

7th Avenue Local

by Katrina Dessavre

The harsh lights of the 7th Ave. Local revealed dark circles that had remained hidden during Vivian's performance. She had smeared off the heavy makeup at the Winter Garden and hurried to the station, hoping that she would avoid meeting the one person she had never expected to see *Hellz-a-Poppin*.

There was no mistaking it was Evelyn's face that caught her eye during "It's Time to Say Aloha." Three years ago Vivian would have been mortified by how many of her former friends would know by noon the next day. Dressed as an Aloha Girl! Only yesterday was she a debutante dancing for charity. And now she's dancing for money!

The monotonous rush of the train soothed the remnants of show tunes running through Vivian's head. Perhaps Evie hadn't recognized her. The bleached blonde hair, pulled back with severity, was a dramatic departure from her once soft mouse-brown curls. Vivian noted with some satisfaction that she wasn't embarrassed at all. Evie's face only reminded her of the day she had lost her faith in tradition, the Fifth Avenue Bank, and those who still believed in the virtues of either.

She was rummaging through her boot cabinet, trying to decide on evening slippers, when Evie arrived unannounced, holding a small bunch of violets. At first, she didn't know what to make of Evie's talk of optimism in the face of adversity, counting how many of their acquaintances had to cut back on their chauffeurs, opera subscriptions, and trips to Europe.

"I even stopped using the elevator in my own house to save on the electricity bill, so you shouldn't feel bad." Evie trailed on in between mouthfuls of the curried chicken she was saving for dinner. Before the last sip of her best St. Julien, Evie made the remark that still reverberated in her ears, even through the din of the subway.

"Oh, Vivian, how silly it must seem now to have held on to your railroad shares when your grandfather made such a fortune acquiring them! Now with poor Charlie's pay cut and all..." The last

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part had been a whisper, but Evie might as well have screamed it. It was the first time Vivian became aware of why her husband had been squirming every time she bought a new bouquet of flowers.

The dark circles under Vivian's eyes smoothed out a bit with a smile. She never thought that she would ever admit that Evie had spoken the truth. But if someone had told her three years ago that the theater was more stable than railroad shares, she would never have believed it.

