

Goose and Gander

Sauce For One Is
Sauce For the Other.

By G. Vere Tyler.

The papering on the parlor wall of the apartment was scarlet. It brought out the two figures, a man and a woman, with decisive sharpness.

They were seated facing each other, she on the couch, he in a chair. Both possessed charm. The man's had been enhanced by contact with the world of which he was distinctly a part. The woman's, which included beauty, had been slightly marred. Silence had fallen between them. He was looking beyond her; she at him. Finally, turning abruptly, the man burst forth passionately: "By all the gods above, Miriam, how did you come to do it?"

"It was the wine, I suppose," she answered fearfully.

"The wine! Why ten thousand barrels of wine shouldn't cause you to stand up in a public restaurant and attempt to fling a coffee cup in another woman's face!"

She looked thoughtful. "No—I know that."

"Then what made you?"

She lifted her eyes to him. "You!" she burst forth.

"Nonsense!"

"Harold—"

"No, listen! Let me give you a detailed account of this performance of yours! To all appearances, a dignified woman, the embodiment of everything sweet and lovable, at a dinner in a Bohemian dining place, where she had been taken as an on-looker of the hoydenish performances of a lot of temporarily irresponsible people, suddenly, with the gesture of a mad woman, hurled a cup at an inoffensive woman!"

"She wasn't inoffensive!"

"Bah! The girl hadn't done a thing!"

"Don't let's discuss it," she exclaimed, rising, but immediately re-sitting herself.

"I will discuss it! I don't know what to think of you. You aren't even ashamed of it!"

"I am!"

"Then offer some explanation! Upon my word, after this, I wouldn't feel safe to go about with you to public places. This insane jealousy of yours—"

Her eyes flashed. "Stop!" she implored.

For a while there was silence. Then he broke it impulsively. "Do you yourself know how you could do such a thing?"

"Yes, I do; but it wouldn't be any excuse in your eyes, Harold!" Her voice was sharp. "I love you so—"

"Which has nothing whatever to do with what we are discussing!" he interjected, unappeased.

"I know it doesn't seem to. Dear, don't reproach me any more."

He sprang up and strode about the room. "I'd give ten years of my life if you hadn't done it!"

She arose and approached him. "You see, dearest, I had been drinking that bad wine—I mean that, of course, had a great deal to do with it. But it wasn't the real cause! I would, in the circumstances, have felt the same—seen the same vision—that caused me to do what I did. If there never had been any wine on earth! Suppose," she went on excitedly, "that without warning you suddenly seemed to find yourself in a small Inferno, and that in the fumes of bad wine, through the clouds of foul smoke, there leered at you one small insignificant face in which all the feminine vices of the world seemed concentrated; wouldn't you feel impelled to obliterate it?"

"I shouldn't think of attempting it with an after-dinner coffee cup," he sneered.

"Suppose that one face, the look of it, hissed at everything you held good and sacred and sweet and pure on earth; wouldn't you feel justified in attacking it?"

"No," he replied firmly. "I would not."

"You don't understand."

"I confess I do not."

"It wasn't what you thought it was," she pleaded. "If it had been you would have the right to upbraid me just as you have done; to say even worse things, and I would have to stand them! But it wasn't that! It was not jealousy, but a surging up of my best feelings that lashed me at the second into insanity and kindled my contempt—contempt that was not even of her!"

"May I ask of what?" he inquired with sarcasm.

"Of all the feminine vices," she burst forth, "that appeared, as I told you, embodied in her small face. And Harold, it seemed to me that if I could strike a fair blow at it, I could rid the world of them! It was as though I was commanded by some unseen force—"

"Wine," the man interrupted quietly.

"I know it was the wine—or partly—I haven't denied that; but there was something not induced by wine—a sudden indignant fury against the worst part of woman's nature that seemed uncoiled, as it were, and snake-like darting its poison. Ah!" she wrung her hands for a moment, "that worst part of woman—you don't know it! A man never sees a bad woman as she is; he is always blinded! Don't sneer that way and look so coldly at me, it makes me forget what I wanted to say." An appeal lit up her face. "What attracted you to me was the spiritual—the strong and true—that's what you have always told me—haven't you? When I saw all that was best in woman being laughed at and what was worst offered you, and saw you assailable, the

best in me was momentarily obliterated! Can't you understand?"

"No!"

"You see, I saw how little the good women have to fight the others with—I mean those who have only goodness for a weapon. I saw them without beauty, without charm, and it terrified me. I really believe I went mad for the moment. I saw there, spread out before me, in its ghostly agony, all the suffering of the poor, neglected, heart-broken women who rely upon their goodness to hold their husbands, and, involuntarily, I took up the battle for them! I flung that cup, not at the girl at all—not at all, dear. She herself was lost in the vision she had brought up—a vision so full of anguish and despair that a battlefield

of the dead and wounded would pale beside it! I saw the helpless, lingering agony of female martyrs of virtue, and I flung that cup at the face of all the feminine infamy of the world!"

She paused breathless and her husband suddenly burst into a rather bolsterous laugh.

"What are you laughing at?"

"My dear girl, at the wonderful workings of the feminine mind! I have no the least doubt that at this moment you believe every word you are saying. The female mind is so used to self-deception that under proper conditions and given sufficient impetus it can invent and turn out anything! It formulates ideas with such little compunction and with such ingenuity that they actually appear sincere to the author of them!"

"What are you talking about?"

"Your own case! Listen to it! In a public dining place a wife becomes suddenly jealous of another woman tendering a husband a certain savory, highly seasoned dish, not served to

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