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MARJORIE RUSSELL'S CHANCE.

How She Took It, and Sent the News.

By R. G. BUTLER.

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"Come back in about two weeks, Miss Russell. In the meantime, if you care to send us anything, we shall be glad to read it."

The managing editor swung his chair around and picked up his newspaper; evidently he considered the interview ended.

"Will you print anything I send? asked the girl, eagerly. "What compensation do—"

"We don't compensate, we pay," said Mr. Hicks, sharply, swinging around again. "We haven't time to compensate. Remember that, please, in writing for the Globe; say 'pay' instead of 'compensate;' it's better, being shorter. Then—yes, we'll print anything you send us that is good, and what we don't print we'll keep for you till the end of the year. Good morning."

It was then nearly 4 o'clock, but Marjorie Russell was so confused by the unusual experience of interviewing an editor and applying for work that she answered dutifully, "Good morning," and went away. She found her way half mechanically through the dingy room, between rows of desks, and down the crooked staircase until she stood in the glass storm door, the only modern appearing part of the old newspaper building. There she stood for a few minutes to get her bearings again.

It was Marjorie Russell's first trial at "entering journalism"—meaning newspaper work. Before she and her brother came to the city she had indeed written for the weekly paper in their town, but that she had done "for fun." Now, however, she was anxious to do real work for real money. Uncle Ben had died, leaving his affairs involved, Aunt Sarah knew nothing of business, and to crown all, her brother, Billy,

"IF YOU WRITE ANYTHING GOOD SEND IT IN," SAID THE EDITOR.

was in bed with a hip trouble that "promised to be serious." So in desperation Marjorie looked about for something to do and happening to pick up an old copy of the New Carthage Palladium, wherein she saw one of her own contributions, she thought of what she called "journalism." That was said to offer a beginner more than any other profession and Marjorie had read that it was destined to be "woman's great field." So she had bearded a newspaper lion in his den and now stood thinking over her audacity and her escape.

If she did not get all she had hoped for she had been encouraged, at least she considered the suggestion that she should return in two weeks as encouragement. And the request that she should write for the Globe? That was almost an offer of work! So she crossed "the park" and gained a small foothold and part of a strap in a crowded cable car and on the trip uptown planned how she would write an article that evening, send it off at once, and perhaps see it in the paper the next morning.

But she had no chance to write when she got home. Going to her brother's room, Billy greeted her with a shout:

"I'm glad you've come, Madge," he cried. "You know that old land title suit of father's? Old Hubbard, who was interested with father, telegraphs from West Capua that it's been reopened and comes up on Monday. He wants me to come on with some memoranda that father had. Fancy me in Capua, not to say West Capua! I'd like to get out of the house even to go there."

"Has the doctor been here today?" asked Marjorie.

"No; but don't worry. I can't go, that's flat—or rather, I am. But you know as much about the case as I do, so you'll have to go——"

"O, Billy," sighed Marjorie; "I won't have a chance then to write an article for the Globe."

"You won't tonight, Madge. I'm sorry, you poor little journalist. But you'll find another chance, or if you don't you must make one," and he began to discuss the suit, producing papers and memoranda as he talked.

"The worst of it is," he continued, "you'll have to go tonight; the Sunday train doesn't connect."

There was no money in her brother's or her own purse for luxuries; so Marjorie, feeling very forlorn, settled herself in the seat of a day car of a through express, prepared for an uncomfortable night. West Capua was two-thirds of the way across the state; she would have eleven hours of traveling, even if she got there on time.

As she was making herself comfortable for the night she saw a young man pass through the car whose face appeared familiar. At first she could not place him, but at last she remembered that she had seen him in the Globe office that afternoon—a reporter, for he had been writing at a desk near Mr. Hicks.

"He's traveling for the paper," thought Majorie. "He goes in the sleeping car. Well, I shall do that some day even if I don't travel for the paper," and she drew her ulster around her, settled her handbag as a pillow a little less uncomfortable and went to sleep.

It was nearly 12 o'clock when she woke again. "I wonder where we are," she said to herself, "I wonder if we're on time. I don't need to get to West Capua until 8 o'clock. I think I'd rather spend three hours extra on the train than in the West Capua 'depot.'" A glance through the window gave her no idea of her whereabouts and she tried to go to sleep again.

Suddenly there came a series of violent jolts, the car pitched like a vessel at sea; there was a great crashing of glass and tearing of woodwork and then, just as the lights went out, Majorie saw something dark break in at the forward end of the car where she sat and then she felt a blow on the head.

"What is the matter?" she said to herself, rubbing her eyes. Where—why—what's happened? What is all that noise? Why, it's an accident. Oh, help! help!" she cried. Then "Be quiet, Marjorie Russell; see if you're hurt first before you cry. No, I don't think I'm hurt much; but if I could find my feet I should know—why don't I carry matches?"

From all around came a confused sound of moans and ejaculations, curses, prayers; and over all and through all, the piercing whistle of the steam, and everywhere it was dark—dark as pitch.

Majorie felt about her carefully. Her feet, she found at last, were held fast under a seat, and the back of a seat was hanging immediately over her head; it was that which had struck her. A few minutes' careful working enabled Marjorie to get her feet out of the trap, and brisk rubbing of the ankles put them in good condition again. She scrambled to her feet and made a step, but her foot met something soft and motionless, and she stood still, horror-struck. That soft, motionless thing must be some one who was hurt.

"O, let me get where I can see something," she cried, desperately; "O, help, help—" To her joy, she saw a light approach the car. "Help us in here!" she cried. "I'm not hurt, but there are persons who are."

There was a crashing of woodwork behind her, a few heavy blows with an ax, and presently two men with lanterns forced their way into the car. The lanterns gave barely enough light to see by; but the men were followed by others, whose lanterns bore the red and green bands on their glasses that indicate the chiefs and foremen of volunteer fire companies. Marjorie stood still until they reached her; five persons were carried out before she was helped out.

"Hullo! Ain't you Miss Russell?" exclaimed the man who helped her to the ground. "I'm George Muller, foreman o' Minnehaha hose."

"Why—where—is this Orleans—where we used to spend the summer?"

"Yes'm. This is Orleans. Now'm, Miss Russell, let's get you to the doctor."

"I'm not hurt—now I know where I am, I feel all right. Can't I help? Are there many hurt?"

"There's nothin' for you to do 'm; we've got all the doctors in town—see, the depot's right here, an' it's an hour since it happened—jest step out o' the way 'm, please;" and Muller pulled her to one side to let four men pass, who were carrying something covered with a blanket.

Marjorie looked at it with wide open eyes.

"How many persons are hurt?" she asked at length.

"There's been ten killed," began Muller. "Hey! what's the matter?" for Marjorie had clutched his arm, and clung to it as if she was about to fall. "You are hurt miss. Let me help you up to the depot"

"I'm not hurt," protested Marjorie, as Muller steadied her on her feet, "but—I didn't know it was much of an accident—I

TWO MEN ENTERED CARRYING A LANTERN.

thought it was all a sort of dream, and rather funny—"

"It's the biggest accident on this road for years," said Muller. "Ten killed is a big thing, an' some of 'em are pretty big people. Nobody'll know it for twenty-four hours, either. Sunday mornin', and no evenin' papers anywhere."

Marjorie looked at him a moment, catching her breath.

"Have you seen a tall, light-haired young man among the wounded, or—the others?" she asked at last.

"In the depot," said Muller, leading her to the station. There she, indeed, saw the young man whom half in jest, she had been envying not so long before. Marjorie looked at him for an instant through tears; she felt as if she had known him, a reporter for the paper she hoped to write for. A reporter! Why, if he had been alive, he would have been sending word to his paper of the accident!

"Mr. Muller," said Marjorie to the foreman of the Minnehaha hose, "I'm a newspaper woman—that man was a reporter on the Globe—my paper. Give me the facts as you've got them, and I'll telegraph the news to my paper; there's a little time yet." She went toward the telegraph office, which was lighted, and full of men.

"I want to send a dispatch to the New York Globe," she said to the first man whose attention she could get.

"You can't," said he; and turned away.

"This is a public office," said Marjorie, astonished at her own boldness. The man looked up at her; there was a little hesitation, and then a second man spoke to her:

"If you wait an hour or so, ma'am, you can have the wire, but we're sending so many railroad messages now that I can't promise it to you short of an hour."

Marjorie turned away in despair, to find Muller by her side.

"I thought you wouldn't get a show, 'm," he said. "Them fellers is railroad men—the depot master 'nd the local sup'intendent, an' the engineer what escaped—"

They were standing in the doorway of the station, and across the square could see an upper room brilliantly lighted—the only place at hand that was lighted.

"There's the telephone exchange," exclaimed Marjorie. "That's open all night. I'm going to try that. Come with me," she commanded, starting toward the light. "You've got the names of them all?"

Muller nodded, and preceding her up the stairs, opened the door of the telephone exchange. "Central" was looking out of the window.

"Fred," said Muller, "this is Miss Russell, who used to live here summers; she's a reporter fo a New York paper an' wants to speak to it—"

"Will you call it up at once, please. I don't know the number."

"What's the name? It'll cost you $2," said "central," shortly; it was bad enough not to be able to go to the wrecked train without having to attend to a call.

"All right," replied Marjorie, producing her purse. This stirred "central" up; he devoted himself to his telephone and after a one-sided conversation of some length turned to Marjorie:

"Got 'em, now—here y'are."

Marjorie took the receiver and leaned against the table. Now that she was in touch with the Globe office she wanted to drop the instrument and run. She stood silent for a moment.

"Hello! What d'ye want?" came a small voice in her ear.

The sound nerved Marjorie to her task.

"Is this the New York Globe?" she called.

"Yes, it is? Who are you?"

"Is Mr. Hicks in?" (Suppose he isn't? thought Marjorie.)

"Yes, he's in. Who are you?"

"Tell him Miss Russell, who saw him about 3 o'clock yesterday—today—wants to see him. I am at Orleans, there's been a big railroad accident—"

"Hold the wire," came the order. Marjorie waited breathlessly; suppose Mr. Hicks should not come, or should make light of her story?

"Well, Miss Russell," came Mr. Hicks' voice. "What's this? Where are you?"

"I'm at Orleans, about 180 miles from the city," answered Marjorie. "The 6 o'clock through express collided with a freight train here about midnight and killed ten persons and injured six."

"Why didn't you telegraph?"

"The company has the wires. You had a reporter on the train—tall, light-haired; I saw him in the office yesterday afternoon—"

"Yes, Saunders—what's happened to him?"

"He's—he's one of the ten," said Marjorie.

There was a sound as if a chair had been pushed back on a rough floor; then Mr. Hicks said:

"I'll send a reporter to take down your story. Tell him everything you know, but remember that it's 1:30 and getting later every minute."

"Now, then, Miss Russell," began a new voice, "begin and I'll take you down."

"Time's up," said "central," behind Marjorie.

"O, Mr. — I don't know your name," cried Marjorie to her friend 180 miles away; "my time is up and I have no more money."

"Tell 'central' to take your place a minute," said the voice. Marjorie obeyed and used the interval to talk to Muller.

"Everything's all right," said "central," after a few minutes, with a subdued air, as he handed the receiver back to Marjorie; "Go ahead, 'm; long's you want."

The foreman of Minnehaha hose was a good assistant. He gave what he knew of the facts in order, and Marjorie detailed them to her unknown friend, who at intervals plied her with question after question. Between the skillful stenographer at one end and the intelligent girl at the other end of the wire, it was not long before the story of the accident was in the Globe office.

"Miss Russell," said Mr. Hicks, so suddenly that Marjorie jumped. She had not noticed that her unknown friend had given up his place. "I am much obliged to you. You've given us a big beat. Will you get today's story and send it to us for Monday's paper? Send it in by 6 o'clock tonight—by telephone, I guess. I'll arrange for it. I can count on you. Very well. Good night."

"Good night," said Marjorie, mechanically.

"Ring off," said "central." "Those papers must be rich. My, how they fly around. That time I called you off and took the wire they switched me on to the big central office in New York, an' I got word right from the 'super' to give you all the time you wanted."

"You'd better come home with me," said Muller to Marjorie. "My mother'll put you up. What you need most is sleep."

Long before Marjorie was awake on Sunday morning the railroad had finished its use of the wires, and newspaper men came into Orleans from all directions. A message to her brother relieved Marjorie's mind of anxiety, and left her free to do her novel work with a light heart. Most of the work was done for her, for the reporters, dividing up among themselves, met later and exchanged news, and, coming to interview Marjorie, gave her all they had in return for the personal news she could give to them.

That afternoon, after she had sent her "story" by telephone, Marjorie told Mr. Hicks of her errand to West Capua.

"Poor Sanders was going to West Capua," said Mr. Hicks. "Will you take his place? If you will, go on by train tonight," and he proceeded to give instructions.

"That's my case," said Marjorie.

"It's a cause celebre," replied Mr. Hicks. "You ought to write about it from knowledge, if it's your case. Now, pay attention. The express doesn't connect for West Capua Monday mornings; that's why we sent poor Sanders on last night. You will have to go ont to Palmyra Center and drive to West Capua."

"Yes, but I have only enough money to—"

"If you can get to Capua you'll be all right. I'll telegraph money to you there."

"I think I have enough," said Marjorie. "Can't you telegraph it to Palmyra?" An inspection of her purse had showed very little spare cash.

"I'll telegraph for a carriage at Palmyra, to be paid for at Capua," said Mr. Hicks, and so the long range talk ended.

Three days later Marjorie sent in her name to Mr. Hicks. This time he greeted her warmly.

"That was a good piece of work, Miss Russell; you cleaned out every other paper in the city. We got out an extra for you."

"An extra! For me!" Marjorie's eyes opened wide. "May—might I see one?"

"Now," said Mr. Hicks, after some further conversation, "you take your extra home, and rest a day. Then come down on Friday, and I'll help you make out your bill, and give you an assignment."

Marjorie found her way home as fast as elevated train would take her, and burst into her brother's room without waiting to knock.

"Billy," she cried, waiving the newspaper in her hand; "here's my extra! I'm not a bit hurt, and I've got a place on the paper!"

BEARD AND A BET.

Story of a Southern Man Who is Searching for a Long Lost Son.

"Would you be kind enough to tell me where I will find the United States district attorney's office?" asked an old man one afternoon recently of a Denver Times man. "You see, it is this way," continued the old man, handing the other fellow a card which bore the name "Cornelius Breckinridge Taliaferro, Flemingsburg, Ky." "I am in Colorado for the first time in my life and the object of my visit is to find a son of mine, Andrew. Andrew has been gone for nearly seventeen years, and I thought I would call upon Mr. John D. Fleming, the district attorney, and see if he could be of any assistance to me in my search. You know I am from the same place that Mr. Fleming was from. I was a great friend of his father's and remember John as a little boy, although I presume he would not remember me. My, my, how time does fly!" When informed that Mr. Fleming was no longer district attorney, the old gentleman seemed surprised and said: "It's strange, very strange; I expected to see him sure, but I am too old to hunt around any more today. You see, I am now in my 75th year, and cannot stand a great deal of exertion.

"I am going to tell you a little incident of my life that has never before been made public," and the old gentleman reached his hand up to his vest and pulled out a snowy white beard which flowed almost to his knees. "That beard of mine is now thirty-one inches long and the cause of its length is all due to the fact that I once made a bet. When the war broke out I was one of the southerners who enlisted and fought with the confederates. Quite naturally my feeling toward Abraham Lincoln was not of the best. When Old Abe came up the second time for election I said to a friend: 'Bob, if Old Abe Lincoln is elected again I will never again shave.' 'Well,' said Bob, 'if Abe Lincoln is not elected I will never shave.' Both agreed it should stand as a bet and the election day rolled around and the result is well known. I never shaved, not because I considered I owed Bob a debt, for he died before another year passed.

"A short time ago I heard my son, Andrew, was in Colorado and had a paying gold mine down in the San Juan country. I am going down there to look around, and if I find him I will consider my mission on earth finished."

Colonel Taliaferro was a guest of the St. James while in Denver.

To Keep from Getting Tired on Train.

New York Evening Post: An experienced traveler says that most of the fatigue of a long journey is quite unnecessary and comes from an unconscious effort to carry the train instead of letting the train carry us. That is, in resisting the motion instead of relaxing and yielding to it. He advises always resting the feet on the rail of the seat in front, if such is provided, as to keep the feet off the floor lessens the vibration that is conveyed to the body and prevents just that much strain. A bag will do as well for a footstool if nothing else is to be had. The body, while sitting in a car, should be as completely relaxed as possible. Until one attempts this relaxation in a railway car it is not discovered how tense is the effort to resist the motion—all of which is in direct accordance with modern physical culture, which has discovered that true repose goes further than mere nonaction.

Hasn't Missed a Day in Nine Years.

A little boy named Hymers, who attends a school under the South Shields School board, has made a local record in the matter of school attendance, never having been either absent or late since he was admitted as an infant in July, 1890. He has now finished his course and to commemorate his exemplary conduct the board last week presented him with a handsome writing desk and a framed certificate.

His Weakness.

Puck: "Wabbles' greatest fault seems to be his lack of decision."

"Yes, he wouldn't know his own mind if he was to meet it in the middle of the highroad in broad daylight."