

HUNTING A FLAT

By ZOE ANDERSON-NORRIS

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The two started out in the rain together—Elizabeth and her friend, who was a widow. Their umbrellas dripped.

"Shall we take a car here?" asked the widow, as they took a car.

"I am sure I shall be happier," said Elizabeth, "now that I have made up my mind. You and I can live in a little flat together, and be cozy, can't we? It's a good deal better than being married. We have been friends for a long time. We'll be very congenial. Unless you are happily married," she assured herself, "you'd a great deal better not be married at all. But I wish it hadn't rained today," she finished, and sighed.

"Forget the rain," advised the widow. "We shall be gay, of course, in our little flat. You are wise. Why live unhappily when you are independent, when you have some money of your own? This is a free country. Be free."

"I think," reflected Elizabeth, "that it will be good to be free. When you are married, you can hardly call your soul your own. You must dress to please your husband—I don't mind that, if only I could please him—and talk to please him, and walk to please him. Why, sometimes when I am dressing to go out I nearly go into hysterics. Jack nags me so about everything I am putting on. I shall be very glad to be rid of all that."

"It is probably not the only thing you will be glad to be rid of," flashed

Elizabeth continued to gaze into the downpour.

"A man is a protection," concluded she. "Isn't he?"

"He is," assented the widow. "No matter how good-for-nothing he is, he's a protection. A lone woman is subjected to all sorts of slights and ill-treatment from other women in authority, particularly if she is a widow. I am a widow—I know."

By-and-by: "And of all the women in authority," she continued, "barring the landlady of a boarding house, the janitress is the most brutal to women. Unless you have a husband, it is almost impossible to live in a flat with a janitress."

They walked on and on in the drenching rain to the next flat on their list. There, the janitress was occupied in polishing the door knobs.

Ascending the steps, they furled their umbrellas, and stood looking at her in a frightened way.

They might have been stone lions on a stoop, for all the notice she took of them.

"There's a flat for rent here," asked the widow, presently, "isn't there?"

"No."

"But," objected the widow, "it was advertised."

"It's rented."

"How much was it?"

"It's rented."

"I understand that," explained the widow, suavely; "but I should like to know at what prices the flats rent for in this neighborhood before I inquire further."

The janitress had finished polishing the door knob. Silently she opened the door and closed it with herself on the inside.

Somewhat disconsolately the pair once more walked into the straight and steady rain.

"My shoes are wet," complained Elizabeth.

"And so are mine," returned the widow.

They arrived eventually at the next flat on their list.

It seemed to be a day for polishing door knobs. The janitress there polished imperturbably. As they approached she added renewed vigor, bending over her work in an absorbed and chilling manner which had the effect of leaving them out in the cold.

"Is there a flat for rent here?" asked the widow, with even more timidity than formerly.

"It's rented," came the answer.

"I wish," remarked Elizabeth, audibly, "that we'd known before we came here they were all rented."

The janitress turned a granite face upon her.

"Did anybody ask you to come?" queried she, to which question, there being practically no answer, they went out again in the rain. It showed no sign of decreasing. It rather increased. The rows upon rows of flat buildings, gray and pink new ones, brown and red old ones, swam in a mist. The streets shone grayly. The skies showed hardly at all, so blurred were they.

"Sometimes," began the widow, "I think these janitresses are soured by their life underground and out of the sunshine; and sometimes I think they are born that way."

Elizabeth stopped short at the corner of a street.

"Let's go home now," she implored, "and get some tea to cheer us. My skirts are wet; my shoes are wet—I'm drenched all over."

On the way: "Did you say," she questioned, wistfully, "that the janitress was not so kind to women without husbands?"

"That," reiterated the widow, grimly, "was what I said. They are brutal to them."

"There are worse things than husbands," reflected Elizabeth, softly.

"As long as there's a janitress in the world," decided the widow, "you can depend upon that."

"Besides," she ruminated, "a widow, after all, is a lonely sort of creature. I know. Apparently she is the gayest of the gay; but in reality there are many dark and lonely hours that she must live through. Sometimes a widow is the loneliest creature in the world."

At home, the hall-boy smilingly bowed them in. At the door of her apartments a joyous yell greeted Elizabeth. She stooped and clasped Fido in her arms.

"Darling," she murmured, "I hope you'll never know how near you have come to living with a janitress."

Making themselves comfortable, they had cups of tea, sitting cozily in opposite chairs, sipping it.

"I'm glad," repeated Elizabeth, "that we never see the janitress in this flat."

"I should think you would be," nodded the widow. "There's nobody to make your life a burden but the hall-boy, and your husband is here to wrestle with him."

Elizabeth set her cup down, and went to the window. She drew aside the curtain, and calmly observed the downpour, which, being outside, no longer depressed her.

"There are worse things than husbands," smiled she, and added, her eyes on the corner where the car stopped and people were alighting: "I think it's just about time for Jack to come home."



"Is There a Flat for Rent Here?"

the widow, "nor the only hundredth thing. There's a flat for rent in this street. Shall we get out here?"

They got out.

It rained. It not only rained, but it poured. At the door of the apartment house they furled their umbrellas, and pushed the janitor's bell. After a long time a woman, in a gray shawl the color of the day, emerged from some subterranean depth, and confronted them with a countenance apparently composed of stone, in which nature, or ill-nature, had carved various and sundry curiously repellent and uncompromising lines. It was the janitress.

"There's a flat for rent here," asked the widow, pleasantly, "isn't there?"

"Yes," answered the janitress, and, opening the door, she preceded them down a long hall, and opened another door.

"The rear apartment," she announced, standing aside to let them pass in. Then she followed them, asking questions.

"Any children?"

"No," answered the widow.

"Any dogs?"

Elizabeth turned white, and her friend pressed a cautioning hand on her arm.

"No," she answered.

"How many in family?"

"Two."

"Women?"

"Yes."

"This flat is \$50," announced the janitress, suddenly, and vaulted back a foot or two to observe the effect.

"It isn't worth \$50," said Elizabeth, in a frightened whisper, "and it's dark. I should die of the horrors in rooms that were dark. I couldn't stand them."

At that the janitress, without a word, freezingly showed them the door, and shut it in their faces.

"I tremble to think," sighed Elizabeth, safe in the street, going steadily against the rain showering heavily on them, "what would have happened if she had known about Fido."

The widow turned upon her in surprise. "If you want to rent a flat in this town," said she, "keep quiet about Fido. A cat might live in a New York flat. It has nine lives. But a dog—never! That is, in a flat with a janitress."

Elizabeth stared gloomily into the rain.

"I'm glad," mused she, "that we have a hall-boy. He's very kind to me sometimes, David is. And he never says a word about Fido."

The widow occupied a moment in thought.

"I believe," she decided, "that the creature raised the price of that flat on us because we are women. A janitress never likes women."

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CHARTERED BY CONGRESS.

Only Union That Ever Received Such Recognition Was Blacksmiths'.

The only union that ever was chartered by congress was organized in 1859 and received a charter in the same year. It was known as the Machinists and Blacksmiths' Union of North America. At first it was composed of smiths and machinemakers, but later boiler-makers and pattern-

makers were added. In 1877 it took the name of Mechanical Engineers of the United States of America. In the meantime it had lost most of its distinguishing features as a trades union, and from a membership of 18,000 in 1872 it fell to 5,000 in 1878. If it is still in existence it is keeping the fact very quiet. The Blacksmiths long since organized separately, and so have the boiler-makers and pattern-makers.

UNION BARBER SHOPS.

Information as to Where You Can Get Your Work Done Fairly.

Following is a list of the union barber shops of Lincoln, the name and location being given:

- Gas Petro, 1010 O street.
- W. A. Jackson, 1001 O street.
- W. E. Myers, Capital Hotel.
- C. A. Green, 120 North Eleventh.
- Geo. Shaffer, Lincoln Hotel.
- J. B. Ramer, 1501 O Street.
- E. A. Snyder, 1206 O Street.
- A. L. Stern, 116 South Thirteenth.
- A. L. Kemmerer, Lindell Hotel.
- Chapman & Ryan, 127 North Twelfth.
- H. A. Larabee, 922 P Street.
- Knigh and Parmenter, 122 South Twelfth.
- H. C. Leopold, Fraternity Building.
- Frank Malone, Havelock.
- E. A. Wood, Havelock.
- C. B. Ellis, Havelock.

GO TO THE PARK.

The city park is in lovely shape these days, and well worth a visit—

if it is not raining. The monkey cage is full of Simians. The buffalo is taking kindly to strangers. The pelican fishes regularly, and the elk no longer hides in the tall grass. The bears wrestle without ceasing and the coyotes are as tame as dogs. No finer place for quiet little picnics can be found within a radius of 'steen miles.

AMERICA'S OLDEST UNIONS.

A Few Dates That You Ought to Paste in Scrap Books.

The oldest American national union dates back hardly more than half a century, and many unions much less than that, as shown by the following list:

- International Typographical Union of North America.....1859
- Tackmakers' Protective Union of the United States and Canada.....1854
- Stone Cutters' Union.....1854
- Hat Finishers' International Association of North America.....1854
- Iron Molders' Union of North America.....1859
- Grand International Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.....1863
- Cigarmakers' International Union of America.....1864
- Bricklayers' and Masons' International Union of America.....1865
- Order of Railway Conductors of America.....1868
- Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen.....1873
- International Union of Horse-shoers of the United States and Canada.....1875
- Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers.....1876
- Window Glass Blowers' Association.....1877
- Granite Cutters' National Union.....1877
- Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen.....1883

CAPITAL AUXILIARY.

Capital Auxiliary will meet Friday, June 26, with Mrs. W. C. Norton, 1532 North Twenty-fifth street. The semi-annual election of officers will be held at this time and a large attendance is requested.

Mrs. W. S. Busted left Monday for Mt. Vernon, Washington.

Mrs. W. M. Maupin, who has been ill for the past few days, is improving.

Members are asked to bring in their best and favorite recipes for the Auxiliary cook book, which is only waiting for copy.

Mrs. F. Ibringer is suffering this damp weather with rheumatism.