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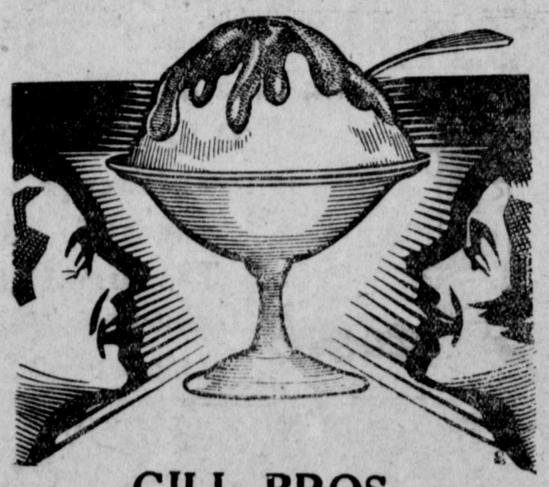
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Chestertown, Maryland

THOSE LIBRARY VAGRANTS

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HALLIE MARRIOTT'S soft blue gaze wandered from the books on the desk before her to the carnation-cheeked children romping through the city's most exclusive square, a pleasant retreat of old trees, tinkling fountains and scented shrubs in mild weather, bordered by tall apartment hotels, smart shops and clubs. A spired church and the mellowed brick convent of Notre Dame lent a spiritual atmosphere; the extension library, where she served as an assistant, a cultural note.

"Miss Marriott," the head librarian's voice lowered to meet library requirements, sounded shrill and rasping, "it is your duty to see that men don't sleep in the back of the room. I hope I won't have to remind you of this again," the pale eyes colder than the snowflakes mantling the benches and walks of the square.

"I'm sorry, Miss Glitson." Her prettily curved lips trembled at the deserved rebuke. "I'll go right down." She had neglected her duty, but she hated to disturb the nodding men. They looked so comfortable until she spoke to them; then so unhappy and embarrassed when she told them to go out. Not hurting anyone, just taking little quiet naps. Tired from hard work, she supposed.

That big, bronzed, outdoor looking fellow with the dark, ruffled hair that made her think of characters out of her favorite adventure books was back there—she had seen him coming in a little while ago. Sleeping, perhaps; he couldn't seem to keep awake. She would have to wake him again, tell him to take his hat and go out. That was Miss Glitson's pet phrase—"Take your hat and go out—you aren't allowed to sleep in the library." It sounded silly, Hallie Marriott thought, that part about taking your hat. But Miss Glitson was head librarian and had influence with the committee—this was not a municipal library. If she suggested the dismissal of an assistant, the heads approved.

If Hallie had studied, was really a trained worker, she would not have been so anxious about her position. It was through a former member of the committee—they had romped together in the old square before the Marriott fortunes, never sky high, sunk sadly low—that she managed to obtain this post seven years before. The former playmate no longer was on the committee; she must watch her post vigilantly. From the first one she had a feeling that Miss Glitson did not care for her. At thirty-five, when one has had training in old-fashioned household arts and graces only, positions are not easy to find and hold.

Her slender figure unnaturally rigid, soft brown braided head stiffly erect, she left her desk, left the view of the laughing, skipping, snowy children and moved daintily down the bright, book-filled room.

The bent, gnome-like man who pored over books on travel was chuckling gleefully over an account of life in the frozen North; the scarlet-nosed scholastic-looking patron with the latest monthly, the tortoise-spectacled young man reading for his thesis, perhaps, all wide awake. No need to speak to anyone at that table. But two aisles over! Why did he have to fall asleep every afternoon!

Did he work at night, perhaps? Feel weary during the day? Even sleep, a drastic test, failed to rob him of the attractive romantic quality she had become aware of the first afternoon he entered the library, just a week ago. Maybe it was the heat—ghost-gaunt and bloodless, Miss Glitson insisted on full steam ahead—or reading, that made people drowsy. She dipped into frivolous books some nights when she had difficulty in gaining dreamland or felt too lonely to stay awake in her tiny third-floor room.

She felt Miss Glitson's icy stare directed from the main desk; she must speak. But he looked so comfortable, like a big, tired boy. He wasn't a boy, of course, any more than she was a girl, although she never felt old. He would stay young in mind, too, she felt as she stood looking at him, her blue gaze softly caressing. A shame to wake him, to send him out like a naughty child. Maybe he had nowhere to go, no warm place to spend the evening. So cold and the wind starting to howl. No overcoat either—his suit looked thin. . . .

Suddenly he opened his eyes. Her cheeks burned at the glance of those darkly intense eyes, the eyes of the adventurer, pirate, knight. Her whole being flamed. This was terrible. She had never felt like this before. Frightened, heart beating wildly, scarcely knowing what she did, Hallie Marriott flew back to her desk. The woolly warm children were darting in, in the care of nurses, to love—bright homes. their cheeks scarlet and snow-flaked. But she scarcely saw them; her eyes were filled with the bronzed, adventurous face of the man in the rear of the room.

"Miss Marriott," that voice colder than the snow in the twilight hushed square, "I am amazed at your conduct this afternoon. Not five minutes ago I reminded you of our rule about men sleeping in the library. You seemed to understand what I said. I saw you leave your desk and walk down the aisle. Just this moment I glanced down and saw that big fellow still asleep."

"I—there was no one asleep—he wasn't asleep—"

"Very strange. Are you quite sure that your eyes are strong enough for library work, Miss Marriott?"

"Oh . . . I can see perfectly. . . . I'll go down again."

"Send him out. Instantly. He's nothing but a nuisance."

"Yes, Miss Glitson." A delicate pink glowed in her cheeks as she started toward the rear of the room. Resolutely, all the elasticity gone from her step, she passed through sections H. and J., lips set in a firm line. She must perform her duty, must satisfy Miss Glitson and retain her position. But why did he have to fall asleep every time he came in!

"Take your hat and go—you aren't allowed to sleep in the library," she stood beside him, her voice lowered for his ears alone. She used Miss Glitson's phrase but into the soft rebuke she poured all her sympathy, all her womanly gentleness, all her heart. The tone of a woman addressing her beloved, although she was unconscious of it. "I hate to disturb you . . . if only you wouldn't go asleep every time!"

"If I didn't," his shaggy head raised from the table, "you wouldn't come and wake me." His deep voice exactly right for a hero out of adventure tales. "The only reason I came in was to see you—I saw you through the window last week. Then I found I had to pretend to be asleep to get you to notice me."

"I hate to tell men to go . . . Miss Glitson insists . . ."

"Miss Marriott!" Thunder as well as ice in her tone. "I am painfully astonished at your conduct today. All week, in fact. I have given you every opportunity to remember your duty. Much as I regret it, I feel obliged to ask you to leave the library at once.

"You too." Withering scorn in the look she gave the bronzed man who had risen to stand beside Hallie Marriott like a towering protector. "This is no place for vagrants."

"I'll wait for you outside," he ignored Miss Glitson, his dark glance deepening the color in her assistant's oval face. "We'll be vagrants together." His richly amused laugh rang through the high room, fluttered the dry leaves of the volumes on the shelves.

"I only pretended to fall asleep to have you notice me, to hear your voice," he told Hallie as they moved slowly through the violet dusk toward the spired church. "But this afternoon I nearly drifted off in earnest. I've been working like the deuce getting ready for my next trip—the icy lady struck it mighty close," he laughed, "I am sort of vagrant. Ever been to Zanzibar, honey?"

"I've never been anywhere—except in dreams," she murmured.

"With your training in writing so neatly you ought to be no end of a help to a fellow like me. My notes are always in a horrible mess, but the people at the university don't seem to hold my scratching against me. They're chasing me off to dig up more ruins." They had passed the brick walls of the Convent of Notre Dame, were close to the big stone house adjoining the spired church. "I've been staying here with my old friend Doctor Holt since I got back from Egypt," he explained.

"Egypt," she repeated, blue eyes wide, "Egypt . . . why . . . you're . . . Dirk Forrest!" The man she had long ago set up as her heart's hero. But. . . Dirk Forrest! So popular . . . sought after . . .

"Yes—that fool explorer. We'd better go in right away, I think, and talk to Holt about marrying us. I have to sail—we have to sail—in two days."

Terms of Admiration That Are Overworked

There are words in the English language, says an article in Popular Knowledge, that the average person uses to distracton. Poor, defenseless words—they are pampered to the point of exhaustion, while slow-witted human beings look on.

Like fat, sleek, weary Angora pussies, such words as dainty, exquisite, lovely, charming, dear, drag out dull lives on idly smart, flippant tongues.

After the manner of prisoned panthers, marvelous, wonderful, magnificent, even adorable, are made to parade before the public eye. Rehashed in speeches, they are frittered to the point where nothing matters, where a doughnut is called marvelous and where there is no refreshing common thing. Wonders become as trite as polish, and magnificence is ascribed to the tiniest of acts. A box of candy is "simply adorable."

Luckily not all spoil the same words. One person pets innocent "beautiful" to the point where this adjective, once coy, obtrudes itself into every conversation. Like a tabby who does not know her place, she clambers upon the mental chair of every sentence.

Another strokes "lovely" with such sweetish, often repeated staccato notes that the little thing is nauseated.

And so it goes. School girls and socializing women are not the only linguistic sinners. In almost everyone's conversational lexicon there are unfortunate words whose tragedy it is to be petted.

These mascots of speech, these hearth-side word-tabbies, unlike their better equipped namesakes, have no last resort of claws that punish. They are helpless. Only their spoilers can save them. But their spoilers, in an unblissful ignorance of their mental estate, cannot function as savers of words. Sorry is the outlook for the race of linguistic tabbies.

Solved

Four-year-old Bobby, perched on his father's knee in the crowded bus, looked hard at the stout, gaudily-dressed woman as she bustled in, sniffed contemptuously, and wedged herself into the only seat left.

Then he turned to his mother.

"Mum," he said, loudly, "it's a lady."

"Hush, Bobby, dear," mother checked him; "we know."

"But, mummy"—Bobby was puzzled—"you just said to dad, 'Whatever's this object comin' in?'"

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This Week
by Arthur Brisbane

WHAT'S BEHIND SLUMP?
WAGES AND PROSPERITY.
HOW OLD IS MAN?
BACKWARD MODERN YOUTH.

Mr. Hoover's "supper galaxy" of business talent reads like a Who's Who in the upper brackets of high finance. The names will inspire confidence, but there are too many to do any actual work together. The President will listen and do something.

Money became cheaper and that is 50 per cent of the battle.

A wise Italian said, "Give light and the people will find their own way." Prosperity says, "Give credit and business will find its own way."

The nation ought to find out who is responsible for the outrageous usury that disgraced the country and precipitated panic, and who is responsible for shameless stock issues that lie on the financial market like a ton of plum pudding on the stomach of a child.

The people reading the list of big guns brought into action to help business ask themselves:

"What is the matter, What is there, beside the slumping of a Wall Street gambling mania, of which we have not been told?"

The American farmer, listening to the radio for the prices of wheat and corn, might muse as follows:

"How busy they all get when anything happens to Wall Street!

"How quietly and calmly they take it when things happen to the farmer."

Nothing better can be said by anybody than what Ford said about wages. Wages are to prosperity what sunshine and rain are to crops.

The big man can get only his part of what the little man earns. The little man, by the way, can only get his part of what some other worker produces.

It is hard to make big men understand that their own prosperity demands liberal pay for the little fellow.

It is hard to make many workers realize that when they fail to do a fair day's work then cheat themselves and other workmen.

Scores of business and industrial leaders have promised the President to expand construction, which means giving more employment "in every prudent direction" to cover any slack in employment.

Power, gas and other public utilities are going to spend money freely.

The railroads are ordering quantities of steel, and the steel industry will undertake large construction programs, replacing antiquated and obsolete plants.

It ought to be a good year.

Millions have studied the puzzle, "How old is Ann?" A few are working at another puzzle, "How old is Man?"

The learned Henry Fairfield Osborn, head of the American Museum of Natural History, learns that the proboscidae, of which the elephant and tapir are samples, were accompanied in their migrations by human beings as long ago as early Pleistocene times.

Man may have reached the North American Continent "many millions of years earlier than is generally supposed."

How old is man?

Man was said to be 100,000, then 500,000, then 1,000,000 years old. Now it runs into many milions of years.

More interesting is scientific proof that the earth will last with men living here for a thousand million years more. The human race should do something in that length of time, stop war, abolish poverty, cheating, swindling, and cease devoting its energies to getting money that it doesn't need.

In Prussia you can be sent to jail for six months for unfaithfulness to your wife or husband. Extreme Socialists want this law killed because it doesn't make marriage any better. Old-fashioned Germany says the penalty must stay, although imprisonment is only inflicted when the aggrieved husband or wife requests it.

Why the Socialists want to change the law is not clear. They are certainly not less moral than any other body of citizens.

Robert Maynard Hutchins, only 30, is had of Chicago University. At 25 he was Dean of the Yale Law School.

In old days, oftener than in our day, great things were done by the very young, Alexander, Napoleon, etc.

Young Captain Nelson, later Admiral and Lord Nelson, when only 25, rebuked by an older officer for youthful presumption, replied: "Sir, I have the honor to be the same age as the Prime Minister of England."

The young president of Chicago University might quote that to anybody criticising his youth. He is six years older than Pitt was, when he first became Prime Minister.

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