

"Good old rose," replied Red. "Old time smeller—better suited to you than to me—ketch!"

At the word he tossed it, and Miss Mattie caught it dexterously. Red had an exceedingly keen eye for some things, and he noticed the certainty of the action. He hated fumble. "A person can do things right if they've got minds that work," was one of his pet sayings. "Taint the muscles at all; it's in the head, and I like the kind of head that's in use all the time." Therefore this small affair made an impression on him.

"Why, you could be a baseball player," said he.

"I used to play with Joe when I was a girl," said Miss Mattie, smiling. "I always liked boys' play better than I did girls'. Joe taught me how to throw a ball too. He said he wouldn't play with me unless I learned not to 'scoop it,' girl fashion. I suppose you will be wanting breakfast." There was a hint of sarcasm in the doubt of the inquiry.

"That's what I do," said Red. "You must just hustle down and get things to boiling or I'll throw bricks through the windows. I've been up for the last two hours."

"Why, I don't believe it!" said Miss Mattie.

"No more do I, but it seems like it," replied Red. "Don't you want the fire started? Come down and open up the house."

When Miss Mattie appeared at the door in the stride with an armful of wood, dropping it, man fashion, crash, on the floor.

"Skip out of the way," said he. "I'll show you how to build a fire."

The early morning had been the most desolate time to Miss Mattie. As the day warmed up the feeling of loneliness vanished, perhaps to return at evening, but not then with the same absoluteness as when she walked about the kitchen to the echo of her own footsteps in the morning.

Now the slamming and the banging which accompanied Red's energetic actions rang in her ears most cheerily. She even found a relish in the smothered oath that heralded the thrust of a splinter in his finger. It was very wicked, but it was also very much alive.

Red arose and dusted off his knees. "Now we're off!" he said as the fire began to roar. "What's next?"

"If you'd grind the coffee, Will?" she suggested.

"Sure! Where's the hand organ?"

He put the mill between his knees and converted the beans to powder to the tune of "Old Dog Tray" through his nose, which Miss Mattie found very amusing.

She measured out the coffee, one spoonful for each cup and one for the pot. Red watched her patiently, and when she had finished he threw in the rest of the contents of the mill drawer. "I like it fairly strong," said he in explanation.

"Now, Will!" protested Miss Mattie. "Look at you! That will be as bitter as bonest!"

"Thn her up with milk and she'll be all right," replied Red.

"Well, such wasteful ways I never did see. Nobody'd think you were a day over fifteen."

"I'm not," said Red stoutly, "and," catching her chin in his hand and turning her face up toward him, "nobody'd put your score much higher than that neither if they trusted to their eyes this morning."

The compliment hit so tender a place that Miss Mattie lacked the resolution to tear it out; besides, it was so honest that it sounded much less like a compliment than a plain statement of fact. She bent hastily over the fire. "I'm glad I look young, Will," she said softly.

"So'm I!" he assented heartily. "What's the sense in being old, anyhow? I'm as limber and good for myself as ever I was in spite of my forty years."

"You're not forty years old!" exclaimed Miss Mattie. "You're joking."

"Nary joke—forty round trips from flying snow to roses since I hit land, Mattie—why, you were only a little girl when I left here—don't you remember? You and your folks came to see us the week before I left. I got a thrashing for taking you and Joe to the millpond and helping you to get good and wet. The thrashing was one of the things that gave me a hankering for the west. Very liberal man with the hickory, father. Spare the clothes and spoil the skin was his motto. He used to make me strip to the waist—phee-ew! Even a light breeze rested heavy on my back when dad got through with me. Say, Mattie, perhaps I oughtn't to say so, now that he's gone, but I don't think that's the proper way to use a boy, do you?"

"No, I don't," said Miss Mattie. "Your father meant well, but his way was useless and cruel."

"I've forgiven him the whole sweep," said Red. "But, d—n me, if I had a boy I wouldn't club the life out of him; I'd try to reason with him first, anyhow. Makes a boy as ugly as anybody else to get the hide whaled off his back for nothing—once in awhile he needs it. Boy that's got any life in him gets to be too much occasionally, and then a warning is healthful and nourishing. Lord, you'd think I was the father of my country to hear me talk, wouldn't you? If somebody'd write a book, 'What Red Saunders Don't Know About Raising Children' it would be full of valuable information. How's that breakfast coming on?"

"All ready—sit right down, Will."

"Go you!" cried Red, and incautiously flung himself upon one of the kitchen chairs, which collapsed instantly and dropped him to the floor.

"Mercy on us! Are you hurt?" cried Miss Mattie, rushing forward.

"Hurt?" said Red. "Try it! Just jump up in the air and sit on the floor

where you are now, and see if you get hurt! Oh, no! I'm not hurt, but I'm astonished beyond measure, like the man that tickled the mule. I'll take my breakfast right here—shouldn't wonder a bit if the floor went back on me and landed me in the cellar. No, sir! I won't get up! Hand me the supplies. I know when I'm well off. If you want to eat breakfast with me, come sit on the floor. I'm not going to have my spine pushed through the top of my head twice in the same day."

"Will, you are the most ridiculous person I ever did see!" said Miss Mattie, and she laughed till she cried in sheer lightheartedness. "But there's a chair you can trust. Come on now."

"Well, if you'll take your solemn oath that this one has no mustache to deceive me," said Red doubtfully. "It looks husky. Well, I'll try it. Hooryay! She didn't give an inch! This kind of reminds me of the time Jimmy Hendricks came back from town and walked off the edge of the bluff in the dark. It just happened that Old Scotty Ferguson's cabin was underneath him. Jim took most of the roof off with him as he went in. He sat awhile to figure out what was trumps, having come 150 feet too fast to do much thinking. Then, 'Hello!' he yells. Old Scotty was a sleeper from way back, but this woke him up."

"'Hello!' says he. 'Was'er matter?'"

"Jim saw he wasn't more than half awake yet, so he says, 'Why, I was up on the bluff there, Scotty, and seeing it was such a short distance, I thought I'd drop in!'"

"'Aw ri,' grunted Scotty. 'Make y'self t' home,' and with that he rolls over."

"Jim couldn't wait for morning, and though his leg was pretty badly sprained, he made the trip all the way round the trail and woke us up to tell us how he'd gone through Ferguson's roof and the old man asked him to make himself at home. Next morning there was Scotty out in front of his cabin, his thumbs in his vest holes, looking up."

"'What's the matter, Scotty?' says I. 'Well, I wisht you'd tell me what in the name of God went through that roof?'" says he.

"I swallered a laugh crossways and put on a serious face. 'Must have been a rock,' says I."

"'Rock nothin!'" says he. 'If it had been a rock 't would have stayed in the cabin, wouldn't it? Well, there ain't the first blasted thing of any shape nor description in there but the hole. You can go in and look for yourself!'"

"It cost Scotty one case of rye to make us forget those circumstances."

"I should have thought the man would be killed, striking on the roof that way," said Miss Mattie.

"Oh, no! Roof was made of quaking asp saplings, just about strong enough to break his fall. Scotty was the sleeper, though! It wasn't hardly natural the way that man could pound his ear through thick and thin. He had quite a surprising time of it once. He'd been prospecting round the Ruby refractory ore district and he came out at Hank Cutter's sawmill just at sundown. Hank's place was full of gold rushers, so Old Scotty thought he'd sleep outdoors in peace and quiet. He discovered some big boxes that Hank was making for ore bins for the new mill, and as the ground was kind of damp from a thunder shower they had that day he spreads his blanket inside the box and goes to sleep. Ore bins have to be smooth and dust tight, so it wasn't a bad shanty."

"Well, there came a jar and waked him up. The box was rolling a little and going along, going along forty mlie an hour. Scotty lit a match and found he was in a kind of big tunnel, but the wall was flying by so fast he couldn't make out just what kind of a tunnel it was. Now, he'd gone to sleep in peace and quiet on a side hill, and to wake up and find himself boat riding in a tunnel was enough to surprise anybody. First he pinched himself to see if it was Hank's pie or a cold fact; found it was a fact; then he lit another match and leaned over and looked at the black water underneath, but this made the box tip so it scared him, and he settled down in the bottom again. He didn't try to think. What was the use? No man living could have figured things out with the few facts Scotty had before him. All of a sudden the box made a rush and shot out into the air, and Scotty felt they were falling. 'God sakes!' he says to himself. 'What's next, I wonder?' Then they hit the water below with a kerdap that nearly telescoped Scotty and sent the spray flying. After that they went along smooth again. 'Well,' says Scotty, 'I don't know where I am, nor who I am, nor what's happened, nor who's it, nor nothing about this game. So far I ain't been hurt, though, and I might just as well lie down and get a little more rest!'"

"It was broad daylight when he woke up again, and a man was looking into the box. 'Hello, pardner!' he says. 'I hope you've had a pleasant journey. Do you always travel this way?'"

"Scotty raised up and found his craft was aground, high and dry—no water within a hundred feet of it. On one side was quite a little town."

"'Say,' says he, 'could I trouble you to tell me where I am, friend?'"

"'You're at Placerville,' answers the other."

"'Placerville!' yells Scotty. 'And I went to sleep at Cutter's mill, sixty-five miles from here! What are you giving us, man?'"

"'I'm putting it to you straight,' says the stranger. 'Take a look around you!'"

"Scotty looked, and there was all kinds of wreckage, from a dead beef critter to a wheelbarrow."

"'What in nation's all this?' says he. 'Washout,' says the man. 'Cloud-burst up on the divide—worst we've ever had—your box is about high water mark—you see there was water

enough for awhile—I reckon you're about the only thing that came through alive!'"

"'Well, wouldn't that knock you?' says Scotty."

"'While the rest of the folk at the mill was taking to the high ground for their lives, with the water roaring and tearing through the gulch, Scotty had



"What in nation's all this?" says he.

peacefully gone off in his little boat down the creek and, instead of going over the rapids, where he'd have been done, for all his luck, the box ambles through the flume they was building for the new mill. Of course there was the jounce over the tail race, but that hadn't hurt him much, and after he rocked in the cradle of the deep until he got beached at Placerville."

"Come along, friend," says Scotty to the feller. "You and me are going to have a little drink on this, if it is the last act." And I reckon probably they made it two, for when Scotty got back again he was in a condition that made everybody believe that he'd only guessed at the story he told. But they found out afterward it was a solemn fact. Mattie, give us some more coffee."

Thus abruptly recalled to Fairfield, Miss Mattie started up.

"Well, Will, it does seem as if that was a dangerous country to live in," said she.

"Oh, not so awful," said Red. "Just as many people die here as they do there. This world's a dangerous place to live in wherever you strike it, Mattie."

"That's so," said she thoughtfully.

"And now," said Red, pushing back his chair, "it's time I got to work and left you to do the housework undisturbed."

"What are you going to do, Will?"

"First place, there's fences and things to be tinkered up, I see. I suppose a millionaire like me ought to hire those things done, but I'd have measles of the mind if I sat around doing nothing."

"I have been wanting to get the place in good order for some time," said Miss Mattie, "but what with the money I had to spend for this and that, and not being able to get Mr. Joyce to come in for a day's work when I wanted him, it's gone on until there is a good deal of wrack to it."

"We'll wrack it t'other way round in no time. Got any tools here?"

"Out in the barn is what's left of father's tools. People have borrowed 'em and forgot to return 'em, and they've rusted or been lost until I'm afraid there ain't many of 'em left."

"Well, I'll get along today somehow, and later on we'll stock up. Want any help around the house?"

"Thank you, no, Will."

"Then I'm off."

It was almost with a feeling of terror that Miss Mattie beheld him root up the fence. Her idea of repairing was to put in a picket here and there where it was most needed. Red's was to knock it all flat first and set it up in A1 condition afterward. So in two hours' time he straightened up and snapped the sweat from his brow, beholding the slain pickets prone on the grass with thorough satisfaction. Yet he felt tired, for the day was already hot with a moist and soaking seacoast heat, to which the plainsman was unaccustomed. A three-quarter grown boy passed by, lounging on the seat of a farm wagon.

"Hey!" hailed Red. The boy stopped and turned slowly around.

"Yes, sir," he answered courteously enough.

"Want a job?" said Red.

"Well, I dunno," replied the boy. He was much astonished at the appearance of his interrogator, and he was a cautious New England boy to boot.

"You don't know?" retorted Red. "Well, with some sarcasm, 'd'ye suppose I could find out at the postoffice?'" The boy looked at Red, with a twinkle in his eye and a comical drawing of his long mouth.

"I calculate if you cud fin' out any-weres 't would be there," said he.

Red laughed. He had noticed the busy postmistress rushing out of her store to waylay any one likely to have information on any subject, a stream of questions proceeding from her through the door.

"Say, you got anything particular to do?"

"No, sir; leastways th'ain't no hurry about it."

"Can I buy stuff to make a fence with around here?"

"Yes, sir; Mr. Pettigrew's got all kinds of buildin' material at his store—two mlie over yonder," pointing with the whip.

### CITY LODGE DIRECTORY

A. F. & A. M.  
McCook Lodge No. 135, A. F. & A. M., meets every first and third Thursday of the month, at 8:00 p. m., in Masonic hall.  
CHARLES L. FAHNESTOCK, W. M.  
LON CONE, Sec.

BOILERMAKERS  
McCook Lodge No. 467, B. of B. M. & I. S. B. of A., meets first and third Fridays of each month in Odd Fellows' hall.

DEGREE OF HONOR  
McCook Lodge No. 3, D. of H., meets every second and fourth Fridays of each month, at 8:00 p. m., in Ganschow's hall.  
MRS. LAURA OSBURN, C. of H.  
MRS. MATTIE G. WELLES, Rec.

EAGLES  
McCook Aerie No. 1514, F. O. E., meets the second and fourth Wednesdays, of each month, at 8:00 p. m., in Ganschow's hall. Social meetings on the first and third Wednesdays.  
W. H. CUMMINS, W. Pres.  
H. P. PETERSON, W. Sec.

EASTERN STAR  
Euroka Chapter No. 85, O. E. S., meets the second and fourth Fridays of each month, at 8:00 p. m., in Masonic hall.  
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G. A. R.  
J. K. Barnes Post No. 207, G. A. R., meets on the first Saturday of each month at 2:30 p. m., in Ganschow's hall.  
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J. H. YARGER, Adjt.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS  
McCook Council No. 1126, K. of C., meets the first and third Tuesdays of each month, at 8:00 p. m., in Ganschow's hall.  
C. J. RYAN, G. K.  
F. G. LECHLEITER, F. Sec.

KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS  
McCook Lodge No. 42, K. of P., meets every Wednesday, at 8:00 p. m., in Masonic hall.  
J. F. CORDEAL, C. C.  
C. W. BARNES, K. R. S.

KNIGHTS TEMPLAR  
St. John Commandery No. 16, K. T., meets on the second Thursday of each month, at 8:00 p. m., in Masonic hall.  
EMERSON HANSON, E. C.  
SYLVESTER CORDEAL, Rec.

LADY MACCABEES  
Valley Queen Hive No. 2, L. O. T. M., meets every first and third Thursday evenings of each month in Ganschow hall.  
MRS. W. B. MILLS, Commander.  
HARRIET E. WILLETTS, R. K.

LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS  
McCook Division No. 623, B. of L. E., meets every first and third Saturday of each month, at 8:00 p. m., in Masonic hall.  
W. C. SCHENCK, C. E.  
W. D. BURNETT, F. A. E.

LOCOMOTIVE FIREFMEN  
McCook Lodge No. 596, B. of L. F. & E., meets every Saturday, at 8:00 p. m., in Ganschow's hall.  
W. R. PENNINGTON, M.  
W. S. BIXLER, Sec.

MACHINISTS  
Red Willow Lodge No. 287, I. A. of M., meets every second and fourth Tuesday of the month, at 8:00 p. m., in Ganschow hall.  
D. O. HEWITT, Pres.  
W. H. ANDERSON, Rec. Sec.

MODERN WOODMEN  
Noble Camp No. 963, M. W. A., meets every second and fourth Thursday of each month, at 8:30 p. m., in Ganschow's hall.  
JOHN HUNT, V. C.  
BARNEY HOFER, Clerk.

ODD FELLOWS  
McCook Lodge No. 137, I. O. O. F., meets every Monday, at 8:00 p. m., in Ganschow's hall.  
E. H. DOAN, N. G.  
SCOTT DOAN, Sec.

P. E. O.  
Chapter X, P. E. O., meets the second and fourth Saturdays of each month, at 2:30 p. m., at the homes of the various members.  
MRS. C. W. BRITT, Pres.  
MRS. J. G. SCHOFEL, Cor. Sec.

RAILWAY CONDUCTORS  
Harvey Division No. 95, O. R. C., meets the second and fourth Sundays of each month, at 3:30 p. m., in Diamond's hall.  
JOE HEGENBERGER, C. Con.  
M. O. McCLURE, Sec.

RAILWAY TRAINMEN  
C. W. Bronson Lodge No. 457, B. of R. T., meets every Friday at 8:00 p. m., in Berry's hall.  
F. J. HUSTON, Sec.  
H. W. CONOVER, M.

WORKMEN  
McCook Lodge No. 61, A. O. U. W., meets every Monday, at 8:00 p. m., in Diamond's hall.  
WEB STEPHENS, M. W.  
C. B. GRAY, Rec.

R. A. M.  
King Cyrus Chapter No. 35, R. A. M., meets every first and third Thursday of each month, at 8:00 p. m., in Masonic hall.  
CLARENCE B. GRAY, H. P.  
CLINTON B. SAWYER, Sec.

ROYAL NEIGHBOHS  
Noble Camp No. 962, R. N. A., meets every second and fourth Thursday of each month, at 2:30 p. m., in Ganschow's hall.  
MRS. MARY WALKER, Oracle.  
MRS. AGUSTA ANTON, Rec.

R. S. M.  
Oe-co-dux-60 Council No. 16, R. S. M., meets on the last Saturday of each month, at 8:00 p. m., in Masonic hall.  
RALPH A. HAGBERG, T. I. M.  
SYLVESTER CORDEAL, Sec.

W. O. W.  
Meets second and fourth Thursdays at 8 o'clock, in Diamond's hall.  
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