

TAKING HIS TIME

Bobby knew he would marry Beth eventually. He had known it for a year—ever since that night Beth unexpectedly passed through the doorway where he was lazily leaning, waiting for something interesting to happen.

"Who is she?" asked Bobby, suddenly alert.

"My cousin Beth," said the hostess. "Introduce me at once," said Bobby. "I want to ask her to marry me."

The hostess laughed. She was used to Bobby's extravagances.

Bobby met Beth later in the evening. Her eyes shone on him mischievously and her mouth curved as if she expected to laugh at any moment. "Are you going to ask me to marry you at once?" she inquired of him sweetly.

Bobby smiled. "I am glad you overheard what I said to your cousin," he replied. "Now you are prepared for the inevitable."

That was a year ago and the inevitable, in the shape of a proposal of marriage from Bobby, had not come. He knew he would become engaged to her eventually, but for the time being things were very comfortable just as they were.

He monopolized Beth's evenings when she stayed at home. He was her constant escort when she was out. He felt all the satisfaction of proprietorship. Still he was not bound. He could come and go as he pleased. He took time for his club. He could pass an occasional leisurely evening at home with his pipe.

One night, however, he met with reverses. Beth wore a cream lace gown that night and—was ravishing. They had been invited to meet an eastern man who was being introduced to a good many persons. That is to say, he was introduced until he met the cream lace gown containing Beth. Then he courteously declined to be introduced any further. He remained beside the cream lace gown for the rest of the evening.

"You had every appearance of liking it," said Bobby in a rage as he was taking Beth home.

"I did like it very much. I have asked him to come to see me."

For some time after that Bobby's club knew him not. Until the eastern man departed he passed no leisurely evenings at home with his pipe. In fact, the eastern man gave Bobby what is sometimes called a run for his money.

"I am glad he's gone," acknowledged Bobby, one evening about a week after the eastern man had departed.

"Are you?" said Beth softly. "Then I am glad too."

But Bobby did not take warning from the eastern man. When Beth said that soft little "Then I am glad, too," he did not ask her to marry him and save him further alarms. He only relaxed, with great tranquility of soul and continued to monopolize her evenings when she stayed at home, to be her constant escort when she went out, to give the world to understand that she was his property—to be very comfortable, in a word, with the idea of eventually asking her to marry him.

Bobby took a fishing trip. For six weeks he fished. He did not write to Beth very often; it was too hard to write when one was roughing it.

"I should have to write her every day if we were engaged," thought Bobby.

He sent her his biggest catch, however, and felt considerable surprise and some resentment when she did not write enthusiastically to thank him.

At eight o'clock the first night after Bobby's return he rushed up Beth's front steps. He wanted to see her very badly. He had been gone six weeks.

Beth's mother was sitting alone on the porch.

"How is Beth?" eagerly asked Bobby. "And where is she?"

"She was married last night," said Beth's mother, quietly. "They left on a late train. They are going abroad for their honeymoon."

"Married!" exclaimed Bobby jolly. "Married!"

"It was all very sudden. Beth met him the week you left. He was exceedingly eager. Think of it! Married six weeks after they first saw each other!"

Tears stood in Beth's mother's eyes. She was not thinking of Bobby. She was wishing that daughters did not have to grow up and get married.

Alone in his room that night Bobby smoked long and hard. He thought of many things. When he finally shook the last ashes out of his pipe he said one word to himself.

"Fool!" said Bobby.

He was feeling very wretched.—Chicago Daily News.

Not Qualified.

The two men were getting warm over a simple difference of opinion.

They turned to the third man.

"Isn't a home-made strawberry shortcake better than a cherry pie?" demanded one of them.

"Isn't a home-made cherry pie better than any shortcake?" inquired the other.

The third man shook his head.

"In don't know," he said. "I board."

Shaky.

"I have been the architect of my own fortune, sir."

"That's right. It's lucky the building was not shakier when you were there."

PERCIVAL WAS CLEVER

Penelope's eyes were big with the horror of the thought and her little hand tightened within Percival's clasp.

"Suppose we had never met!" she said in a half whisper.

Percival is sometimes a little slow about rising to an occasion. All he said in response was "Um-m-m-m!" It was meant to be the equivalent of "What indeed!" but it was not satisfactory to Penelope.

"Just suppose!" she repeated. "Ah!" rejoined Percival in the same tone as before.

"Wouldn't it have been awful, darling?" said Penelope.

"It certainly would have, sweetheart," said Percival.

Penelope thought that over a little and then: "What would you have done?" she asked.

"Search—" began Percival, and then, becoming suddenly conscious of the seriousness of the question, checked himself. "Searched through the world for you until I had found you," he said happily.

"How sweet of you!" said Penelope. "But really, this isn't an answer to my question," she continued. "If you had never met me, you wouldn't have known that there was any me to look for and consequently you wouldn't have looked for me and you wouldn't have found me, don't you see?"

"And yet they say that women aren't logical!" exclaimed Percival. "But we did meet, didn't we, dear heart?"

"Yes, we did," said Penelope. "But what if we never had? What would you have done, dearest?"

"I don't know," said Percival, pinned down to it. "I don't suppose I'd have done anything. What would you have done, honey bird?"

"I wish you would keep still and let me say what I want to say," said Penelope. "I want you to tell me what you would have done if you hadn't met me. You would have fallen in love with some other girl, wouldn't you?"

"Well," Percival admitted, "I suppose I might have. And you would probably have become engaged to some other fellow."

"I would not."

"What are you taking your hand away for?"

"I'm tired of keeping it in that position. Whom would you have chosen?"

"I don't know," answered Percival. "Whom do you think you'd have picked?"

Penelope's eyes flashed. "I wouldn't have picked anybody," she asserted with indignation. "I told you I wouldn't. I suppose you would have fallen in love with Charlotte Smetter."

"Not in a thousand years," said Percival, emphatically.

"I don't see why not. You were calling there right along."

"Not right along. I used to go over once in a while when I didn't have anything else in particular to do. I told you all about that, you know."

"But you liked her."

"Oh, yes, I liked her well enough. She's all right in her way. Good-hearted girl, too." Percival spoke with a fine assumption of indifference.

"You liked her very much—you know you did."

"Now, what's the use of going into all that again?" remonstrated Percival. "You know there wasn't anything to it. I've told you so over and over."

"Please don't," said Penelope, forbiddingly. "I wish you wouldn't do that. Charlotte Smetter may like that sort of thing, but I don't."

"Penelope!" exclaimed Percival.

"It's a pity that you didn't get engaged to her," said Penelope. "I think that you would have suited each other very nicely. Perhaps it isn't too late now."

"Why Penelope!" said Percival. "Listen—"

"I think you've made yourself perfectly clear," said Penelope, coldly. "I am a sort of an accident. If I hadn't happened to strike your fancy somebody else would have and you'd have been just as well satisfied. If you hadn't known me, you'd have probably married Charlotte Smetter and been perfectly happy. You say yourself that you might have. You may, if you like. I'll release you gladly."

"Now, you just listen to me," said Percival. "When I said I might have fallen in love with some other girl, I was speaking hypothetically for the sake of argument, not according to my convictions."

"If you want to know what I would have done, I can tell you. I'd have gone about all my life with an unsatisfied yearning for the ideal woman that I had failed to find. To the outside world I might have shown a smiling face, but there would always have been that canker within, that aching void, the want of Penelope."

"I would never have married. I would have remained solitary to the end if I had never met you. How do I know? Because I never loved before, but the moment I saw you I knew that I had met the one and only girl for me. And you reproach me; you repel me and say cruel, wounding things to me!"

"Well, why didn't you say all that when I first asked you?" said Penelope. "Are you quite sure, though, that you didn't like Charlotte Smetter very very much?"—Pittsburg Leader

The Highwayman Unmasked

By Stuart B. Stone

The man with the black mask made the nickel-plated revolver fairly gleam as he flourished it in Marshall's face. Marshall shivered, though the very fine eyes and the very pleasing tones of the highwayman hardly went with things such as killing.

"I have my hands up," Marshall finally expostulated.

The masker chuckled, but continued to move the revolver about in a gradually narrowing circle.

"You can trust me if you play no tricks," he purred.

Somehow the highwayman's soft accents soothed the man with elevated hands. He felt no imminent danger—yet the revolver was a very grim thing.

The masker dived into Marshall's vest pocket and appropriated his watch. The light from a little lantern was sufficient to show a massive gold time-piece, bearing a picture of a deer, and attached to a chain that weighed half a pound. The highwayman returned the thing, while a derisive light shone in the very blue eyes.

"You have no taste in watches," he said. "Why don't you carry an eight-day clock?"

And Marshall took comfort in his own inelegance.

Next the highwayman levied on a pin from Marshall's scarf—a perfect gem in a setting of exquisite gold carving. The blue eyes were pleasure-lit now.

"I take it this is a gift," he commented. "The barbarian who bought the watch would never see the opal."

And this time Marshall, with the little steel circle hovering evilly in his face, bemoaned the fate that called for costly opal pins in wonderful settings of gold.

Then the highwayman scoffed at a signet ring and jeered at a massive button in the blue, green and red of the Ardent Sons of St. Timothy. But a sparkling diamond of price and a ring of finest emeralds appealed to the fantastic robber, and also the wallet of his victim was very fat—and you know fat wallets are negotiable from Bering sea to the Friendly Islands. So that altogether Marshall would have done better to have avoided this lonely open road.

The masker reached the bulging side pockets now, and he examined certificates of copper stock and a budget of Wheeling 4's with equal disgust.

"Very pretty engraving," he declared, "and vastly desirable for Mr. Man-With-His-Hands-Up, maybe, but an honest gentleman of the road makes a poor coupon clipper. I'll leave these."

After the stocks and bonds came a gaudy periodical of bulk, with a woman in flaming red taking the whole of the cover. The highwayman glanced idly at the thing and would have returned it, but he caught the words, "The Adorner," on the flaming cover, and he hesitated.

"Let's see what the women are wearing," he suggested. "Hold steady now," and the highwayman turned the pages as best he could with one hand. The light from the lantern, placed on the fence, revealed skirtish things and waistish things and gay, nodding hats and other dress-treasures of quality, cut bias, cut V-shaped, cut zig-zag.

"Well, I declare," remarked the masked man, "the polonaise is coming back. I always detested the things."

The glittering pistol dropped just the least bit.

"Now these picture hats are just dear," went on the highwayman, and the line of fire from the deadly circle would have missed Marshall probably half a foot.

It was the moment of moments and Marshall had the nicked weapon in his own hand and the highwayman flung two delicate palms heavenward in about the space of three ticks of the big barbaric watch.

"Dress—dress—dress—" hummed Marshall, as he tore the black mask from a pretty pink face and stripped the rough derby from coils of glorious yellow hair. "It is the frills and furbelows that ever catch you women."

The lady of the highway sobbed as Marshall took back the jewels of price.

"Oh, do take care," she wailed, "you are musing my hair up dreadfully!"

Useless Waste of Energy.

A small Wichita boy's father is a Democrat. But at the grandfather's house all are Republicans and when he visited at the latter place he heard a good many jolts flung at Democracy and its friends. He tried to stay loyal, however.

One day his aunt was helping him through with his lessons, when he suddenly flung his book into a corner of the room and said:

"Auntie, it's no use. I'm not going to learn to read. It's no use, I tell you. Why, I've got to be a Democrat, anyway."

Kansas Appetites.

Here are some things discussed on a North Atchison porch the other night: One woman said she had a hired girl who ate lard by the spoonful; the girl said she "adored" lard. Another woman said she had a friend who ate toilet soap. That reminded some one on the porch that her brother-in-law ate peaches with sugar, cream and salad dressing. A sweet little girl on the porch said: "Well, when we have hash I always eat it with sugar."—Atchison (Kan.) Globe.

The North Pole

Could Be Made a Cozy Little Corner

by the judicious use of GOOD COAL, and plenty of it. We have the GOOD COAL, but the North Pole is in the other fellow's territory. It is the Falls City consumer that we are after—WE HANDLE THE COAL THAT STANDS ANY TEST—WE HANDLE GOOD COAL, and nothing but good coal, and an order placed with us for the winter's supply brings happy results—good fires and general satisfaction to all concerned.

Order Now--Don't Procrastinate

Lay in your winter's supply NOW, or at least a part of it. Come and see us or phone to us and let us "talk coal" to you. WE CAN SAVE YOU MONEY AND SAVE YOU MUCH VEXATION,

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Highest Market Price

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Japanese China

A package just in. It should have been here in mid-summer. We have marked it low for a quick sale. You can see it in the south window at

Chas. W. Wilson's

A Few Snaps in Land

Richardson County

80 acres, 4 1-2 miles from Falls City, nicely improved. \$115 per acre.
80 acres, mile from Falls City, nicely improved. \$150 per acre.
240 acres, 3 miles from good town, nicely improved. \$80 per acre.
80 acres, 7 miles from good town, nicely improved. \$90 per acre.
94 acres, 1-2 mile from good town, some improvements, \$6,500.
160 acres, 6 m. from good town, fine farm, fine improvements. \$20,000.
120 acres 9 miles from good town, fair improvements. \$7,000.

Boone County

480 acres fine land, good improvements. \$40 per acre.

Thayer County

240 acres of fine land, fine improvements. \$80 per acre.

S. & F.--Jefferson County

280 acres good land, good improvements. Easy terms.

Pawnee County

54 acres close to town, good improvements. \$80 per acre.
80 acres, six miles to Pawnee City, good improvements. \$90 per acre.
120 acres, 1 1-2 half miles to Pawnee City, good imp. \$90 per acre.
80 acres, 1 miles to good railroad town; good improvements. \$5,200.
120 acres, 6 miles from good railroad town; imp. \$65 per acre.
90 acres, 1 mile from Pawnee City; good improvements. \$100 per acre.
121 acres two miles from Pawnee City; good imp. \$80 per acre.
97 acres 1-2 mile from town; good improvements. \$70 per acre.

The above are worth the change, and if you want a good home for yourself or your children, it will pay you to investigate.

SEE ME SOON, AS THEY WILL NOT LAST LONG

G. H. FALLSTEAD

FALLS CITY, NEBRASKA