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R. E. FOE, Ticket Agent.

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THE LOST UMBRELLA

By CLARA COURTRIGHT.

She was young, tall, dignified and well dressed, and as she entered the elevated train and demurely slipped into the only vacant seat Wagstaff, covertly watching her over the edge of his newspaper, decided that she was a rare girl, indeed.

He kept taking one more look at the girl; her attention being centered upon a book. By the time the train reached his station he was deeply interested in her. He vaguely remembered having seen her on his morning train at intervals, but never before had she sat within the direct range of his vision.

The next morning he took special pains to catch that same train. Mifflin was sitting near the door of the car and dragged him into a seat beside him. However, Wagstaff lost all interest in Mifflin's baseball chatter as the train neared the station where the girl had entered on the previous morning. He craned his neck to scan the waiting passengers on the platform. Mifflin looked at him curiously.

"Expecting somebody to get on here?" Mifflin asked.

"Oh, no," Wagstaff said hastily. "I thought I saw some one I knew."

Then, to his unmeasured delight, the girl came demurely in with the crowd and found a seat almost opposite them. Mifflin followed Wagstaff's enraptured glances.

"Is that the party you thought you knew?" he asked.

"Well, no," Wagstaff said guiltily, "but I wouldn't mind."

After that it got to be a regular thing every morning for Wagstaff to watch for the girl and then to steal glances at her all the way to his station. She looked at him so calmly in gazing around the car day after day that he thought despairingly that she didn't know he was on earth.

Just when he was losing hope of ever getting acquainted with her something happened. One morning she got off at a station which the train reached before it arrived at Wagstaff's. More than that, Wagstaff saw a long handled umbrella resting against the window frame of the seat that she had just left.

"What shall I do?" the young man asked himself. "Shall I take her umbrella with me for safe keeping, or shall I turn it in at the lost and found office? In either case—"

With a fast beating heart he possessed himself of the forgotten umbrella. On mature consideration he decided that it would be best to turn it in to the company in the usual way and take a chance on future favorable developments.

A week later the developments came. On a wind-swept elevated platform one evening, several stations distant from the one nearest his office, Wagstaff found himself alone with the girl.

For an instant her glance lingered, and there was a sort of recognition in it as their eyes met. Wagstaff acted on the moment's impulse, all the hero in his makeup coming to the front.

"I beg your pardon," he said, advancing a step, hat in hand, "but did you recover the umbrella you left on the train a few days ago? I turned it in at the lost and found department—"

She started a little with surprise as he spoke, and then she smiled graciously. "Why, yes, thank you," she said. "I—I got it. Was it you who found it? It was awfully good of you."

"Not at all," declared Wagstaff.

Just then the train came in and he helped her aboard. They sat down together and their acquaintance prospered.

In ten minutes he found that she knew half a dozen of his own friends. While things were a little bit unconventional, she concluded finally that he might call.

Wagstaff called and found two of the friends there to vouch for him. Then he took pains to call again, when he was certain the friends wouldn't be there. Since the girl chose the time for the call it is possible that she didn't want them there either.

Two or three months later as she and Wagstaff were standing in her front hall one night counting the hooks on the hatrack and otherwise enjoying themselves, the girl said: "Billy, I've heard of a lot of ways that young men get acquainted with girls they want to meet, but that umbrella plan of yours makes a hit with me every time I think of it."

"What do you mean?" Wagstaff asked a bit feebly.

"Why, you innocent child," she said, smiling. "I never lost any umbrella on the elevated train!"—Chicago Daily News.

He Tipped Again.

He was very affable and free with his opinions, was this young man, but that was about all he was free with. To the man who had carried his not un-heavy bag to the little countryside station he had given one whole penny.

Notwithstanding the forlorn look on the man's face, he still continued to chat in an easy manner.

"I shall never forget," he continued, "the splendor of the scenery when I was in Switzerland. It was an education to see the sun rise, tipping the little blue hills with gold—"

"Ah!" interrupted the man who had tolled with his bag. "Them 'ills was luckier than me, weren't they?"—London Tit-Bits.

Hard to Explain Otherwise.

"Dubbs interrupted his wife yesterday."

"How much did he win?"

"What do you mean?"

"Didn't he do it on a bet?"

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