

VOYAGERS OF THE NIGHT

By Roy Norton

Drawings by Herman Pfeifer

ARE you quite brave?" he asked gently and slowly.

The girl, with flushed, excited face, stared at him a moment before answering. It was the first time they had spoken, and she hesitated as to the propriety of conversation with a complete stranger, studying him meanwhile with frank directness. Her momentary sense of annoyance or fear that he was taking advantage of their strange situation passed and was replaced by a subtle interest. His garb was that of a gentleman, and the beginnings of gray around his temples left no uncertainty as to his age; but his eyes, weary as though tired of nearly anything life had to offer, caught and held her with calm scrutiny. She decided to respond.

"Yes, I suppose I am."

He asked nothing more; but sat studying the tips of his gloved fingers as if he had gained all the information he wished. She looked off into the mist which was now everywhere,—above, below, and around them. After that last strange shout there had been no noise, and they seemed to have suddenly passed into a soundless world where the very silence was oppressive. She wished he would speak further. Her fear of improprieties was being dissipated by a desire for companionship, some decided assurance that she had not forever departed from other human beings.

"Why do you ask?" she ventured, with a soft laugh.

It was his turn to pause. He lifted his eyes and gravely studied her, inventorying the dimples in her cheek, the wisp of waving hair that had sprung loose from beneath her simple hat, the plain neatness of her dress, and even noting the fact that her gloves and the tips of her shoes betrayed much wear.

"I asked," he answered without change of expression, "because our balloon has broken loose from its moorings and we are drifting—God knows where, or to what."

She sprang wildly to her feet and, as she stood in the center of the illuvisively solid car, clasped her hands together. He saw that her lips which had opened as if to scream were tightly set again, that her graceful throat contracted as if straining for utterance, and he admired her quick self mastery. It was as though she had again cloaked herself in that bravery she had avowed and was now ready to face the new and desperate situation as best she might. Only her knees betrayed her faltering; for she fell rather than sat back into the seat she had vacated.

"Ah!" he said, "I thought you would do that. Somehow I fancied you spoke truthfully when you declared that you were brave. You appear quite different from other women."

HIS calmness had such a decided effect on her that she began to wonder if this could be a jest or, if it was the truth, whether the danger was as great as she thought at first. It seemed preposterous that he should sit there, careless, immovable, and unperturbed, under conditions fraught with any great menace. The woman instinct made her trust to his greater physical strength for some support and also to seek his judgment of their predicament.

"You do not seem worried," she said in desperation. "You must have some reason for calmness. You must believe that we are safe!"

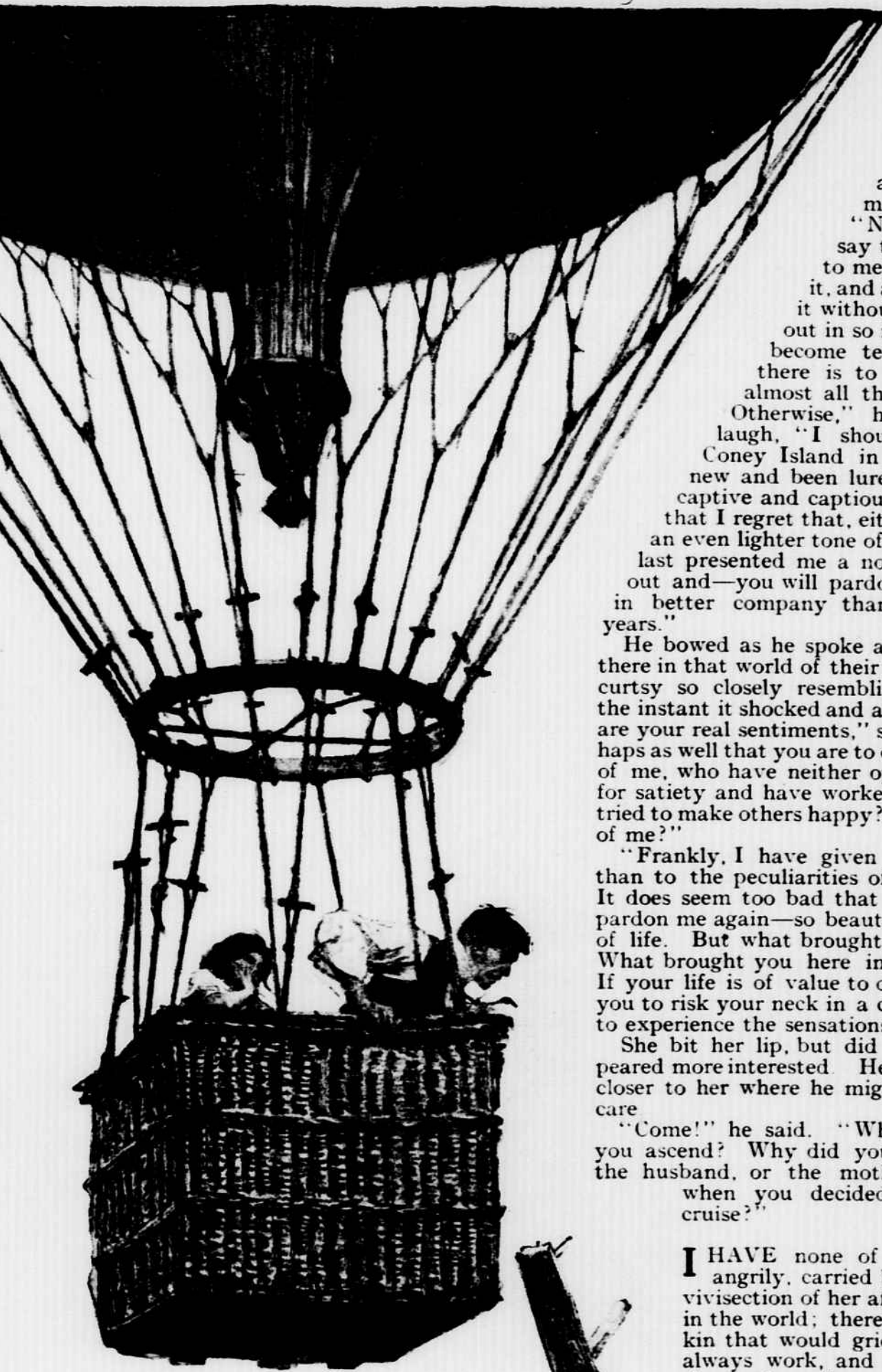
"You said you were brave," he replied; "so I may as well be truthful. Contrary to your suppositions, I believe that we haven't one chance in a hundred thousand. I believe we are as certainly doomed as if already cast into the sea."

She clutched the edge of the bench on which she sat, and this time the fight for self mastery was palpable and pitiable. He admired her for the gallantry of it. "But what are we to do?" she asked in a voice that, despite her efforts, had a note of trembling.

"There isn't much of anything to do," he answered thoughtfully. "We can only hope that the breeze in this higher altitude will prove kindly and waft us landward to some place where we can descend. I know little of balloons; but think we could find some way of going earthward. How easily I do not know. So, all we can do is to be quiet and—wait."

"But if we go out over the sea?"

He started to shrug his shoulders as if it was a habitual gesture, and then, remembering her presence, paused and turned more fully toward her. "If we sail out to sea, nothing but a miracle can save us."



He Could Retard the Inevitable End for Only a Few Minutes.

"But what are our chances?" she insisted.

"Do you mean our chances of route?"

"Yes, yes! Do you think we shall go toward the land?"

"I doubt it. All we can do is to wait."

"To wait! To wait! To sit here in this car, this prison in the clouds,—to be starved, to drift and drift, and wait and wait, for—the end?" Distracted, she leaned toward him and twisted and wrung her hands till one of the worn fingers of her glove burst open and displayed the soft, white flesh beneath.

"Yes," he replied, but more patiently, "just that. See, the mist is everywhere. Listen, if you wish, and you will hear no sound. We are high above the point where we are likely to hear any noise; but in height, unless we go too far, is our safety. By and by we shall pass from the mist, perhaps, and can tell where we are. I am sorry, very sorry, for—for you."

HIS voice trailed away into a whisper that in a silence less profound would have been inaudible. Some undernote in it, even in the time of stress, aroused her curiosity. With her attention thus momentarily diverted, she closed her lips and stared at him as if searching for some outward explanation. He sat quietly as ever without noticing her, and she now recalled that he had scarcely shifted his position or attitude since they together drifted away from the white garishness of Coney Island to enter the realm of fog and cloud.

"Why for me? Don't you think of yourself?"

Don't you value your own life?"

His smile was melancholy as he frankly met her inquiring eyes. "No," he said, "I can't say that it is of great value to me; I'm slightly tired of it, and am willing to part from it without regret. I've lived it out in so many ways that it has become tedious. I've seen all there is to see, and experienced almost all there is to experience. Otherwise," he added with a soft laugh, "I should not have visited Coney Island in search of something new and been lured by a barker into a captive and captious balloon. I can't say that I regret that, either," he concluded in an even lighter tone of voice; "for it has at last presented me a novel means of passing out and—you will pardon me for saying so—in better company than I have known for years."

He bowed as he spoke and lifted his hat. Up there in that world of their own it was grotesque curtsy so closely resembling mockery that for the instant it shocked and angered her. "If those are your real sentiments," she stormed, "it is perhaps as well that you are to die; but what of me,—of me, who have neither opportunity nor desire for satiety and have worked and been happy and tried to make others happy? Have you no thought of me?"

"Frankly, I have given more thought to you than to the peculiarities of our impending end. It does seem too bad that one so young and—pardon me again—so beautiful should be robbed of life. But what brought you to Coney Island? What brought you here into this predicament? If your life is of value to others, what right had you to risk your neck in a captive balloon merely to experience the sensations of soaring?"

She bit her lip, but did not answer. He appeared more interested. He shifted his seat a trifle closer to her where he might watch with greater care.

"Come!" he said. "What recklessness made you ascend? Why did you leave the lover, or the husband, or the mother or father, behind when you decided to make this aerial cruise?"

I HAVE none of those," she retorted angrily, carried beyond herself by this vivisection of her affections. "I am alone in the world; there is no one of truth or kin that would grieve for me. I work, always work, and give, always give, to those whom I can. This trip to Coney Island was a trip to fairyland for me. I couldn't afford it before. I'm a bookkeeper in a commission house, and it was a day off, and—and—"

She broke down and threatened to whimper; but once more bravely controlled herself, while he continued to watch. She stood up in the cage-like car and strained her eyes out into the silent mist that still hung round them in a cloud. She was not certain that she should have told this quiet stranger so much of her affairs.

"Then, after all," he went on mercilessly, "you are, like me, leaving few behind to mourn your unfortunate trip

out into another world. I too leave none other than friends, and not many of them; because on the whole I can't say I've ever done anyone much good. In that regard you have doubtless done better than I, though I've had opportunity and money. Yes, I'm quite certain that you, the bookkeeper who had to work for a living, have accomplished more than I, who inherited much and have been selfish. I think that's the word—yes—selfish. Probably that's why you have more regrets than I in sailing off into space."

He might have said more; but she held up a warning hand and stood alert, her splendidly formed body swaying out toward the edge of the car. Involuntarily he rose to his feet and stepped over beside her, listening as she listened, while from some mysterious distance below came the hoarse call of a fog siren. She turned and looked him squarely in the eyes, and he nodded his head.

"Yes," he said quietly, "that is the answer! We are passing out over the sea, and—well, you said you were brave—in the end the sea will get us. I am

sorry for your sake. Believe me, I am sorry! It is a pity that you who enjoy life and have so much to live for should be cut out of the game and the great quest for happiness!"

In his voice and manner there was something of a boundless tenderness and sympathy that disarmed her. It was such a review of all that she had felt and was even then suffering. She dropped to her knees on the floor of the car and, resting on the bench, buried her head in her arms and sobbed in hopelessness, while he looked down on and pitied her much as he would have pitied anything condemned to death. He was not quite sure, but conjectured that in her extremity she was praying; so, with unaccustomed reverence, he removed his hat and turned away, as though he feared to desecrate a shrine.

He stepped to the opposite side and peered aloft at the big silken bag that spread out above them and was dimmed and lost in the mist. By carefully working his way to the upper edge of the roped cage and leaning far out, he could see that the rope still trailed away into the depths of the fog below. It was quite apparent that by some accident it had broken loose from the drum that should have pulled them back in safety to the earth, and that the shout they had heard must have been given when the frail line passed beyond reach.

IF they had only traveled landward! Perhaps some vagrant current from the wide sea might yet return them! He glanced back at the girl and became eager for a change of wind and avid for a chance to live. The mere sight of the drooping, girlish figure aroused in him a wistful longing to take her in his arms and solace her in the hour of approaching death. Impulsively but with care he lowered himself into the car and tiptoed toward her. She might be frightened, she might believe him a madman; but in any event he must try to extend some sympathy.

"Come," he said, kindly, "so far you have proved courageous. Let us not lose hope entirely; or, if we must go out, let us travel bravely to the end. See! The light is breaking above. It is as if we were leaving our world of mist, and perhaps in that there is a sign of good omen. It was in clear skies that God hung a rainbow of promise. Perhaps we are sailing away into the blue for a view of ours."

Looking into the gradually diminishing gloom, he smiled sadly at the thought, and wondered if it could be possible that in any existence there was flung aloft a rainbow for him. She rose to her feet. Her face was tear stained and her hair more loosely bound. He assisted her and clung to her hands as if to reassure her, while she strove to find something encouraging in the expression of his eyes. Sharply, as if hurled from below the whirling earth, the balloon leaped out of and above the vapors into a world of revealed distances, untenanted save by them. The sun, low lying, threw long shadows across a mystic sea of fleecy white whose hollows were tinged with red.

"See!" he said. "If death comes, it can be little different than this,—a leap from a long and persistent gloom into a broader and softer light, into another existence of infinite purity and rest."

He released one hand and waved it around in a wide gesture, and an exact silhouetted shadow of his form on the cloudbank below repeated his movement in a more comprehensive sweep of the upraised arm which appeared to embrace this new world of their discovery. In this transition there had been discovery, too, for him, which filled him with regret that he had not known her before the other life had been relinquished; a something that destroyed his intrepidity and made him loath to drop carelessly the shackles of the earth below. Without reasoning why and constrained by unexpected and new born shyness, their eyes lost touch, they parted, and he stepped to the edge of the car.

"The sun has set for those below," he said slowly, and down there night is approaching. Our altitude has lengthened our first and last day." He paused for an instant, and the desire to encourage her grew stronger. He faced her with an abrupt assumption of gaiety. "Now, while there's life, there's a chance. The wind currents at this time of year may sweep us back and—oh, well, we may even return to our lost city."

He had in nowise relieved her. His voice rang hollow and untrue. "Pardon me," she responded in an even tone; "it is useless to speak to me as though I were a child. Thank you for trying to make it less painful to contemplate; but one must face probabilities. I've done so all my life."

HE felt the reproof, and at last seated himself beside her, where for a long, long time they sat in silence and listened for any familiar guiding sound. The warmth expanded the imprisoned gas above, and they ascended until the sun dipped away into the western edge of the feathery blanket and the dusk came on as if drawing the final curtain on the scene. It grew colder in that high altitude, and he threw his light coat round her shoulders as, hunched up and disconsolate, she sat and shivered. Each was absorbed in thought. She sat quietly, while his mental turmoil aroused a physical disquiet that impelled him to move restlessly backward and forward.

"You too are cold," she murmured at last, after the darkness had surrounded them, leaving only the light of the stars, which, bright and chill, shone very near over the huge silken dome that swayed above them. "Can we not economize warmth? Will you not sit beside me and draw your coat over both? It may be unconventional; but—"

Her voice broke and her attempt at laughter did not deceive him. He sensed her despair and loneliness. He was not suffering from the cold, but followed her suggestion; and for another long wait they sat thus, until, unresisted, his arm stole round the supple waist and drew her close in a hungry desire to protect and comfort her as best he might. She leaned her head against his shoulder for the first time, and sobbed unrestrainedly, while he petted her as he would some loved and suffering child.

He grew tactful and led her to talk of herself, her history, her likes and dislikes, anything, to keep her mind from tragedy, and thus learned the commonplace story of a valiant and honest life. In a further endeavor to keep her from brooding over her fate, he told her of his own career in harsh, unembellished terms, sparing himself nothing in this time when untruth would have been petty and the soul could be laid bare with all the solemnity of a death bed confession. He paused at last when her weight grew heavy, and saw that she was asleep in his arms, still clinging to him as to her only refuge and hope.

Thoughts, great or insignificant, surged through his mind, bringing a

lateness of the hour. He tried now, quite desperately, to buoy hope within her.

"We are still beyond sound," he declared, "and who knows but when the sun comes up and sweeps away the fog we shall find ourselves above land? Think how glad we should be! I should then climb up over the outside rigging and find a way to release the gas from this bag that has abducted us, so we could descend with proper dignity and unbroken bones."

Unsmiling she listened and watched him, and there was something of unconcealed admiration and affection in her candid eyes. He clambered stiffly up on the network, while she tremulously cautioned him, and then outward until from the dizzy turn of the rigging he could inspect the upward slope of the dull, varnished shape. He was white when he regained the car, and his face betrayed some new knowledge bordering on disaster.

"What is it?" she breathlessly queried. "You saw something that alarmed you. You can tell me, my—my friend."

He tried to evade reply. He knew that the end was not far distant; for he had found that either the gas was less expansive or was escaping. Baggy folds were gradually replacing the hardened plumpness of the silken shell. A dull sound, still distant, was becoming painfully audible to his superacute ears. He tried to talk constantly so that she might not hear; but it was useless. The noise became louder and more constant, until she paused and, wild eyed, stared at him.

"The sea!" she said in a whisper. "The sea!"

Its roar was becoming more insistent in a dull, menacing, and cruel monotone.

"Yes," he answered, scarcely louder, "it is the sea!"

Like one distraught he tore loose from her, and his apathy gave way to a period of extreme action. He tore the frail seats loose and cast them overboard into the mist; but the balloon did not perceptibly rise, the colder air having robbed it of buoyancy. He slashed away at the rope nettings round the cage and threw those over. Everything had been done that could be done. The inevitable end was only a few minutes retarded.

SUDDENLY and smiling he stepped over to her and held out his hand. Wondering at his action, she accepted it and then started back in alarm, reading his intent.

"Goodby," he said quite clearly. "I'm going now. I'm the last of the ballast that can be spared. And before I go I want you to promise me to fight to the last. Don't lose hope. It makes my going a little easier to have known you and to realize that my last personal action has been in trying to do something for some one I—well—I care for."

She clutched her arms around him as he started for the edge of the denuded car and held him back. "No, no, no! Not that!" she insisted, her voice rising to shrill entreaty. "Don't leave me alone! You must not! You shall not!"

He paused and tried to unclasp her hands; but they clung more desperately. He hesitated to use force on those slim fingers which were intertwined, and so for an instant rested. In a measure she regained command of her voice while the din of the hungry sea came nearer.

"Your going would delay it but a little while," she pleaded. "It is hopeless, and I—I am afraid to die alone! To go down into the waters alone and to stay there forever—alone!"

He made another attempt to gain his freedom; but she prevailed.

"Promise me you will stay! That when the last comes you will hold me tight against your breast! I am no longer brave. I am frightened!"

Holding her in his arms, he promised, and in the weary drag of minutes she again became calm, as though resigned. She buried her face against him, and he knew that once more she was praying. The balloon was dropping more rapidly through the mist, and he knew that in a few moments they could see the coldly lashing waves beneath. He drew his coat up round her head to keep her from seeing the thing of horror.

"It is the end?" she asked.

Still looking down into her eyes, he gravely nodded.

Her arms went up a trifle higher, and she drew his head toward her own upturned face. "Ah!" she said. "You have been so kind, so considerate, so brave! I shall die easier while holding to you and—"

She had drawn his head still lower, and very slowly kissed him, almost as a child kisses before going to sleep. He was so intent that he had not realized that they were out of the fog, nor taken time to peer round in the forlorn hope of succor.

With a splash the bottom of the car struck the waves, which swirled in through the flimsy sides, and he struggled to hold her higher, and higher, and to gain some place where life might be prolonged for even a minute more until the warmth of her first caress had died out on his set cheek.

BY the gods! There they are!" yelled the officer on the bridge of the big Slavonia, which was nosing her way, outward bound, toward the Mediterranean. He jumped to the tubes, telegraphed hurriedly to the engine room, and then called to the quartermaster at the wheel, "Port your helm and run down on them! Hold fast there! Hold fast!" His other hand reached for the brass lever, and the

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He Drew Her Close to Protect Her as Best He Might.

vague discomposure and regret. He wished he might have life to do over again; that he might make amends for glorious opportunities lost and—his arm insensibly tightened round her with a shielding caress and he stooped to where his lips might rest against her fragrant hair. The arm became numb; but he did not move for fear of disturbing her. He prayed that she might pass thus peacefully to the end.

WHEN, after many hours, she stirred and drew away from him, the morning light accentuated the hollows round her sleep bewildered eyes. The fog was around them once more with all its suggestion of a shroud. The haggard change of the night vigil had left him older, but with a new and finer expression on his face, which she interpreted and caused her own to flush for one quick instant.

"You have not slept? You held me closely all the night? You are at least unselfish! What time is it?" He inspected his watch, and was astonished at the

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GRAND OPERA AND THE INDIANS

THAT these are wonderful days indeed—these times of ours in which at last man

sends his annals athwart the skies in wireless messages—is somewhat strangely testified in the far "wild" West of the modern moment. Even the Indians—those who have survived the shock of war, the shock of the white man's whisky, and the shock of the amateur photographer—have come at last beneath the all pervading spell of modernism and have waxed almost shockingly up to date.

In a few places only do the Indians still rove freely in country and town. Nevada remains practically unaltered as a happy hunting ground, a happy gambling ground, and a happy living ground for the once unlettered aborigines. There the Washoes, Piutes, and Shoshones abide in much of their oldtime freedom. Nevada's capital, Carson City, is always picturesquely ornamented by numbers of the braves and their squaws. In the streets of the town they sit about on boxes and sidewalks, play cards beneath the shade of some convenient cottonwood, and attend the Government school, if so disposed. They hunt in the valleys and mountains with breech loading guns; they fish in lakes and rivers with the white man's tackle.

But all of this is as nothing, by comparison with other ways of progress, adapted to their needs.

Now, around that town the Indians are chiefly Washoes, and save as makers of baskets, in which they are unexcelled, they have never been highly esteemed as high browed creatures of advancement. In the early days they did not even fight the whites. The Piute (or Pah Ute, properly) did, and was quieted by gifts of splendid lands. The Washoe was despised as a man of too much peace. Yet, a Washoe—well wait for the story.

A number of these harmless red men abide to the north of Carson on a level tract of land where nothing but sagebrush is grown. They

By Philip Verrill Mighels —at least, some—have built themselves genuine houses,— little square shacks that actually have windows let into the walls; but still rather high, it must be confessed. At one time no Indian would dream of putting in a window. It gave too fine an opportunity for the enemy to look in and mark down his victim. Years and years after all warlike activities had ceased, the Indians still avoided the window.

One of these Washoes not only has the windowed house, but—a phonograph! And behold what it is that moves his savage breast. One summer day, not long ago, he wanted records for that instrument. The agent in Carson was a fine old German with an exceptional taste for music. He had records fit for a king.

Mr. Washoe, being heavy with money and hungry for symphony, went down to the agent for the wherewithal to inundate his soul. All day he remained at the agent's wickiup, on the city's main thoroughfare, stolidly listening to every record in the place. One by one they were played for his delight or criticism. Coon songs, popular ditties, tumultuous scores from Wagner, he listened to them all. And then he selected.

Of all of these records most seductively rendered, he chose—grand opera only. Nothing but grand opera! No lullabys no ragtime, no light pretty trifles of the hour. would do for him. The thunderous crash, remindful of the wars, the shrill and soul stirring treble of agony, triumph or remorse, the sensuous waves of passion's utterance, the clash and din of rejoicing,—these were the things that soothed his untamed heart.

He bought them,—the finest, the most tremendous things in town,—and carried them off to the sagebrush. There, in his shack, which stood beside the oldtime campoodee of his brother, he stormed the night and gladdened his soul with the world's masterpieces of music.

Things That Are Cheaper

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good a wheel can be bought for forty dollars, or even less. Whether a bicycle is a luxury or a necessary, depends, presumably, upon the kind of use one makes of it. But, speaking of luxuries, there is the matter of pictures, which twenty-five years ago were comparatively costly, whereas nowadays one may cover his walls at trifling expense with exquisite works of art. Of course, this is due mainly to improvement in methods of mechanical reproduction; but even the frames cost only a fraction of their former price.

Another thing in the line of necessities that has come down greatly in price is hardware. Though building materials generally speaking, have gone up in the last few years, hardware has fallen, some of it, as much as fifty per cent.; and as for carpenters' tools, they are from twenty-five to forty per cent. cheaper than they used to be.

Things for the Kitchen

ALL sorts of articles for the kitchen cost only a small fraction of the prices of a few years ago. Twenty-five years back, for example, a baking pan was worth a dollar; to-day a good one may be purchased for ten cents. But, if one would realize how cheap things can be in these times, he should go to the ten-cent store, where he may buy for a dime a silver plated spoon or fork, a shaving brush, a pair of eye glasses, a pair of scissors, a pair of gloves, a pair of stockings, a dishpan, a saucepan, a kettle, or even a gas stove. Think of a gas stove for ten cents!

Soaps are cheaper than formerly,—not toilet soaps so much as the household kinds, which are sold for as little as six cakes for a quarter,

whereas three cakes for twenty-five cents used to be the minimum. The fifty-cent toothbrush of twenty-five years ago may now be had for twenty-five cents at any apothecary shop; and as for drugs, they have dropped amazingly. Quinine has fallen from a dollar and a half an ounce to forty cents, and in twenty years cocaine has come down from five dollars a grain to three dollars an ounce. On patent medicines in general there has been a horizontal reduction of about thirty per cent., and mothballs have diminished in cost from fifteen cents a pound to two pounds for five cents at retail.

Traveling is far cheaper than it used to be. Railroad fares have been cut, and they seem to be coming surely and steadily down from the old rate of three and four cents a mile to two cents. But the most notable reduction has been in the charge for local transportation. The fare on Philadelphia street cars twenty-five years ago was seven cents, and in Washington it cost twelve and a half cents to go from the navyyard to the farther end of Georgetown, a distance of about four miles. To-day you can make a trip for a nickel in a better vehicle, driven at far greater speed, and lighted and heated by electricity.

This means luxury for the poor man. Indeed, the same remark applies to so many things that the poor man to-day may be said to live better than the rich man of a generation ago. He has more comforts. And, while it is undeniable that the cost of not a few necessities of life has gone up, he gets in the aggregate far more for his money than he formerly did; mainly in the shape of luxuries hitherto inaccessible, which contribute in large measure to his happiness and contentment.

Voyagers of the Night

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siren shrieked the signal for "Man overboard!" Bare feet pattered hastily across the ship's deck to stations, and a boat swung out ready to lower away as the liner approached the half collapsed bag that had descended so unexpectedly from the overhanging pall of fog. It had rested on the surface when the car struck, the water thus lightening its burden, and the man could be seen clinging to the network of the outside and struggling to hold the girl's head above the water. On the Slavonia passengers were swarming out to the rail, excited, voluble, and anxious.

"That's they, the man and the woman the wireless warned all ships to watch for! They say he's wealthy. What's this his name is? Do you think the boat will get there in time? They say the rope broke from the drum at Coney Island. Just think nearly three hundred miles west of here! What an escape!" And so on in a confused babel of exclamation, while the boat dropped away from the davits as the Slavonia, reversed and slowing down, slipped past the rapidly sinking balloon.

The boat's crew lifted them aboard, threw blankets around them, and with quick and measured strokes regained the ship. He sat beside her in the center, still pillowing her drenched form against his shoulder and soothing her with words that none might hear. As they boarded the ship discipline was momentarily forgotten and the passengers overran sacred precincts and cheered as though the lives saved were their own. Neither the man

nor the girl paid any attention to the outburst. Drenched and dripping, they stood on the deck, the water running in tiny rivulets from their feet. Some one started to assist her; but the man roughly thrust the outstretched hand aside as if jealous of any touch other than his own, and put his arm round her waist and supported her. He dragged the blanket closer round her form to shield her from the staring yet friendly eyes, and turned to the Captain. "Thank you," he said in quiet simplicity. The chattering which had stopped for the moment broke out again.

"You are to go with the matron," he said, looking down at his charge. "I will come and talk to you after you have had time to rest and—" He bent forward and once more she put her arms round his neck, while her fingers touched his wet hair with a caress of infinite tenderness.

He whispered, "And may I hope that when I do come you will promise me that our journey—yours and mine—has only begun?"

In the swift flush of her cheeks, the trembling lips, and the depth of her eyes he read his answer; and, heedless of the curious bystanders or of anything else in all the world, he bent still farther and kissed her with that love and reverence that a man may bestow upon one woman alone in all his life, while the ship resumed her speed and the far shores of the Mediterranean, warm and blue and sunlit, seemed beckoning to them with outstretched and welcoming hands.

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