

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

"What a life!" repeated the man to himself with almost a wince. "Making bricks without straw all the year round. I wish—there, I wish to God I'd never learned how to write."

And yet it had paid him in solid coin, so far. One of his minor dreams was realized; the window of his writing-room overlooked a suburban roadway along which jarring wheel seldom rattled; he had got away from the whirr and drone of the town, where his nerves had been at tension all day long. He could compose in peace. And yet he sat with the bitter, idle stare, clutching a dry pen.

The door behind creaked; a woman glided in on tiptoe. "Don't start—it's only I," she whispered.

"Don't start!" He threw down the pen without turning. "It's all starts—or the strain of expecting them. I'm sick of it, I tell you—sick of it all."

"What is the matter?" She had paused half way, with hands together. "Can't you write?"

"Write! I've nothing to write. I'm drained dry. And I've promised a tragic story—with a half sneer—for that 'Society Sun.' Tragic! What's the time?"

"It must be nearly 6."

"Six? Dark in another hour—dark now! I've done nothing. And you—you never attempt to help me by so much as a word."

"Never help you?" she echoed, and repeated it to herself. "I never help him! But when have you asked such a thing? What good would be my ideas?"

"Oh, not much. Women seldom have real ideas—they're fitting superficialities. Still—"

A long silence. The door creaked again, but he knew she had only closed it and was still hovering behind him. He was somewhat surprised, but would not turn, vaguely conscious of the sneer's hollowness. Then—

"I never help you," she repeated, calmly. "Would you like me to try?—perhaps something has just come to

in its little way, and that there are some women for whom years of such silence and loneliness spells death—or worse. She was always crying at first, and never dared to tell him why if he did not see for himself, and kept out of his way so that his mind should not be spoiled for work. And he—say that he thought it was something else, and spoke harshly and sneered, and at last got so that he lived in a world of his own, and wouldn't open his door when—when he knew that her heart was bursting outside, longing for one kind word again. * * * Or—something like that. Could you begin anything with that?"

No answer. She could not see, but the man's outward stare was as if it would never again relax. She went on a little faster, her voice taking a thrill—just as though his silence implied that there might be real dramatic possibilities in her small inspiration.

"I think my husband could—yes! The world is used to seeing the man grow indifferent, and the woman cold and pale; but you—you might take the tragedy as it is within the four walls, and make it live and throb in there. You might put it that at first the man's mistake was in always straining forward to his goal, forgetting that the happiest time is now—forgetting how, when he looks at last he will not find just the same laughing girl as he married. * * * Often he left her, and she will say; he wanted cheerful faces and relaxation after his work, and the wife was only like a ghost creeping about the house. And so at last, for her the only alternative to a broken heart was a heart hardened to stone. And oh! she had so loved him—had so determined always to look her brightest and best for him! * * * That might have gone on until the end, as it often does; but there came a blow—one blow more than she could bear. We'll suppose—we'll suppose that one day the wife, somehow or other, heard him talking to a friend. The friend was quiet; he had asked: 'What's the matter with—with her? All the romance gone that you used to talk about?' Make it—make it that she held her

breath for the answer, even then—even then; that even then she was hungering to put her arms around him, and tell him, oh, no, it was not gone! And supposing she heard him say: 'Her! Poo, take no notice of her—always the same. Wish to heavens sometimes I'd never married—what with the expenses and the miseries at home. Can't make her out—not like other women. Given it up long ago. Don't you ever marry, old man!' * * * And supposing the wife stood and cried to God to take her on the spot, and that God did not answer, and that at last—at last, when something seemed as if it would snap in her brain—she crept into her husband's study, took out the pistol that he kept in his desk and put it to her forehead, and almost pulled the trigger. * * * Wouldn't a paper accept a story like that?"

Still no answer. The man had craned still further forward, his hands gripping the desk, his face gray in the dusk, his stare widened. It looked—somehow looked as if he feared for his life to look around, in fear of a hand waiting for his throat. It was not his wife's talking. It was Tragedy that had come creeping into the room—as it sometimes did when he wrote late, and something stood and breathed behind each shoulder.

The voice came again, as from a long way off.

"Yes! Say, she paused the moment and that saved her. She looked at his work and thought of his long struggles and the mind that always strained after something in life that is never to be found. But the thought had come into her head, and it stayed and stayed, and more than once, when he had passed her with hardly a word or look. No, my God! she could not bear it! God forgive her, she cannot bear it!"

The indescribable sob and a swift rush. A hand had plucked open the drawer at the man's side and something bright flashed out. Just in time he realized something and swayed up with a hoarse cry: "Winnie! No—"

no!" and faced the picture that was to eat into his memory all time.

The dead silence, the stare with which the wide eyes in her worn, white face seemed to search his soul wildly for a flicker of the truth! Then her hand dropped and her face began to twitch piteously. His arms were out—and the heart beat there yet.

"Winnie!" he had whispered—such a whisper—"don't! don't! Come back to me—come back!"

And for those two Time put back the clock. But the story—that was not for publication.—London Star.

THE JAILER'S BABY.

It was all the fault of the baby. So the jailer said, and so everybody believed. At the same time it was declared absurd that a baby should be allowed companionship with a murderer, and beyond all decency that bottles of laudanum should be left within its reach. Indeed, there was a great deal of talk, and much disappointment over the affair. Not since the lynching of the negro Tilly, two years before, had there been a hanging in the jail. And this time it was to have been conducted on the strictest principles of the hangman's code. So very proper were all the arrangements that the citizens spoke of the coming "execution" with quite the decorum which an eastern town would use to discuss a pink tea. Small wonder then that everybody—especially those holding tickets of admission—was outraged. In fact, so much was said that the jailer resigned and he and his wife—with the baby, who had done all the mischief—moved to another town. The jailer's wife declared that his nerves seemed dreadfully upset about the whole thing and she was glad he had given up the "jail business." Farming was nicer work anyhow, she allowed, and the baby seemed to thrive better. As for the baby himself, he told me in strict confidence just how it happened.

The prisoner had never made the slightest effort to escape. From the time sentence was pronounced he seemed to begin to die. He would sit for hours without moving a muscle—would neither eat nor drink. A horrid sort of stupor possessed him, from which the kind-hearted jailer was powerless to rouse him, until one day he thought of his baby, Ted, the only bit of sunlight in the gloomy house of bondage. The lovely child blossomed like a Sharon rose in this desert of sin and death, and the very sight of him might, so the jailer thought, bring peace and healing. So one day the baby was brought to the death-watched cell. His tousled, yellow head peered curiously in, and his small voice had a ring of pity in it as he said: "Dark, poor man." And the prisoner came to the grating and stretched out eager hands, clasping the tiny fingers restfully in his. And nobody disturbed them, for the "poor man" was crying, and so they were not afraid.

The baby came again, and often, and they noticed that the prisoner would always eat what he brought; a bit of candy or a dirty lump of sugar was his daily offering, and it was never rejected. One day the jailer came, too, and they both watched the boy. He was playing horse with a piece of pine

board. The prisoner glanced at it and said, grimly: "Won't they need that in the yard?"

The jailer could not answer, but kept his gaze on the baby, who had distracted the attention of the guard in the corridor. The prisoner grasped the door with both gaunt hands, and, putting his ash-blown lips as near the jailer's ears as the bars would allow, said, sullenly: "Have you any idea of how you are going to die?"

The jailer was alarmed and distressed. He had hoped to lead the prisoner to forget his impending doom, if only for a respite of an hour, but this question showed him how poorly he was succeeding. He pretended not to hear, and made a move as if to go, but the child ran to him and, putting the stick through the bars, lisped: "See, horsey!"

A smile distorted his face as the man took the piece of wood, then let it drop with a shudder, speaking rapidly and low: "Dying is bad enough, I suppose, under any circumstances, but none of us is heroic when forced to sit, day by day, for a certain hour, when we are to begin the process of 'rotting in cold obstruction.' God! can you think, man, how it feels? What devilish irony in the fate that I, who have always hated any public display"—he choked and the baby laughed—"should die in this way—should perform the tragedy of my life before a gaping crowd. I tell you, man, it must not—shall not—be!"

His voice sank to a whisper, but his face was so livid with fear and threat that the jailer grasped his baby and moved away from the cell door. The man behind it laughed a dry, high-pitched laugh.

"I beg that you won't be frightened. I am not going to do anything violent, except to myself, if possible. Do you hear, man? Except to myself. Listen to me. Every night you pray that baby may never be in such a devil-ridden hole as this cell. By those prayers, and as you hope for mercy for him, I charge you have pity and listen to me. I have thought of escape. I do not fear death. What would life be to me now? I killed him for her, and now—now I must die for him. Be it so, but not that way!"—and he pointed to the bit of wood the child had dropped.—"God! not that way!" Then as the jailer moved a little nearer, the man staggered to his feet and whispered hoarse-

ly: "An old bottle, I could break it in pieces; or a rope—but no, the guard would see me. Some drug—anything, so it be strong enough, but bring it—oh, let me have it before—before they come to me!"

Not a word had the jailer spoken during this plea of agony. Then the guard came up with the little one.

"The kid wants to kiss 'man,'" and the prisoner stretched his arms through the grating and stroked the curly head. The beautiful baby face lit up with an angel's smile. "By-by, man," he said, and his father carried him away, with no sign of response to the wild look of entreaty in the eyes of the doomed man.

Next day the baby came again. This time he passed the guard, returning his challenge, "Hullo, two-year-old!" by only a dignified stare. He toddled up to the prisoner's cell, and the first glimpse of the yellow head brought the wretched occupant forward. His attention was attracted to the small tin can the child carried. "See there!" And the little one proudly tapped it against the iron grating. With feverish haste the man seized it, and with an effort wrenched off the cover. Inside was a small bottle containing a brown liquid, which he smelled, then sighed as with infinite relief. A second's hesitation, a glance upward, which was more a despairing inquiry than a prayer, and he raised the phial to his lips. Then he crawled to the cot and crouched upon it, while the baby tip-toed to see. Only the baby! No pitiless crowd of ghouls; no vultures watching the dying struggles of their prey; only the baby! And to the dying man's vision the aureole of hair and beckoning hands were those of a heavenly spirit.

The phial dropped to the floor, the shaven head sank back, and the prisoner was free.—Gertrude Gunning.

MOCK HANGING IN A CHURCH.

A Gross Performance Entertains a Colored Congregation.

Kansas City Journal: A most startling and unique entertainment, in which the principal feature was a gruesomely realistic imitation of an execution by hanging, was given in the colored Baptist church in Carthage the other night, and attracted a crowd which packed the big building to its utmost. An interesting account, given in the Press of the "tragic" affair is as follows: "The audience assembled in the basement of the church, where the gallows was erected, reaching upward about five or six feet. The drop was only a short one, but every other detail was carefully copied from a sure enough hanging scene. About 9 o'clock Peter Gibson and Sporting Willie Hancock came in, leading Art Irwin, the boy condemned to the gallows. A suppressed murmur ran over the audience, which waited with bated breath the finale of this strange scene. The lamps about the walls cast a shuddering gloomy light about the room, and a superstitious horror could be traced on many a face. But Negro good humor can not long be suppressed, and scarcely had the first feeling of awe passed away, when some lusty voice broken out in a hearty laugh. This soon spread, and the scene lost a large share of its gruesomeness. The convicted murderer was led up the steps of the improvised gallows, his arms and legs were tied and a rope was fastened to his neck, a black cap was adjusted, the trap sprung and the body dropped. So far as actual appearance went he might have been hanged by the neck. The body turned and twisted as the rope dropped, seemingly limp and lifeless, and was carried out on a stretcher amid a deathly silence. The affair, however, was not so realistic as it appeared, for before entering the room another rope had been carefully harnessed around Irwin's body, with a loop coming under his collar. This last rope was concealed by the boy's clothing, and although the rope appeared to encircle his neck, it was in reality fastened to the loop under his collar. After a few minutes in which to remove ropes, etc., Irwin returned to receive the congratulations of his lady admirers, who gathered around the little 'hero' in groups."

LUTHER'S RING DISCOVERED.

Engagement Band of the Great Reformer Found in Norway.

Martin Luther's historical engagement ring has been found, and in the possession of a Norwegian peasant woman, Sigrid Hansen Alm, in Sanderhordland, in Norway. How it came to Norway and when is unknown, as for centuries the ring has been an heirloom in the family of all the women having the name of Sigrid. Two years ago the German State Historical Museum had advertisements inserted in continental newspapers. Slowly the news found its way to Norway and was read by the Norwegian peasant woman. The description of the ring tallied exactly with the ring in possession of the young woman. Consul Jens Gran, in Bergner, was notified, and at once offered the woman a 800 kroner for the ring, which was refused. This is the description given in Norwegian newspapers of the ring found: "It is of silver, considerably worn and badly scratched. Set in the ring is a red pearl, to represent a drop of the blood of Christ. On the outside of the ring is engraved Christ on the cross, and several of the subjects of the crucifixion as the ladder, the lance, etc., and the letters I. N. R. J. (Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum). On the inside of the ring is engraved 'Martino Luther—Catharina von Boren—13-71525,' and the faint outlines of two hearts." Through the German minister to Sweden and Norway every effort will be made to induce its present owner to permit it to become the property of the German Historical Museum.

The Parent Before the Teacher.

Let us ask for a moment what it is "to deal honestly with a child's moral and intellectual life." Is it not to set before him a worthy example; to fill him with honest aspirations; to inculcate pure motives; to aid him in his endeavors to overcome evil influences? Is it not to give him a glimpse, even if it be only a glimpse, of the highest possible ideal? If this is put off until the child reaches school age, if it is not done in the home under the influence of the father and mother, if they do not persist in it while the child remains under the parental roof, it is often in vain to attempt it in school.—Teachers' World.

Mollusks in an African Lake.

Lake Tanganyika, in Africa, offers a unique field for scientific exploration. This region, like Australia, is one of the few localities where animals still live that have become extinct elsewhere, certain whelklike mollusks of this lake appearing to have been driven from the ocean and to be identified with the fossil forms of old Jurassic seas in Europe.

OUR BUDGET OF FUN.

SOME GOOD JOKES, ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

A Variety of Jokes, Glibes and Ironies, Original and Selected—Plotsam and Jestsam from the Tide of Humor—Witty Sayings.

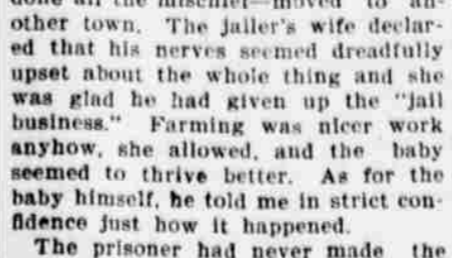
Her Choice.

From Judge: She was a pretty young thing, fresh from a fashionable "finishing school." She was bidding the "happiest man on earth" a fond adieu on the stoop of the old country house.

"Now, dearest, just before I go," he said, commencing all over again, "what kind of ring shall it be?"

"Oh, Jack," she answered, rapturously, "do get me a solitaire with three diamonds in it."

Well?



Teacher—"Now, Robert, what is a niche in a church?"

Robert—"Why, I s'pose it's just the same as a niche out of church, only you an't scratch it so good.—From Scrap."

The Lack of a Carpet.

Missionary—"Was it liquor that brought you to this?"

Imprisoned Burglar—"No, sir; it was house-cleanin'—spring house-cleanin', sir."

Missionary—"Eh—house-cleanin'?"

Burglar—"Yessir. The woman had been house-cleanin', an' the stair carpet was up, an' the folks heard me."—Tid-Bits.

Her Disturbing Thought.

Life: "What is troubling you now, Penelope?" said Marguerite to her friend, as she noticed the cloud on her brow.

"I was merely thinking, Marguerite," replied Penelope, "that when a woman condescends to marry, she is compelled by force of circumstances beyond her control to marry a mere man."

A Yellow Idea.

Judge: "We," said one yellow editor to another, "have printed a picture of Dewey's wife and a picture of the woman Dewey wanted and couldn't get. Now, what shall we do?"

"Now, we'll print a series of pictures of women that Dewey might have fallen in love with if he had met them."

Four Consolation.

"When we were first married, he called me his little kitten," wailed Mrs. Bickers, "and now he calls me a cat."

"But you must remember," replied the consoling one, "that even little kittens grow up to be cats in a comparatively short space of time."—Detroit Free Press.

His Gay Old Time.

"Yes, his wife left him at home alone."

"How does he seem to enjoy it?"

"He says he is having a gay old day."

"How does he pass his time?"

"Sits on the front steps and waits for the letter carrier."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

In Danger.

Washington Star: "I'm afraid I'll lose my place," said the valet of a young man who had become naturalized in England.

"What's the trouble?"

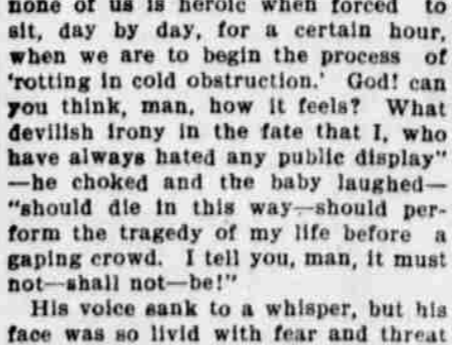
"I thoughtlessly addressed him as 'Mrs. Astor.' I should have said 'Hastor.'"

Made to Order.

Grubbs—"Perkins seems to be a self-made man."

Stubbs—"Well, if you ever saw him when his wife was around you would think he was made to order."—Ohio State Journal.

Missed It That Trip.



Doctor—"You're all run down. What you need is a sea voyage. What's your business?"

Patient—"Sailor with Dewey; just home, sir."

Thought It a Dinner-plate.

Mrs. Benham—"The report of the baseball game says that one of the players died at the plate."

Benham—"Well, what of it?"

Mrs. Benham—"I suppose it was averting that killed him?"—Judge.

Bad for Them.

"Doctors have a hard time in summer."

"How's that?"

"Patients who go away owing them money come back in so much better health."

Regret.

Boston Traveler: Young Wife—The new servant girl is a treasure! She is a good cook, is so economical, never goes out and never answers back. Husband—Why didn't I meet her before we were married?



COME BACK TO ME.

my mind. It is silly, maybe, as I tell it, but you—my husband, might make it clever and interesting. You say your stories are always twaddle as you first set them down."

"Do I? Well, what is it?" he said, staring across at the opposite roofs. "This situation is novel. Go on. Never mind so long as there is anything at all in it."

"There is—there is a woman's heart in it, I think," she whispered. "Is that any good?"

"Oh!" he said. Her voice had talled off as if she had a real idea, but was afraid of the sneer. "Well, there usually is—that's one of the component parts of the average story. Even humor is the brighter for tragedy lurking in the background, you know. Anything in the heart? That's the point. Yes; anything in this heart?"

Another silence. "Couldn't I tell you just as it came to me, then?" she said. "I'm not clever enough to know. It's more of a sketch, perhaps. I—I imagined two lovers, very dear lovers. They got married and there was a beautiful world before them, with such peace at the end, if they knew! Make the man an artist. He lived for his art. The girl—the girl was only just a girl; she lived for the man. She hung on his every word, you might say; she prayed for his success when he was never there to hear, thought for him in ways that he would never know, and checked her singing, and moved always so softly, so that he should never be disturbed at his work. You're not writing. Is it so any?"

"Go on," he whispered. "There's—there's nothing to write yet."

"That went on for years. The man, deeper and deeper in his work, never saw that his wife was changing; that the light had gone out of her eyes. He forgot all he had meant to be—forgot after a time even to kiss her; and the girl—she could never bring herself to remind him. * * * Oh? Still, she lived only for him, but he never cared what she wore, never thought that her work might be hard

breath for the answer, even then—even then; that even then she was hungering to put her arms around him, and tell him, oh, no, it was not gone! And supposing she heard him say: 'Her! Poo, take no notice of her—always the same. Wish to heavens sometimes I'd never married—what with the expenses and the miseries at home. Can't make her out—not like other women. Given it up long ago. Don't you ever marry, old man!' * * * And supposing the wife stood and cried to God to take her on the spot, and that God did not answer, and that at last—at last, when something seemed as if it would snap in her brain—she crept into her husband's study, took out the pistol that he kept in his desk and put it to her forehead, and almost pulled the trigger. * * * Wouldn't a paper accept a story like that?"

Still no answer. The man had craned still further forward, his hands gripping the desk, his face gray in the dusk, his stare widened. It looked—somehow looked as if he feared for his life to look around, in fear of a hand waiting for his throat. It was not his wife's talking. It was Tragedy that had come creeping into the room—as it sometimes did when he wrote late, and something stood and breathed behind each shoulder.

The voice came again, as from a long way off.

"Yes! Say, she paused the moment and that saved her. She looked at his work and thought of his long struggles and the mind that always strained after something in life that is never to be found. But the thought had come into her head, and it stayed and stayed, and more than once, when he had passed her with hardly a word or look. No, my God! she could not bear it! God forgive her, she cannot bear it!"

The indescribable sob and a swift rush. A hand had plucked open the drawer at the man's side and something bright flashed out. Just in time he realized something and swayed up with a hoarse cry: "Winnie! No—"

no!" and faced the picture that was to eat into his memory all time.

The dead silence, the stare with which the wide eyes in her worn, white face seemed to search his soul wildly for a flicker of the truth! Then her hand dropped and her face began to twitch piteously. His arms were out—and the heart beat there yet.

"Winnie!" he had whispered—such a whisper—"don't! don't! Come back to me—come back!"

And for those two Time put back the clock. But the story—that was not for publication.—London Star.

MOCK HANGING IN A CHURCH.

A Gross Performance Entertains a Colored Congregation.

Kansas City Journal: A most startling and unique entertainment, in which the principal feature was a gruesomely realistic imitation of an execution by hanging, was given in the colored Baptist church in Carthage the other night, and attracted a crowd which packed the big building to its utmost. An interesting account, given in the Press of the "tragic" affair is as follows: "The audience assembled in the basement of the church, where the gallows was erected, reaching upward about five or six feet. The drop was only a short one, but every other detail was carefully copied from a sure enough hanging scene. About 9 o'clock Peter Gibson and Sporting Willie Hancock came in, leading Art Irwin, the boy condemned to the gallows. A suppressed murmur ran over the audience, which waited with bated breath the finale of this strange scene. The lamps about the walls cast a shuddering gloomy light about the room, and a superstitious horror could be traced on many a face. But Negro good humor can not long be suppressed, and scarcely had the first feeling of awe passed away, when some lusty voice broken out in a hearty laugh. This soon spread, and the scene lost a large share of its gruesomeness. The convicted murderer was led up the steps of the improvised gallows, his arms and legs were tied and a rope was fastened to his neck, a black cap was adjusted, the trap sprung and the body dropped. So far as actual appearance went he might have been hanged by the neck. The body turned and twisted as the rope dropped, seemingly limp and lifeless, and was carried out on a stretcher amid a deathly silence. The affair, however, was not so realistic as it appeared, for before entering the room another rope had been carefully harnessed around Irwin's body, with a loop coming under his collar. This last rope was concealed by the boy's clothing, and although the rope appeared to encircle his neck, it was in reality fastened to the loop under his collar. After a few minutes in which to remove ropes, etc., Irwin returned to receive the congratulations of his lady admirers, who gathered around the little 'hero' in groups."

LUTHER'S RING DISCOVERED.

Engagement Band of the Great Reformer Found in Norway.

Martin Luther's historical engagement ring has been found, and in the possession of a Norwegian peasant woman, Sigrid Hansen Alm, in Sanderhordland, in Norway. How it came to Norway and when is unknown, as for centuries the ring has been an heirloom in the family of all the women having the name of Sigrid. Two years ago the German State Historical Museum had advertisements inserted in continental newspapers. Slowly the news found its way to Norway and was read by the Norwegian peasant woman. The description of the ring tallied exactly with the ring in possession of the young woman. Consul Jens Gran, in Bergner, was notified, and at once offered the woman a 800 kroner for the ring, which was refused. This is the description given in Norwegian newspapers of the ring found: "It is of silver, considerably worn and badly scratched. Set in the ring is a red pearl, to represent a drop of the blood of Christ. On the outside of the ring is engraved Christ on the cross, and several of the subjects of the crucifixion as the ladder, the lance, etc., and the letters I. N. R. J. (Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum). On the inside of the ring is engraved 'Martino Luther—Catharina von Boren—13-71525,' and the faint outlines of two hearts." Through the German minister to Sweden and Norway every effort will be made to induce its present owner to permit it to become the property of the German Historical Museum.