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"LOVE-ALL."

The Way Four Young People Played the Game in Kentucky's Blue Grass Country.

A bronzed youth helping a blue-habited girl mount her pony is no uncommon sight on a bright morning in Kentucky, yet a certain look of earnestness watching this particular couple as they started gaily on their morning ride. He even shaded his eyes to watch them until they were a mere speck on the horizon. Then he walked around the long, low farm house till he came to the open pantry window where his wife was cooking.

"Mating time is about here, Sarah," he said, with a jerk of his thumb toward the roadway.

Sarah deftly trimmed a pie before she assented.

"What do you suppose her folks will say?" continued the man.

The pie came to the pantry shelf with a bang and the woman faced her husband fiercely.

"Don't you think our boy is good enough for any girl living?" she demanded. "He's a lawyer, Mr. Upton was a struggling lawyer once himself. I don't think he'll interfere at all and if my Robert is as good a husband as my man has been these thirty years they will be very happy."

The old man leaned through the window and kissed his faded Sarah very tenderly. "She'll have to be a darn good wife if she is anything like you," he returned as his wife pushed him laughingly out and said: "What can you expect of young folks if old ones go on spooping after thirty years of married life?"

For Robert Allen, John and Sarah had given years of toil towards his education. He had now graduated from Harvard college and completed his law school course and was at home on a last vacation before going into Lawyer Upton's office, to commence practice. By his side was Lawyer Upton's youngest daughter, Ruth. She and an older sister had returned home with Robert under the chaperonage of a maiden aunt, who was on her way farther south.

The mothers of these young people had been close friends in their school days, and even after marriage took one to the north to become a rich man's wife and left the other at home a poor farmer's wife, the friendship still kept warm. Mrs. Upton took Robert into her family during his school and college days and so the children had grown up intimately.

"Why are you so late every morning, Ruth?" Robert was saying as they ascended the hill. "You never used to be slow about dressing. We get started twenty minutes after the others every day."

"Now, Bob, don't scold," rejoined Ruth. "You know you like this smart center with me better than moping along the road the way Harry Downer Upton's office. There they are now poking as usual," and she indicated a young couple with her riding whip and then brought it down sharply on her pony's flank and tore down the hill at breakneck speed.

The couple were soon overtaken and as Ruth passed the young man she touched his horse shyly and they galloped off together, leaving Bob to pull up by her sister.

Mary Upton was 25 years old; Ruth was 22. They were unmistakably sisters, yet very different in many ways. Mary's eyes were quiet, straightforward eyes, shaded by long lashes that gave them a dreamy look; Ruth's very lashes curled and her eyes danced and twinkled, flashed anger or melted with tenderness exactly as her heart dictated. Mary's nose was straight and a

trifle too sharp; Ruth's was an unmistakable pug. Their mouths and chins were alike, small but firm.

The fourth member of the party was Harry Downs, a son of a wealthy planter. He was a blond giant, 30 years old and in love with all women. Just now he fancied he would like to marry one of the Upton girls; he didn't mind which, so he gave his devotion to either one that seemed most likely to appreciate it. As he galloped away with Ruth he drewled good-naturedly, "Mah horse seems to be going rather more rapidly than pleased him," to Miss Ruth, "but I advise him to respect your wishes, as I try to mah-self."

The whole party now cantered gaily along, running little impromptu races, laughing, teasing and enjoying themselves as only healthy young animals can. They came after a while to a small wood and turned off the road at Rob's suggestion to try a little jumping. They made a convenient pile of brush and spent a half hour jumping it in various ways, ten-yard starts, standing jumps, etc. Rob's mare was a famous hunter and it was play for him. Harry Downs' horse was also used to such sport and Mary's, though a little green at it, was a thoughtful little creature, willing to imitate the better trained animals.

Ruth's pony was a scrubby little fellow of uncertain breed. She had chosen him from Mr. Allen's stock because he would follow her like a dog and having won his affection she could usually make him do just what she wished. Jumping, however, was neither in his blood or training and he gave her trouble every time, though yielding to whip and voice and scrambling over somehow.

At last Rob got tired of the brush and started off for a gate in the distance. The others followed at a swinging lope. Rob's mare loped quietly up to the gate and apparently stepped over it. Harry's horse took it with a rush, showing a clean six inches of daylight between his flying hoofs and the top rail of the gate. Mary's little mare quivered and tossed her head and then leaped over as lightly as a cat.

"Poor Puck, Ruth's pony, refused point blank. 'Don't give in to him. Hide back and make him do it,'" shouted Rob.

Ruth, angry and excited, swung Puck round and rode with him back to get a new start. Then she struck him repeatedly with the whip till he was running and so they came at the gate. Puck quivered and paused, but with a jerky lift and with a wild cut she made him jump.

The jump was high enough to carry him over, but his heart was not in it; his hoofs tickled the rail, he struck the ground badly, turning his ankle, and horse and rider rolled over on the turf.

Rob Allen and Harry Downs hurried to the prostrate figure. Ruth lay still and white and only moaned a little when Rob picked her up. Harry rushed away to a little stream for water and by bathing her face and chaffing her hands they brought her back to consciousness. She sat up sobbing. "Oh, poor Puck, he ought not to have made you do it," and then quietly fainted away again.

"This won't do," said Harry, and jumping on his horse, he assured them he would find a carriage if Rob would carry her out to the road. So Rob gathered up the forlorn little figure and Mary followed, leading the three horses.

Ruth was fortunate in securing a passing vehicle, a farm wagon with meal bags in it. Mary got in and received Ruth's unconscious form, while the farmer good-naturedly

redly agreed to ride Bob's horse and lead the others.

At last they reached the farm house and Rob took her carefully down. Her foot just touched the wheel and with a sharp cry she regained consciousness and began to weep hysterically.

"Oh, darling, don't," said Rob, helplessly. "Here's mother. Now you'll be all right."

Ruth clung about his neck and they disappeared into the kitchen.

Mary clambered down from the wagon as best she could and stood a moment with clenched hands. "Rob loves her," she said, under her breath, and with shame in her heart, she went to her sister and did all that could be done for her.

By the time the doctor had made his visit she had so far conquered herself that she went to Rob, who was pacing the yard like a wild thing, and told him in quite a stately fashion that Ruth was not seriously hurt. A sprained ankle and general shaking-up was all.

For the next few weeks Ruth was an interesting invalid. Every morning Rob carried her out under the trees in the doorway to ask her to be his wife, but she insisted that Mary should ride with one young man each day while the other stayed at home and entertained her. This arrangement kept Harry Downs in a trying state of mind, for on the day he rode with Mary he longed to ask her to be his wife, but she was busy that morning he spent with Ruth and she teased and petted him till he was sure she was the only woman to make him happy.

The weeks went by swiftly and Ruth gained steadily. One day Mary came home from her ride with Harry Downs and, coming round the corner of the house, found Ruth and Rob walking together, Ruth using Rob's arm for a crutch. They were so busy talking they did not notice her and she hurried into the house, stumbling over a book on the threshold.

She opened it mechanically and found the leaf turned down at Lowell's "Love." "So that is what they are discussing," she thought, with a bitter little laugh. Her feet carried her heavily over the stairs and she felt worn and old as she entered her room.

The evenings were cool and were usually spent in the big living room, where a cheerful wood fire burned in the big fireplace. On this evening after supper Ruth occupied the couch and Mr. and Mrs. Allen sat by the hearth, she knitting a red stocking that was to delight some pickaninny's soul and he with the evening paper spread before him. Rob and Mary were at the piano and soon Harry Downs came in, very welcomed by all and then sat down very near Ruth.

Rob selected song after song and Mary sang them in a pure, sweet contralto. She was so placed that she could see Ruth and her mind wandered from the music to her sister's face. Ruth was looking up at Harry Downs and blushing brightly. He was talking low and earnestly and she answered him at some length. Then he leaned forward eagerly and took her hand for a moment, and then leaned back and apparently became absorbed in the music.

Mary noticed that Rob appeared abstracted and she finally told him he was selecting songs she knew he particularly disliked.

"Am I?" he said, quietly, "well, to tell you the truth, my mind is not on what I am doing. Mary," after a pause, "I am trying to get up courage to ask the dearest little woman in the world to be my wife. I'm afraid she don't love me, though, and I can't give her up wholly, so like the coward that I am I just hover round her and hesitate. I've had a great many opportunities in the last few weeks, but something in her manner repels me when I try to ask the question."

Mary looked down helplessly, answering not a word.

"We have always been good friends, I think, Mary," the quiet voice went on.

At this Mary raised her head and looked full into the honest face above her. Rob's fine eyes were full of a soft, beseeching and a great love lurked in their depths. It seemed bitter hard to the girl that she should be asked to act as go-between in this matter. But she loved him enough for any sacrifice, and her answer was quite steady.

"Yes, Rob, and we always will be the best of friends. I will let you know tomorrow," and she fled precipitately to her room between the placid old people by the fire.

At bedtime Mary faced her task while the two girls were brushing their hair.

"Ruth," she began, "are you in earnest?"

"Yes, always," Ruth answered flippantly, "what about?"

Mary put down her hairbrush and took her sister by the shoulders. "You are trifling with a good man's affection," she began sternly, "in the afternoon you have a tele-a-tele with Rob and talk over love poems and lean on his arm. In the evening you lounge on the sofa and let Harry Downs hold your hand. Now tell me what you mean."

"Yes'm," answered Ruth, with mock weakness, "I was going to, anyway, only you hurt my arm."

Mary flung her away, laughing in spite of herself. "I don't mean to be cross. Only do tell me honestly if you love Rob. Don't play with him, dear."

"Yes," Ruth said slowly, with a wicked smile. "I love Robert, and I know he loves me. Why, he told me so the first time he came to Boston when I was 7 and he was 10, and my affection has not diminished a bit. But if you'd asked me if I loved Harry Downs I should have to say 'Yes,' too, and he told me tonight what sort of girl he would like for a wife, and she has a pug nose and freckles and ugly hair like mine. I did intimate that I wouldn't mind if he came to Boston next summer. You see, Rob's a good enough fellow and all that, but he happens to like a girl with a straighter nose than mine better than 'ho does me. He told me so the day we discussed love."

Ruth had delivered herself of this speech so rapidly that Mary could not stand wide-eyed and stare at her. Before she could frame a suitable reply Ruth was snoring contentedly.

Meanwhile the same subject was being discussed by Mr. and Mrs. Allen. "Durned if I see what the young ones are up to," said the old man as he dressed a chair-back in his coat. "Seems to be a game of 'love all,' as they say in tennis. I thought one time it was a sure thing between Ruth and Robert, but they change round so since the accident that I don't know what to think."

"I'm puzzled, too, John," said his wife, "but Rob hinted to me tonight that somebody was going to answer him a mighty question tomorrow, so we shall soon know. I hope it's Mary."

"I like the curly headed little baggage myself." And having had the last word the old farmer left the argument.

Next morning Mary was up early and knowing the habits Rob had contracted at college, which usually made him late to breakfast, she felt secure in going out for a walk to calm herself for the interview which she feared and longed for. She had barely left the farm buildings behind her when she heard many steps and turned, surprised, to find Rob.

"I've come for my answer, Mary, and my cowardice is gone. I must know the truth. I love you, dear. Will you be my wife?"

And she answered him simply "Yes" at that time, though before they returned to the house each had explained and blamed themselves and excused the other to their entire satisfaction.

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Lord De Broke—Been hunting all winter. Count De Samways—Birds or horses?



spot. Sundberg held three six spots and a nine. When the cards were played Ellis was fifty-two and Sundberg forty-two points. The deputy sheriff's Indian horse drew his last-pipe at this juncture and made across the prairie. The game was held until his could be pursued, overtaken and then he kicked several times in the side to teach him better manners. The deputy also, to show his possession of the animal, shot it through the left ear, and the game went on. The sun was making the western sky look as if the heavens were a few feet above the tops of the two players stood at 112 each, and there were but nine points to be played for one or the other to be the winner. Sundberg held the crib and deal, a situation not altogether to his liking. Ellis was certain to have the first count. After the discard Sundberg held in his hand a nine spot, a deuce, a seven and a ten—a nasty combination as any cribbage player ever cares to hold. Ellis, singularly enough, held also a nine, a deuce, a seven and a ten. Such things happen in cribbage once every 10,000,000 years.

The card turn-up was a five spot. Ellis led his deuce and it was paired by Sundberg, who thus made two points. Ellis then led his ten, and that was paired by Sundberg, who made two more points. The next card of Ellis was a seven, giving him thirty-one-two, and two points.

Sundberg led with his seven and Ellis added a nine to it. Sundberg paired the nine and gained a count for last card, which made him eight points in all or a total of 120. Ellis counted his hand and found that it held in points just two. Sundberg counted and held in his hand two points, which gave him the game and located the site of Good Hope on the banks of the Goose river.

It is immaterial to the story that in the end the town of Good Hope was never laid out. For a long time, though, in the tales of the territory, this game of cribbage held a place. The peg holes were in sight for many a day and were often pointed out to "wanderers" from the east come to see the banana belt. The man from McCauleyville lost his mule cows, and another man from Abercrombie walked to Arthur without his horse. Some land changed hands and considerable money. In all there were involved in the outcome of the game about \$1,000 worth of wagers.

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