

# "The Least Of These"

By LULU JOHNSON.

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Betty shuddered at the heavy iron gates clanged behind her and she realized that she was actually within the prison yard. It was her first visit to a penitentiary, and, though she found it not so terrifying as she had anticipated, the atmosphere sent a chill through her whole girlish figure.

Instead of rock piles, with convicts monotonously breaking the stone, here were flower-bordered walks and swards of softest green. But for the high walls and the barred windows she might well have imagined herself in a municipal park or on a million dollar estate.

When she reached the office her basket of delicacies was consigned with others brought by loyal friends for the delectation of other convicts, but the keeper looked curiously from the tag on her basket to Betty's face.

"No, 11,806 hasn't had a visitor since he came here five weeks ago," commented the man significantly. "Are you a relative?"

"No," said the girl simply. "He was just good to me when I needed help."

"He was good to lots of folks," grunted the warden, "but somehow they seem to have forgotten it. He's in the hospital."

The warden made a sign to a trusty, and with fast beating heart Betty followed the man in the direction of the great gray building, in one wing of which was located the hospital.

Moreton, ex-boss of the 14th district, was propped up in bed, and at sight of Bessie Wynne he smiled radiantly.

Five weeks he had lain there fighting grimly for the life that he had begun to think was hardly worth the saving for Moreton had indeed been through the valley of political humiliation. Less than two years before it had required two husky men to guard the door of his headquarters and keep back the crowd of importunate callers who wanted financial help, influential word or perhaps just the chance to fawn upon the powerful political leader.

Moreton had been the boss of his district, ruling with a rod of iron. He had controlled the machine through sheer force of will power.

His enemies both without and within the party had fought doggedly to break his sway, but the boss had gritted his teeth the harder at each fresh attack and beaten the malcontents into submission.

But there had come an end to his rule, as to almost all one man control the opposing party had secured the services of a political revivalist. "In the interest of good government," they had explained, but the whole city knew that it was a ruse to rid the district of its dominating boss. It meant turning the district over to another clique as bad, but less experienced in municipal villainy.

And the political world had sat back and watched the warfare with grim smiles. Perhaps, after all, the boss would win again. But in this they were wrong. By a mere quip of fate the wheel spun the other way.

The boss lost, and after loss of power came scandals and lawsuits. The latter took most of the fortune he had fled from the city, much of which he had spent on the care of those who needed it more desperately than the taxpayers from whom he had fled it so remorselessly. In reality the boss when the blow fell could have counted his fortune only in thousands when his enemies ran it up to tens of thousands.

When he left the civil court room almost penniless he found himself face to face with criminal charges. Stoically he had accepted his sentence of five years in the penitentiary. Stoically he had accepted his desertion by those who had fawned upon him in prosperity and power. A child of the streets who had started carrying the water bucket for the marching club, he had become a ward heeler, a lieutenant and finally the boss without the aid of family ties or family influence. Stoically he had accepted the decision of the hospital staff. He had an incurable disease. He probably would not live out his sentence.

Yet at sight of Betty Wynne's face his stoicism vanished, and after the radiant smile of welcome came a tenderness almost pathetic.

"What are you doing here, child?" he asked as he stroked the hand that clasped his. "Sing Sing's a good way for a girl to come who's only making her eight a week."

The girl laughed, but her voice was shaky.

"Just listen to the man! And I'm getting ten—right in this town. I read in the paper—about your being so lonesome!" The man smiled grimly. So the papers were commenting on the fact that he was a deserted as well as a deposed leader of men. "And I saw the ad. of a lawyer up here who wanted a stenographer, and I came and got the place. I like it much better here than in town. And I can come to see you once a week."

Moreton, deposed boss, leaned over and looked into her face.

"You—come—up—here—to be near me?"

The girl nodded her head.

"And I've got the nicest boarding place with a widow, and you ought to see her flower beds."

Just then a physician in white uniform came toward them.

"You can stay only five minutes," he said without waiting for the formality

of an introduction. "I cannot have my patients unduly excited. In a few weeks we shall have him in fine trim. I hope, but we don't want our treatment upset by too much company."

Moreton's lips set in grim lines. The young doctor evidently did not know that this was his first visitor.

"Dr. Lindsay, this is one of my best friends, Miss Betty Wynne, and her coming can't hurt me. Why, say, I feel like a two-year-old right now."

Nevertheless the young doctor stood near the door, and when the five minutes were up he led Betty from the ward.

"You can come again, as often as the rules permit, but do not stay too long."

The next time he made the rounds Dr. Lindsay found Moreton oddly quiet, his fever reduced, his pulse normal.

"Doctor," he said, with a smile, "that girl's coming did me more good than all your dope. It's good to know that there's one person that hasn't forgot you."

And then the young doctor saw that something more than an organic disease was aiming for the old boss's heart.

"Daughter of an old friend?" he asked casually.

"No, much—just a kid I picked up in a tenement; took her from a sodden old thing who was beating the life and spirit out of her. I turned her over to the sisters. They did the rest."

Lindsay smiled, but he understood. It was the ex-boss who had paid the sisters for the girl's care and put her through a business school and set her on her feet, saving a girlhood like his own boyhood from the slums and the gutter.

After that Moreton slowly but surely began to mend. There was no curing the disease, but there was every chance to prolong his life for years if he wanted to put up the fight. And every time that Betty Wynne came to the hospital he seemed stronger for the fight.

For a time Dr. Lindsay watched the case with purely professional interest, but gradually this feeling became distinctly personal. He generally met Betty in the reception room of the hospital, lingered near Moreton's bedside during her stay and escorted her to the entrance when she departed.

And, oddly enough, he found many excuses for sitting with Moreton and learning more about "the kid's" plucky fight for education and self support.

Before the first year of his sentence had passed the ex-boss read young Lindsay's secret, and one night after Betty had paid her usual call the two men talked it over.

"Mind you, she ain't anybody. Neither she nor I know where she sprung from. So it's up to you," said Moreton warningly and yet with loving anxiety in every word.

Young Lindsay studied the cracks in the flooring for a few seconds, and then he turned resolutely to his patient.

"She's true blue. There are not many like her, no matter what sort of blood was behind her, and I'm going to take chances if she'll have me. And, what is more, I am going down to see her tomorrow when I'm off duty."

"Is it all right, Betty?" inquired the ex-boss as he stroked her hand tenderly the next time she came. "Is it all right, little girl?"

The girl smiled into his anxious eyes.

"Oh, Mr. Moreton, do you think I'm half good enough for him?"

"Mind that, will you?" inquired the invalid, as if addressing an audience; then he drew the girl close. "Let me tell you something, Betty. He wouldn't let me tell you before for fear you'd think you owed him something. He wanted you to love him for himself. See? But Dr. Lindsay's got some of the boys started, and it looks like a pardon, Betty; it certainly does."

She sank on her knees beside the bed.

"Oh, that is too good to be true."

"And that ain't all, Betty. I had some shares in a gold mine; thought it was a dead one, but Lindsay he's been looking into it, and—mebbe—well, just mebbe I can take you and Lindsay on a wedding trip over to Germany. Lindsay says the springs over there would do wonders for me, and Lindsay needs a change, and—well, Betty, I'd been dead by this time if it hadn't been for your coming."

He looked up to meet the shining eyes of young Dr. Lindsay.

"Say, Lindsay, ain't there something in the good book somewhere about the least of these? I want to find that verse. I'm going to learn it. I certainly am. Ah, there is so much for me to learn and so little time!"

The Bible's Good Use of Words.

The Bible as a standard for the correct use of words has been urged upon readers by Professor Lounsbury of Yale, writing in Harper's Magazine.

"Make up your mind," says Professor Lounsbury, "that the Bible is a guide to be followed grammatically as much as it is morally. The language of our version belongs to the sixteenth century. It therefore naturally contains expressions which, though proper at that time, are not in accord with the common usage of our day. When it was originally translated, which was generally the relative pronoun referring to persons. Hence we say, 'Our Father which art in heaven.' More than this, the subtle distinction found in the employment of shall and will had not then become established in the language. But these do not affect the correctness of its procedure in regard to expressions still met with everywhere. In such cases accept its authority without question and conform your practice with it."

He Went.

Mr. Lingerlong—I had a queer adventure this afternoon. Miss de Muir (with a swift glance at the clock)—You mean yesterday afternoon, I presume.

—Exchange.

## PAGANINI.

A Genius That Touched the Line Dividing Sanity From Madness.

If ever there was a genius it was Paganini, the violinist, and probably no one has ever approached so near without crossing the border line that divides sanity and madness. The stories of his antics and eccentricities are endless. His up-bringing was atrocious, but it will not explain everything. At sixteen he was a gambler, a rouse and—a genius. Everything seemed to turn to gold under his marvelous fingers. Money poured in upon him like water. Yet he was at one time reduced to the point of selling his fiddle. He had got down to his last 30 francs. He took them to the roulette table, staked the whole sum on one fling and—won.

The violin thus opportunely rescued came into his possession very curiously. When he was a lad, Parsini, the painter, came one day to his father's house and, putting into the lad's hand a priceless Stradivarius and the score of a concerto of great difficulty, said:

"This," indicating the violin, "shall be yours if you play this," indicating the sheet of music, "at sight without a fault."

"You have lost your instrument, sir," said the youthful Nicolo and proceeded to play the concerto through.

Here is a pen picture of the great violinist by one who was present at one of his triumphs:

"He looked," says this eyewitness, "like an indifferently dressed skeleton. His figure was of astonishing gauntness and angularity and his walk—shambling and awkward. But his face, lit up by a pair of great, dark, flaming eyes, was of a pallor quite extraordinary, even ghastly, and had a look of almost eagle sharpness, sometimes varied by a sardonic grin or a look of almost demoniacal fury. He came on to the stage limping, having run a nail into his heel. At all times odd looking, his appearance in these circumstances was ludicrous, and there was some tittering among the audience."

"As he stood, he settled himself on one hip at a gaunt angle, and one found oneself wondering how he could hold his violin, much less play it. Just as he began a candle fell on his desk—more laughter. Presently his first string broke—more laughter. But he played the rest of the piece through on three strings, and now the laughter was changed into tumultuous applause, which as the evening wore on became simply frantic."

Verily, great wit is oft to madness near allied.—London Family Herald.

The Growth of Seaweeds.

Seaweeds vary surprisingly in their habits of life. Some species grow altogether beneath the water, attaching themselves below the lowest tide level; others frequent heights where they are left dry at every retreating tide, while others yet are found in situations where they are scarcely ever covered by water. Whereas most of them attach themselves to rocks or solid bottom, keeping to the shallows, there are exceptions to the rule, among which the most remarkable is the sargasso or gulf weed, which floats on the surface of the ocean. Immense fields of it are seen by the navigator, extending as far as the eye can reach. It is sometimes so abundant as seriously to interfere with the progress of ships, and it was this which so alarmed the crew of Columbus on his first voyage of discovery.

Idiosyncratic Problems.

Sociology, if it is to deserve the name of science, must soon turn itself to a quantitative and qualitative analysis and synthesis of certain phenomena which now go about unattached, unshelved, as it were. For instance, how many freaks does it take to make one fad, how many fads to make a fashion? How many cranks must be gathered together in one place before we have a cult? What relation does a cult bear to a movement? What is the comparative proportion of ideas to each of the categories here mentioned?

The permutations and combinations of these tentative queries are infinite.—Judge's Library.

Managing John.

"John," she said softly, "have you been saying anything about me to mother lately?"

"No," replied John. "Why do you ask?"

"Because she said this morning that she believed you were on the eve of proposing to me. Now, I do not wish you to speak to mother when you have anything of that kind to say. Speak to me, and I'll manage the business with mother."

And John said he would.

# A Storekeeper Says:

"A lady came into my store lately and said: 'I have been using a New Perfection Oil Cook-Stove all winter in my apartment. I want one now for my summer home. I think these oil stoves are wonderful. If only women knew what a comfort they are, they would all have one. I spoke about my stove to a lot of my friends, and they were astonished. They thought that there was small and smoke from an oil stove, and that it heated a room just like any other stove. I told them of my experience, and one after another they got one, and now, not one of them would give hers up for five times its cost.'"

The lady who said this had thought an oil stove was all right for quickly heating milk for a baby, or boiling a kettle of water, or to make coffee quickly in the morning, but she never dreamed of using it for difficult or heavy cooking. Now—she knows.

Do you really appreciate what a New Perfection Oil Cook-Stove means to you? No more coal to carry, no more coming to the dinner table so tired out that you can't eat. Just light a Perfection Stove and immediately the heat from an intense blue flame shoots up to the bottom of pot, kettle or oven. But the room isn't heated. There is no smoke, no smell, no outside heat, no draftiness in the kitchen where one of these stoves is used.



Cautionary Note: Be sure you get this stove—see that the name-plate reads "New Perfection."

## New Perfection Oil Cook-stove

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MAIN STREET LOUISBURG, N. C.

North Carolina, In Superior Court Franklin County, Before the Clerk.

I. H. Kearney, Adm'r of Annie M. Fuller deceased vs

Notice of Summons

Jacob W. Arrington, Elizabeth Drake, James Drake et al heirs at law of Annie M. Fuller deceased, To Eliza Drake and James Drake, defendants above named:

You and each of you will take notice that an action entitled as above has been commenced in the Superior Court of Franklin County, North Carolina, by I. H. Kearney, Administrator of Annie M. Fuller, deceased, against you and the other heirs at law of said Annie M. Fuller, deceased, for license to sell, for the purpose of making assets to pay the debts of said Annie M. Fuller, deceased, a certain lot of land in the town of Franklin, said County and State, situated at the corner of Green and Franklin Streets in said town, bounded on the North by the lands of W. L. McGhee, on the East by the colored Baptist Church lot, on the South by Green street and on the West by Franklin street, containing about one fourth of an acre being the lot conveyed to Annie M. Fuller by C. H. Sandling, and of which she died seized and possessed.

And you will further take notice that you are required to appear before the Clerk of the Superior Court of Franklin County, said State, at his office in the court house in Louisburg, on the 27th day of June, 1918, and answer or demur to the petition of the plaintiff filed in said action, or the plaintiff will apply to the court for the relief demanded in said petition. This the 15th day of April 1918.

J. J. BARROW, C. S. C. N. Y. GULLEY, W. H. YARBOROUGH JR. Att'ys for Plaintiff.

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# Facts

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