

PAYSLIP'S KILLING.

Algie Payslip, the talented young stenographer of the bureau of adumbration, had it all figured out on Wednesday forenoon as he leaned toward the hot-air register and waited for the chief to summon him. Algie was going to kill 'em out at Benning. He wasn't going to bog-slaughter 'em, or put the whole card over, or cut a bunch of watermelons, or drive 'em all off the block—he was just going to kill 'em. He had so announced to three of his particular friends, with a crafty light in his eye, on the night before, and he meant it. Algie Payslip always means everything he says.

"I don't know," he mused, as he leaned closer still to the hot-air register, "whether I'd better resign this miserable little \$1,200 job to-morrow morning, or hang on until the end of the month, so's to give 'em a chance to get another shorthand man. It'll be hard to hang on, though, when I'll have about \$14,000 in cool yellow cash in my homepocket when I get back from Benning this evening." Algie leaned back and closed his eyes dreamily and thought of the pleasant, patronizing manner he'd assume toward the chief of the bureau of adumbration on the morrow.

"He's a good enough old podger in his way," reflected Algie, "but he thinks the measley little old \$3,000 a year he's getting is big money, even for the support of his large family.

And then, Algie, freed from his stenographic cares, was out at the track, with the little roll of \$40 in his vest that he had screwed with great difficulty from a brusque gentleman who had not only required an indorser, but the somewhat usurious interest of 120 per cent. per annum. Algie also had carefully tucked away in his waistcoat pocket the slip given to him on the afternoon before by a sharp-featured young person from New York. The slip contained the names of the winners of each of the six races on the card, each guaranteed to be at a price of 30 to 1 or better, and the ten-dollar remnant of his last pay day which Algie had cheerfully given up for this potential piece of paper had seemed a mere bagatelle to the talented young stenographer when compared with its possibilities.

"Caninus to win the first race," mused Algie, as he made his way into the betting ring before the slates went up. "And guaranteed to be at least 30 to 1. I'll put ten dollars on Caninus—\$500 ought to be enough for a starter."

Forcing his way up to a hookie's stool when the betting began, Algie Payslip was delighted to find that Caninus was the rank outsider at 100 to 1 in the betting. And so he got \$1,000 for his ten dollars, the bookmaker smiling at him sardoniously as he took the money. Then Algie mounted the stand to watch the race.

No description of that remarkable race is necessary—the news report of the day's races gave it in full. Caninus got off last, gradually worked his way to the front and won on the wire by a nose from the odds on favorite. Algie repressed his inward excitement in a dead-game manner, and when he collected the \$1,010 from the bookmaker's cashier he favored that disgraced individual with a satirical smile that was meant to be, and probably was, exceedingly cutting.

"Um—a fair start, that," said Algie to himself, languidly, as he strolled over to the bar and refreshed himself with a quart of the restless amber product of Gaul. "Steam Roller to win the second—guaranteed to be at 20 to 1," my information reads. "I shall invest a little matter of \$500, then, on Steam Roller to win."

Which Algie did. He had, however, to take odds which were cut before his advance along the line—the rumor of a new plunger having spread with its customary rapidity in the ring. Algie felt an inward sense of triumph when he perceived that the bookmakers were not only gazing at him with respect, but that they were rubbing over the prices on their slates when he made his appearance. Algie got some of his \$500 down on Steam Roller at 20 to 1, but when the scared bookies saw him coming they quickly began to shave, so that he had finally, at post time, to accept four to one. When he had placed all of the \$500 he stood to win about \$6,000 if Steam Roller romped home, as Algie had every reason to expect.

with green-eyed envy that, however, nevertheless had in it also a gleam of admiration. He was generous enough to banish the resentfulness he felt over the predictions of some of them, made the day before, that he wouldn't win a bet, and to give them the name of the horse he had played to win the third race—whereupon, needless to say, they rushed down to the ring and "tapped" themselves upon Algie's word.

The melancholy yellow sun drew close to the horizon as Algie, \$75,000 to the good at the finish of the fifth race, reached the stand to watch the sixth and last event. He had bet enough to make his afternoon's winnings an even \$100,000. As he stood on the grand stand steps, with his glasses placed jauntily at his eyes, men and women paid more attention to Algie Payslip, the marvelously successful stenographer of the bureau of adumbration, than they did to the horses parading to the post. He had, it was known, compelled at least 12 of the bookmakers to take down their slates and close their satchels, and it was whispered around the ring that if he won the last race, too, one of the most famous of the bookmakers, after years of unvarying success, would have to put up the shutters.

The horses fretted at the post for a moment, and then Mars Cassidy gave the cry and Algie stepped down to see which of the bunch had secured the roll, and in doing so he—

PHILIP'S PROPOSAL.

(Copyrighted by The Daily Story Pub. Co.) Old Mr. Brewer believed himself to be acting in a manner most broad and liberal-minded indeed when he told young Philip Maintainon that he might call on his daughter Gertrude as often as he liked provided he spoke or wrote no word of love to the young woman. This embargo was to last until Gertrude, who had just passed her eighteenth birthday, was 20 and Philip correspondingly older. The young man accepted its conditions unwillingly but with a moderate degree of cheerfulness in the beginning; he smarted under them considerably as they became more familiar.

It was delightful to see Gertrude as often as he liked, certainly, especially after the long weeks in which he had wondered how much longer he would be a welcome visitor at the Brewer mansion, but he soon found that the permission to see her often meant far less than it had appeared to do at first sight. He was not the only young man who saw her frequently, to begin with; Gertrude was a pretty girl, bright and popular in the bargain; Philip began to live in a chronic state of fear lest some other fellow wise enough to speak to the girl first and then the father afterward, should step in ahead of him. The girl herself did not seem, to his excited fancy, to take nearly so much interest in his attentions as she had done heretofore. Sometimes he was on the point of throwing up the whole thing for a year or two and going west. All of which was precisely what Mrs. Brewer had counted upon when she had consulted her husband to make terms.

"Gertrude is both headstrong and impressionable, my dear," she had said when Mr. Brewer had spoken of forbidding Philip the house for the time being, "and if you do that she will immediately fancy herself deeply in love with him, whether she is or not. Merely tell Philip that she is altogether too young and too incompletely educated, as yet, to think of such things, and that he must not dream of telling her that he loves her—or thinks that he does—for some time. Ten chances to one they'll both tire of the fancy shortly, and if it's really love between them the waiting will do no harm."

After a time, however, Philip became so deadly tired of waiting that he gave up the idea of going out west and decided to change his tactics entirely. He had promised to write or speak no word of love to Gertrude, certainly, but proposing had never been mentioned. Surely it was possible to make a proposal of marriage without uttering love-sink speeches! Yes, he would certainly propose, and that as soon as the opportunity offered.

But the opportunity was long in coming. Mrs. Brewer had a "nose for news" which would have made the fortune of a metropolitan newspaper reporter, and while she did not exactly suspect Philip of endeavoring to break his compact, she gave her husband to understand, still she meant him to have no temptation of that order. The bones of her opposition were too nicely clothed in the flesh of conventional courtesy for Philip or any other man to discover them, but she strove against them in vain. Never a moment alone with Gertrude could he find or obtain. Even when they went upon photographing expeditions, together—both being enthusiastic photographic amateurs—they were invariably accompanied by Gertrude's brother Benjamin, a spoiled youth of 14, his mother's darling, and also badly afflicted with the picture-taking craze. And yet it was through a photographic process that Philip finally carried out his will in regard to his innamorita and circumvented her mother's care.

fell in with it as delightfully as innocently and ran upstairs to her own little room to develop the plate immediately. Philip had explained that he thought she would understand the new experiment he wanted to share with her more clearly if she herself developed the negative. His least safe wild jump when Benjamin announced that he wanted to watch the development and rescue nobly, although quite unconscious of any need for so doing.

"No, Bennie, you can't," she told him, shutting the dark-room door with gentle decision; "you make me too nervous when I let you come in. I'll tell you all about the experiment afterward."

Philip really doubted that she would keep her word, but he said nothing. It needed all his self-control and patience to talk commonplace calmly with Mrs. Brewer until Gertrude returned.

The girl, meanwhile had received a startling shock. "Metohydrol I suggest as a developer," Philip had told her as she ran upstairs with the plateholder containing the "experimental" negative, and this agent she had accordingly prepared. She rocked the little tray back and forth for two or three minutes, then exposed it to the rays of the red lamp. Black and white "values" are also reversed upon a photographic negative so the message which stared up at her was outlined in gleaming white letters upon an ebony background. And this was the message:

"My Dearest Girl: Will you marry me? Philip Maintainon."

The girl grew white and pink as she read it. Then she laughed merrily and sat down to consider. Ten minutes later she went down to the parlor and explained that she had broken the precious negative. Whether by accident or design she did not say.

Philip colored hotly, and Mrs. Brewer, pitying his fancied disappointment over the lost negative, took Gertrude gently to task.

"I don't see how you could be so careless, my daughter," she remonstrated. "Nobody knows how much trouble Mr. Maintainon may have taken to secure the negative you have destroyed. Can't you make it up to him in some way?"

"I don't know, mamma," answered Gertrude, smiling and blushing adorably as she turned her face away from her mother and toward Philip. "I don't know. I shouldn't care to repeat the experiment myself, even if I knew how to do so, which I do not." But we might possibly present him with some other work of art, if you think best. Suppose we try."

A sudden thought made her cheeks burn yet more brilliantly, and she took from the mantel a small plaster figure of the conventionalized "Chicago," and offered it to Philip. And—whether by accident or design, again, it would be difficult to say—her small forefinger pointed to the inscription: "I will!"

LOVE OF MRS. FERRIS

(Author "Song of Solomon," etc.) (Copyrighted by The Daily Story Pub. Co.) "You are a peculiar woman," Mr. Daere said, reflectively. His hostess leaned forward and placed a little scarlet devil ash-receiver in close proximity to his cigar, then twisted her lithe body comfortably among the cushions of a long, low chair that was her especial weakness.

"You were saying?" she murmured, lazily. "Oh, yes; I am, no doubt. But in what does my peculiarity make itself particularly worthy of comment just now?" Mrs. Ferris had large, shadowy eyes that were either green or yellow or gray, her friends were never sure which. She now stared through the thin haze of perfumed smoke that drifted from his cigar around her bronze head, and added gravely: "You are rather nice looking when you are smoking." "By which, the natural inference would be that I usually appear—"

floor slowly, her soft tea-gown trailing in silvery folds behind her. "Go on," she said, presently. "He stared into the fire and did not speak. Soon she went to her desk and took out a letter.

"Do you recollect one time my writing you of Angelo? Where I said 'there is always a Laura.'"

Going over to him, she laid a letter on his knee. "That was your answer. Do you remember?" Bending over him, she read: "Of course, dear, there is always a Beatrice or a Laura. I think Michael Angelo lost his Laura, or Laura, mayhap, was of clay. Strong men like Angelo are ever the prey of designing women and little men. That accounts for Michael's hardness of line and the grim, stern quality in so much of his work. Greek beauty is fluid—his was full of angles. How you and I would gloat over the old stuff in Rome, Venice, Florence! Yet, I do not know—you are a delicate woman, beautiful and fond of the luxuries. I'm worse than Michael Angelo—I have the rind on. I sleep hard and dine cheap and walk alone in the bleak, black, winter's night, through sleet and driving rain. Then I know you never could endure a man in a 'fannel shirt and thick boots!'"

"You quite reveled in metaphor, when you wrote that." She laughed, a little, low, odd laugh, then went from him back to her cushions.

"The first and the last of our being is doubt, you say. And you do more—you doubt all the time."

Her voice was low and sweet. He lifted his head, and her eyes, smiling, inscrutable, met his. "You are not a—er—pretty man. Neither were Angelo and Napoleon and Dante. You are an intellectual success and you have a bank account as well as a brain. But that brain has an ever-present lag—it is its one weakness. You loved me, but you did not trust me. You knew that my debts followed me thick as Anthony's fleet of ships—"

"And you doubted always. Then Mr. Harland appeared upon the scene. He it is, as you say, not only distinguished looking, but wealthy. And I—"

"That's a really lifelike to marry?" His face changed as even in granite as he rose to his feet and bowed. She, too, had risen and her face had paled.

She looked at him a long moment, then she said, very gently: "Yes."

Mrs. Ferris moved softly to his side and slipping her hand up to his face, she turned it toward her. "Do you think you could trust me now?" she asked, her lips smiling a little, but the eyes dark and wistful. He looked down into her face, a sudden light and warmth softening his own.

"You mean—?" he whispered. "That I have loved you always—ah, my beloved!" And as her lips met his, at last, he understood.

Grains and Grasses Wanted.

There is not an exhibit of the agricultural products of Josephine county to be seen in Grants Pass and strangers in the city noting this fact and that the hills about the city are yet in their primeval wildness, draw the inference that there is little farming carried on here. To prove that the soil of this county does produce grass, grain, fruits and vegetables not to be excelled by any other county in Oregon the Courier will undertake to collect an exhibit of these products.

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