

VERA GELO THRILLS

THROWS HERSELF INTO SEINE AFTER COMMITTING A MURDER AND BREAKING A HEART

RIVALRY THE FICTION OF HUGO

She Falls in Her Attempt at Suicide, and Is Now a Homeless Fugitive From Paris Justice.

PARIS, March 30.—Following the tragic suicide of one lover she rejected, after desperately attempting her own life, Mile, Vera Gelo, the young Russian student, has disappeared.

She is the overwrought, supersensitive, nerve-tortured girl of twenty-one years whose trial at the College of France, there she was accused of the murder of her lover, Vera Gelo, the young Russian student, has disappeared.

What emotional French jury could find Vera Gelo guilty of murder in causing the death of the girl who was so dear to her? Mile, Vera, after a trial crowded with sensational incidents, was acquitted.

Her spirit stood between them. Again Vera refused to marry him, sadly telling him that an apparition, Alexandra's spirit, stood between them and must forever separate them.

Her spirit stands between us, he cried. "But see! she stretches her hands to us; she would unite us. She forgives; she forgives with her last breath. She blesses us."

Sorrowfully, firmly the remorse-torn girl put away the happiness he offered her. For the last time she refused to wed him a few days ago.

Zelenine, his brain whirling, his bosom rent by an agony of despair, threw himself from the balcony in Saint Ouen, where he was hidden in Saint Ouen.

Three hours later Vera Gelo sprang into the Seine from the Pont de Grenelle. Two workmen saw her take the plunge. They jumped into a boat and with all their strength rowed to her rescue.

She determined to end an existence so melancholy, fought to attempt to save her, crying, again and again, "Let me alone! I wish to die! Death is welcome to me!"

But she was not then to have her wish. They drew her, faint, weak from her struggles, into the boat. She was detained by the police, she revealed her identity, the commissary of police inquired of her and extracted from her a promise that she would relinquish her design on her life and that she would call on the bureau the next morning.

She did not recognize M. Deschanel, that man of her promise she has certainly broken. The police cannot find her. She has disappeared as completely as if indeed she, too, was hidden in Saint Ouen.

As she completely broken her promise to the commissary of police? Has she ended an existence so intolerable and rejected Alexandra Zelenine, the young Russian student, who was so dear to her?

For the last four years, since she blossomed into womanhood, Vera Gelo has been the victim of her own temperament. But her early history is simply this: Born in Odessa, she passed a quiet girlhood in the company of her father, an able but a self-effacing man, the steward of a great estate. When she became eighteen, Vera, like so many modern Russian girls, decided that she must study medicine and went to Geneva for that purpose.

Forming of a Friendship. There she met Alexandra Zelenine, a charming and gifted girl, two years older than herself. Both Russians, both voluntary exiles, both students, these interesting young women were drawn together by an unusual bond. Their friendship grew constantly stronger. They were inseparable.

One day Vera returned from a walk in an alarming state of excitement. Anxiously Alexandra questioned her. Her replies, given with intense emotion, were, nevertheless, entirely vague.

"A man, a man old enough to be my grandfather, insulted me just now," she said. "Oh, that I, whom all men have respected, should suffer such an indignity! A man, too, whose gray hairs should command respect!—could kill him as I would a dog!"

Under Alexandra's soothing Vera slowly recovered her composure. Soon she forgot, it seems, the incident that so deeply wounded her honor, her pride.

In December, 1900, the two young women went together to Paris and shared a cheap lodging at No. 10, Rue de Froubourg, Saint Honore, of which Mme. Hart, an estimable person, was landlady.

Vera Gelo had discontinued her study of medicine; both she and Alexandra pursued the study of philosophy and literature at the College of France. There Prof. Emile Deschanel, the one of the lecturers, a man of the highest character, universally respected and absolutely free from the remotest suspicion.

More over, he is in no wise associated with political life except through his distinguished son, Paul Deschanel, president of the chamber of deputies, whom many regard as the next president of the republic.

A few weeks passed. Miles, Vera and Alexandra assiduously attended the lectures at the college. About Jan 15, of last year they went to their first lecture by M. Deschanel.

The instant he entered the lecture room Vera became violently agitated. Seated next to her, Alexandra was alarmed by her staring eyes, her clinched hands, her trembling limbs.

"My dear Vera, what ails you? Are you suddenly ill, dearest?" "There he is," whispered Vera, trying to one of the lecture halls, where a surgeon, after a brief examination, reported her wound severe, but not necessarily fatal.

When she regained consciousness, although she was suffering grievously, Alexandra proved her affection for the misguided Vera.

"I am the One to Blame." "Vera was mad for the moment," Alexandra insisted. "She was not responsible. Harm me? She would lay down her life for me. Indeed it is I who am to blame. For as soon as I saw what the mad girl intended to do I jumped before her pistol."

Vera, recovering from her faint, was overcome by grief at the result of her crime to which she had been driven by the resistless energy of her self-respect. The police hurried Vera away. Alexandra was taken in an ambulance to the Hospital de la Pitié, where the surgeons found that the bullet had imbedded itself in her spine and that her survival was impossible.

She was removed to the Hotel Dieu, and in that hospital received the most devoted attention from the Deschanels, father and son, and their wives. The newspapers rang with praises of Alexandra's bravery; the government gave the dying girl a life-saving medal of the first class.

Michael Zelenine, who had followed Vera and his sister to Paris, passed every moment that the hospital authorities would permit by Alexandra's bedside. He really deeply in love with Vera, the weight of his double grief overwhelmed the handsome young Russian.

At Alexandra's prayer the police allowed Vera to visit her dying friend. They mingled their tears. But no reproach fell from Alexandra's lips. Instead she sought to explain and excuse Vera's deed.

"Dearest, it was but the result of a horrible confusion of identities," the heroic girl said. "After I leave you I implore you to give up your studies. You, with your wealth of emotion, are unfitted for the rigors and repressions of student life."

Alexandra frequently interceded with the authorities for Vera, and prepared a deposition which was read with great effect at Vera's trial. After several weeks welcome death came to Alexandra.

Paris flocked to Vera Gelo's trial in the Court of Assizes last summer. The girl's sufferings had rendered her semi-hysterical, and all sorts of strange hallucinations were declared she was the victim of hallucinations.

When the judge first mentioned the name of Alexandra Zelenine, Vera burst into a paroxysm of tears. The nervous twitches of her face as she sat in the dock revealed her mental anguish.

So tense was her nervous strain during the trial that a physician twice administered ether to her to relax it.

But the most dramatic moment of the trial was that when Vera was for the first time convinced of her mistake of confounding the estimable M. Deschanel with the unknown old man who insulted her. M. Deschanel was giving his testimony when the girl, who had been staring at him as if she hoped to visually penetrate his brain, suddenly shrieked:

"Forgive me, I pray you, forgive me. I acknowledge my fearful mistake." The jurors were entirely sympathetic. During their brief consideration of the verdict Vera sat, her face buried in her hands, seemingly oblivious to what was passing around her.

The jurors, weighing her state of mind, decided with Alexandra that the unhappy Vera was momentarily mad when she fired the fatal shot. When the jurors returned to court, everyone could see in their faces what the verdict would be. In anticipation of it and led by Prof. Deschanel, the people in the court room burst into applause which could not be quickly suppressed.

When the verdict of acquittal was announced Vera smiled feebly and swooned. Michael Zelenine was the first at her side, and raising her in his arms whispered the fondest congratulations. If the president of the court felt sympathy, he did not betray it. Sternly he ordered Vera to leave France and never to return.

In a few days the newspapers announced that she and Michael Zelenine had gone to Russia and that they would be married.

Leaped From Eiffel Tower. On March 14 last a well-dressed young man jumped from the top of the Eiffel tower. Turning, twisting in the long, frightful descent, he struck the ground head first. Necessarily his features, as form were entirely unrecognizable. Nor had he a scrap of paper, a mark by which he might have been identified.

A few hours after his determined, spectacular suicide, a girl threw herself into the Seine from the Pont de Grenelle. One Villeneuve, a carpenter employed at the Hotel Royal, floating baths, now moored near the Ile des Cygnes, saw the girl as with a desperate gesture of farewell she sprang from the bridge. Villeneuve and another man jumped in a boat and quickly rowed to the drowning woman.

So vigorous were their strokes that their boat reached her as she arose from her first plunge.

Leaping far out of the boat they seized her. But she beat at them with her hands, and repeatedly begged them to let her die. It was not until she had exhausted herself by her struggles that Villeneuve and his companion could lift her into the boat.

Silent, almost sullen, like one who has suffered a grievous disappointment, she was taken to the emergency station near the bridge, where she would say only that her name was Muller and that she was stopping at a hotel in the Rue de Passy.

Her attempt at suicide was instantly reported by the police and the commissary sent orders that she must be de-

tained until the next morning, when he might find leisure to interrogate her.

The woman shivered and shrank away when the police were about to take her to jail. Finally she said, hesitatingly: "Tell M. the Commissary that it is Vera Gelo who has tried to end her wretched life. He will remember me, the unfortunate one in the affair Deschanel."

"Implore him, if he wishes to interrogate me, to come to me at once or to permit me to be conducted to him. At least spare me the shame of being again a prisoner."

Receiving this message the commissary hastened to Mile, Gelo, who awaited him, silent, unmoving as a woman carved out of stone.

"Why have you returned to Paris? Why have you attempted your life? Were his first questions.

Tells of Her Wanderings. "Obedient to the order of the president of the court I returned to Russia," answered Vera, speaking almost mechanically. "I found that my father had married again, that another woman was in my mother's place. So I was a stranger in my old home. M. Zelenine again and again asked me to marry him, and I refused. I could see that dear, sad figure that stood between us that was invisible to him. The desire possessed me to return to Paris to die, to be buried next to Alexandra, whose life was forfeited to my mad mistake."

"Courts judge to the contrary. I could not resist that desire. I came here by way of Italy. I have been in Paris but a week. M. Zelenine followed me."

"Once more I refused to listen to his prayers that I marry him. Today I received a letter from him telling me that he would cast himself from the great tower this morning. My love for him, which I hid at Alexandra's behest, tells me that he has kept his word, has destroyed himself."

For hours the commissary of police conversed with the girl, threatened her with serious punishments for having returned to Paris and implored her to make no further attempt on her life.

But when the hour appointed arrived Mile, Gelo did not appear at his office. Instead she sent this note, dated from a hotel in the Rue de Passy: "Mons. le Commissaire—Forgive me, if you please, for not responding to your invitation. I am ill. I am in bed."

She has disappeared. The closest search by the police has not found her.



VERA GELO.

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Poetry and Prose of Kissing. Dr. Christopher Nyrop, professor of philology at the University of Copenhagen, has just written a curious book which is causing a good deal of talk in Europe.

FASTER PROGRESS ON NEW STATE CAPITOL.

Many people are beginning to wonder when the new capitol building will be completed and ready for occupancy. To the average individual who has no real knowledge of the magnitude of the undertaking of erecting a structure as large as the new capitol building, there seems to have been little progress in the last two years, and one is compelled to ask if the structure will be ready for occupancy during the lifetime of the present generation.

While to all appearances there has been little visible progress made in the last few months in the work of construction, the work has been really progressing as rapidly as possible, and the time is near at hand when the slower parts of it will be completed and the work of finishing the building will be started.

As soon as the dome is finished and the floors laid, then a larger force of workmen may be employed who will rapidly put the final touches on, and make it ready to receive its occupants.

A greater part of the work which has been done on the building during the last twelve months has been devoted to the beautiful dome, which is rapidly nearing completion. The size of this part of the

structure and the nature of the work which is being done on it makes it impossible to employ a large force of men, and the work must of necessity progress slowly.

Another thing which has made the work of constructing the building much slower than it would otherwise have been, is the nature of the work itself. The stones of which the building is constructed have been shipped into the city from the quarries in Georgia, and when it arrives in the shape of ponderous blocks of marble that have to be cut and modeled to suit the plans of the builder. This is slow

work even with the improved machinery that has been employed, and of course the stone was slow in reaching its place upon the walls of the new structure.

Carving is Slow Work. Then again there was the amount of carving that had to be done. Of course some of this work was done before the stones were put in place, but a great deal remains to be done on the walls of the building. For months men have been employed every day in cutting and carving the beautiful figures and statues that

will lend so much to the general appearance of the finished building. This is slow work, as every one knows, and the sculptor has had a great deal to do on the building. But the end of his work is in sight, and it will not be many months before the countless ornaments that are to adorn the walls of the building are completed.

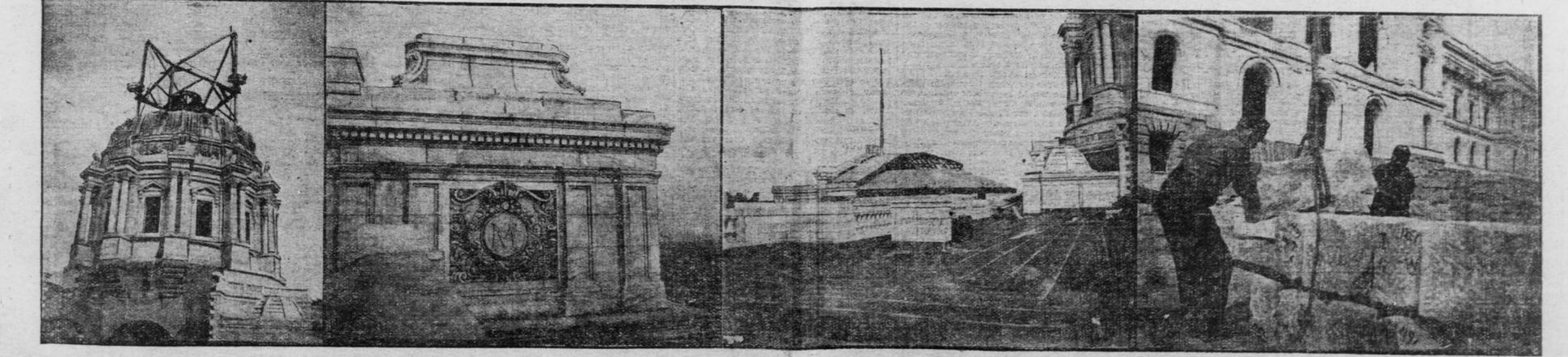
There are always certain things which happen to retard the progress of any large work which is entirely beyond the control of the workman or contractor. Such has been the case with the new capitol.

When the contractors were about ready to begin work on the dome it was found that there would be some difficulty in securing the iron work necessary for its construction. This caused a delay of several months, but finally the material was all secured and the work commenced.

A large force of workmen is daily employed at the new building, and the results of their labor are being making rapid changes in the appearance of the structure. The tiling for the roof is nearly all on the building, and in a few days it

will be laid in position. Some of the floors have already been started, and other finishing touches are being put on the building.

Stone Work Nearly Finished. At the present time the laying of stone is almost completed and a few weeks will see it all done. Then all that will remain is the finishing work, which will proceed much faster. While it is not likely that the building will be ready for occupancy this year, yet, if nothing happens to retard the progress of the work, it will be occupied early next spring.



The Dome as It Looks Now.

A Bit of Carving.

Scene on the Roof.

Hauling Stone to the Roof.