

The Result of An Infatuation

By EUNICE BLAKE

Two men were sitting together at a table in a cafe in Madrid, the one a young American globe trotter, the other a Spaniard who had taken some pains to cultivate his acquaintance.

"You noticed the lady," said the American, "who sat a few seats in front of us last Sunday at the bullfight, the one in red and black?"

"I noticed that you admired her."

"She is very beautiful. There is something about her to drive a man mad."

"For that reason I shall not introduce her to you."

"You know her?"

"Yes."

"Introduce me."

"That you may be driven mad?"

"It would be very thrilling to be driven mad by her."

"Oh, well, if you insist upon it."

"What is her nationality? She does not look like a Spaniard."

"Italian, but she has dwelt in many lands."

Renaud, the person who was to give the introduction, after asking the lady's permission, took the American to call upon her. She received him graciously.

"Ah, Mr. Albertson," she said, "I am only too glad to make your acquaintance. You Americans interest me. There is none of the bias about you that there is about Europeans. You are so enthusiastic, so generous, so intelligent."

Albertson was as refreshed by these encomiums in behalf of his countrymen as he would have been by a roller on the beach on an August day, especially as a pair of compelling eyes above the lips were fixed upon his while the words were spoken. If a woman has this great power over a man it is usually instantaneous in its effect. It was with Albertson as if he had quaffed an intoxicating nectar. He passed an evening in a delirium and afterward a night dreaming of Senorita Morelli.

His visits were frequent. It cannot be said that his infatuation increased, for it was born perfect. He was full of gratitude to Renaud for the introduction and could not understand why the Spaniard was not also an adorer of the beautiful Italian. Renaud, instead of encouraging him in his passion, told him to have a care not to become too deeply involved.

There was nothing by which Albertson could judge of the lady's social position, for she was a stranger in Madrid and not expected to have a place in society there. She took care to observe the proprieties and would not accept gifts from her admirer except such as a lady might properly receive from a man. But one day when Albertson called upon her he found her irritated at not receiving an expected remittance from her banker. She needed money to make certain payments and the delay was annoying. Albertson asked to be permitted to advance the amount, but was refused for the time being, though the next day, the funds not arriving, his offer was accepted.

Three days elapsed, but no remittance came. Albertson said nothing to Renaud about the loan, but one day when the two men were walking together, passing a gentleman evidently of high degree, Renaud said:

"Behold your rival for the affections of your senorita."

Albertson's heart stood still. He had begun to suspect that there was something wrong about the expected remittance, and this accusation on that account had more effect. However, he repelled the imputation. Renaud told him that if he could get sight of the lady's private papers he would be convinced.

After much discussion Renaud suggested a plan by which Albertson might make the test. Albertson was to take advantage of his intimacy to steal the keys of a certain escretoire in her rooms. Then he was to take her out to dine. While she was gone Renaud was to take the keys, go to the rooms, open the escretoire and bring Albertson any proof he might find there of the existence of his rival.

Albertson at first promptly declined to have anything to do with such prying, but Renaud artfully worked on his jealousy until he consented. He waited and watched some time for an opportunity, but at last it came. He carried the keys away with him and gave them to Renaud. The same afternoon he took the senorita out for a drive.

The next morning he read in a newspaper of the arrest of a woman who called herself Adela Morelli in her apartments. A detective had been watching the lady, who was a noted adventuress. He had used a young American, who was desperately smitten with the woman, to secure certain incriminating papers in her possession. Senorita Morelli was wanted for various crimes, the most important of which was the poisoning of her husband. She would be taken to Italy to be tried for her offenses.

Albertson was crushed. For a time he could not believe his senses. But at last—he had not been repaid the money he had advanced—he saw through the whole scheme. He had been duped not only by the woman, but by Renaud, who, having noticed his infatuation, had introduced him for the purpose of using him to secure evidence needed to obtain her conviction.

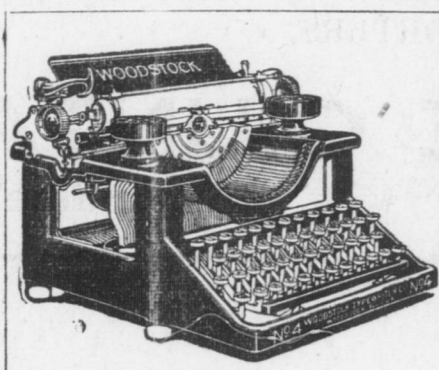
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Backhanded Favoritism.

"I suppose you stand for justice for all men," said the loyal constituent. "Always, always," responded Congressman Hammfatt earnestly. "However, as we can deal out justice to all at the same time, I keep a list of political backsliders whom I try to see get theirs first."—Richmond Times-Dispatch.

IMPROVE YOURSELF.

The happiness of your life and its part and rank in earth or in heaven depend on the way you pass your days now. They are not to be sad days; far from that. The first duty of young people is to be delighted and delightful, but they are to be in the deepest sense solemn days. Now, therefore, see that no day passes in which you do not make yourself a somewhat better creature.—Ruskin.

His Own Boss.

After a man has succeeded in gratifying a long felt desire to be his own boss he is likely to find that he has taken on a burden of responsibility which mars the joy over his success.—Albany Journal.

She Was

He-Man was born in a spark. She was a woman.—Judge.

Girl Babies in Japan.

In Japan all the girl babies have their heads shaved until they are three years old.

The Very Good Man.

"He's forever prating about what his conscience tells him. What does his conscience tell him, anyway?"

"It usually tells him apparently what awful sinners his neighbors are."—Philadelphia Press.

From Experience.

Suitor—What makes you think, sir, that I will not be able to support your daughter?

Her Father—The difficulty that I have had in doing it myself.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

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