

**MY LADY INCOGNITO**

By MILDRED M. BASTION.

Jack Perry and Miriam Shelby had grown up together in the little Southern town as playmates. On the day when Jack had been sent North to attend school, and later college, it had been a sad and to-be-remembered parting. For carving their initials on a tree in the old garden where they had spent so many happy hours, Jack made a solemn promise to, some day in the near future, return and marry Miriam. Neither ever forgot that promise.

In New York, several years later, Jack Perry graduated from college with honors, and therein began his career, from which social affairs were barred. While a guest at a week-end party he met the Only Girl. She was a young and beautiful actress of Southern birth, who had recently come North seeking fame and fortune. She immediately acquired both. As soon as Jack saw her he fell in love with her. But not once did he forget his promise to Miriam, whom he had not seen since his sad parting with her, and of whom he remembered nothing except that she had always been a pretty, agreeable child. Then came one day when he asked vivacious little Marion Stevens, the actress, to become his wife, and she accepted. A little later, in a happy burst of confidence he told her of his mad promise to his childhood sweetheart. But he hastened to explain that said promise could not in any way bind him to Miriam, and that she could easily fix it up with her and she would understand it all perfectly. He gave a self-assured laugh as he said this last. But Miss Stevens' pretty face darkened with displeasure as she listened to Jack. Then she proceeded to give him her candid opinion of his actions, which opinion was indeed unflattering.

She finished her scolding by telling him to go back immediately to the girl to whom he had given first choice of his heart. Jack remonstrated, but she refused to listen and at last he grumblingly obeyed.

Thus it was that a week later found Jack en route for the South. Miss Stevens having left for parts unknown a few days before. Manlike he tried to comfort himself by the thought that Miriam, his first choice, might still be very attractive, and might not regret that choice. But somehow he could not rid himself of the picture of Marion Stevens with her wealth of golden hair and her large blue eyes. That bewitching picture continued to linger in his young heart. It was with a sigh that he descended at length to the platform of the dusty little station in his home town and looked about for Miriam and some sort of conveyance. He expected to see a graceful, flower-like creature glide out into the sunshine to greet him. He gave a start of surprise when he saw instead the stately old two-horse carriage, driven by an old darkey. On the back seat of the conveyance he saw a small, grim, old-fashioned girl. She wore a plain gray dress and her shoes were broad of toe and low of heel. On the top of her yellow hair, which was parted in the middle and drawn tightly back from her forehead in one long, yellow braid was perched a small, ludicrous hat. Her features, especially her eyes, were disfigured by large dark glasses. Instinctively Jack knew this was Miriam, and his heart sank.

One day, thinking to draw her out of her shell of cold reserve, Jack offered to take Miriam for a ride in the one automobile that the town possessed. They were speeding along outside of the town when Jack, for the first time heard his companion indulge in a long, silvery laugh. Startled, he looked at her, meanwhile forgetting to steer in his surprise. He drove the car straight into the foot of a tree, the impact knocking them both from the car, badly shaken but unhurt. Jack regained his feet first and crossed to his companion to help her but she was safe and sound; in fact, she was sitting on the ground, her body shaking with uncontrollable laughter. Jack simply stared at the change that had taken place in her, for her disfiguring glasses had fallen off, showing her frank blue eyes to an advantage, and her loosened hair had fallen about her shoulders in a cascade of golden ripples. Jack recognized in Miriam the girl who was known in New York as Marion Stevens, and cried out her name. But the girl on the ground shook her pretty head, saying: "No; here I'm just plain Miriam Shelby, although I was known by that other name up North. You see," she said, rising and coming toward him, "when I was of age, I attended a school of dramatic art, and later, with a recommendation of past successes in back of me, I started out seeking more fame, and I met you. I recognized you immediately, though you didn't remember me, I guess. When I heard your version of your promise to poor deluded me, and how confidently you expected everything to turn out for your own benefit, and thought all could be easily fixed up with 'Miriam,' and that you would enjoy yourself here and then return to your 'Marion,' I determined to use my art in teaching you a lesson, by upsetting your self-confident state of mind for the time being. So, here I am," she finished.

"Well, you certainly turned the trick of frightening me somewhat," Jack grinned with a sigh of relief as he took Miriam in his arms.

Their silence on the return trip that afternoon was not, as before, one of cold reserve.

**Female Executioner.**

According to the London Sunday Times of February 15, 1829, the hangman who executed Burke had a wife whom he had instructed in the art and mystery of hanging. Dressed in man's attire, while he was executing criminals in one part of the country, his lady was giving effect to the law in another. Burke, it may be recalled, was an Irishman, who was in the habit of suffocating his victims and selling their bodies to the anatomists. He was hanged at Edinburgh on January 28.

**Two Minds in Accord.**

Clergyman (intent on administering a gentle reproof to bridge-playing parishioner)—"I am afraid much valuable time is wasted on playing cards." Bridge-playing Parishioner—"I quite agree with you. The time taken by some players in shuffling, dealing or deciding what card to play is simply exasperating."

**Wrong Guess.**

A teacher was giving to her class an exercise in spelling and defining words: "Thomas," she said to a curly-haired little boy, "spell 'hex.'" "I-b-e-x." "Correct. Define it." "An 'hex,' answered Thomas, after a prolonged mental struggle, "is where you look in the back part of the book when you want to find anything that's printed in the front of the book."—Christian Register.

**Daily Thought.**

He who loses wealth, loses much; he who loses a friend, loses more; but he that loses his courage, loses all.—Cervantes.

**Artificial Eyes.**

During the year 1840 Professor Boscawen of France created what could honestly be called an eye that was human in appearance. The method of manufacturing was practically the same as that employed at the present time, with the exception that in the intervening years great improvements have been made in imitating the colors, that are almost lifelike in their effect. Besides, many improvements have been made in the shapes, which are practically molded to conform to the socket and fill all the available space.

**Everything All Right.**

Nellie was happily anticipating Santa Claus' visit. It was Christmas eve, and raining furiously. A friend happened in and said: "Santa Claus can't come tonight because it is raining." Nellie thought seriously a moment and said: "Oh, yes he can; he has his reindeers."

**Boring Rocks Under Water.**

To enable holes to be bored in under-water rocks no matter how rough the water, a Hawaiian engineer has invented a drill standard with a heavily weighted bottom, power being obtained through flexible connections with a vessel.

**How They Breathe Under Ice.**

The ability of a beaver to remain under water for a long time is really not so strange a problem as it looks. When a lake or pond is frozen over a beaver will come to the under surface of the ice to expel breath, so that it forms a wide flat bubble. The air coming in contact with the ice and water is purified, and the beaver breathes it again. This operation he can repeat several times. The otter and muskrat do the same thing.

**The Target at Fault.**

A company of militia had been out all day for target practice, and on their return the captain said to one of the sergeants: "How are your men coming along, sergeant?" "Well, sir," said the sergeant, with an air of great pride, "my men shot very well today, very well, but they would have shot better perhaps if the target had stood a little more to the left!"

**Heavy Female.**

The weight of the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor is 440,000 pounds.

**Fish Attacks Ship.**

An attack made by a swordfish on a ship which arrived at a port in India resulted in considerable damage to the vessel. The ship was entirely stripped of her metal sheathing in the encounter. The creature made a hole on the port side, penetrating through a mass of copper and for fourteen inches into solid oak plank and timber.



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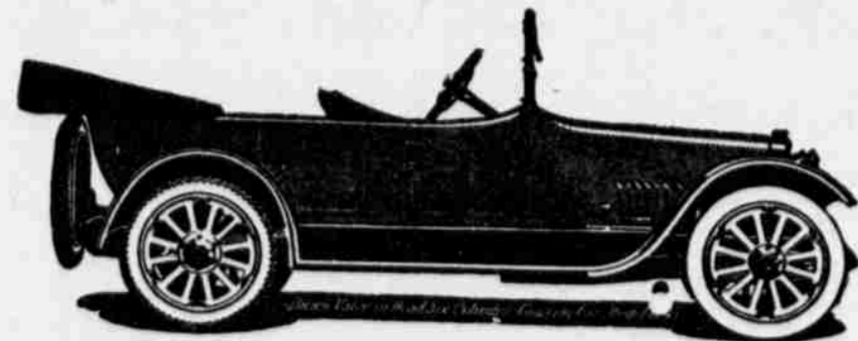
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