

the public restaurant instead of at her own private table. Philippe acquainted her with the joys and griefs of his difficult profession. There were fourteen thousand waiters in New York, if, by waiters, you meant any one. Of course there were not so many like Philippe, men of the world and their three years as sub-waiters; men who spoke English, French and German, who knew something of cooking, how to dress a salad, and how to carve. Only such, it appeared, could be members of the exclusive Gentlemen's Club that procured a place for you when you were idle, and paid you eight dollars a week when you were sick.

Having the qualifications, one could earn twenty-five dollars a month in salary and three or four times as much in gratuities. Philippe's income was never less than one hundred and twenty dollars a month; for he was not one who had come from Europe as a master, after two seasons at Paris where a man acquires his polish. His perfection of manner, his finish, his grace—Philippe could never win enough prize that post-graduate course at the Maison d'Or, where he had personally known—madame might not believe it—the incomparable Casimir, a chef who served two generations of epicures, princes, kings, statesmen, travelling Americans—all the truly great.

With his own lips Casimir had told him, Philippe, of the occasion when Dumas, pere, had invited him to dinner that they might discuss the esoterics of salad dressing; also of the time when he had been with the Marquis de St. Georges embracing Casimir for inventing the precious soup that afterward became famous as Potage Germaine. And now the skilled and puissant Casimir had retired. It was a waltz, a Maizy, a Polka, a Mazurka, no longer to be what they had been.

For that matter, since one must live Philippe preferred it to be in America, for in no other country could an adept acquire so much money. And Philippe knew the whole dining world. With Celine and the baron Philippe had secured an apartment that would really amaze madame by its appointments of luxury, in East Thirty-eighth street, and only the four flights to climb. And Paul was three, the largest of his age, quite the largest, that either Philippe or Celine had ever held. Even his brother, who had a restaurant of their own serving the table d'hote at two and one-half francs the plate, with wine—even these wore they had never seen an infant so big, for his years, as Paul.

And so Mrs. Bines grew actually to feel an interest in the creature and his wretched affairs, and even fell into the deplorable habit of saying, "I must come to see you and your wife and Paul some pleasant day, Philippe," and Philippe, being a man of the world, thought no less of her for believing that she did not mean it.

Yet it befell on an afternoon that Mrs. Bines found herself in a populous side-street, driving home from a visit to the rheumatic scrub-woman who had now and then supported by the papers her miserable offspring sold. Mrs. Bines had never seen so many children as flooded this street. She wondered if an orphan asylum were in the neighborhood. And though the day was pleasantly warm, she decided that there were about her at least a thousand cases of incipient pneumonia, for not one child in five had on a hat. They raged and dashed and ripped from curb to curb so that they might have made her think of a swift mountain trail in the bottom of a gloomy canyon, but that the worthy woman was too literally-minded for such fancies. She only warned the man to drive slowly.

And then by a street sign she saw that she was near the home of Philippe. It was three o'clock and he would be resting from his work. The man found the number. The waves parted and plied themselves on either side in hushed wonder as she entered the hallway and searched for the name on the card under the door. She had never known the surname, and on the two cards "Ph." appeared. She rang one of the bells, the door mysteriously opened with a repeated double click, and she began the toilsome climb. The waves of children fell together behind her in turbulent play again.

At the top she breathed a moment and then knocked at a door before her. A voice within called: "Entrez!" and Mrs. Bines opened the door.

It was the tiny kitchen of Philippe. Philippe himself, in shirt sleeves, sat in a chair tilted back close to the gas range, the Courier des Etats in his hands and Paul on his lap. Celine, in a white shirt and bosom of a gentleman's white shirt on an ironing board supported by the backs of two chairs.

Hemmed in the corner by this board and by the gas range, seated at a table covered by the oilcloth that simulates the marble of the most famous quarries, sat, undoubtedly, the Baron Rouault de Palliac. A steaming plate of spaghetti a la Italian was before him, to his left a large bowl of salad, to his right a bottle of red wine.

For a space of three seconds the entire party had been as if it were being photographed under time exposure. Philippe and the baby stared, motionless. Celine stared, resting no slight weight on the hot flatiron. The Baron Rouault de Palliac stared, his fork poised in the air. Then it had mastered her meaning. Then he had mastered her meaning. Then he put both hands to his head and turned to the sideboard as if to conceal his emotion.

"That's it," he said, as he busied himself with a tall glass and the cracked ice. "It's that 'no-breakfast' fad. I didn't think you knew about it. The fact is," he continued, pouring out a measure of brandy and directing the butler to open a bottle of soda, "we all eat too much. After a night of sound sleep we awaken refreshed and buoyant, all our forces replenished; thirsty, of course, but not hungry"—he sat down to the table and placed both hands again to his head—"and we have no need of food. Yet such is the force of custom that we deaden ourselves for the day by tanking up on coarse, luscious food, like bacon, eggs, butter, and one would think, the way you two eat so early in the day, that you were a couple of cave-dwellers—the kind that always loaded up when they had a chance because it might be a week before they got another."

"Now, why not be reasonable?" he continued, pleadingly. "You know there is plenty of food. I have observed it being brought into town in huge wagon loads in the early morning on many occasions. Why do you want to behave in this way? Why do you want to starve you? Why stupy yourselves when, by a little fresh and bright and clear-headed as I am at this moment? Why doesn't a man make his own escape. Mrs. Carstep-Jam-wudn't you believe you feel right, either. I just know you've got an awful headache right now. Do let the man give you a nice piece of this steak."

"Don't, I beg of you, Lady Ashmorton! The suggestion is extremely repugnant to me. Besides, I'm not behaving in this way because my head was a fine large acordon and that some meddler had drawn it out too far. I'm sportively pretending that I can press it back into shape. Now I have a headache as with any such light poetic novel attempt to deceive me." He glanced over the table with swift disapproval.

"Strawberries, oatmeal, rolls, steak three inches thick, bacon, omelette—oh, that I should live to see this day! It's disgraceful! And at that age—before your own right child and leading her into the same excesses. Do you know what that breakfast is No. 78 in that book of Mrs. Rorer's, and she expressly warns everybody that it can be eaten safely only by the most robust and planless and steeple climbers and pianists and other people who, Mrs. Wrangleberry, I blush for you."

"I don't care how you go on. You ain't looked well for months." "But think of my great big heart—a heart like an ox"—he seemed on the verge of tears—"and to think that you, a woman, have a heart with anything but respect, since we met in Honduras in the fall of '80—to think you should throw it up to my own face that I'm not beautiful. Others there are, thank God, who can look into a man's heart and prize him for what he is—not condemn him for his mere appearance as you do."

"And just know you've got in with a fast set. I met Mr. Milbrey yesterday in the corridor—" "Did he tell you to make a lovely asparagus shortcake or something?" "He told me those men you go with so much are dreadful gamblers, and that you'd better get to Palm Beach last February you played poker night and day, and you told me you went for your health."

"Oh, he did, did he? Well, I didn't get anything else. He's a dear old soul, if you've got the copper handy. I was a woman, and he was a warm neighborhood gossip. He'd be the nice, kind old lady that starts things, that's what Hody Milbrey would be." "And you said yourself you played poker most of the time when you went to Alton on the car last month."

"To be honest with you, ma, I've did play poker under the table, and I do so fast I could feel myself catching cold." "There, you see—and you really ought to wear one of those chamolis skin chest protectors in this damp climate." "Well, we'll see. If I can find one that an ace full won't go through I'll snatch it so quick you'll think it's a thing with her. Now I'll join you ladies to the extent of some coffee, and then I want to know what you two would rather do this summer than."

"Of course," said Psyche, "no one stays in town in summer." "Exactly. And we've chartered a steam yacht as big as this hotel—all but—but what I want to know is whether you two care to bunk on it or whether you'd rather stay quietly at some place, Newport, perhaps, and maybe take a cruise with me now and then."

"Oh, that would be good fun. But here's ma, and she's got a thing with her, on account of all those beggars and noddie people down in the slums." Mrs. Bines looked guilty and feebly deprecating. It was quite true that in her own way she had achieved a reputation for prodigality not inferior to that accorded by her children in ways of their own.

"You know it's so, ma," the daughter went on, accusingly. "One night last winter when you were away we dined at the Baldrige, in Eighty-sixth street, and the pavements were so sleety the horses brought up steam, and the Baldrige brought up steam, and the Baldrige brought up steam. Well, at one of the stations a big policeman got on with a little baby all wrapped up in red flannel. He'd found it in an area way, nearly covered with snow—where some one had left it, and he was taking it down to police headquarters, he said. Well, ma went crazy right away. She made him undo it and then she insisted on holding it all the way down to Thirty-third street. One man said it might be President of the United States some day; and Colonel Baldrige said, 'Yes, it has known possibilities—it may even be a President's wife. Just like that. But I thought ma would be demented. It was all fat and so warm and sleety it could hardly hold its eyes open, and I believe she'd have kept it then and there if the policeman would have let her. She made him promise to put it in a bottle of warm milk and give it to the policeman to get it things with and then all the way down she talked against the authorities for allowing such things—as if they could help it—and when we got home she cried—'you know you did, ma, you pretended to be a perfect noddie and ever since then she's been perfect daff about babies. Why, whenever she sees a woman going along with one she thinks the poor thing is going to leave it some place; and now she's in with the charity workers and says she won't leave New York at all this summer."

"I don't care," protested the guilty mother, "it would have frozen to death in just a little while and it's done so often. Why, up at the Catholic Protectors they put out a basket at the side door, so a body can leave their baby in it and ring the bell and run away; and they get one twice a week sometimes; and this was such a sweet, fat little baby with big blue eyes and its forehead wrinkled and it was all puckered up around its little nose—" "And that isn't the worst of it," the relentless daughter broke in. "She gets begging letters by the score and gives money to all sorts of people, and a man from the Charities Organization, who had heard about it, came and warned her that they were impostors—she doesn't care. Do you know, there was a poor old blind woman with a dismal, wheezy, organ down at Broadway and Twenty-third street—the organ would hardly play at all, and just one wretched note—only the woman was blind at all we found out—and ma bought her a nice new organ that cost seventy-five dollars and had it taken to her. Well, she found out through this man from the organization that the woman wasn't the new organ for twenty dollars and was still playing on the old one. She didn't want a new one because it was too cheerful; it didn't make people sad when they heard it, like her old one did. And yesterday ma bought an Indian 'An Indian tobacco sign.'" "You don't mean it? One of those lads that stand out in front and peer under their hands to what palefaces are making out of the house over the street. Say, ma, what you going to do with him? There isn't much room here, you know."

least two months, and I mean to stick by him. Awfully kind of you, though!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE SIGHT OF A NEW BEAUTY, AND SOME ADVICE FROM HIGBEE. From the landing on a still morning in late July, Mrs. Dreimer surveyed the fleet of sailing and steam yachts at anchor in Newport harbor. She was beautifully and expensively gowned in her gray chiffon; her toque was of chiffon and lace, and she held a pale grey parasol, its ivory handle studded with sapphires. She fixed a glass upon one of the white, sharp-nosed steam yachts that rode in the distance near Goat Island.

"Can you tell me if that's the Viluca?" she asked a sailor landing from a dinghy, "that boat just astern of the big schooner?" "No, ma'am; that's the Alta, Commodore Weekford."

"Looking for some one?" inquired a voice, and she turned to greet Fred Milbrey descended the steps. "Oh! good morning! yes; but they've not come in, evidently. It's the Viluca—Mrs. Bines, you know; he's bringing his sister back to me. And you?" "I'm expecting the folks on Shepherd's craft. Been out two weeks now, and were to have come down from New London last night. They're not in sight either. Perhaps the gale last night kept them back."

Mrs. Dreimer glanced above to where some one seemed to be waiting for him. "Who's your perfectly gorgeous companion? You've been so devoted to her for three days that you've hardly bowed to old friends. Don't you want her to know any one?" The young man laughed with an air of great shrewdness.

"Come, now, Mrs. Dreimer, you're too good-natured. Mr. Mauburn's about his marrying, I mean. You fixed him to tackle me low the very first half of one game we know about, right when I was making a fine run down the field, too. I'm going to have better interferences this time."

"Silly! Your chances are quite as good as his here this moment." "You may think so, I know better." "And of course, in any other affair, I'd never think of it." "But you're not a sportsman; but I'd rather not chance it just yet."

"But who is she? What a magnificent mop of hair. It's like that rich piece of old Mrs. Bines showed us, with copper and gold in it." "Well, I don't mind telling you she's the widow of a Southern gentleman, Colonel Breach Wybert." "Ah, indeed! I did notice that two-inch band of black at the bottom of her accented, pointed, petticoat. I'll wager that a Rue de la Paix idea of mourning for one's dead husband. And she confides her grief to the world with such charming discretion. Half the New York women can't hold their skirts up as daintily as she does it. I dare say, now, her tears could be dried—by the right comforter?"

Milbrey looked important. "And I don't mind telling you the late Colonel Breach Wybert left her a fortune made in Montana copper. Can't say how much, but two weeks ago she asked the governor's advice about where to put a spare million and a half in cash. Not so bad, eh?" "How old, now, should you say she was?" Mrs. Dreimer glanced up again at the color-scheme of heliotrope seated in a victrola in the parlor.

"Thirty-five, I should say—about." "Just twenty-eight." "Just about what I should say—she'd say." "Come now, you women can't help it, can you? But you can't deny she's stunning!" "Indeed I can't! She's a beauty—and, good luck to you. Is that the Viluca coming in? No; it has two stacks; and it's your people because the Lotus is blacked, it shall go back to the hotel. Eadie Trafford brought me over on the trolley. I must find him first and do an errand in Thames street."

At the head of the stairs they parted, Milbrey joining the lady who had waited for him. Hers was a person to gladden the eye. Her figure, tall and full, was of a graceful and abundant perfection of contours; her face, precisely carved and showing the faintly generous rounding of maturity, was warm in coloring, with dark eyes, well shaded and languorous; her full lips betrayed their beauty in a ready and fascinating laugh; her voice was a rich, warm contralto, and her speech bore just a hint of the soft r-less drawl of the South.

She had blazed into town Milbrey's darkest one night in the parlor of the Hightower Hotel, escorted by a pleased and beefy youth of his acquaintance, who later told him of their meeting at the American embassy in Paris, and who unsuspectingly presented him. Since that meeting the young man had been her abject cavalier. The elder Milbrey, too, had met her at his son's suggestion. He had been as deeply impressed by her helplessness in the matter of a million and a half dollars of idle funds as she had been by his aristocratic bearing and enviable position in New York society.

"Sorry to have kept you waiting, the Lotus hasn't come in sight yet. Let's loaf over to the beach and have some tall, cold ones." "Was your elderly friend?" she asked, as they were driven slowly up the old-fashioned street. "Oh! that's Joe Dreimer. She's not so old, you know; not a day over 40. Joe can't be; fine old stock; she was a Leydenbrook and her husband's family is one of the very oldest in New York. Awfully exclusive. Down to meet friends, but they'd not show up, either. That reminds me; they're friends of ours, too, and I must have you meet them. They're from your part of the country—the Bines." "The—ah—?" "Bines; family from Montana; decent enough sort; didn't know but you might have heard of them, being from your part of the country."

(Continued next Sunday.)

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