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AN AWFUL PLIGHT

It happened when I was attending medical lectures. One day I went from a clinic to my room, sat in my easy chair and lighted a pipe. I expected my mother, who was coming to town, at any moment.

"Great Scott, what's that?"

From my bedroom came a clear, melodius whistle. The air was "Oh, listen to the mocking bird!" and after the chorus came an excellent imitation of the bird's notes. When it was finished a sweet feminine voice said:

"Why don't you do your part, Billy?"

My name is not Billy, and I never did any part in the song of "The Mocking Bird."

What occupied my mind was who had taken possession of my bedroom to give such a concert. I got up from my chair and proceeded to find out. The door between the two rooms opened, and there stood a very pretty girl.

We stood looking at one another for a moment equally astonished. Then she executed the feminine device, taken doubtless from the bird which buries its head in the sand to avoid being seen, of clapping her hands to her face.

"There is evidently some mistake," I remarked.

"An awful mistake."

"How did you get into my bedroom?"

"I thought it was Billy's."

"Who is Billy?"

"My brother, Billy Fanning."

"Why, he's my chum! His rooms are next to mine."

There was a knock at my sitting room door. The girl shrank back into my bedroom, and I closed the door. Turning, there was a head looking into the room—my mother.

"Dear boy!"

"Dear mother!"

Oh, if there were only a door opening from my bedroom into the hall! But there was no such door. The girl could not leave my room except by the one we were in.

"You are tired, mother, at climbing the stairs. Sit in this chair and rest."

I put her in the chair and listened to and asked the usual questions after a separation.

"I haven't any refreshment to offer you, mother, dear, but if you'll just step next door to the rooms of my friend Billy Fanning I dare say I can find something."

"I don't want anything. I have only an hour to spend with you and must get right to work at your linen."

"There's not a break in it. I looked over everything carefully last night."

"And I'll look over everything carefully this morning."

She arose and was going to my bedroom. Indeed, she had her hand on the doorknob when I stopped her.

"Mother," I said, with a trembling voice.

"Oh, my boy, what's the matter?"

"Mother, before you go in there I have something of importance to communicate."

"Do tell me quick! Has anything happened?"

"Mother, I'm engaged."

"Engaged! And without consulting your poor mother! Oh, Roger, how could you?"

"And, mother, my fiancee is in that room now attending to my linen."

"Your fiancee in there! Then I'll never speak to her!"

"But, mother, it's worse yet. I haven't told you all. I'm married. It's my wife who is in there."

Poor mother sank into my arms and groaned.

"Mother, when you see her you'll be delighted. She's lovely. She's Billy Fanning's sister."

"I don't care who she is. I'll have nothing to do with her."

Now, I had purposely talked sufficiently loud for the girl in the next room to hear. She did hear and lent herself to my desperate makeshift. She opened the door and stepped boldly out.

"Mother, this is Miss—I mean my wife. I know you will love her and she will love you."

The girl walked up to mother, kissed her and asked in a voice into which she contrived to throw a tremolo, "Can you forgive us?"

"You are a very sweet looking girl," said my mother, somewhat appeased.

"Yes, mother, and when you've known her as long as I have you'll admit she's as lovely as she looks."

The girl turned away suddenly. Mother supposed it was to hide her blushes at my encomium. I caught a glimpse of her face in a mirror and saw that it was to hide her laughter.

"Well, Roger, you've been a very bad boy to do this clandestinely, but I dare say when I hear the explanation I'll understand it all and not blame you."

"Yes, mother." Then I turned to my supposed wife, who was making for the sitting room door. "Must you go so soon, dear?"

"Yes, but I've not touched your linen. Your mother won't have to give that up for some time yet."

When I got mother off I went next door, where I found Miss Fanning.

"This is a serious matter," I said to her, "and I see but one way out of it. I offer you my heart and hand and ask you to consider my proposition as long as we can deceive my mother. Then we must be married or suffer the consequences."

We kept mother quiet for thirty days and told several lies each day. Then there was an announced engagement, followed by a public wedding.

Billy Fanning and my wife often whistle "The Mocking Bird" together to piano accompaniment, but my wife invariably fails to keep the second whistle.

A series of extraordinary events was given in a London theater some months after the close of that memorable war. On the one side was the English army in full red coated uniform, with every button in its exact place. Opposite them was the American army, composed, as the theater bill stated, of "artizans, cobblers and tinkers," arrayed in their working dress, with buttons of every size and hue. When the curtain dropped, Captain Bartlett of Plymouth, Mass., the captain of a ship then in port, stood up in his seat in the pit and, in a voice as if given from a quarterdeck in a squall, called, "Three cheers for the artizans, cobblers and tinkers who were too much for King George and his redcoats," and, with a wave of his hat, he gave these with a will. For a short time there was silence in the theater, followed by an enthusiastic John Bull appreciative cheer for the pluck and assurance of the Yankee captain, who became the lion of the city, receiving invitations to clubs and free tickets to theatrical and other entertainments while he remained in port.

Just a Little Too Smart.

A scrubwoman in a Paris theater found a magnificent diamond stomacher in a box in sweeping up. The honest old soul determined to restore the stomacher to its owner, and the owner, of course, wasn't long in turning up, a young woman splendidly dressed and on the verge of hysterics. "Oh, have you found my stomacher?" she cried. "It is a chef d'oeuvre of Lalique of the Place Vendome." "Calm yourself, madame," said the scrubwoman. "Here is your stomacher." And she produced it from her pocket. The other took out a fifty dollar bill, pressed it on the honest scrubwoman and departed with her stomacher hurriedly. But an hour later another lady called. "Have you found my stomacher?" she asked, smiling. "I think I left it in my box." "Why, yes, madame, but if it was your stomacher," said the scrubwoman, "a thief has got it. She got it this morning. She gave me $50 reward." "Why, the stomacher was imitation," the lady said. "It only cost $5. Your thief is $45 out."

Mr. Gladstone's Catch.

"How many members of this house," asked Mr. Gladstone once in the course of a debate on electoral qualifications, "can divide £1,330 17s. 6d. by £2 13s. 8d.?"

"Six hundred and fifty-eight," shouted one member.

"The thing cannot be done," exclaimed another.

A roar of laughter greeted this last remark. But it was true nevertheless. You cannot multiply or divide money by money. You may repeat a shilling sum of money as many times as it is contained in a larger sum of money, but that is a very different thing. If you repeat 5 shillings as often as there are hairs in a horse's tail you do not multiply 5 shillings by a horse's tail. Perhaps you did not know this before. Never mind; you need not be ashamed of your ignorance, for it was shared, as has been demonstrated, by the entire house of commons (bar one member), including the then chancellor of the exchequer.

Hunter and Hunted.

A nearsighted sportsman strolled into a little hotel on the shores of Loch Carron and complainingly said, "Just seen a seal, shot at it three times and missed it each time."

At dinner an hour later he sat next to a tourist who had a bandage round his head.

"Had an accident?" asked the sportsman.

"Accident!" growled the other. "Attempted murder, you mean. I was having a bath about an hour ago when some lunatic with a gun fired at me three times from the shore and shot part of my ear off. I don't know why such animals are allowed out without a license."

Then silence reigned supreme.—London Telegraph.

Laviishness.

"In days of old luxurious people had cloth of gold placed beneath their feet."

"Yes," replied Mr. Chuggins. "But those times were comparatively economical. Now we want nothing less expensive than rubber tires between us and the earth."—Washington Star.

There Was No Music.

"What is the greatest fib that ever impressed itself on your experience, Sandy?"

"Well, by all odds, the worst one I ever heard was that your quartet performed last night when they came round to the house and sang 'Sweet Music in the Air.'"

The Terms of Exchange.

"We wish to arrange for an exchange of prisoners," announced the South American dictator.

"On what basis?" inquired the leader of the other side.

"The usual basis—eight generals for a good, husky private."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Quick Sprint.

Sandy Pikes—Dat rich guy in de bungalow took quite a fancy to me. He took me around to de stable, showed me de $5,000 bulldog he had just bought and asked me if I could beat it. Gritty George—And what did you say? Sandy Pikes—Nuttin'. I just beat it.—Chicago News.

Was Willing.

Smith—You and Jones don't seem to be as friendly as you were. Have you owe you money? Brown—No, not exactly, but he wanted to.

Nearly a School Scandal.

What might have been a terrible sensation, calling for public investigation and much newspaperiety, was averted by the visit of a shocked mamma to one of our public primary schools. A friend of the mother was calling at the house and asked the little daughter, "How do you like your teacher?"

"Oh, my teacher is nice," answered Tot, "but she is always asking us for a cigarette."

"What!" cried the lady and the mamma in horrified tones, seeing contamination of the morals of Tot under the teachings of a modern bachelor of the feminine gender.

"Yes, mamma. She says, 'Cigarette, cigarette.'"

The next day, mamma visited the school. As she entered the class room the teacher was calling first to one child and then to another, "Sit erect, sit erect!" while Tot flaunted a glance of intelligence and "Didn't I tell you so?" at her mother.—Wasp.

It Is a Wise Child.

An official of the immigration bureau at Ellis Island told a story of a wise little immigrant child.

"A little girl came over in the steerage in search of her father, whose name she gave us. We sent for the man, and he came and looked at her.

"'I can't tell whether this is Mary or not,' said he. 'I haven't seen Mary since she was a baby about three months old. How can I tell then whether this is Mary or not?'

"It was a question we couldn't answer, so we looked blank like to the child and from the child back to him, remaining silent.

"Finally, when we found all at sea with' said, he looked apparently at the child and said pensively, 'Are you father?'

"And the wise little child answered quickly, 'Yes, you are.'

"And so we made her over to him."—New York Press.

"Hang on Tight."

When a smoking car with thirty-two passengers jumped the track, a railroad engineer in the car, the story goes, yelled to the passengers to "hang on tight," and while the car turned over no one was hurt.

"Hang on tight" is good advice in most upsets. The man who hangs on tight to himself when his temper is upset will get through without hurting either himself or others. The man who "hangs on tight" to his seraphic ends with a countenance. The man who "hangs on tight" to his place when business upsets occur usually holds down his job. The man who "hangs on tight" when disarrangement or even disaster upsets others is a man to be hopeful about, because he will keep right side up whatever else turns over.—Philadelphia Press.

Saved by a Dream.

"Plots contrived by dreams are occasionally worth heeding," says the London Chronicle. "Thus late Lord Dufferin, when in Paris (previous to his appointment as ambassador to Turkey), was about to enter the carriage of a certain hotel, he was startled to find that the attendant was a stranger. The driver of the horse in the dream. He therefore promptly left the carriage and walked upstairs. The cab moved off without him, but as it started for the proceedings in the establishment gave way and the passengers met their death. Had they also, once more been summoned to a banquet?"

A Voracious Monster.

The most voracious of all monsters of land or sea is the genus of whale. It reaches a length of ninety feet, and its jaws present with teeth from four to six feet long that are as sharp as a dirk knife. Its digestive power is proportioned to the tremendous capacity of its jaws. It seems not to be an atrocious glutton, and does not, unless provoked, contribute to the sum of human calamities. Its food consists of small fishes, porpoises and tortoises.

Fell Penalty.

Mrs. Packem—Henry, what punishment should be meted out to a man who proposes to a woman and then refuses to marry her? Packem—He should be compelled to marry her.—Exchange.

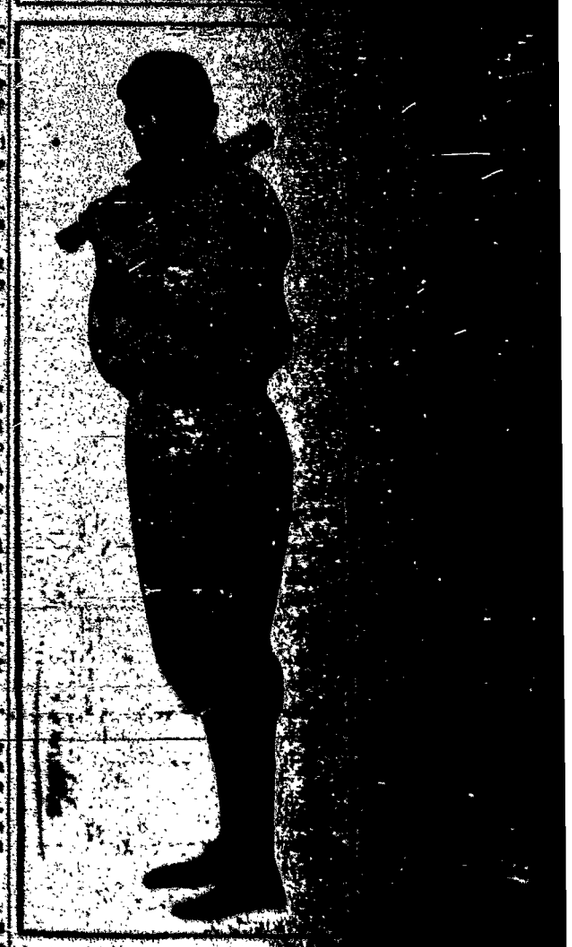
Didn't Want Trouble.

The Playwright—Honestly, now, what do you think of my new play? The Critic—Don't ask me. You're as much bigger and stronger than I am.

Never throw an ax, pare an apple or use harsh words in a hospital.—Ram's Horn.

IN THE SPORT

Johnny Kling, Chicago Crack Backstop



Johnny Kling, whose catching for Chicago National Sports has led to his rapidly remaining [illegible] will soon begin [illegible] backstop of the [illegible] he [illegible] season [illegible] when called [illegible] powerful [illegible] enough of him to [illegible] to whether he [illegible] [illegible] put [illegible] out will [illegible]

Take it [illegible] rules, and there [illegible] looks, always [illegible] safety valve [illegible] on speed and skill. [illegible] the football [illegible] fully as any [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]