

Fidèle moved about the room doing her work, and he watched her as she moved. Her father and Bartholdi were talking about pigs and cows. Ordinarily pigs and cows deeply interested him, but just now they were exceedingly tedious, and when the two men spoke to him he gave them distraught answers. Gradually they ceased to address him. He was thinking what a fine girl Fidèle was, and how soft and white her arms looked in the early twilight. It would be delightful, he thought, to live in this clean little house with the old man, and with Fidèle as his wife. He could leave the place where he was employed and virtually have a place of his own. The old man was getting feeble, and perhaps before very long would die. There were three cows now, and two horses. With a little close economy—what a pretty picture Fidèle made as she set the table! Three plates, he counted. And she smiled graciously toward him as she put them on. He hadn't expected to stay to supper, but why not, since she appeared to wish it? And he settled down to the anticipation.

All at once he was aware that the table was set, and that Fidèle had taken down the big bucket hanging by the door and gone out. Picking up his gift, François sprang to his feet and clattered after her. Then he stopped, for he saw—he saw the burly form of Bartholdi going down the path, his big arm around Fidèle's waist, and old Pierrot looking after them in approval.

That night roast goose was on the bill of fare at "La Lune Argentine," and a young Frenchman lay asleep in the rain beside the road, dead drunk.

G.

