

Therapies of Love

Year 1861, in Hermoupolis, Syros island, Greece. Androcles, a twenty-five-year-old young man, is happy with his life. He has a good job, inherited a comfortable house and enjoys his free time, playing card games in Hermoupolis club, with his friends. Through his good friend, Emmanuel, Androcles meets Christina, a pretty, brunette girl, tall, with wide shoulders, ample bust, and sparkling eyes. Androcles falls madly in love with Christina and suffers the consequences of the condition of being in love. Despite objections from relatives and friends, that Christina is not compatible with him, he decides to marry her, to put an end to his misery. The reason he wants to marry Christina, is to relish her, to enjoy her, to have enough of her and to begin to eat, sleep, walk and play cards in the club as he did before he met her.

The honeymoon lasts an entire summer, on the island of Kea. In the morning, the couple enjoy swimming in the sea and in the afternoon, go for a long walk or trip. Androcles returns exhausted, eats like a wolf, and after doing with Christina what he has to do, he sleeps well till the morning.

The couple return to Syros after the honeymoon, with Androcles completely healed from the anguish of being in love. But Christina is a spoiled only child, loves mixing with the good society, adores gaiety, fineries and dances. Especially the dances become a nightmare for Androcles, since there, Christina meets many admirers. The dances are frequent and Christina does nothing else but prepare for a whole day the day before the dance, dance all night on the day of the dance and rest the whole of the next day. Androcles does little else than to accompany her, to stay up, to worry, to spy on her and to see in his sleep her adventures with her fans. As the desert explorer is tormented by the illusion of fountains, rivers and green valleys, so is Androcles, by the memories of the good days at Kea, the quietness, the calmness and Christina lying on the divan in her white everyday dress with a book in hand. When Androcles ponders how easy it would be for Christina to make him the happiest man on earth, if her love of entertainment and social behaviour were a little more restrained, he feels like strangling her. The danger of putting into practice his feelings though, is not great. He doesn't believe that there is in the world, a heart softer than his own. If he had to slaughter with his own hands the chickens that he eats, then he would prefer to feed himself on the bran on which the chickens themselves feed.

Androcles philosophises the matter and tries various ways to live harmoniously with a coquettish woman. He finds fault in those grumbling men that declare the world badly designed for the reason that roses have thorns. Instead of grudging about these he thinks it would be black ungratefulness not to glorify God, considering that he is still under thirty years old, he has an adequate income, thirty firm teeth in his mouth, an ostrich stomach, a wife capable of incarnating the dreams of a Sybarite, and a cook for whom Talleyrand would be jealous. He considers unfair and somewhat ungrateful, to complain about his wife's behaviour, because she does exactly what she has to do to make her kisses sweeter. If he had an everyday wife, he would not have a part time superior quality lover. He sees his life move forward as a parade of good dinners, see through clouds of veil, sparkling black eyes and multi-coloured candlelight.