

An Artistic Courtship

By ETHEL HOLMES

Gabriel Martel painted pictures for a living, but made a very poor one. At last he gave it up and became an instructor in his art. He was now a widower, an old man, and had one child, a daughter, Winifred, about twenty years old. The rooms in which he lived and gave lessons were in a studio building for persons of his profession.

One spring morning Winifred was sitting by an open window in the living room, facing the street, making clothes for herself, for her father had no money with which to buy them.

She had a very sweet face and as she bent over her work formed an attractive picture. Beardslee, who had just returned from Florence, Italy, where he had been studying and was considered a genius, saw the girl at the window, and—well, he fell in love with her. I don't mean his love was full fledged the moment he laid eyes on her, but that is when it began.

He noted the position of the room in which she was sitting and, crossing the street, entered the studio building, mounted the stairs and proceeded to the door leading to the room. His object was the acquaintance of that girl. How he was to make it he didn't know, but he was full of assurance and resource and trusted to these and luck. On the door was painted, "Gabriel Martel, Instructor in Painting."

Opening the door, he saw Mr. Martel standing over a small boy whom he was endeavoring to teach to draw the outline of a goblet. Winifred sat in an adjoining room.

"Beg pardon," said Beardslee; "I am desirous of taking some lessons in painting."

"Are you a beginner?" asked the instructor.

"Oh, no! I have had some practice."

Martel stated the terms, which were satisfactory, and Beardslee said he would take a lesson then and there. He sat down at an easel faced toward Winifred.

As soon as Martel had disappeared Beardslee took out some pieces of thin ivory he had in his pocket and began to paint a miniature portrait of Winifred. If his love for the girl was not yet full fledged, his love for his subject was. At any rate, he made one of those rapid strokes of genius which will sometimes come without the slightest effort, but which will elude an artist on more pretentious work. Meanwhile other pupils had come in, and Beardslee heard Martel talking to them. In this way he kept a knowledge of the instructor's position, and whenever he came near the screen Beardslee would hide the miniature and begin to daub on the subject assigned him. But he had asked that he might not be disturbed, and his instructor did not visit him till after he had finished the miniature sketch.

A few days later Winifred was looking over the art columns of a Sunday paper and saw among the pictures of moment reproduced there a picture called "At Work," by the newly arrived celebrity Clarence Beardslee. It was a girl sitting by a window sewing. The work was valued at \$1,000.

"Isn't that like this window, papa?" she said, showing it to her father, "and that work stand is an exact reproduction of mine."

"And the face is yours, too," said the parent.

"It says the picture will be on exhibi-

tion at Gambrell's for a few days. I'm going to see it."

The same afternoon she visited Gambrell's picture store, and there was the miniature, into which the artist had found room to give a suggestion of the window and the work stand. She had no sooner looked upon the face of the girl than she recognized herself. The likeness was perfect. She stood looking at it in a dream of wonder.

There is a break in the story which cannot be supplied. When Winifred went home to her father happiness bubbled up in her like a spring of limpid water. She had seen at the picture store the would be pupil of the day before. The break in the story is how did he come to be there when she was there? Nobody but himself knows, and he has never told. All Winifred said to her father about the miniature was that it was a rare work of art. The mix had brought it home with her.

There is more that does not appear in this version of the story, and that is, What was going on between Beardslee and Winifred during the next month? at the end of which Martel received the surprise of his life. His former pupil of one lesson entered his instruction room and presented a card, on which was the name Clarence Beardslee. Martel looked at it, then up at the visitor and wondered if one or the other of them had not lost his senses.

Winifred ran from the other room and wrapped both arms around her father.

"I came," said Beardslee, "to ask you, Mr. Martel, for your daughter."

"My daughter! You, Clarence Beardslee!"

"Yes."

Then Winifred explained matters, which it is not necessary to explain here, for they are explained already, except the breaks, which in case of lovers no one can explain but themselves.

"The Worker" remains the best of Clarence Beardslee's small offhand hits. It is a gem.

Versatile.

"They tell me your boy Josh is very versatile."

"He is," replied Farmer Cornstossel patiently. "I never saw anybody who could do so many fool things without repeatin' hisself."—Washington Star.

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