

THE DAILY NOVELETTE

TEN DOLLARS WORTH

By J. STUART LANE

Sally Graham, turning from the treacherous window and opening her pay envelope, found therein her usual very moderate weekly salary, two weeks' advance for her vacation, and an extra \$10 bill, clipped to a slip of paper. Wonderingly she read, and spread for some foolish thing that will add the final touch to your vacation. G. T. Putnam & Co.

Sally's hazel eyes widened in surprise. The tone of the note was almost human. Could it be that George Putnam, for, of course, he was the entire T. Putnam Co., was not the frigid young man her occasional glimpses of him had indicated? Did a kindly heart actually beat beneath the icy front he presented to his employees? Blushing the question as, after all, of little moment, Sally left the Equitable Building with a high and happy heart.

Two weeks' vacation with pay plus ten extra dollars! Oddly enough, that same G. P.—the Arctic explorer's pet name among his employees—had been responsible for Sally's choice of a retreat at which to spend her vacation.

He had interrupted a frigid-feminine friend, Sally's romantic intuition divined—and in the course of conversation had gleefully glowing a certain mountain hamlet on a certain northern lake and disclosed his intention of going there in August. It was the only time Sally had ever known G. P. to go, and she made mental note of the fact that it must be some place to produce such a phenomenon. Also, she figured that she could manage in late September what G. P. could afford at the height of the season.

Consequently, it was on a mellow September day that Sally, her slender, all-weathered figure hidden beneath an enveloping coat, her golden-crowned head disguised under cap and goggles and well stood on a tiny steamer deck, awaiting the culminating event of her vacation, a dollar-a-minute voyage in the seven-passenger hydroplane whose flight she had witnessed with bated, anxious breath, and for one wild ride in which she had resolved to spend her \$10 bill.

Came a distant roar, a speck which neared rapidly, a downward glide, a splash or two, and a swift rush through the water toward the dock. A few minutes later Sally stepped from a row-boat into the slender hull of the hydroplane, one of five other shrouded, goggled passengers.

Immediately followed a deafening roar, a curtain of spray shooting beside her, and then an apparent cessation of all motion as the craft left the water. By the time that Sally's senses were partially adjusted, she was flying at a speed of sixty miles, which actually seemed far less, far above the beautiful lake country undulating below. Then, as the airplane swerved toward the mountains, the engine gave a sudden choking cough or two, caught itself and relapsed into uncanny silence.

Sally's heart missed a beat and she went white, but she did not scream as did two women behind her. The machine, circling, dropping, swung in the air and finally landed with a tremendous splash of water in a pond, glided to shore and crashed into a mass of brush.

One of the men sighed deeply. "Well, we're here," he remarked. And Sally mentally registered the timeliness, adequacy and moderation of the observation.

But it was the pilot upon whom all eyes were turned. Turning from the engine, he drew off his gloves. "Gentlemen, I'm sorry to report, 'No' to get to hear it five miles over the mountain back to the lake. Let's go."

And then something happened which in Sally's eyes, surpassed the marvel of the failure of the beautiful mechanism. She buried one hand in her pocket and slipped off her goggles in preparation for the ordeal ahead, she saw—why, no, it couldn't be! But yes, the man who had said, "We're here!" was, with his glasses off and his nose other than that frigid, Arctic G. P. who, by giving her the \$10, had lured her miles from nowhere on a mountain untrodden, as far as she knew, by men since the days of the Indians!

The little man introduced them "Surely—surely! Miss Graham! Really now!" Well, of all things! What a general person G. P. was when you ran across him right after he'd broken down airplaning!

The hours which followed took toll of both the clothes and spirits of the party. Their rugged way led them through wily thickets, over rocky ridges, down and up gullies, across swamps. Putnam, preceding Sally, held back branches and lent a frequent helping hand. Hungry they grew and, worse than that, thirsty—for some odd whimsy of fate brought them only to water-courses whose beds had dried out in the summer's drought.

And then, at the very end, in sight of the lake, Sally slipped and sprained her ankle. As Putnam carried her the few hundred yards, her thoughts were agonized. How could she, in whose pocketbook was barely enough to see her home, manage now that an accident had overtaken her?

And Putnam, whose thoughts were given over to thinking partly of the pluck the girl in his arms had been showing since the accident and partly of the gentle feel of her in his arms, was startled when a small, meek voice spoke in his ear: "I'm afraid—I may have to ask an advance of salary, Mr. Putnam!"

"But it was not an employer to employ that the man who finally placed her tenderly in the bow of a motorboat which pulled in in answer to their hail, spoke: "I ran up here unexpectedly to see my sister, who has a cottage here for the fall months. It will be a great favor to us both if you will stay with her until you are better."

And Sally, oddly happy in spite of the pain in her foot, was thinking that never again would she get so much for \$10.

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