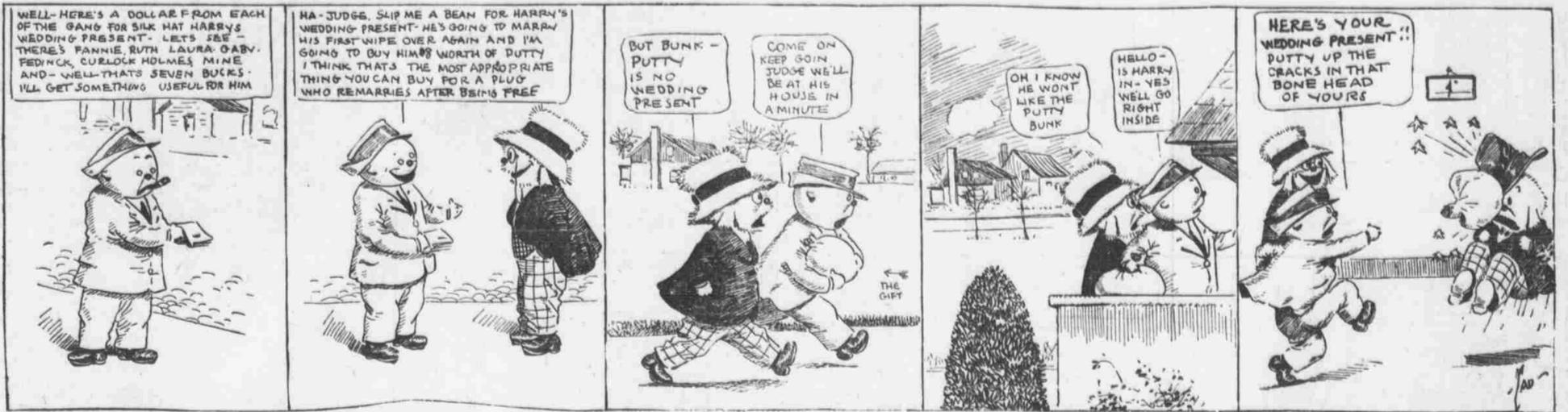


The Bee's Home Magazine Page

Harry Gets a Present from Bunk and the Boys

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By Tad



Married Life the Second Year

Helen is Firm in Her Refusal to Dine at His Sister's on New Year's.

By MABEL HERBERT URNER.

"Why Warren, how CAN you expect me to go?"

"After the way you people treated me Christmas—and Carrie particularly!—and now you think I'll go to her house for dinner?"

"It was all your own fault. You no business to leave the room like that—stalking out with a high and mighty air. Creating a scene before everybody!"

"Warren, you know I didn't create a scene! I simply HAD to take Winifred out of the room because Roy persisted in blowing that horn in her face."

"Oh, well, other people manage to get along with Carrie's children. I don't see why you can't."

"Because they are always annoying Winifred. They're always doing something to make her cry."

"She cries entirely too easily anyway. You've coddled and fussed over her until nobody can look at her without making her cry."

"You know that isn't true, Warren. You know Winifred is more delicate and more nervous than Carrie's children. And she's!"

"That's just what I was saying—and it's your own fault. It's the way you've raised her. Carrie brought up her children to be hardy."

"Would you want Winifred raised the way Carrie has raised Roy? Why I've heard you say he's the worst boy for his age you ever!"

"Oh, I suppose Carrie should make him mind more than she does. But at least she hasn't made a hothouse plant of him!"

"Winifred is not a hothouse plant," indignantly. "She's perfectly healthy, but her whole constitution is more delicate than Roy's. And I've never coddled her. I've always tried to—"

"See here, I've no time to listen to your method of raising Winifred. What I want to know NOW is—are you going to that dinner or not?"

"No, Warren, I told you I COULDN'T go."

"You mean you WON'T go—that you're stubbornly determined not to go. Why don't you tell the truth about it?"

"Because that isn't the truth."

"Well, I tell you right now—I'm not going to have any stir up in my family. You're going to that dinner, and you're going to act as though nothing had happened. And you'll not pull off any more high and mighty stunts either. It's about time you're getting some common sense. And right here's where you're going to get it!"

"Warren, I can't let you talk to me like that."

"I'll talk to you as I blame please!"

Without a word Helen rose and quickly left the room, closing the door after her.

She did not cry. Her indignation was too great for tears. She had gone into the bedroom and locked the door. And now she stood with her hand still clutched on the knob—her cheeks aflame.

Would he try to follow her? She listened tensely. For several moments everything was very still. Then came the banging of the hall door.

So he had gone out! Well, anything rather than a continuation of this! When he returned he would probably not speak to her at all. But she felt even such a silence would be better than to go on saying things that were more and more bitter—that perhaps they could never forget.

At 10 o'clock she wearily undressed and went to bed. It would only irritate him for her to wait up.

It was after 12 when he came. Although Helen lay very quiet and did not turn he knew she was not asleep. But he went to bed without speaking to her.

The next morning he ate his breakfast in stolid silence and left without kissing her goodby. For Helen it was a long, unhappy day. Before evening she had worried herself almost sick. She knew if she did not go to Carrie's dinner that for weeks Warren would show his displeasure by this scowling, sullen silence.

But how could she go? How COULD she—after her treatment of her Christmas day? And now to give them another opportunity to further slight her—to let Carrie's children annoy Winifred while the rest of the family looked complacently on! No, no, she would not go! It was not often that Helen took so

firm a stand, but now she did not waver.

When Warren came home for dinner he maintained the same stolid silence as at breakfast. This was the way he was punishing her. And she knew if she did not go—he would keep it up indefinitely.

It was just as they left the table that the telephone bell rang. Helen usually answered the phone, and she did so now without thinking. It was Carrie. Helen knew her voice with the first "Hello." She had of course not seen or spoken to her since the Christmas incident, and now there was an embarrassed pause.

Then Carrie said coldly:

"Is Warren there?"

"Yes, I'll call him—just hold the wire."

"Warren, Carrie wants to speak to you," she called into the sitting room.

Warren came out and took the receiver.

"Hello! . . . Oh, at 7? . . . Well, that's sensible—I loathe these noon-day dinners. No reason why you should ruin your digestion just because it's a holiday. . . . That's fine. . . . Yes, I'll be there in time to make the punch."

"Helen's not coming. . . ."

"You'll have to ask her that. . . . I haven't the least idea. I'm only accounting for myself these days. . . . Yes. . . . I'll call you up tomorrow."

"Goodby."

Warren came back into the sitting room and took up his paper without comment.

Helen was standing by the window, pressing her flushed face against the cool pane of the glass. The hall door had been open and she could not help but hear.

And Carrie asked him if she was coming? Or had he volunteered the information? And when he said, "You'll have to ask her about that"—it was of course, in answer to Carrie's "Why?"

What would he have said had she not been there—had he not known she could hear him? What would he say tomorrow when he called Carrie up from his office?

For the first time Helen realized the possibility of Warren "talking her over" with his people. It is always a painful moment when this realization first comes to any wife. That her husband, the one to whom she is nearer than to any one in the world—that he can stand apart and discuss her in any way that is critical or disapproving!

And now Helen with her sensitive and vivid imagination tortured herself with questions as to what he would say—and HOW he would say it? When Carrie pressed him for a reason for her not coming—what reason would he give?

Of course Carrie KNEW the reason, yet Helen felt she would pretend NOT to know. That she would ignore the incident of Christmas and ask Warren, with well assumed surprise, "Why isn't Helen coming?"

And then what would Warren say? Would he refuse to discuss it and say, as he had tonight, "You'll have to ask her about that?" Or would he talk to Carrie about her? Would they talk over the incident of Christmas when she had so indignantly left the room? What would they say about it? COULD Warren "talk her over" with anyone—even with his sister?

Some such torturing thoughts as these must at some time come to every wife.

And now to Helen they came with a sick realization that after all in many ways she stood alone. She could never again feel quite the same as when "being one" with Warren that she had before.

(END OF THIS SERIES.)

THE MENDICANT

BY N. P. BABCOCK.

Pity looked out of a window and spied Man with his hat in his hand; Motionless wreck in a swift human tide— Man with his hat in his hand.

Justice peered over her shoulder and said: "Yonder's the base of the land— 'Shiftlessness claiming its portion of bread— Man with his hat in his hand."

"Oh! he is crippled," moaned Pity in tears;

"Surely we must understand Offspring of squalor through limitless years— Man with his hat in his hand."

"Close your eyes, Pity, for are we not just. Temperate, equable, bland? Battle of life fairly fought in the dust— Man with his hat in his hand."

"Pray, you make way," spoke a calm voice above.

"Mine is an act of command. Here is my shoulder, lean on it, I'm love— Man with your hat in your hand."

Officer!! He's in Again!

By Tad

