement that he would take the next steamer for South America, for Colombia, and having arrived there he would push at once into the lands of the Goagira and come out with a new turpiale—a new pet to take the place of the one that was gone.

"But your work, my Pierre, your portraits—the many commissions you now have and must finish in a hurry—what of them?" asked the astounded Mme. Tartoue.

"What is work—what are portraits—what is money or commissions when my wife has reason for tears?" Pierre answered. "I shall go upon the next steamer and I will be content if I but find another turpiale as beautiful as the one we lost and as fitting a mate for the one that is left, even if I never again have another commission to paint a portrait."

There was great consternation among half a dozen rich and fashionable mammas when the decision of Pierre became known. There were that many unfinished portraits upon his easels. They beset him to give them long sittings—to give to them the days that intervened before his steamer sailed—but Pierre would have none of them. The huge advance commissions that had been paid him he returned. "Perhaps," he said, "he would come back without a bird—perhaps he would be killed—in either event their portraits never would be finished. If he came back, escaped the ferals, escaped the savages, and with a new turpiale to amuse his wife and console her—then he would think of portraits and such things as commissions again—but time would have to tell."

Mme. Tartoue remonstrated with her impulsive young husband—and then he, in turn, reproached her. "How could she think of him that he would let miles or perils or mere money prevent him from restoring the pet that had flown out the window when its loss had so pained her?"

There were hurried preparations; the day for the sailing of the steamer came near, and then, another morning when the studio windows were raised, the little truant came flying in and was found by its mistress pecking furiously at the bars of the cage in which its mate fluttered in ecstasies at the imminence of reunion. Mme. Tartoue was overjoyed. For an hour the plans for the trip to South America were forgotten. But Pierre noticed restraint in his wife's happiness.

"I cannot but be fearful, Pierre," she said wistfully. "Perhaps another time one of my turpiales will fly away and not return—and, besides, I can no longer trust my little pet. She has been away from me whole nights and days—and the sparrows and blackbirds of the park are such unscrupulous companions."

"Then I shall go, just the same—we will run no more risks, and if the little truant does not regain your confidence you shall have another to replace it."

Indeed, can there be a greater love than this?