

## The Matinee Idol

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"Married!" she laughs, scornfully. "On what?" "I am to get a raise next year," Pierre explains. I was trying to keep it for a surprise, but any time will do now to publish the banns, eh?"

"I never said I'd marry you."

"But—it is understood!" cried Pierre, taken aback.

"Not by me. Besides I—I have other chances yet."

"Rosalie! Don't joke. It's serious. I get twenty a week now. It will be twenty-five in January next. A little flat—"

"And I can take in washing I suppose!"

Pierre says no more. They part half in anger and the girl will not tell him when he may next call round. As he returns to his own cheap abode he meditates sadly, profoundly. He sees a little habitant village nestling half in the "boosh" by a big lake, many little white-washed cottages, hundreds of children, ten or twelve (conservative estimate) to a family. Oh, why did he and Rosalie ever leave Ville Madonne! He hated the big city. He loved the peace of the hills, the silence of the bush, the healthy life of the trapper. He hadn't wanted to leave, but had followed Rosalie to the city two years ago. Ah! The hearth-fire of the old home! The dog-sleds travelling across the snowy wastes! The genial welcome, winter or summer, of simple, kindly people! But Rosalie, eldest of fourteen children, hated the drudgery and monotony. The city beckoned irresistibly. She loved the whirl and bright lights, the clangour and the show. It intoxicated her. She loved her old home, too, but—a little life, Mon Dieu, a little taste of life! Rosalie was only 17.

It is three evenings later. In a de luxe cabaret we find Rosalie, prettier than before, in a dress of rose color. Across from her is seated—not faithful, humble Pierre, but the lion of the vaudeville house, Signor Bertini himself! He smiles to see her delight in her surroundings, the pretty air of gaucherie she cannot conceal. The smile is a bit patronizing, to be sure, but she doesn't realize it, and that look that comes and goes in his eyes, it frightens her just a little. Also, he keeps catching her hand, just in fun.

She gazes about in rapture at the gay dresses and the sparkle of silver and glass, the rich velvet draperies of the windows and the obsequious, soft-shod Japanese waiters.

"Wine, little one?" "Wine?" echoes Rosalie, withdrawing her eyes from the scene about her.

"Wine, you say?" "Sh! The real thing, little one. Very few others have it, but I have a locker downstairs. It has scarcely any kick, so don't fear. Pour her a glass, waiter."

"No, No! I—I only like red wine."

"But champagne, little one! Come! Here's to the blackest eyes in the city."

The waiter fills her glass and Bertini's from a napkin-wrapped bottle taken from an ice-pail nearby. He keeps a furtive eye on Bertini.

Rosalie laughs. She raises the slender goblet and leans forward to touch it against her companion's. But at that instant Fate or her patron saint, or just sheer accident causes the girl's goblet to slip, and the delicate glass crashed into fragments among the dishes and shining napery.

"No matter," says Bertini, soothingly, and he beckoned to the waiter. "Here! Fill the lady another goblet."

Rosalie, pale and shaking, refuses any now.

"No, no! It's a sign, an omen. I dare not. See, I will drink your health and mine in coffee, Signor."

He assents to this, but very glumly. "You are so cold to me, little one," he complains. "And when I saw you with those other girls at the stage-door I picked you out for a live one."

"When you spoke to me that time I shouldn't have answered," the girl said slowly. "It was wrong."

"But why did you come to the stage-door, then?"

"We wanted—I wanted to see a great actor close up."

"Well, here he is," and Bertini smiled complacently at the compliment. "And now shall we dance a little?"

The orchestra plays a soft, seductive waltz. A comic singer has just left the platform and a Salome dancer now glides about and up and down, the violins accompanying her weird motions with rich and slumbrously soft cadences. The diners laugh at Salome doing a waltz. It is humorous. But wait. She speeds

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## Film on Teeth

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