THE VIOLET.

In life's last, lone December,
Those blooms are white!
But who should remember
When she can no longer?
She will not mourn or care it
Where cold winds chill
But lean, frail lips, and kiss it,
For we remember still!

In unknown paths and places
Her fairy steps may be,
But still her pictured face is
The fairest dream to me;
And though the skies are cloudy
With stormy scenes aswell,
The dark cloud seems to love me,
Ah! how could they forget!

Oh, that the winds might wait her
This dying violet's breath;
That I might follow after
And die the violet's death.
For then, for heart believing,
Would leave, poor, worldly dove!
Upon my lips, half grieving,
The first, last kiss of love!

—Frank L. Stanton in Atlanta Constitution.

ZOZO.

Through a thickly falling snow, on the outskirts of one of New York's suburban towns (a hamlet of some 300,000 population), walked a man who had but one desire in the world ungratified. His name was Richard Brant, and he was a large, deep chested, handsome man—a man's man, beloved by women, too, for he had yet the sort of man that is likely to make a pretty serious matter of it if he loves a woman, or if a woman loves him.

Mr. Richard Brant came from the west, the western born child of eastern born parents. He made his fortune before he was thirty-five, and for five years he had been trying to find out what he wanted to do with that fortune. He was a man of few tastes, of no tastes and of a restless, ever-grabbed spirit that set him apart from the people who make affectation the spice of life. He wanted only one thing in the world, and that one thing money would not buy for him. So he often puzzled as to how he might best spend his money, and he often spent it foolishly. As he walked through the suburban streets of the suburban city this sharp winter's night he was reflecting on the folly of spending money on a fur coat. He was wearing the coat—a magnificent affair of lear skin and sable.

"South of Canada," he said to himself, "this sort of thing is vulgar and unnecessary. I don't need it any more than a cow needs a side pocket. It's too heavily hot for comfort at this season. I'd carry it over my arm, only I should feel how absurdly heavy it really is."

Then he looked ahead through the thick snow, and, although he was a man, he started and stepped back like a woman who sees a cow.

"Great Cæsar's ghost!" said he.

He had forgotten that he had told Brant that the salt in his office was his only salt. Or perhaps he had forgotten the wife the humiliation of such an admission.

"I'm dryin' off this rate," he said cheerfully. "Smoke, pepper ain't wet where you're sittin', is it? Set down. Well, now, mummer, you get out the whisky and give Mr.—Mr. Brant—a glass, with some hot water, and then he won't get no chill. We're all pre'ticinalists here," he said, addressing Brant, "but we ki'ber in spirits for medicinal use. Yes, mother, you'd oughter've seen that place before Mr. Brant came in on me before I knew'd where I was, and I ho thought to myself, thinks I, if these here people ever see a cousin' away from a fire, I won't catch a stagecoach in Hopelessness after this, and I tell you, the way I got enter the back window and enter the back door was a caution. There's good whisky, sir; you'll excuse me if I don't take none myself. We ain't in the habit here."

Brant did not greatly wonder at their not being in the habit when he tasted the whisky. It was hot enough to wear a tuner, and had to be sipped in and made over-sweet to the baby. And after a while she showed an inclination to come and look at his wonderful watch that struck the hour when you told it to. Below long she was sitting on his knee. Her father was telling the female members of the family about the fire, and she fell both sleepy and wheedlesome. She played with Brant's watch for a while, and then fell asleep on his breast. He held her tenderly, and listened to the astonishment at his pitiful tale over and over again, trying to fix the first second when he had smelled the smoke.

He was full of the excitement of the affair, but full of the consciousness of his own achievement to realize the extent of the disaster. But his wife suddenly broke down, crying out:

"Oh, Simmons, where'll you get $300 to build a new office?"

Brant spoke up, but very softly, for he might wake the baby, who was sleeping with her head on his shoulder.

"I'll be happy to—to advance the money," said he.

Brant's coat came off his shoulders in an instant.

"Put this on," he said. "Confound you!" as the man resisted, "put it on."

The stranger slipped into the coat with a gasp of relief.

"Cracky!" he cried, "but I was freezin'!"

"Do you live far from here?" Brant inquired.

"Just a bit up the road. I'm most home now," replied Zozo, still chattering as to his teeth.

As they walked along the half built street Zozo told his tale. He had been in the astrology business for thirty years, and it barely yielded him a living. He had been able by rigorous economy to save up enough money to build himself a house. "Elegant house, sir," he said; "built that house for my wife's sake, but it's an elegant house. I got the design out of a book that cost a dollar, sir, a dollar. They ain't so far in trying to do things cheap when you're going to build a house."

But his joy in his house was counterbalanced by his grief for the loss of his "office." He had taken the ground rent of the office for a term of years, and had put at his own cost. Three hundred and twenty-seven dollars he had spent on that modest structure. No, he had not insured it. And not only his history but his fire, and his "office" was burned to the ground, and his best suit of street clothes with it—his only suit, as he sorted after a second's hesitation.

In ten minutes' walk they arrived at Zozo's house. It was quite the sort of a house that might have come out of a story book, with a great deal of scroll work about it, and with a tiny tower, adorned with fantastically adorned shingles. As they stood on the porch—building would content Zozo but that his new friend should come in and warm himself—Mr. Brant looked at the door plate.

"Zozo's only my name in the science," the astrologer explained. "My real name—my born name—is Simmons. But I took Zozo for my business name. I'd seem kinder go with the astrology business, somehow—I don't know why. There's Zadkiel and Zerimeder and—oh, I don't know—they're Zo's and 'Z's,' most of 'em, and it goes with the profession. I don't no more like humbugging superstition than you would, but a man's gotter to live, and the world isn't up to the science yet. Oh, that's your Mommer; is it?" he concluded as the door was opened by a bright, buxom, rather pretty woman. "Mother ain't to bed yet, is she? Say, Mommer, the office is burnt down!"

"Oh, Pepper!" tried the poor woman, "you don't say!"

"True's I live," said the astrologer, "and my street clo'es too."

"Oh, Pepper!" his wife cried, "what shall we do?"

"I don't know, mummer; I don't know. We'll have to think. Jus' let this here gentleman in, though. I'd need a' from of his hosh's just one ton loss of his wepsent. My sister," he broke out as he looked at the gateway to the light of the hall lamp, "that coat aren't nearly Mommer, this here's Mr.—I don't caught your name, sir."

"Brant," said the owner of the name.

"Brant. And a real elegant gentleman he is, mummer. I'd'n' from stiff in my sciences if it hadn't been for this coat. My sister" he exclaimed, screeching "never see this; no." That'll keep a serpine warm. Shut the door, mummer, an' take the gentleman into the dining room. He kind be right solid himself. Is mother there?"

"Yes," said Zozo's wife, "and so is Mack. You was so late we all got a shaker warming, and Mandie went right down in her nightie just before you came in. 'Where's pepper?' say she. 'Ain't he come in yet to bim jim good night?' 'Tain't morein', sez she. And the orfen turned down! Oh, my, pepper! I thought our troubles was at an end. Come right in, Mr.—Mr.—I don't rightly get your name, but thank you kindly for looking after pepper, and if you hel'ev the how ever no hates said me, sez I, I'm ever so much thankful I'm. Come right into the dinin' room. Mother, this is Mr. Brant, and he and Simmons the loss of his coat to cause some with. What's he wear?"

"What's that?" croaked a very old woman in the corner of the dining room. It was a small dining room, with a small ex-tension table covered with a red damask cloth.

"Simmons' office is burned up, and his best suit with it," explained Mrs. Simmons. "Didn't it awful?"

"It's a judgment," said the old lady solemnly. She was a Scotch woman of the Anti-Burgher persuasion, and yet she evidently was more afraid of a wrathful God than of a Deity of Love. Her grim-faced spirit that set him apart from the people who make affectation the spice of life. He wanted only one thing in the world, and that one thing money would not buy for him. So he often puzzled as to how he might best spend his money, and he often spent it foolishly. As he walked through the suburban streets of the suburban city this sharp winter's night he was reflecting on the folly of spending money on a fur coat. He was wearing the coat—a magnificent affair of lear skin and sable.

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