

The Wife and the Mistress

BY W. B. BARRETT.
(Copyright, 1922, by Daily Story Pub. Co.)

It was so dark and still in the woods that not a sound, save the scanty, almost noiseless splash of rain, could be heard by the two breathless listeners in the buggy. The woman was holding one hand out to feel the drops; her ears were sharpened until even the breaking of a twig made her start.

"There is nothing," she said at last. "We could hear a horse's hoofs two miles off."

"Go on, then, as fast as you can."

"You'll not forget that you're taking the name of John Whitting? I marked all your clothes with it this morning before I packed the valise and put those handkerchiefs that were father's with the same initials embroidered on them; and—"

Her companion broke in with a discordant laugh.

"I guess the old man would rise up in his grave if he knew it. He never took much stock in me anyway."

The woman shivered slightly.

"I was going to say," she continued without replying to his remark, "that you can't be recognized by the silver watch. It was never used, you know. Your gold one I've put away."

"You can give it to Bob when he grows up. And I say, Annie, are you going to let the children know?"

"Not more than I can help, Robert. The little ones need hardly hear of it yet a while, but, of course, Bob and Eleanor will. Nobody can keep the papers from them."

"It's rather rough on them," muttered the man. "I'm sorry for Eleanor."

"She will bear as a woman knows how to do and has to do. But, oh, Robert, why didn't you think of that before?"

"Why didn't I do a lot of things different? I've lived my life, that's all, and now I'm ready to drop out of it. Jackson was to blame, curse him, for winding me up so soon. It was he that got the bank directors here this month. He's had his evil eye on me all winter. Stop, will you? I heard something."

"Sh-sh! That was a call—a man's voice!" he whispered excitedly. "You hold the reins, if they come; I'll jump and cut." But it was the scream of a distant locomotive, followed by the dull roaring of the train. No other sound was audible in the silent woods save the soft falling rain.

"I should like to ask you one thing before we part," said his wife presently, in the calm, deliberate tone which is sometimes a feature of intense mental pressure. "How did you come to all this? Were you an honest man in the beginning, as—as I believed you to be—or have your friends been deceived in you all these many years?"

"I am asking as much for Bob's sake as my own. He is much like you and your temptations may be his. Tell me, was it that other woman?"

"What other?"—but he faltered over the interrogative lie. "Oh, well, if you know about her"—carelessly—"I suppose it may have been. A man can't keep up two establishments on the salary of a bank clerk. But you can't say I didn't provide for my family, Annie. Did you or the children ever want for anything?"

She drew in a quick breath.

"Not for material comforts, no; you kept us well housed and clothed and fed. But what you took the money for, then, was your—love—for her?"

"Why, if you want it in plain terms, yes. I'm like a good many other fellows, I guess." He laughed uncomfortably. "Now I suppose your next question will be, How did I come to fancy anybody so different from you, eh? Well, I may as well have it out with you. I don't mean any offense, you know, and I appreciate your being a good wife and all that. You won't find I ever breathed a word against you to anybody. But you were too strict in your ideas from the start, that was the trouble. You couldn't expect a fellow to live up to 'em. By Jove! one gets enough of the serious side of life in his business without having to tackle it when he's at home! Yes, I know what you'll say; but it's so. I

care about such things, you know, and if she did, why—"

"See here," she interrupted. "You haven't the slightest conception of any brutality in what you are saying. I suppose; but please spare both her and me the comparisons. I didn't ask for any justification of your caring for her. But, if she loves you, why is she not with you to-night? Was there not sufficient of the daredevil spirit in her to face flight and danger with you?"

He muttered with an attempt at lightness; "Well, you know, Annie, all women haven't the grit that you have. And she's got other friends; she's too popular to give up all her chances for one." The bitter curl of his lip was hidden by the darkness.

"Robert," she said softly, "I want you to remember that one of the two women loved you. I know nothing about the other, and it does not matter—now. But when you think of to-night's ride, you may take that comfort to your soul; and you'll need comfort some day. It is breaking my heart to let you go like this."

The man made no answer. Then suddenly she drew in the horse till he stumbled back on his haunches.

"Listen!" she cried.

Through the stillness they could hear a new sound, painfully distinct:



"Good-bye, old girl. You came out fine to-night."

the quick trot of hoofs and the roll of wheels over a distant bridge. They listened, breathless, two interminable minutes.

"My God!" exclaimed the man. "That's no country team. They've been to Riverton, and now they're coming over the turnpike. I'm done for."

"No, you're not. It takes half an hour to get here from Riverton. That long stretch across the meadows and the place where the road is being mended will put them back five minutes, too. We're close to the station now."

"Hurry, then." But the horse picked his way slowly down the hill in the darkness. The man was desperately nervous; the woman calm as if looking into the face of death.

Finally they reached a little country station in the woods, and the woman handed the reins to her companion.

"Give me your valise," she whispered, "and keep well back. If they come drive away—anywhere. I'll meet them." Then she walked into the waiting room and called the station master, who was walking outside.

"Going away?" he asked.

"Yes; one ticket to the Junction, please." He drew it from its place with maddening slowness. She tried not to snatch it as he held it out.

"Have I time to say good-bye to my husband before the train goes? We can't leave the horse to stand."

"Oh, yes; that's the whistle, but it's a mile off yet."

She kept the valise in her hand and walked back to the buggy.

"Here's the ticket, Robert. The man's busy and won't see you. Cross the track, and you can hide in that clump of bushes till the train comes. Then swing yourself up on the back platform. Quick!"—as he moved stiffly.

"Good-bye, old girl," he returned, kissing her hastily. "You came out fine to-night. Take care of the children, and don't let 'em hear any more than you can help. You'll get on all right"; and he sprang away into the darkness.

The train dashed up. She could see him climb on at its further end and hear the thump of baggage and boxes under the station master's hands.

One sob escaped her. Then with short, sharp puffs the train started and the cars dragged out of sight.

"Hey, there! Stop here, will you?" called a voice from a light wagon drawn by a sweating, galloping horse, as two men drove up to the platform.

"Too late," answered the station master. "What d'ye want? You ain't travelin', are you?"

"We want the man that got off on that train."

"There wasn't any man, nobody but a woman."

"What kind of a woman?"

"A little one—not up to my shoulders."

"Sure there was no one else?" asked the other man.

"Not a soul. She bought her ticket and got on while I was unloading the baggage."

"Fooled again!" was the angry exclamation. "Well, Jackson, we've raced twenty miles, now I guess we'll walk home."

"It was a mistake to go to Kate for information," said his comrade. "She

told us all she knew fast enough—she won't have any more use for him—but it was the wife we ought to have kept our eye on. I told you that all along. We might follow her up now, if it wasn't likely to be too late."

The wife had driven away, alone, into the black woods.

RHYTHM OF THE SONGS OF BIRDS

Music of Nature Is Always in Perfect Time.

How little we realize the fact that the music of nature is always intensely rhythmical! An intelligent rooster with a good ear always crows in accurate three-four time, and in the minor key. Our own simplest idea of time is perfectly illustrated by the drum, the dots indicating footsteps and the dashes drum beats. Now, this is rhythm, an essential principle of music, and we are widely at fault if we suppose for one moment that the birds sing regardless of it. The drum beats are in unmistakable four-four time, the commonest time of all, and I think it could be conclusively proved that the oriole, for instance, has adopted that time for his own.

It is evident to a close observer that there is something odd about the oriole's time; it is four-four, without doubt, but there are queer breaks in it; the singer drops a note here and there, much as good old grandmamma drops a stitch in her clever knitting. These omissions are characteristic of the oriole; his style is one of marked syncopation, with a preference for that kind of melody which has been styled "ragtime." If you wish to imitate this quality you must whistle a "toot" by placing the tip of the tongue immediately behind the upper front teeth, dropping, and returning it quickly.—Frank Leslie's Monthly.

Troubles of Young Housewives.

A young housewife, from upstate, who had been recently married, called upon one of her neighbors in an apartment house a day or two ago looking for information, says the New York Post. She saluted her neighbor with "How do you kill crabs?" "What on earth are you talking about?" "Well, you see, my husband sent home some crabs for dinner, and he will be home soon, and I don't know how to kill them. I have been trying to drown them for an hour, and they are just as lively as ever."

Another young married woman from one of the suburbs of Boston, came to live in New York. One afternoon she was entertaining two callers at tea, when the husband of one dropped in. She knew very well that he did not care for tea, and thought her husband might not like it if she did not give him something to drink. She asked him if he would have some whisky, and on his replying in the affirmative, left the room. After a somewhat long absence, she returned with a bottle in each hand, saying: "I can't find the whisky, but here is some 'Cognac' and some Baltimore rye. Will either of these do?"

Rhodes and Emperor William.

Cecil Rhodes once was conversing with Emperor William in regard to an agreement entered into between the German government and himself about the construction of the Cape-to-Cairo telegraph line through German territory in Africa. The emperor said: "Well, Mr. Rhodes, I hope you are satisfied with the arrangement."

"No," replied Rhodes, "unless, sir, you want to see Cecil Rhodes file his petition in bankruptcy." "What do you mean?" asked the kaiser. "I mean," was the reply, "that there is a clause in this document which provides that while your majesty undertakes to protect the telegraph against attacks or injury Cecil Rhodes has to pay the whole cost incurred in such defense. Now, sir, there is nothing in the clause to prevent you from sending a whole army corps for this purpose, and if I had to pay for that I should have to file my petition."

The kaiser laughed and said, "Quite right," and turning to Count von Bulow, who was present, said: "Add words limiting Mr. Rhodes' liability to £40,000. That's fair, I think." To which Rhodes replied that he was perfectly satisfied.

Painting on Human Skin.

Marcus Lorenz, an Italian painter, who flourished in the last century, once paid 200 francs for a piece of human skin no larger than a dinner plate upon which to execute a landscape in oils. The skin, which was chemically prepared to receive the paint, was taken from the back of an aged woman, whose body had been sold to a medical man for dissecting experiments. The human parchment was drawn tightly over a metal frame and the artist spent nearly seven months in producing a painting that was afterward exhibited in various salons, and ultimately realized the sum of \$4,000 francs.

Panama Hats to Be Popular.

The Panama hat is to be the thing, and a man who wears a rough straw hat cannot hope for recognition. Moreover, colored hat bands are no longer in favor. An exception in favor of college men wearing colored hat bands is made. The cut of clothes has not changed much from the styles of last summer. Tan and russet shoes will not be popular because they are too cheap. They may be tolerated in the country, but not in the city. The black boot is the thing.—New York Sun.

Population of Hawaii.

Out of the population of 160,000 in Hawaii, nearly 90,000 are Asiatic, 60,000 being Japanese and 30,000 Chinese. There are also several thousand Porto Ricans.

My Carol

AUGUSTA PRESCOTT

For birds that flutter from the nest,
For sunset in the splendid West,
For crimson rays in ruddy East,
For promises of Summer's feast,
For Nature's voice in sweet accord,
For all Thou daily granteth me,
I carol forth to thee, O God!
I carol forth to Thee!

For bursting bud and velvet sward,
For lilies white with fragrance stored,
For soft Spring days and floral horde
For all that Easter giveth me,
I carol forth to Thee, O God,
I carol forth to Thee!

COOK'S ONLY QUALIFICATION.

Cowboy's Frank Explanation of Why He Was in Charge.

Ex-Senator Manderson of Nebraska, has not lost the art of story-telling, and being in Washington to look after the interests of the beet sugar growers, he spends some time at the capitol, where his company in the cloak room is always sought. Yesterday Gen. Manderson made this contribution to the symposium:

"Some years ago," he said, "I had occasion to make a trip across the plains and we camped out as we went along. The first night out I watched a cowboy cooking supper. I was quite interested, not only because I was hungry, but also because I imagined that the cowboy was some finely educated fellow, who knew how to enjoy good eating and who would cook to perfection. The supper, however, was simply vile. It could not be eaten. There was plenty of good stuff but it had been spoiled."

"William," I said to the man, "what are your qualifications for cooking?"

"I haven't any," was his frank reply. "I simply have a swollen leg and I can't ride."

Legacy for Fair False One.

One of the beneficiaries named in the will of the late James Finlayson is believed to be dead. Mrs. A. J. Mason was her name and she formerly resided in Tulare, where her husband

managed the Grand Hotel until two years ago, when he disposed of it.

Finlayson's friends say that in the early '70s he was engaged to be married to the woman, but Mason, who was at that time a partner of Finlayson, won her affections and wedded her. At that time Finlayson vowed never to marry and he never did. When his will was opened recently it was found that he had bequeathed \$15,000 to Mrs. Mason, or, in the event of her death, to her daughter, Annie.

Attorney James P. Sweeney has been endeavoring to locate Mrs. Mason, but his efforts have been fruitless. It is believed that she is dead and the whereabouts of the daughter is unknown.—San Francisco Examiner.

Gave Landlord Good Advice.

The Earl of Aberdeen owns something like 63,000 acres of land in Scotland, so naturally he is quite unknown to many of his tenants. He has not lost his passion for solitary rambles, and not long ago, while in a part of the district with which he was not familiar, he stopped beside a cottage fence to ask his way of an old man at work in the garden, and lingered after receiving the desired information to ask: "Is this good soil?"

"Aye," was the laconic response. "What is your crop to be?" was the next question.

The worker looked up impatiently, then said, slowly and impressively: "If you were to hire an allotment,

and cultivate it, ye'd come speiring around and wasting other folks' time."

Their One Failing.

They were neither of them brilliant scholars, but they liked to move with the time as regards their knowledge of current events, so the daily newspaper was regularly delivered at their humble domicile, and it was Jennie's duty to read out during breakfast time all the most interesting items of the day. One morning, after wading through the latest intelligence from the front, she turned to another page of the paper and said:

"Herbie, it says here that another octogenarian's dead. What's an octogenarian?"

"Well, I don't know quite what they are, but they must be very sickly creatures. You never hear of them but they're dying."

A Sufferer's Plea.

Lady—You are sure you have put the piano in good condition?

Tuner—Quite so, madam. I guess your daughter will find it as good as new when she resumes her practice.

Lady—I hope so. Did you do anything to it, by the way, besides tuning?

Tuner—Yes; I deadened the hammers.

Rear room boarder (sotto voce)—I wish, while you were about it, you had done the same to the hammerer.

Artistic Check Sent to Pope Leo.



One of the oddest looking checks ever drawn upon a bank or trust company has just been returned to the People's Trust Company of Brooklyn from Rome.

The check was signed by Bishop Charles E. McDonnell of Brooklyn and made payable to Pope Leo XIII. The amount it called for was \$10,000, representing the Peter's Pence contribution in the diocese of Brooklyn toward the expense of the Vatican.

Unlike the ordinary check upon a

banking institution the one sent to the Pope was a beautifully illuminated affair on parchment, with ornate elaborations of much artistic merit.

In the upper right hand corner was the coat of arms of the United States; in the lower right hand corner a clever drawing of the Brooklyn bridge; in the upper left hand corner the Papal insignia, and in the lower left hand corner Bishop McDonnell's coat of arms.

Ink of many colors was used by the

artist who fashioned the check. It was indorsed as follows:

Special Order of His Holiness Leo the XIII.
Cardinal Mocanni.
The check, which was dated April 3, was deposited in the Bank of Rome on May 8, and the amount it called for, equalling 52,500 lire, was placed to the credit of the Vatican.

A sitting hen constantly broods over the probable outcome of her mission.



He drew it from its place with maddening slowness.

couldn't go on being a respectable family man all my life, and after I met Kate I had some diversion. You were all right enough, and you know I was affectionate—you can't complain of anything, can you?—but a woman with a saucy little daredevil way like hers, I tell you, takes a man's fancy in spite of all he can do. She was more my kind, Annie; there's no use talking. I thought a lot of her. If she wanted diamonds or a saddle horse I had to get 'em for her. You never