

A KISS IN THE DARK

By EVERETT P. CLARKE

When consciousness came to me I found myself in a strange room surrounded by a number of persons, all of whom were looking at me with sympathy on their faces. I could not remember how I came to be there in that condition or why I felt as I did. The truth was that in crossing a street I had been knocked down through the carelessness of a chauffeur and severely injured. A man whom I took to be a doctor was patching me up, and as soon as I returned to consciousness he ordered every one out of the room and, after telling me that I had been run over, said that I had been carried into a house near the scene of the accident and could not be at once removed.

One of my eyes had been injured, and a strip of linen was laid over both of them. Then I suppose I was left to myself for a while, for I heard no sound in the room, though at intervals persons came and went. After having been alone so far as I knew, during one of these intervals I heard what sounded to me to be a faint rustling of a woman's skirts. Then there was a vague consciousness that some one was standing near me looking at me. One thing I felt sure of—a warm breath against my cheek.

Suddenly I felt a pair of lips pressed against mine. It was only for a moment, after which by the sound of skirts I knew some one was scampering away. I had evidently been kissed by a woman.

Now, I was at an age when a kiss like that would naturally stir the imagination. Was the kisser young? Judged by the feeling of her lips, which were soft and warm, I longed to get well that I might find her out.

I remained where I was but a few days, when I was taken to my own home. I was not permitted to remove my eye covering before leaving the house, so I was ignorant of the members of the family. As soon as I was well enough to be out again I went to thank them for the care they had taken of me. I was received by the lady of the house, and I asked that I might thank every one who was in the house during my stay there. The lady told me that the members of her family were one son and a little daughter eight years old. I knew that the person who had kissed me was neither of these, for the wish of skirts I heard was not that of a child. I asked if there had been any one besides the family in the house during my sojourn there, to which she replied that no one had been staying there. The accident had caused considerable excitement in the neighborhood, and a number of persons had come in to make inquiries.

This was as far as I could go in my investigation, at least at the time, and I felt discouraged. There was a strong probability of my remaining in ignorance of what I was extremely anxious to know. I resolved to cultivate the acquaintance of the Murrys, who had housed me, with a view to a possible meeting with the kisser.

This I did. The son, Ed Murray, was about my age, and I took especial pains to cultivate him. He was nothing loath, and we soon became excellent friends. I have often thought that the kisser, seeing me going about with him, must have quaked in her boots. But, though I purposely talked with Murray about my stay in his mother's house, I gained no information as to who was there on the day I was taken in. Ed had been away at the time. However, I was doing my bit of detective work very well, and it was quite likely that by being a good deal at the house I might run across my quarry, and if I did I was quite sure she would show in her features a consciousness that would betray her.

Time passed, and, having thus far failed, I concluded to reveal my secret to some one of the family and ask assistance. Neither Mrs. Murray nor Ed could be relied on to give the girl away. I chose Edie Murray, the daughter, as one too young to have many scruples about giving the lady away.

"I do believe it was Kit Travers," she said. "She's just the kind of girl to do a thing like that."
"Who is Kit Travers? Was she here on the day I was brought here?"
"I don't know about her being here, but she might have been. At that time she used to come here quite often."
"At that time? Doesn't she come here quite often now?"
"She hasn't been in the house in a long while."

I felt quite sure I was on the right track. I based my conclusion on the fact of Miss Travers having formerly been often at the Murrys' and having suddenly dropped off after I became intimate with them. I induced Edie to send for Miss Travers on some pretext and telephone me on her arrival.

One day I received the message and hurried to the Murrys'. I had my own pretext for coming prepared, but did not need to use it. I suddenly entered a room where Edie was talking with a very pretty girl. The moment the pretty girl saw me she blushed beautifully, and I felt that I had landed the girl who had kissed me.

I often tell my wife that it was her appreciation of me that brought about my appreciation of her and, consequently, our marriage. If she, moved by a sudden impulse, hadn't kissed me in the dark—

I got no further, warned by a rising tempest.

Running Water.

Have you ever noticed, when the water has almost all run out of the bathtub, how the light particles on the surface seem then to race out much faster than the water? As a matter of fact, they are traveling faster than most of the water, but no faster than that on the surface.

The reason is not far to seek. Running water, even in a river, goes at different rates, but fastest on the top surface right in the middle of the stream. Friction with the sides and bottom makes the water there go more slowly. So the light particles on top of the water in the bathtub, along with the surface water, rush ahead at a good rate.

This particular peculiarity in rivers is utilized by boatmen when they have to go up a swift stream; they always paddle up near the bank. And at curves, as the water swings outward, they take the inside bank, for there the water is almost still. On the other hand, in coming down the very center of the stream is chosen.—St. Louis Republic.

Washington Official Life.

Dinners and social functions are conspicuous features of Washington life. The new senator or congressman always feels that he must keep up the pace, but his older colleagues do not hesitate to send in their regrets now and then. One senator whose young daughters make severe demands upon him as an escort to official functions, said:

"I have cut out all dinners and functions except those I feel under obligations to attend in my official capacity."

"I have done this for two reasons: First, because I have no time to attend them. I have too much to do. Second, Mr. Spofford, so long librarian of congress, once told me that most public men and army and navy officers who died in Washington dug their graves with their own teeth—a saying which I have taken to heart."—National Magazine.

A Chinese Superstition.

When a Chinese baby takes a nap people think its soul is having a rest—going out for a long walk perhaps. If the nap is a very long one the mother is frightened. She is afraid that her baby's soul has wandered too far away and cannot find its way home. If it doesn't come back, of course the baby will never awaken. Sometimes men are sent out into the streets to call the baby's name over and over again, as though it were a real child lost. If a baby sleeps while it is being carried from one place to another the danger of losing the soul along the way is very great. So whoever carries the little one keeps saying its name out loud, so that the soul will not stray away. They think of the soul as a bird hopping along after them.

Clever Elephant.

"Elephants are clever animals," said a trainer, "and I once had one that could read. He was a quarrelsome beast, and one day he got into a scrape with the Bengal tiger, and before we could get them separated he had his trunk badly damaged. After the scrimmage was over the elephant broke loose and started down the street fast. 'He's going wild!' somebody shouted. 'Don't you believe it,' says I. Now, where do you suppose that elephant went to?"

"Went to the surgeon's, I suppose. Can't you get up a better yarn?"
"No, he didn't go to the surgeon's. He went straight to a little shop where a sign read, 'Trunks repaired while you wait.' Of course he had made a mistake. But what do you expect of a poor dumb brute?"—London Globe.

Tale of Two Dogs.

Sir John Sebright, a prominent society man of the early nineteenth century, owned a remarkable dog. In "Coke of Norfolk" Mrs. A. M. W. Stirling relates that "Sir John Sebright often brought a favorite dog to Holkham, who was remarkably clever at learning tricks."—Lord Erskine also possessed a dog which he declared the cleverest of the two. A wager was laid as to which animal in the course of a twelvemonth could be taught the most extraordinary trick. The trial took place at Holkham at the end of a year. Erskine's dog cleverly took a roast oyster out of the fire without injuring himself, but Sir John's dog actually carried a glass of wine without spilling a drop to any gentleman in the room pointed out to him.

Nothing Too Good For Her.

Mrs. Newlight—"That's a pretty good-looking one. Show me that. The Piano Salesman—"That's one of our finest instruments. I sold one just like it to Mrs. De Frazzle. Solid mahogany, seven and a half octaves. Mrs. Newlight—"Seven and a half? Send me one with eight."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Something Comic.

Brownblige (to waitress who has handed him a newspaper)—Ain't yer got nothing comic? I likes to have something funny to look at while I'm a-hunting. Waitress—"There's a looking glass straight in front of you, sir."—London Tit-Bits.

Making Headway.

Nervous Traveler (to sent companion)—How fast would you say you were traveling? Companion (who has been flirting with the girl across the way)—About a smile a minute.—Life.

No Need of It.

"Don't you ever play cards at your house?"
"Never. We got so many other things to quarrel about."—Detroit Free Press.

He who has time, let him not wait for time.—Italian Proverb.

Haha, an Indian Maiden

By F. A. MITCHEL

Haha was the name given by white settlers of Kentucky to an Indian girl who lived more than a hundred years ago because her real name was so difficult to pronounce. It was something meaning laughing girl, the latter part of it being "haha." This appellation was given her on account of her musical laugh—not that she laughed a great deal, for the Indians, both men and women, are a stolid race, and a smile is seldom seen on the face of any of them. Haha laughed only when especially moved by some happy condition, and then there was something catching in her laughter. Even the chief of the tribe was known to chuckle on hearing it.

One day the tribe to which Haha belonged pitched its tepees in the neighborhood of a family of white settlers named MacDermott, who were of Scotch-Irish extraction, as most of the early emigrants to that region were, a hardy race, especially fitted to endure the hardships of a pioneer life. A son, Donald, was a fine, handsome fellow twenty years of age and as much admired by the Indians as by his fellow whites.

One spring morning Donald, who was fond of wandering, struck a stream on the other side of which was a bluff extending perpendicularly from the edge of the water from which it was reflected. The bank on which he stood was a wooded plain, where grew the wild yew, pea vine and other herbs, interspersed with various flowers. The birds were singing, the air was fragrant indeed, and, as that morning in its virgin condition, undespotted by man.

Suddenly there rang out a peal of melody, a laugh. It had scarcely died away before its echo came back from the cliff opposite. A mocking bird on the branch of a tree over Donald's head heard it and was mightily astonished. Indeed, he looked indignant that any creature should dare to make more beautiful sounds than he. His throat swelled, and out came a very good imitation of what he had heard, and, like its predecessor, came back in reduced volume from the cliff.

At that moment the Indian girl, Haha, came pushing aside the undergrowth, and Donald saw her stop, parting it, and look straight at him. She was evidently pleased with the startle white man, and he was delighted with the attractive picture before him.

Now, Donald knew nothing of her language, and she knew but little of his. He contrived by words and signs to ask her why she was so happy, and she pointed to the cliff reflected in the water, the wild flowers peeping through the long grass, the grapes, persimmons, blackberries, cherries, mulberries and nuts that were beginning to swell on the trees. He repeated his own name several times, putting his finger on his breast. She understood and gave her own name, adding, "White man, Haha."

There could be no better place than among this profusion of nature's bounties and beauties for the birth of love. The white and the dusky mingled all day and night meet in the gloaming. Thereafter their meetings were frequent and always at the same place. Now and again through sheer happiness Haha's laughter would ring out to the envy of some mocking bird, which would try to imitate it. As the season advanced the lovers had no need to bring a luncheon with them, for it was at hand in the ripening fruits of the earth.

Haha had many suitors among the young warriors of her tribe, but from the moment she met Donald MacDermott, she would listen to none of them. This, as well as her frequent absences, attracted the attention of her people, and they were at a loss to divine the cause. When the hunting season came the lovers were in danger, for the Indians spread themselves in every direction to hunt the deer, bear and wild turkey with which the country abounded. Aware that if they were caught together by Haha's people one or both would suffer, they changed their trysting place to a point under the bank of the Ohio river, near which they lived. Between the bank and the stream were shallow lagoons frequented by flocks of birds of all sizes, from the snipe to the sandhill crane.

But it was now autumn, the season when the wild geese visited the lagoons, and the Indians came there to procure them for food. One day an Indian crouched upon the bank above where the lovers were together, watching for a shot at the geese. He heard Haha's laugh. Crawling forward to a point where he could see the white man and the Indian girl, he raised his rifle, fired, and Haha's laugh was turned into a shriek. Donald fell dead.

That was the last of Haha's laughter. She lived but a few months after her lover's death, ending her life by jumping from the cliff near which they had so often met. There was a belief among the tribe that occasionally her "haha" was heard as an echo from the cliff. At any rate, the spot was treated with great reverence by them and was a favorite trysting place for lovers. The legend was handed down through the Indians, and their belief is now turned to a matter of mere interest among their white successors. Maidens are accustomed to laugh before the cliff to hear the echo. It may be that what the red men heard was similar laughter from their own girls.

Tonic of Outdoor Life.

Outdoor life, contact with the earth, the digging, the wheeling of a barrow, even the quiet contemplation of unfolding animal and plant life, are better tonics and restorers than any man has devised.

There was one gardener who did wonders for himself at the very prosaic task of digging holes. Through a period of three years he dug 400 holes for trees and shrubs. He was three times as strong, he asserted, at the expiration of that time than ever before, and he weighed twenty pounds more. The improvement in his attitude toward life was too great to estimate.

During all that time he had been working in the open air he had "found"—although this particular gardener was no poet, and didn't express it in just this fashion—"tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones and good in everything," including himself.—New York Post.

Didn't Watch His Watch.

In a subway crowd not long ago a New York man was "touched" for his watch. The watch was not intrinsically valuable, but the New York man wanted it back for sentimental reasons and inserted divers advertisements in the papers offering \$50 for the return of the watch and "no questions asked."

The "dip" who had "lifted" the watch saw the advertisements and concluded to take the \$50. He called on the New York man, handed him the timepiece and demanded the reward. The owner of the watch was only too happy to give it to him. After examining the watch he returned it to his pocket and handed over five ten-dollar bills. The "dip" pocketed the money and departed. There was little said.

A few minutes later the New York man reached for his watch.

But it was gone.—New York Tribune.

Restfulness of Flowers.

Flowers in the home divert the mind and rest the weary eyes of the housewife and mother.

A bouquet in the sickroom aids in keeping the mind off the disease and often starts the brain on a new channel of thought that puts the patient on the road to recovery.

Flowers in the office or on the desk of the weary clerk or stenographer will produce such a telling effect that by actual comparison more work is accomplished by those whose eyes and brains are rested by the presence of those gifts from nature.

Artists visit the parks and gardens to study the flowers, and their orbs are wonderfully toned up by the refreshing glimpses of the colors in nature, and no artist has ever been successful who does not study colors in the beautiful flowers.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Bad Disease.

A well known railroad president once took occasion to visit a small southern town to enjoy the excellent fishing near by. He carefully concealed his identity and was consequently snubbed by a "bleeding citizen" with whom he attempted to strike up a conversation on the banks of the stream. When leaving he secured the services of an aged black to carry his things from the hotel to the depot. There the departing visitor caught sight of the man who had given him the cold shoulder. "Poor Smith," he said, smiling amiably, "suffering from an aggravated attack of egotism."

Bless the Baby.

Bless this little heart, this white soul that has won the kiss of heaven for our earth.

He loves the light of the sun, he loves the sight of his mother's face. He has not learned to despise the dust and to banter after gold. Clasp him to your heart and bless him.

He has come into this land of a hundred crossroads. I know not how he chose you from the crowd, how to your door and grasped your hand to ask his way. He will follow you, laughing and talking and not a doubt in his heart. Keep his trust, lead him straight and bless him.—"From 'The Crescent Moon,' by Rabindranath Tagore.

Two of a Kind.

"Oh, George," sighed the loveliest maiden, "I'm sure I'm not worthy to be your wife."
"Well," replied George wearily, "I'm not worthy to be your husband, so we're just about evenly matched."—Philadelphia Press.

Mean.

Burton—Mean man, isn't he? Robinson—Mean? He's capable of going into a barber's shop for a shave and then getting his hair cut just to keep other people waiting.

India's Dry Period.

In India—the skies are practically cloudless from February to May, and dryness gradually develops into parching heat.

He who has lost confidence can lose nothing more.

A Telegraph Joke

By SARAH BAXTER

No one knows of the serious and comic episodes that have occurred between telegraph operators. I refer more particularly to those of the opposite sex. I have been a telegraph operator for twenty years, and I can count five marriages between operators that I know of personally. And three of these began by the sending of messages between persons who had never seen each other.

When I was a young man I was located at a railroad station in a quiet place where there was no recreation whatever. I spent most of my time in the office, and in order to get away with the time when I was not busy I kept books there. I read everything I could get to read and even then there were times when I was hungry for something to do. One evening I was called on for some information about a train by an operator some distance down the road and, being particularly lonesome, asked if there was anything going on "at your station."

I was dying for something to break the monotony of my existence, and if there was a ball or a barn dance I would run over by the next train.

My correspondent replied that there was nothing on hand for that evening, but there would be a dance in Aeolian hall in a few days. I asked if he would get me an invitation, but he replied that it was a pay dance, the tickets being for sale to any one who could pass the committee, and he didn't think I would have any trouble.

I had said nothing over the wire about whether I was man or woman, nor had my correspondent. I assumed that he was a man, and he talked to me as though he supposed me to be a man also. But presently he said something that sounded feminine, and I wondered if I was not talking with a woman. I asked to which sex he belonged, and the reply came, "A man." But there was a hesitancy between the "a" and "man" which led me to believe that my suspicions were correct. Then it occurred to me to say that I was a woman.

Upon this my correspondent began to say some very gallant things to me. Some of them were without a manly ring and couched in phrases that a woman rather than a man would use. I replied, using as feminine language as I could command, and I flatter myself I was very successful. Then came a request for my photograph, and I consented to an exchange. I have a number of pictures of relatives and friends and sent one of my sister's, who had the name of being a very pretty girl.

I received one of a fairly good looking young man. Then my correspondent and I indulged in any quantity of fat-tory, he telling me that I was pretty enough to kiss and I telling him that he was "just too handsome for anything."

After several days, with occasional chats over the wire, I was still uncertain whether I was chatting with a man or a woman. As to my correspondent, I couldn't infer from anything he said that he didn't believe me to be a woman. He invited me to go with him to the dance in Aeolian hall, and I accepted the invitation with thanks. He asked what train I would come on and promised to have a carriage at the station to take me to the dance. I took a lady friend into my confidence, and she wrote out a number of questions for me to ask my correspondent as to how I should arrange myself.

When the evening came round I got myself up in the best clothes I had and provided myself with a bouquet. If my correspondent should turn out to be a man our episode would have little value; if he were a woman it would be interesting. I wondered if he were in doubt about my sex and how, if a woman, she would receive me. My train arrived at the station at 8 p. m., and the dance was to begin at 8:30. As the train drew up to the station I saw from the window several girls in their best dresses standing together on the platform. One in the center of the group held a bouquet. I made up my mind at once that my correspondent was a girl and the one with the bouquet. If she expected a girl she would not be looking out for one. I alighted from the train and walked right past the group, none of them taking any notice of me, but still on the lookout.

It was evident to me that they expected one of their own sex, upon whom they would have the laugh. I stepped up to them, my hat in one hand and my bouquet in the other, and asked the center one if she were expecting me. The look of surprise on her face gave way before a twinkle in my eye to one of defeat; then the whole party broke into a laugh. I handed the center figure my bouquet and accepted hers.

"You've lost, Kit!" cried one of the girls, and the rest followed with good natured taunts.

"I have a carriage for you, as I promised," said Kit. "Come!"

Going to the other side of the station, I got into a carriage with her, while her friends entered another. Then we all drove to the dance, and I found myself an object of interest to every one there, the secret having been told how a joke was to have been played on a girl telegrapher and how the joker caught a tartar.

I was made acquainted with every one in the hall and passed a delightful evening.

Practicing Forethought.

Forethought looks beyond the obstacle to ultimate results. It reaches out constructively for a way to get over, through or around that which hinders the realization of its object.

Forethought when exercised develops the imagination. The mind accustomed to thinking ahead soon acquires vision. This leads to freedom in a higher degree. The one who takes no forethought is surprised, cast down, discouraged, when anything goes wrong. Such a one is enslaved, imprisoned, as it were, by a wall of circumstances. The one accustomed to use forethought is far less the slave of circumstance. Such a one learns to look for a way by which to turn the unpleasant experience into profitable results. He uses his imagination to find a way out. He thinks constructively instead of just blindly giving in to fate. He has learned that by forethought and imagination, by creative, constructive thinking, he can find new ways to success when one way is blocked.—Nautilus.

Reporters in the Commons.

Short-hand writers first gained access to the house of commons with some sort of official acquiescence about 1796. In the year 1803 they are to be found occupying the back bench in the strangers' gallery without interference from the house officials, although the latter affected to be ignorant of their presence. In 1830 the house commenced to publish the daily division lists itself and from that time onward the old idea that there was something sacred about the doings of the house which required the prohibition of publicity was exploded. After the great fire of 1834 the reporters were admitted as a matter of course to the temporary building used by the commons and when, on Feb. 3, 1852, the representatives of the people took possession of their new chamber in the palace of Westminster the press was at last officially recognized and the reporters' gallery as it present exists was acknowledged fact.

A Luckless Caterpillar.

Nature is a curious force. There is a caterpillar in Australia. It looks for food under leaves and twigs in the usual way. As it searches, a parasite, specially equipped by nature for the purpose, drops on its neck and fastens itself there. In a week or two this little parasite seed begins to germinate, drawing its nourishment from the very lifeblood of the insect. The latter, feeling sick, buries itself about two inches into the ground. Eventually a pale green stalk about twelve inches high, at the summit of which is a most extraordinary flower, somewhat resembling the top of a burdock when in seed, appears. The poor caterpillar's refuge in the ground is of no avail, for its whole interior has to make room for a vegetable mass of roots. Bucked as dry as a bone, it is actually converted into a stick of wood.—Johannesburg Chronicle.

In the House of Commons.

In the days of Burke, Pitt and Fox members of the house of commons used to relieve the tedium of debate by sucking oranges and cracking nuts while lying full length on the benches, and Brougham made his great six hours' speech on law reform in 1828 with a hatful of oranges by his side for refreshment. Joseph Home found solace in pears, which he took from his bulging pockets and munched by the hour, leaning the while against his favorite post. No wonder oranges were so popular; since their vendor (one of them, at any rate) was a picturesque girl who used to sit with her wares in the lobby, attired in a "sprigged muslin gown with a gauze neckerchief" in the glory of "clean white silk stockings, Turkey leather shoes and pink silk petticoat, becomingly short."—Westminster Gazette.

Selfish Etiquette.

Some rules in an old book on etiquette seem to encourage a practice commonly called "looking out for No. 1." Here are two of them:

When cake is passed do not finger each piece, but with a quick glance select the best.

Never refuse to taste of a dish because you are unfamiliar with it or you will lose the taste of many a delicacy while others profit by your abstinence, to your lasting regret.

Better Things in Store.

There are better things in store for you than you know. In the calendar of your future there are days marked for angels' visits. The angels may come disguised, but come they surely will. Yours be it to have for them an open door and a house where they shall find a home.—G. A. Merriam.

His Dream.

Towne—Do you believe in dreams? Brown—I used to, but I don't any more. Towne—Not as superstitious as you were, eh? Brown—Oh, it wasn't a question of superstition. I was in love with one once, and she jilted me.—Exchange.

Til For Tat.

Affable Barber—You're very bald on top, sir. Self Conscious Customer (much annoyed) What if I am? You needn't talk so much. 'Ow about that squint of yours?—London Telegraph.

Adding to His Offensiveness.

The man who told us so is always doubly offensive if he comes around after the arrival of our troubles and tries to look as if he had forgotten all about it.—Chicago Record-Herald.

It is a wise man who knows his own business, and it is a wiser man who thoroughly attends to it.—H. L. Wayland.