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not chill; the street car was slightly heated, and during the ride Vivian appeared to grow drowsy, until by the end he had slumbered off, against his father's shoulder; nor did he arouse when they disembarked, and entered the theatre.

"Standing Room Only," was the sign displayed in the foyer. The youth in the box grinned as he shoved out a ticket.

"Just in time," he volunteered. "She comes on next after the pictures."

The interior of the theatre was dark, save for the focus of a light projected by a kinetoscope upon a screen at the forefront. Unobserved Mr. Newsome, bearing Vivian, proceeded in and stood in the back by a pillar, with a clear view before him down the center aisle.

"Aw, why don't they ring off with their machine an' bring on the lady!" complained the usher, near him. "She's the whole pie, to-night."

"She's a beaut, all right, all right," responded a companion.

"Ever see her?" the husband heard a man in the back row ask, casually, of another man.

"Me? Well, I should say yes! Know her, too."

"Trades at the store, does she?" "Comes in about every day. I'm not sayin' she trades—but she stops at my counter pretty reg'lar. Can't imagine why—" and he nudged the other, with an evil chuckle.

"It's 'good-by, hubby,' now," vouchsafed the other. She's got a husband and kid, out in Edgewood, hasn't she?"

"Sure. But that cuts no ice. I'm liable to marry her myself some day. What's one husband to an actress—

no one noted him now. So he stood against the pillar, tightly clasping Vivian, as yet undisturbed, and staring with feverish gaze at the figure in the uncompromising glare of the foot-lights.

It was Frances—something of the Frances of old when, standing almost thus, ere he met her, he had worshipped her. Yet not the Frances of old after all; her pink gown, apparently simple, from throat to foot fitting closely over her perfect lines, gave earnest that she was no longer a girl, but a wondrous woman. A fierce pride of possession seized him; for she was his, his; she was his wife. At a broadly appraising comment beside him his resentful anger up-flamed, and in imagination he throttled the speaker.

The salvos died to a ripple, and the leader of the orchestra raised his baton. At the signal swelled from the instruments an introductory measure, familiar to Mr. Newsome's ears. He knew the song that was forthcoming; she had sung it for him alone, up at the house, that he might pass judgment upon it. Oh, the people now listening need not think that they were the favored—first-nighters though they were. He knew more than they; far more.

From his wife's smiling lips trilled the initial silvery note, in itself jocular, foretoking the laughter that was to follow. Not daring to move lest he should break a spell, the man by the pillar waited. Would the audience appreciate that it was his Frances singing? Was it already appreciating or did the silent attention presage cold criticism! The numbskulls! 'Twas her song, her song, to which people were being treated. A



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say!" And again the evil snigger.

"I wonder if he's here." "Dunno. Mebbe. In one of them boxes, likely. Bet I'm sendin' her a bigger bunch of flowers than he is."

Mr. Newsome, involuntarily listening, burned with mingled rage and shame. Remarks such as these about a soubrette were only to be expected; but when about his wife—and his fingers clenched into his palms. To what was Frances exposing herself! He fancied that all the theater was permeated by a morbid excitement, dominating the incessant rustling, the sibilant murmurings. He fancied that all conversation, all thought, even had for the subject his Frances; and the idea threw him into a nervous tremble. He felt himself also becoming excited.

With a humorous finale the kinetoscope interlude closed; the orchestra tentatively struck up, and the lights of stage and walls sprang into sudden activity, premising some near event. The screen rolled up into the flies, and amidst a breathless, tense silence throughout the house, abruptly, without any further pre-indication, from the wings out upon the stage Mr. Newsome beheld trip his wife.

Yes, it was she. A thunder of ready applause, long enduring, spontaneous, greeted her. It sent the blood to his head, as though himself was in part receiving it. He clutched the pillar for support. No one had noted him, when the lights flared up; all eyes had been stageward. And certainly

jealous rage surged within him, while, half fearing, half anticipating, he waited for the end of the first verse.

She paused; and his eyes flashed when rose a storm of rattling claps. She had won; of course she had won. Bully for her! Bully for his Frances! She had not lost any of her art; rather, she had gained. He was glad; glad for her success, glad that after all, association with him had not an iota depreciated her gifts. No; he could not be mean enough to gloat over a failure, even though it restored her to him; rather he found himself taking satisfaction in her success, appropriating a portion thereof to himself, as one who had been responsible for her.

Amid the merriment provoked by her piquant audacity she concluded the second and last verses. While blushing, triumphant, she poised for a moment, curtsying and waving her disclaimer to the honor of the deafening applause, a file of ushers bore down the center aisle (brushing past the man at the entrance of it) flower basket after flower basket, bouquet after bouquet, until her arms were filled and the clusters and bunches of vivid blossoms were piled about her feet. Again the applause. No; they would not let her go. And with her massy armful of pinks and roses she advanced the few steps that she had vainly retreated, and as the uproar lessened, and was hushed, once more she sang.

This time it was the sweet, brooding lullaby from "Erminie"—that old favorite, haunting, thrilled with moth-

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