

Talents of Talula

The Princess Natalie lifted her lace-hung shoulders in an adorable shrug. "Monsieur is peremptory; for a suitor who is not even accepted, singularly peremptory."

It was Miss Montgomery, in her studio, reading aloud to Jean Bumfrey, the last chapter of her first novel, a crimson experiment in nihilism, which she had just completed.

Gideon Alexander, who at his own risk was to illustrate this novel, was an unintentional listener in his hammock outside on the roof.

He grinned as he heard, and wondered why it was that Miss Montgomery only cared to write of princesses and dukes and terrible plots against an innocent czar's life.

He was quite certain he despised her genius, such as it was, but in these girlishly pretentious stories, as well as in their pretty writer, he was beginning to have an interest almost uncomfortably eager.

There was only one thing he weakly resented. This was the gifted Talula's blindness to any talent that he himself might be harboring, not too far out of sight.

He was willing to let it pass that he had three times hung on the line at the Paris Salon, but he thought it only decent, humanly decent, to take some little notice of the splendid "Fall of Rome" he was doing for the autumn academy.

But interest in women was not with

Gideon a selfish sentiment.

And when, presently, pale with the fire of her own genius and delicately charming in one of the limp white dresses she affected, Miss Montgomery came out upon the roof, he listened delightedly to her long, hushed talk of her novel. When having said she, he turned wearily in his hammock—he always jumped out of it as if shot at sight of her—and stared at the stars away from him, he understood that the interview was over.

As he turned to go she called out in the sweet, bored voice that always distinguished her when not discussing her works:

"I've put my book on your desk. Remember, keep it in the bag always, and at the first cheap of fire grab it."

"The glory of Sigis Belousoff (this was Miss Montgomery's nom de plume) must not be extinguished prematurely," she added, with a ghost of a smile that yet fell exasperatingly upon Gideon.

This fear of fire in the Wolverton was not confined to Talula. It hung over the entire house like a cloud, and several recent sudden alarms had not tended to inspire confidence in the old barracks.

Once a respected and fashionable apartment house, with the elevated train rushing along its side the Wolverton had sunk to mere room renting, and the roomers, who inclined largely toward the artistic, were much given to light housekeeping and little regard for burning matches. One day a fierce blaze was found crackling away in an airshaft, and Miss Witcheit, who wrote wonderful articles in the *Trumpet* on "How to Live on Five Dollars a Month," lost her valuable manuscripts. There was no doubt about it, it was openly declared in the restaurant on the ground floor, some day the old Wolverton would go up in a cloud of smoke.

Talula, whose dingy little duplex studio, along with four others, had been hurriedly knocked up in the former drying room of the old caravansary, had a sense of safety in the adjoining roof. But, yielding to the general terror, she insisted that one of the little windows opening on the shed, and wired over against light fingers should be left free for an emergency.

Then she said her prayers devoutly, kept her novel in the "fire bag," and felt somehow comforted when in the night she heard the water pouring down from the great roof tank, the wall of which touched that of her only home.

It was summer, and the July days had begun to burn hotly.

After a while it was almost impossible to work in the studios; so their occupants did much lounging on the great roof upon which this half floor opened, and the several sheds that had been put up for that purpose. The luxurious carried out gay striped hammocks, and when the worst of the hot spell came they and the benches, with merely a cushion for pillow, were often occupied all night long by the weary sleepers.

On the roofs of the tenements of the street below others slept—wary, exhausted laborers and their families. Toward morning, when the quieting street sounds began to bracken again, these disappeared. Then one by one the little lights on the distant river and the Jersey coast twinkled out, the morning star paled away and in the faint sweet chill of the new day Talula would lift her heavy head again, shake the wrinkles in her thin white wrapper and from a divine hope become once more a cruel mystery.

For it was upon this roof, with its canopy of stars and romantic possibilities, that poor Gideon awoke to the pain of love and realized the depths of woman.

Without a murmur it had been his fate to listen for endless hours to the awakenings of genius. Then, but a bare week after these communings of the soul, this mute acceptance of his suit, as it were, she had ceased to speak to him!

On top of this horror, if he so much as caught her eye it gave him quite a shock, it was so blank and unrelated. A week of this dreadful, during which time, with her melancholy remoteness from all about her, she reminded him of nothing so much as Lady Macbeth in the sleep walking scene, and she fell into a false gale of spirits, so heart breaking in its unreality that Gideon could not even feel hurt when he saw her flirting outrageously with Kessel, the conceited beau of the house.

No, it was not a matter for jealousy; the wound it was deeper. Then, simply, Gideon told himself, that Miss Montgomery had no longer any need of his services. He had the best of him in the illustrations he had toiled over through all the baking weather—illustrations for which, with the academy so near, he had basely neglected the once beloved "Fall of Rome," and he had scarcely placed them in his hands, scarcely ceased to wonder at the light that irradiated her delicate face with the glad cry, "Now for the publishers!" when this other thing, complete strangerhood, had come.

It was the way of woman, mused lovesick Gideon in his misery. Gratitude had been left out of her composition. And as he plumbed the shallow depths of the frail sex suffering painter-laughed sardonically, and had glittering visions of a life of luxurious bachelorhood, offset by others of unhappy, badly dressed spinsters with ink fingers.

Then one crisp August morning, after three weeks of this nightmare, there came a tap at his door.

"Come in!" he called; and lo! his lady, clothed in even another mood.

"Good morning," she cried, with blooming affability. And with high praise for the gaudy "Fall of Rome," upon which he was once more engaged, she invited him to dine with her that evening in her place, and would accept no refusal.

"There will be only Jean Bumfrey and Miss Witcheit besides," she concluded from the doorway, "and dinner wouldn't be dinner without your salad."

And with another affusive compli-

ment upon his work she was gone. The mystery, for of course he went. Jean Bumfrey, who, because of a fairy finger with cookery, was general-

ly chief at these studio banquets, called upon him for frequent services. But, between grating the cheese for the spaghetti pouring out the thin red wine and manipulating the seltzer siphons, he had plenty of opportunity to discover that Miss Montgomery's last pose was the most astounding of all.

She no longer took the floor, as of old, and held forth, sauntering, on the one interest that possessed her—her own talent. She drew out her visitors to dilate on their glories, and was an ideal listener, everybody in turn receiving such burning compliments on his or her work that heads began to reel.

Through a haze of bliss generously tempered with doubt as to the lasting qualities of these new virtues Gideon found himself listening ardently to her talk with Miss Witcheit.

The innocent old soul had been made to believe that her articles on "How to Live on Five Dollars a Month" were works of the purest genius, and Miss Montgomery declared that the idea of telling the roomers to "keep the red-checked apples for the rainy days" was a genuine inspiration.

"It is a note of artistic beauty among all your beautiful facts," she said with a deep-eyed gravity there was no doubting. "And such articles are more valuable than all the novels in the world; they throw a true light on the sad, hard lives we women live in New York for the sake of the will o' the wisp, a career."

"I envy you all the letters you have received about them," and the speaker hurriedly left the table on an errand. Gideon, who had suddenly and idiotically haw-hawed at the mention of the "red-checked apples" felt his heart fall as she turned, for there were tears in her eyes.

He wondered if there were any application in her talk to her own case. He wondered too how she had lived during her first years in New York, and the frightful possibility came that perhaps with her struggles, many a bitter rainy day had passed without even the most humble glorification of red-checked fruit.

He knew that she lived with the very strictest of economy even now, and with the information that Miss Montgomery's newspaper articles were not of a highly salable sort, Jean Bumfrey had once told him that when Talula "pigged" alone in her room, she "had never enough to eat."

"Is it possible," thought Gideon, aghast at the generous spread before him, "that when she is alone she skimps?"

Talula had come back and was serving the desert of baked bananas and cream. Miss Witcheit began to talk of a still more useful line of articles she contemplated, and Jean, a book-cover designer of no mean merit, went in search of her last piece of work to show the painter.

"I shall advise all young women who fancy they have talent and more work before leaving their comfortable homes for this great and terrible city," Miss Witcheit was saying, with wise ways of her fine, snowy old head.

Jean, who returned here, whispered to Gideon behind her book cover—"How about the old women?"

"Show them the advisability of marriage, and anchoring in the safe haven of peaceful domestic existence."

It was Talula who had put forth this piece of wisdom and the book cover going the rounds of the table with compliments buzzing and lowered eyes Mr. Alexander made bold to stare long at his divinity.

And there was no doubt about it, during that brief visit to the closet kitchen in the hall some tears had fallen. Yet how much more wonderful she was than all the rest of the world of women. The slight reddening of the delicate eyelids, the shadows under the large eyes themselves, but added to her pale charm, and with the simple white frock, out to leave bare the slim young throat with its childish gold chain, with her nimbus of dark hair and softened mien, there was something so enchanting, something about her that Gideon felt his doubting heart melt and ventured to touch upon a subject once dear to them both.

"How about 'Princess Natalie'?" (Miss Montgomery's novel.)

"Haven't I written you yet? The lowered lids before him rose and his angel regarded him with a look distinctly frigid.

"It usually requires a month for a magazine to pass upon a book. Only three weeks have transpired since I sent my novel to Putney's," and with the icy drooping of the lids again Gideon realized, with a flazed wonder that he had somehow touched upon the wrong subject.

Yet, nothing daunted, he sought her on the roof that night. She was talking to Kessel, with a white flower in her hair and such soft laughter that he had a momentary terror that it was not disappointment about her book, but happiness after all that had changed her.

Kessel was a good looking devil, a thrifty lady killer, getting along in his world. It would be such a difficult matter to care for him, but even as he thought it all out he walked boldly up to the pair and spoke:

"I beg your pardon, Miss Montgomery, but I must ask you to let me get my drawing pad out of your place. I forgot it there this evening."

"Of course, I don't," any drawing pad," he said gloomily as they reached her studio. "I wanted to bid you goodby. I'm going away."

"Yes!" returned Talula, with a slight raise of voice on the "yes." "Isn't this very sudden?"

Gideon felt his temper rise, and then longed miserably to kiss her.

"You don't seem to be as interested in your work as you once were," was his irrelevant and sulky response.

"I am not; there are better things in the world than work," she said with a faintly appealing look at him, but for some reason he seemed to read in it but allusion to his rival.

With a frightful "Hal! hal! hal!" So apparently thinks Kessel," he stamped disapprovingly from the place.

The next six weeks of Mr. Gideon Alexander's life cannot be told in detail. He had a vague impression that he was outting it somewhere in Canada and knew moments when he thought he must draw, and then destroyed all the faces took on a look of one in New York.

At the end of the six weeks he told himself that it was time to vanish the "Fall of Rome" again, and, clinging to this thin excuse for his return, 2 o'clock of a cool September night found him strolling leisurely down the street and led to the Wolverton in the distance.

And here fate put forth her finger

Broke In Europe

Ever been broke in Europe? Got any system, brothers or sisters going over this summer? Not well, some one else has, and how many of those 200,000 who sailed this last month do you suppose will be up against it within the next few months? Many, many more than you would think. Through some cause or other they will find themselves broke. It won't seem funny to them at the moment, but their stories will tell on their return and are sure to furnish many a laugh to their friends. At least, it has been so in the past.

Of course, it is not every traveler that gets down to hard pan, but it is certainly surprising how many hard luck stories one hears from persons who have been on the other side. Here is a story told by a musician which proves that the cable failed to work for him when he was in Rome last winter:

"There were two of us, a college friend and I," he explained. "We reached Rome from the mountains with enough funds to last us a week. To economize, however, while we waited an answer to a cable, we determined to rent a room and eat at restaurants."

"The cable was sent on Monday. On Wednesday I went to look for the cash. No answer. We made anxious queries the next day and hurried off letters home."

"By Saturday we found it necessary to visit a monte di pietà—a mount of pity—the very euphemistic name for a pawn shop. We parted with a watch and decided that it would be a bit frugal to cook her own meals."

"We visited the office of the express company where we expected our money, but the Italian official shrugged his shoulders, looked suspicious, and curtly said, 'Niente danaro,' or the equivalent of 'nothing doing.'"

"In two weeks, after daily calls, the Italian gave us to understand that he would let us know when our money had arrived. He gently suggested that we must not bother him any more."

"In desperation we called again at the monte and left everything but two suits of clothes. At the end of the third week we had one pair of trousers and a coat between us. We took our daily walks alone. Our diet consisted of bread and onions, with the occasional luxury of a piece of cheese."

"Finally, at the end of four weeks, while fighting with the pangs of hunger, we wandered between the rash taunts of another visit to the express company and a call upon the American consul, and decided in favor of the official gavel me could be called warm."

"I turned away in despair, and on the way out I stopped in front of the paying teller's desk. Suddenly, in a fit of desperation, I grabbed up a bundle of cablegrams, and despite the excited jabbering of the clerk, ran hastily through them. There, to my joy, I found a cable which read, 'Pay to the order of the sum of \$500.'"

"That was so good, when I noticed that the cablegram was nearly four weeks old, that I couldn't demand an explanation. I started in to curse him out in emphatic English."

"He started to explain. I wouldn't listen. I resumed my cursing with renewed vigor and walked out, hungry, threatening suit, but on second thought I remembered my friend who was in the country, and I decided to wait. I decided that I would wear once more my own trousers, and I finally returned and got the cash."

"The officials could offer no good reason whatever other than carelessness for holding up the cablegram. The head man of the firm apologized profusely for the neglect, but that didn't buy bread during the four weeks that we waited for our money."

"This incident shows that a cablegram may go wrong. Another illustrates the fact that money does not always reach you when you need it."

A young business man started abroad with plenty of pocket money and arranged to have money sent him at Berlin. He tells this story:

"By the time I reached the German capital I had just 40 marks. With the aid of a pension, paid my first week's board in advance, as provided by the city regulations, and began to

and rapidly stirred up the remaining ingredients of Mr. Gideon Alexander's lot.

As he reached Seventh avenue an elevated train, tearing past the old house, gave the shrill prolonged whistle that several experiences had warned the Wolvertonians meant fire.

He looked up and saw a sight to stop a lover's heart—a fierce blaze springing from the Wolverton's roof.

"My God! It's the studios! Talula!"

On winged feet he tore through the block and with two dashes of his broad shoulders against the riotous front door was in the house. After him tumbled a policeman and the street hoodlums who at the first alarm of fire in New York seem to spring out of the sidewalk like the demons of a pantomime. Gideon kept the lead of the hustling rabble up the stairway and found time to call back to the policeman that he had better look out for sneak thieves. Then, at the fourth floor, in various stages of dress and with hurried bundles of property, he began to pass the frightened tenants, who were seeking escape. The lady killer, Kessel, went by, wrapped in a blanket and carrying on his arm some of the apparel that made him invincible.

"Fire!" he shrieked frantically as he dashed by Gideon, and behind him came little Jean Bumfrey, with her pretty crinkly hair standing out in a bush and holding about her an airy, frivolous fall gown, the one precious thing she had always vowed she would save in case of fire.

Gideon clutched her arm fiercely and asked for Talula.

"She's out," said Jean with a wrench of her train from under his foot. "She got out before anybody."

But a step lower down she shrieked back at him.

"No, no; she went back! Go look for her, for pity's sake."

Breathing a prayer to heaven the distracted lover placed his foot upon the last landing, and saw with a great gasp of relief that the fire was confined to the large studio but one removed from his own.

The one that concerned him most was at the far end of the floor, and though some smoke pursued him, a turn in the hall in a moment cut off all view of the conflagration. Talula's door stood wide open, and the burning electric

CLASSES BEER AS A LIQUID FOOD

Does Not Tend to Produce Habit of Intoxication. Report of Pure Food Inspector of the State of Kentucky, Before Congressional Committee.

Prof. M. A. Seavell, of Louisville, sale of beer containing more than 5 per cent.

Asked if he considered a beer containing not more than 5 per cent of alcohol, as proposed in the pending bill, to be a food, he replied: "CONSIDERED SIMPLY AS A CHEMICAL PROPOSITION IT IS A FOOD. THERE IS NO QUESTION ABOUT THAT. IT IS A FOOD."

The beer brewed by nearly all of the present day breweries does not contain more than from three and a half to four per cent of alcohol. All the water used in brewing beer is distilled. The process of brewing absolutely destroys every impurity that may be in the material required, and every vessel or purtenance used in its manufacture is chemically pure and clean. Every bottle of beer is pasteurized before it leaves the brewery.

"The Munchener beer tasted good, but I had to refrain and confine my tastes to looking into the shops along a large gilded pocketpiece which looked like a \$20 coin."

"By this time I was behind in my board. To soothe the feelings of my hausfrau, I told stories of paying 400 marks, and then in desperation described my private yacht. While I hinted that I was expecting money from America, I carelessly tossed into the air a large gilded pocketpiece which looked like a \$20 coin."

"I could see the hausfrau's eyes glister as I caught the coin and played with it. Then I slipped it into my pocket and walked away."

"Do you know I waited four weeks for money and then borrowed enough money to cable? I speedily got an answer, paid my debts and was just leaving Berlin when my letter arrived."

The railroad strike in Rome in May caused many tourists great embarrassment. Though it lasted only a week, it detained many in out of the way towns, and prevented others from getting down to Naples and Genoa to catch boats there for home.

This meant a delay of three or four weeks, as many had return tickets on a certain line and did not have money to come by another. The delay used up their extra cash and many had to forego excursions, even when the roads started again, because their funds were exhausted. The event started a general borrowing bee among tourists, who were waiting at the time for home-bound ships.

Letters of credit sometimes fail the traveler and leave him or her in a financial plight. Two sisters were spending the summer in Paris. They had with them a letter of credit which for the sake of convenience they left with their banker and drew checks upon the amount which they supposed was deposited to their credit.

With womanlike carelessness they kept issuing checks until one day they got a note from the bank saying that they had overdrawn their account. Much alarmed they hastened to the banker and found that they owed the bank 400 francs.

They insisted that, according to their reckoning, they should still have 1,000 francs left, but the banker was equally positive that they had not and finally became very angry. In despair they went to their pension. They had only a few francs left. There the landlady confronted them with a returned check and demanded an explanation.

"We couldn't explain," said one of the sisters, "and the landlady became wrathful. She threatened to put us out, have us arrested and confiscate our clothes."

"Sister was in tears, but I promised that our rent should be paid very speedily, and dragged out two dresses as security. When we had pacified the landlady we began to count up the amounts of the stubs of the checkbook."

"We found that we had spent \$400 and should have \$200 left, if the amount of our letter of credit was right. It was several days, however, before we knew what to do beyond paying our watches. Then we went to the American consul and told him our troubles. He went to the banker and had an investigation, which showed that the clerk had cheated us out of \$300."

Of course many a tourist has been robbed and awakened in the morning to find himself without a cent. Sometimes he has been able to borrow from a companion, sometimes he has managed to get a cable through, but never has he recovered the stolen coin.

But the most pathetic story of all is to hear of the man or woman who planned to make the trip abroad on just so much and by the time he or she got to Paris it became painfully evident that a dollar goes about one-half as far as it does in the States.

Anyway, think kindly of the brother or sister who's gone abroad this summer and keep a little extra money on hand. You may need it for a cable.

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