

The Maiden and the Beau Gallant

By LOUIS J. VANCE

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MR. RICHARD DORRANCE, meditatively rolling a cigarette, cast about him an approving glance.

"Perfect country," he growled to nobody in particular, though Tom Darby was at hand to hear. "Orange sunshine on the yellow sands, magenta shadows, ultramarine sea, lurid tint of age to beat all creations. This beats tossing around on board a yacht, anyway. Think I'll marry a native and settle down to dream out my days in peace."

He lit the cigarette and sipped over on his back, flourishing heavenward his lengthy and immaculately white duck club legs. Tom Darby resented the resultant display of vivid bores and growled. Darby was in a resentful mood. He had been most comely about Dorrance's private yacht, the Beau Gallant, and saw no earthly reason why he should have been dragged therefrom for a mile's row over the steaming shallows to the end that they might merely loaf on the edge of the beach. Moreover, he was athirst.

"There's not a drink in sight," he said crossly, "nor a suggestion of a breeze. This is plainly the jumping off place. And we'll be caught in the jaws of a thunderstorm if I'm not mistaken."

"Disappointed, you mean?"

"Besides," Darby went on defiantly, ignoring the correction, "who'd have you, I'd like to know?"

"That's immaterial. I'll find some one." He raised his voice and chanted: "Young gentlemen, rich and of distinguished appearance, desires a wife. Object, matrimony. No triflers."

Darby grunted and resumed his disgusted contemplation of Dorrance's sockie. He was about to make an unpleasant remark when both became aware of the presence of a third person.

How she ever got there so quietly Darby could never understand, but she stood before them trim and neat and most desirable in a chic muslin frock and a canary colored hat of some sort, with ribbons, perched saucily atop her curly brown hair. Brown eyes she had, too, and the very devil of mischief lurking in their depths, and rosy lips with the shadow of mirth in their corners. Darby believes that her nose is tipped just the least bit, but he will never dare assert it. At any rate, she was entirely to be adored, with the sun filtering down through the leaves and dotting her with little blurs of light.

Dorrance was on his feet in an instant, and you may believe that Tom Darby was not far behind him. The two stood like idiots, gazing at her as if she had dropped from heaven. And she might have had that, but the dancing eyes were against the theory.

She glanced from the one to the other, apparently enjoying the situation immensely. She fairly laughed when at last she said:

"Good evening, gentlemen."

"Both stammered incoherent responses, and then the young lady calmly pointed at Dorrance with the tip of her dainty parasol.

"I'll marry you," said she. She might have been asking him to tea.

But Dorrance was ever more ready than Darby and lucky. It is but fair to state that Tom was staggered, but Dorrance:

"I'm convinced of that when I laid eyes on you," he said, bowing.

"Just so," she laughed.

And then Darby found his tongue.

"Perhaps you've overlooked me," he said timidly. "Dorrance is all very well, but I have my points." He stuck out his chest, louting low and with a flourish.

"They're well covered," said Dorrance nastily.

"Which one do you herobly respectfully submit to my consideration?" she asked.

"Just so, but you're a trifle late, Mr.—Dorrance, I think you said? Mr. Darrance asked first."

"Darby protested. "But he never imagined."

"Oh, but I did," Dorrance interrupted unblushingly. "I've expected this right along."

"Of course," he said, she added severely. "That was very ungalant of you."

Darby collapsed; he had never learned to accept defeat gracefully.

"Just my luck," he moaned. "I never raised a little dog and learned to love its soft brown eye but what—"

"Oh, dry up," said Dorrance ungraciously enough. "Besides, you have it wrong."

Tom Darby sulked. The maiden eyed Dorrance somewhat approvingly. He returned her gaze with admiring interest, but she kept her countenance—neither spoke till she extended a tiny hand with a firm pink palm.

"Come along," she said, "since we are to be married."

"Ever at your service." And he took the hand.

yacht was beating steadily up against the breeze. "Hendricks can take care of her all right. 'Tisn't every day a fellow gets married."

"No, indeed," Tom Darby assented heartily and followed them. At least he could see Dorrance through even should he fail to keep him from eggregious folly. And he himself was falling into the mad humor of the proceeding.

"Ruth," Dorrance began over his shoulder.

"Who?"

"My fiancée, sir?"

"Oh!"

"Introduce me," she said demurely.

"Ruth, this is my chum, Mr. Tom Darby."

"Thomas Edgerton Darby—"

"Tom, my promised bride, Miss Ruth Wharton."

Again Darby bowed, this time over a pink and white confection of a hand.

"I don't know that she does except as an alternative. This amiable uncle is added about money; wants to get her married, even tried to force her into a match with a—oh, a real dayvillain sort of fellow, Fetter by name. Now, Fetter won't do, according to Ruth. She doesn't want him, or anybody else, for that matter."

"Not even you?"

"Not even me?"

"How do you know?" she queried archly from the doorway, and Darby is positive that a prettier picture never was than she made framed in its rich, sunny darkness. "Are we not engaged?"

"I hope so!" Dorrance cried fervently. "I'll have you if you'll let me, though all the world—"

"Oh, here," Darby exclaimed hastily, "I'm a modest man! Go on with the plot. I begin to see a light."

"Well, then," Ruth took up the thread of narrative, "as a last resort he persuaded me to come down here from Atlanta, knowing that I could never escape. And I never thought, it's twenty miles to the nearest village, eighteen to the nearest railroad. I could not walk it if I tried, and Cassius keeps close watch on me. The horse uncle took with him when he left this morning, saying that he would return this evening. I am positive that he means to bring back with him this odious Mr. Fetter and a clergyman."

"Two and two," said Darby.

"And—and I know you thought me a bold creature this afternoon, but I was desperate, helpless. I could not think what to do. You will help me, dear Mr. Darby, won't you? And, believe me, she plumped down on her knees before him."

Darby was so embarrassed that he jumped as though she had kissed him. He adopted a paternal tone, speaking with the matured judgment of twenty-five years.

"Why, of course, my dear, you may rely on me." He was in a fine conceit with himself for that speech.

"Oh, thank you," she said gratefully.

"No, at all! Not at all!" Darby marvels that he restrained himself from saying, "Tut, tut, my dear!" He added, with a relieving inspiration, "Then the best thing we can do is to get right aboard the Beau Gallant."

"Not in a thousand years," said Dorrance firmly.

"Why?"

Dorrance eyed him curiously. "I've a better plan," he said at length.

"Well?"

"I'll tell you later. For the present you stay here. I'm going to trot down to the beach and signal Hendricks. We dine aboard tonight, you and I."

"That's a mercy. At what time?"

"He is just splendid, isn't he?" said Darby.

"Dorrance? Oh, yes, he's all right. If you marry him?"

"I've promised." She hung her head in such sweet confusion that Tom Darby was more than ever envious.

"But he will not hold you to that promise."

"Indeed," she fumed defiantly, "he has the right!"

"I wish I had," said Darby. "He's a lucky dog."

Here he suddenly executed a backward leap of some several feet. Ruth had whipped out from beneath her skirts a small revolver. To Tom Darby his size approximated that of a cannon.

"Great Scott!" he cried. "You can have him. I'm not thinking of interfering. For a moment her surprise was only equalled by his own. Then she began to laugh convulsively."

"Take it," she gasped. "It's for you."

Darby was suspicious. "What for?"

"You might need it—shouldn't you, Henry come. He—he would be angry."

Darby approached and took the weapon solemnly.

"Is it loaded?" he asked, with trepidation.

"Of course."

"Very well, then," in resignation. He deposited it softly upon a table, convinced that at any second he might be called an involuntary assassin, and retired to a distance. Ruth sat into the hallway. Darby eyed the revolver and swore softly, sighed and lit a cigarette.

Twilight was falling, and from behind him came stifled mirth.

Come 10 o'clock on a cool, starlit night, and the Beau Gallant was speeding westward under a full head of steam. To the north loomed the dim, low coast of Alabama.

In the saloon was assembled a merry party to a champagne supper, of which Dorrance and Tom Darby formed the only self-satisfied members, the others being plunged in deepest gloom despite all attempts to relieve them.

First, Henry Wharton, aged in years and sin, in conversation with his daughter, who was glowing with the spirit of the enterprise; then Mr. Fetter, young and weak-willed, lacking excuse for his existence, but mightily impressed with his own stolidity of selfish selfishness; lastly, a pale, frightened person, a stranger by his dress, but deep in the clutch of a snuff habit; for strong drink—these were the snuffing party.

Mr. Wharton addressed himself to Tom Darby, who was contentedly sipping the breast of a tender chicken. Mr. Wharton shook a lean fat finger in stilled lines at him.

"I'll have the law on you!" he said, pointing with a stick.

"Thank you, your kindness—yes. A name; then, 'I don't know how to thank you, Mr. Darby.'"

"Mr. Darby," he repeated foolishly. He rushed desperately in where both had feared to tread. "There is the way!"

"I—I—of course, I—"

"Oh, then we are agreed?" Her tone was haughty as a princess.

"But didn't mean," he stammered. "You made your meaning plain, sir?"

"Since you feel that way about it?" He turned to go.

"Oh, one moment. I—do not wish that you should think me ungrateful. Indeed, I am not. You have done me a great service, and—"

"And the reward?"

"But I scarcely know you."

"I am sensible that I gave my word."

"But your heart?"

She sighed. "My heart remains mine."

"I know that."

"To bestow—oh!"

She had been toying with her ring, a tiny affair studded with a single stone. It had slipped from her fingers and splashed in the fountain. Dorrance was instant to plunge his arm in to the el-

"Three thousand," he smiled.

"Oh, make it worth while and I'll raise you, pop," cried Fetter.

"Five?"

"No," said Dorrance.

"Ten, then. I'll give you ten!"

Mr. Wharton's hands were trembling violently. Dorrance politely filled his glass for him. He tossed it off eagerly.

"Twenty?" he pleaded.

"Fifty?" Darby whistled. "I had no idea the stakes were so high."

Mr. Wharton hesitated; every moment was now of consequence. He stammered painfully.

"Fifty-fifty thousand," he managed to say.

Dorrance rose and looked at his watch. "You have no security to offer but your word," he said wearily, "and this is no time for a standstill. Mr. Wharton's jaw moved loosely, but no sounds came.

"Moreover," Dorrance continued, "I don't need your money, nor do I want it."

"I'll have the law on you," Wharton repeated sullenly. Hope was dead in his breast.

"I wouldn't if I were you. And you what to do. This is rather a noxious business which you've attempted—and failed at. Your credit would suffer were it known. So you will say nothing. I'm happy to inform you that you're too late. It is 11 o'clock, and your ward will be her own mistress in one hour."

Dorrance walked to the door and gave an order. The captain began to move more slowly, and the Beau Gallant came almost to a standstill. Mr. Wharton spluttered threats and obscenities.

"I believe you were right," said Dorrance to him. "We do not desire your company after all. Come on deck. I'll put you ashore now."

The four followed him.

"That is 'Mobbie,'" he said, indicating a light on the northern horizon.

"There is a landing here and a fair road. By hard walking you should reach it in the early morning. Thence you can get home by noon if you're lucky. But by that time Ruth and I will be married."

"So that's your game," Fetter sneered. "I thought you didn't care for the money."

"My dear sir," said Dorrance, unmoved, "when you have associated with decent people for any length of time—if you ever do—your thoughts may be of some consequence. At present your opinion is of absolutely no moment."

"The boat is ready, sir," a man reported.

"A fascinating occupation," said a philologist, "to search the language for palindromes. A palindrome is a word that reads the same backward as forward. Rotator, for instance, is a palindrome. Several hundreds of these strange words are tabulated, and new ones are continually turning up in the English tongue. If you can find one send it to the Palindrome society of New York."

"I can rattle off extempore a dozen or two palindromes. Thus:

"Bob, rotor, dib, Anna, tot, bob, peep, eye, foot, dad, madam, deed, pop, did, deed, noon, dived, lat, did, dials, eye, revolver, ewe, rotator, gog, pop, gig, gog, redder, level, noon, Otto, sexes."

Philosophical Bulletin.

Gambetta and Napoleon's Portrait.

When Gambetta, accompanied by Jules Favre, arrived in the hall of the Hotel de Ville, where he was officially to read the proclamation of the 31st French republic, the crowd which followed the two deputies caught sight of a fine portrait of Napoleon III, hanging on a wall. They promptly tore it down and were about to smash it to pieces when Gambetta intervened. Turning the portrait to the wall, he said: "My friends, we have put up with the original for twenty years. Let us be content today to turn his face to the wall. It is all he deserves."

Why, then?

"Did you finish your shopping today, my dear?" said the model husband.

"Yes, I think so," answers the trusting wife.

"You think so?"

"I don't know, though. You see, I went to get my hat and there were so many and all of them so pretty that I got five of them."

"Five? Why did you do that?"

"I really—I must have lost my head."

"In that case, why get a hat at all?"—Chicago Tribune.

Rules For Writers.

Frederick W. Seaward said that when he first started in at newspaper work Thurston Wood said to him: "I will give you two rules to begin with. First, never write anything without some definite point and purpose; second, when you have written it, take your pen and go over it to see how many words and sentences you can strike out and how much you will thereby improve the article."

Beamed.

"Bigger's manager has promised to give a presentation of that comedy of mine," said Dr. Ritter, "but I don't know when it's to come off."

"Probably the night after it's put on," suggested Critchick.—Catholic Standard and Times.

He had both no inward beauty and outward none, though all around he beeth—Young.

Southern Pines Doesn't Want Negro Residents.

Southern Pines is a resort town in Moore county. The place was developed by Northern people and the residents are nearly all Northerners. Recently two colored ministers acquired property in the town and the Raleigh Times tells the story:

"There was a bowl and a petition, signed by 20 of the citizens and property-holders of Southern Pines, was presented, in which they described the proposed acts of the negroes and stated without beating about the bush that 'we believe that they can truly be declared public nuisances, and that they will militate against the best interest of the town and its future government. By permitting these buildings to be erected and occupied by their owners, and others whom they will induce to occupy them, the property owned by citizens in that section of the town will be made to greatly depreciate in value, and the loss in assessed valuation there will be far greater to the town than can possibly be gained by permitting them to be built.'"

Thereupon the colored ministers sent the following to the mayor:

"We wish, to state that it is not our wish to thrust ourselves as unwelcome citizens upon the town, and, under existing conditions, will for the worth of our property, dispose of it, and relinquish our intention to become property owners within the corporate limits of Southern Pines."

William Simpson Dead.

Raleigh, N. C., June 23—William Simpson, Grand Treasurer of the North Carolina Grand Lodge of Masons; ex-president of the American Pharmaceutical Association, and a leading citizen of Raleigh, died at his home in this city tonight, aged 66 years. He conducted a drug business in Raleigh in thirty years until failing health necessitated his retirement. He was prominently connected with the State and American Pharmaceutical associations many years and was one of the highest Masons in the country. The funeral will be conducted in this city Sunday afternoon.

THE "LAZY" MICROBE.

A learned Professor claims to have discovered that "Laziness" is caused by a germ. If the Eminent Doctor is right, Rydale's Liver Tablets can rightly be termed Microbe Killers, because they always remove that tired, lazy, sluggish feeling that has usually been attributed to a torpid liver or constipated bowels. Rydale's Liver Tablets are guaranteed to cure constipation and all liver disorders. They are small, compressed chocolate coated tablets, easy to take, pleasant in effect. Reliable. Any dealer in our remedies will return your money if you are not satisfied with these tablets. 50 tablets 25 cts. J. C. Simmons Drug Co.

Charlotte Observer: It is said that the Yancey county commissioners have declined to pay interest on bridge bonds because the structure was not satisfactorily constructed. The owners of the bonds, who are residents of Ohio, had nothing to do with the bridge contract, having only paid cash for the bonds. If correctly stated, this is about the rankest instance of repudiation yet attempted in North Carolina. It is as if a man borrow money and make an unprofitable deal with a third party and refuse on that account to pay back the amount borrowed. The courts will in all probability decide for the bond-holders.

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North Carolina Patents.

Granted this week: Reported by C. A. Snow & Co., Patent Attorneys, Washington, D. C.—Stuart W. Cramer, Charlotte, Machine for dyeing, &c.; William T. McCormick, Charlotte, Automatic Controller for filter, &c.; Olmeda C. Wyson, Greensboro, Mortaring-machine. For copy of any of above patents send ten cents in stamps with date of this paper to C. A. Snow & Co., Washington, D. C.

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