

WHEN CUPID WAS THE VENZEL

STRIVINGS OF A SKAT CLASS END IN A REFOULSH.

Schleim and the Frerherr Find Widows Trumps and Miss de Clinghe Acquires a New Night-Perspiring Consensus a Better Card Than Dry Self-Command.

The telephone bell rang, and Justice, whose name in private life was Ellen Murphy, struggled with it. Then she stepped from the private hall into Mrs. Rompleigh's bedroom on the eleventh floor of the Shaftston Arms apartment hotel.

"Lady to see you, ma'am. She's coming up."

"Oh, Justice! You know I was going out. Who is she?"

"Don't know, ma'am."

"Oh, Justice!"

But Mrs. Rompleigh took another look at her new skirt and realized that it was all right—very all right, in fact—so she smiled faintly and concluded: "It doesn't matter. Let her come."

While the visitor is coming up in the elevator it may be mentioned that Mrs. Rompleigh is a lady of means, living on her alimony. She is under 30 years, 5 feet 7 inches, in the hope of her impression that she is statu quoque beautiful.

When she entered her sitting room and faced her heart to heart friend, Miss de Clinghe, a tall person with a small fortune and a blight in her life, her first thought was: "How lucky that I'm all prinked up! I wouldn't have been caught dowdy for a supper at Shelly's."

"Oh, you are a dear. How lovely of you to surprise me. I was just scolding Justice for springing a call on me when I was rigged in this dinky old rag. But as it's you, dear—sit down and tell me the news."

"Got anything on for to-day, Dolly?" asked Miss de Clinghe. Mrs. Rompleigh's name on ceremonial occasions was Dorothy Augusta.

"Why—began to lady cautiously."

"Because I was going to ask you to join a couple of us girls that—"

"Is it bridge?"

"No-o-o-o-o! Don't be a back number, Dolly. Bridge is all over the river. I've come to save you by steering you into the new game on the very first deal."

"Great Scott!"

"Yes, that's it; but how did you know?"

"I didn't, Minerva, and if it really Scott I decline to know."

"Don't be clammy, Dolly. I wouldn't waste a reading club on you. I came to propose—"

But right there the telephone in the hall rang and both ladies caught their breath. Miss de Clinghe, in the hope of hearing something worth while, and Mrs. Rompleigh in terror lest she should, it was only another caller, and in a minute Mrs. Symptom undulated into the room.

"She was the real thing in widows, and in fact she was only two-thirds of a standard widow she gave full measure in circumference. When the kissing was over she opened fire in an appalling way."

"Miss de Clinghe, I'm going to ask dear Dolly to say 'hello' to your number. I thought you might like to come in for I'm going to show Dolly a new stunt. A couple of girls have backed out of our skat class and I thought you two might like to take their places to-morrow."

"Skat!" ejaculated Miss de Clinghe. "Indecent, how funny. Why, that's the very thing I came to tell Dolly on. I was going to take her to our class to-day because a couple of dear home bodies as slow as a subway express had phoned me they wouldn't play any more."

"But you said Scott," put in Mrs. Rompleigh.

"No, I didn't. It was you said that, and I wonder where you picked up the General's wit on it."

"Who's your teacher?" drawled Mrs. Symptom.

"Prof. Schleim. Who's yours?"

"Oh, Schleim. I hear he plays the guck to lay away game, and that's not the real thing, you know. I want to play the style the Kaiser and King Edward play. Our teacher is Dr. von Eisenbart. He studies the present tenses of his dictionary and plays good to find the real German university game."

"But I hear von Eisenbart is dead," snapped Miss de Clinghe, as if that was final.

"No, he isn't; and I'm sure he was an army officer. He can't help looking up to him. He is a born commander."

They settled it by agreeing to try both instructors, and Mrs. Symptom's auto whisked them off to the house near Riverside Drive where Schleim was to hold forth.

They found him tall and moist with hay colored hair worn pompadour and a curly mustache. He could have easily filled two chairs at a university, but had hitherto functioned only as a tutor at young ladies' schools.

He was growing all but thin at this game when he had the happy idea of advertising complete courses of skat in six lessons. Since then he had become busy and prosperous.

"Dis being lesson nombre eree of our series," he began, "I go on ze printzapt say you remember ze two older. Soh, ass ze say I pluntesch on ze practiss of se gehm. Soh!"

The older pupils finished, but Miss de Clinghe was ready with an excuse. She reminded him that the two new comers had not enjoyed the earlier lessons.

"Ah soh!" responded the professor. "Alooh, I reref in a few ferriss. Vitah is a gehm of Cherman orichin vitah makhs sat se termer as mostly Cherman, but easly onderstehd by se smart American ledies."

"Alooh, I vill esplehne. Se gehm is plehd by fife, four or seef, of whuhm vun is se dealer. Se ohlohers is called fohrhant, mitelohant und inderhant, respektlich."

"All se chacks iss trumpfs und iss bronounced venzels. Ven you haf goot hand you schneider. Ven you haf a more besere one, you schwartz. Ven your partneer plehs a goot cart out, tohks a trick, you schmeck him viss a goot cart. You onderstehnd? Soh!"

"You haf se chohice of elefen gehms, from vintsch, iss sehrefro no longer plehd and tohks all ze way zee zee zee zee. Soh, now you onderstehnd se hull gehm you begin zee zee zee. Ahloh!"

Every woman pretended she had absorbed the whole business for fear the others would think she hadn't. Schleim set the cards and looked patiently to guide his pupils through the first play.

With almost every card laid down he delivered a tangled lecture full of technicalities and terms, and in the end he looked ten years older and 100 per cent cheaper—a regular marked down suitor. Even Mrs. Symptom saw that he was plucked.

In the street he reflected: "I still have de Clinghe." But she was worth while! He determined to settle with her, and he happened that in fifteen minutes Justice admitted him to Mrs. Rompleigh's sitting room.

"Oh, Justice! You know I was going out. Who is she?"

"Don't know, ma'am."

"Oh, Justice!"

dry and snappy. He did not really believe only the intense study of that pushed back the hair line from his forehead in the course of a good many years he had played it.

He advertised himself as a German nobleman who had lost a million marks in mastering the game, and he engaged to teach the student for \$500 a year in five treatments. His plan of instruction was remarkable.

He never told his pupils anything, because he was convinced they wouldn't understand. He never tried to make them understand, because he held a fixed belief that that women never understood anything.

What he did was start a game and keep it going by playing all the hands himself. He would let them see the cards and complimented them on their quick intelligence and skill. Throughout he kept up an illusion of being dictatorial. He was a sort of schoolmaster and all the women were a trifle afraid of him.

After their five lessons the learners proposed to try a game by themselves. He refused to play with them, but he would let them play alone without any more lessons. In his heart every one of them intended to take another series, but each was too timid to get into all the rest.

They sadly missed the dictator. Every one had her own idea of the rules and there was no one to arbitrate. The game wouldn't move forward, and Mrs. Symptom's helplessness. She was so pathetic when crossed that the bigger and harder women came to her just to help the men, did.

First they've her deal and she was happy. Then she found she couldn't play and made a face as if her doll had been taken from her only for Mrs. Symptom's helplessness. She was so pathetic when crossed that the bigger and harder women came to her just to help the men, did.

"Why can't I play?" she whimpered. "The professor said it was a four hand game."

"That's only the name of a hand," replied Mrs. Supple, a filler in the class. "But what do I do while you're playing?"

"Look on as you do at bridge."

"But that's why I gave up bridge. I hate to be left out."

"Oh, we're only practicing," said Mrs. Rompleigh. "Just make believe I dealt and you play."

"You're a dear," cooed Mrs. Symptom, all smiles again, but I don't want to be treated like a baby."

"Now, Josie," said Miss de Clinghe, "you must make the first bid to forehead."

"What must I say?" bleated Mrs. Symptom.

"You'd better look over her cards and help her," suggested Mrs. Supple.

Mrs. Rompleigh recommended a bid of two.

"Two" piped Mrs. Symptom enthusiastically.

"Miss de Clinghe," said Mrs. Symptom. "Now say six to bindhand," prompted Mrs. Rompleigh, and Mrs. Supple passed also.

"Now, then, Josie, announce your game."

"Anything I like," said Mrs. Symptom, "but I don't want to be treated like a baby."

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what an enemy. That should have been her professor. Why didn't you map her up? You're the man for her. The temptation was too great for Eisenbart. He was talking mechanically before he knew how or why, and this is what he said:

"There are one grade principal reason why that was impossible. I could not do it, and that degradation brings me to a scabbard that I most treasure this fortunate occasion to present to you."

By the time he had finished about his eyes and ears and his hands and feet as well as his own. Rompleigh was gazing at him only half quizzically.

"If you're looking for your million marks, professor," she said, "you're at the wrong bank. I'm not even a suspended trust company. I haven't a dollar to my name, but my all-my-allowance of \$3,000 a year is far too little for one. So where would you come in? You'd be almost better off with Mrs. Clinghe with her insurance money all tied up to keep her off the stage."

Eisenbart looked faded and limp.

"And still," Mrs. Rompleigh went on, "you might do well to keep up your eyes. We might try well in double harness, or maybe I'd better say in tandem."

"You're a dear," said Mrs. Clinghe, and she pulled Mrs. Rompleigh up and do the hard pulling. "You're a business man, professor. Why did you advertise to teach skat in five lessons? You know you couldn't."

"Now, you stick to your offer and make me the Frerherr or Lady Baron or whatever you call em, and we'll teach skat together. You can't get up and I'll collect the price. In a couple of years we'll be financing South American republics."

The cards are out.

THE OPIUM SMOKER'S PIPE.

It May Cost \$300 and Grow in Value the More It is Smoked.

An opium smoking layout consists of about a dozen distinct articles, although only half of them are absolutely necessary for smoking, and in case of emergency a person could get along with four—pipe, bowl, lamp and yehook. Of these the pipe is first in importance.

Opium pipes vary in size, price, color, material, quality and beauty. Those of the better grade are made of ivory, and are used only by well to do smokers. They cost anywhere from \$25 to \$300. The pipes generally used are made entirely from bamboo and cost anywhere from \$1 to \$50. These pipes relate to old pipes, bought at a second hand.

A new bamboo pipe, which no one cares to smoke until it has been thoroughly seasoned, costs several dollars. It is light brown or yellowish tint and resembles a piece of fishing pole in appearance. Only after continuous smoking for perhaps several years will it begin to develop that rich, glossy brown color similar to a meerschaum tobacco pipe—a color so much desired by smokers. In fact, there is really more difference between a good opium pipe and a poor one than there is between a high grade French briar tobacco pipe and a Missouri cornucop.

The average opium pipe is eighteen or twenty inches in length, although they often come as long as two feet and as short as twelve inches. They also vary in circumference. Some are an inch, others are two inches in diameter. Even on the mouthpiece an inch or so in length. From the mouthpiece to the saddle is the body of the pipe proper. The saddle is that part which holds the bowl in place and is generally situated about half way between the centre of the stem and the end. On the ordinary pipes the saddles are of tin or brass, on the finer pipes they are of silver, and gold is sometimes used.

Immediately behind the saddle is a fantastically formed knob of half an inch to several inches in height that is an outgrowth of the wood and is termed the nut or hoodoo. A well shaped and nicely polished hoodoo is highly appreciated and valued by smokers, both Caucasian and Mongolian. Superstition forbids the latter from ever smoking a stem that has no hoodoo on it, in fact, all opium pipes minus these queer knobs are regarded as being fit only for foreigners.

Sometimes Chinese make artificial hoodoos of sealing wax or clay, placing them on heathen pipes and palming the counterfeiters off on unsophisticated foreigners for a good price. Opium pipes pass for collateral security in nearly all the pawnshops in the large cities, but if one were to try either to pawn or sell a stem that had no hoodoo on it he would find that to experience considerable difficulty.

There is only one way of testing an opium pipe without smoking it, and that is to feel its weight. Pipes of quality and value are invariably heavy from continuous smoking; those that haven't been smoked much are light in both weight and color. The longer an opium pipe has been used the better it is. A great deal depends on the quality of opium smoked and on the care the stem has had.

Often a smoker on getting a new pipe will place it in the care of some Chinaman running an opium joint, and will be given a large number of smokers, with the object of having it used as much as possible for a period of six months or a year. This is the best way to keep the pipe in shape. This is the only known method of having a pipe broken in quickly.

In addition to the manufacturing of hoodoos clever Chinese also have ways of their own for doctoring opium pipes so as to give them an appearance of age. Not all of the opium pipes used in this country are made of bamboo by any means. In a search of the pawnshops of the large cities like New York, Chicago and Philadelphia one will find stems made from so many different kinds of wood he will probably not even know the names of them all.

Opium smokers often decorate their pipes with precious stones. The poorer smokers, not to be outdone by their more fortunate brothers, often have imitation stones stuck on their pipes, but as a matter of fact all around their pipes.

PRICES UP AT BAYREUTH.

Again the Theatre Ticket Speculators Are Driving Hard Bargains.

Once again theatre ticket speculators are driving hard bargains in Bayreuth festival tickets. At Bayreuth itself huge bills are posted announcing that all the twenty performances, from July 22 to August 20, are sold out.

Professional ticket dealers watch for this announcement to start on their campaign. It is chiefly to the American public that they look for custom, and it is on record that a \$5 seat for a Parsifal performance will sometimes sell for \$50 or more.

The Parsifal management tries to keep the seats for the public, but as a matter of fact the sale of tickets is exercised this year than before it has availed little. The tickets are bought up by the same persons acting for the dealers, and so it comes about that the German papers just now are full of advertisements offering seats at Bayreuth while the tickets are announced to be unobtainable.

How Diamonds Burn.

From the Minneapolis Journal.

The jeweller, at closing time, was putting his diamonds in a safe. He was about to close the door when two watchmen walk the shop all night?"

"On account of fire," the jeweller replied. "Diamonds are nothing but coal—carbon—being burned beautifully. Their hardness makes them think them indestructible. But as a matter of fact a few diamonds would be the brakes of a steam engine."

"Put a handful of diamonds on a plate and set a light to them. They will burn with a hard, sparkling flame, and when they are all gone there will be no smoke, no soot, and at the end of the plates will be as clean as though just washed. The slightest particle even of ash will remain."

MAJOR MAX AND DONA INEZ

Views on Suffragettes, Gila Monkeys and a Mining Camp Hostess.

"A chapter dealing with the revived woman suffrage movement is so manifestly essential to the completeness of my book that I am disposed not to write off to-day, but to interrupt my labors until the movement has culminated," remarked Major Max.

"You will have to wait some time, won't you?" suggested Mrs. Max. "But perhaps that will not cause you undurable grief."

She smiled in the enjoyment of a rare indulgence. You can't get up and I'll collect the price. In a couple of years we'll be financing South American republics."

"You might do well to keep up your eyes. We might try well in double harness, or maybe I'd better say in tandem."

"You're a dear," said Mrs. Clinghe, and she pulled Mrs. Rompleigh up and do the hard pulling. "You're a business man, professor. Why did you advertise to teach skat in five lessons? You know you couldn't."

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The cards are out.

"Polly Slangur made an outrageous comment on that piece of work you hold so gently in your hands, my dear," said the Major after a thoughtful pause. "The drumheadlike piece of white stuff wherewith admirable deliberation his wife took an occasional stitch."

"All of Polly's comments are outrageous. What did she say?"

"She told me, with that injunction to accompany which was an command for me to re-act to the remark to you, that Mrs. Jack Darter, who you had been talking about as a table d'hop when you and Mrs. Jack were girls at Mrs. Hoffman's school on Thirty-eighth street, and she hoped you would finish it before the fashion of embroidered cravens got out of date, as she yearns to get it as a top for a lid—whatever that may mean. Polly says she is going to become a suffragette."

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sight of a Gila monkey, would cause unnecessary doubts to arise in him."

"Was she pretty?" asked Mrs. Max, looking down to the fountain for Marjorie.

"Was she pretty?" the Major asked in surprise.

"The woman in your story. Is there not a woman?"

"Sure, or else there were no story. There were we—ah, the lights of Panamint."

"As we drew near to the camp there were shouts of angry cries, the sound of firearms. Reaching the one street of the camp we saw what appeared to be two mobs of men: now one would retreat, the other advance, then the fortunes of war would turn and those who had given way would charge. They brandished picks and shovels, some fired revolvers."

"It was as if a mob scene on the stage. That I can't say."

"As our little force, ready for any emergency, marched to the centre of the camp, those who seemed to have been in fierce and deadly combat ceased their action, their alarms, parted a way for us—the way led straight to the hotel—and stood on either side, grinning goodnaturedly."

"In a couple of hours we were camped near, then I walked over to the hotel. I saw a number of men in earnest conversation with a comely woman, who withdrew as I approached. The men sought to avoid me, but I got a fair look at them in the light of a reflector lamp."

"There was another stagelike riot in the morning, and while our men were held in readiness I imparted my notion of the state of affairs to our Captain, and he said he would take no active steps to preserve the peace until I had looked over the ground again."

"I found the noisy mobs as on the night before advancing, retreating, threatening with picks and shooting—in the air. There were no casualties. What interested me even more was the not wholly unexpected discovery that the factions were led by the men I had seen talking with the comely woman."

"Then I called on her. She was the landlady's wife, and had been born to a higher station in life might have accompanied her husband into the White House."

"How was she dressed?" Mrs. Max inquired with calm interest, having discovered that Marjorie was outside the fountain instead of in it. "And you have not told me how she looked?"

"A dull red calico was loosely draped her shapely figure, on her small feet hung loosely a pair of her husband's carpet slippers, and her abundant black hair was roughly pyramided on the exact middle of the top of her head. I judged that she was what is there called half native-half American, half California Spanish."

"Well, General," she said, giving me her hand with unfeigned cordiality, "there sure is hell to pay here."

"There is," I replied, "and you have stage managed it well."