

Smith and the Bank Thieves

By CLARE SMITH

Dugald Forsythe smiled with the impersonal amusement of one who watches himself struggle in the grip of fate and has grown tired of resistance. He looked at the door of his car behind him and, with his suitcase in his hand, started for the door of the bank. He had almost reached it when a hand was laid on his shoulder. Forsythe looked up into the kindly face of Mr. Smith, the manager.

"Will you come into my office a moment, Mr. Forsythe?" asked the latter.

"Mr. Forsythe," said Smith, "Mr. Swain died suddenly this morning. We thought he would be able to return to duty, but the end came unexpectedly. We have decided to give you his position," continued the manager kindly. "You have worked for us faithfully and efficiently for seven years. Your present salary is—"

"Two thousand sir," answered Forsythe, swallowing hard.

"You will start on Monday morning at \$3,500," said Mr. Smith. "That is the assistant manager's regular salary. Please let me have your key. I shall turn it over to Griggs, who will succeed you. Report to me on Monday at nine o'clock. Thank you! Good-day!"

A minute later Forsythe was standing on the curb in front of the bank, breathless and bewildered. It was a Saturday afternoon, and in his suitcase he had a ticket for Pensacola and \$5,000 in bills, the property of the bank.

He had been driven to it. He had tried to keep Maud and their little girl in comfort. He had plunged deeper and deeper in debt. Loan sharks threatened him with a "bawling out" which would mean the loss of his position. And Maud lay sick in a southern sanitarium, and Maud's was staying with a relative. Maud had undergone a desperate operation successfully, but it would be weeks before she was well. The news of his default would not reach her in Atwater, Fla.

The crudeness and impossibility of his plan had not troubled him. When a man is surrounded by creditors and sharks his life becomes such a nightmare that he grasps at any release. So he had taken \$5,000 that morning, knowing that the theft would not be discovered till Monday.

And now his brain swam, his senses reeled.

He must get the money back into the safe!

If only he had not yielded to that hideous temptation!

Next day was Sunday. Every time he went outside his apartment building his footsteps seemed to turn in the direction of the bank, which lay only a matter of a few blocks distant. At eight o'clock that evening he was standing outside for the fourth time that day.

At midnight he was still pacing the street.

One o'clock boomed from the church steeple. Forsythe turned homeward. He would confess upon the morrow. He would go to Mr. Smith and—

A tiny flicker of light beside the bank attracted his attention. Somebody was within the bank.

Forsythe the thief swiftly. If thieves had gained access it must have been from an adjacent building. He hurried round to the cellar door that gave upon the rear street.

He crouched behind a pile of lumber and waited. All at once Forsythe heard the faintest sound behind him.

It was the sound of a padlock being very cautiously unfastened.

A moment later a man came stealthily up the stairs, followed by another. The two hesitated. They looked round anxiously, and one of them caught sight of Forsythe behind the lumber pile.

Instantly they flew at him. Forsythe saw the gleam of a steel blade in the hands of one of them. He dodged and struck the fellow with a length of timber, felling him to the ground. The other closed with him. They wrestled wildly into the street, and fell on the curb.

Forsythe was no match for this giant. He could not defend himself adequately in any event, for his hands were full of bills. Five thousand dollars in his hands, and this fool wildly hammering at his face! How much more did he have on him? Whatever he had taken from the safe was now increased by \$5,000, for with his last atom of strength Forsythe crumpled the money packets full of the bills. This he faintly.

When he opened his eyes he was lying in a darkened room. A woman stirred beside his bed.

"Where am I?" he asked, feebly, and his hands went automatically feeling for the money.

"Forsythe! Don't you know that name? A man who rose from his bed-side."

"Mr. Smith?" Forsythe exclaimed, the events of the past night surging through his brain again.

"You have saved the bank \$50,000," said the manager with emotion.

"Fifty thousand? And he had taken only \$5,000."

"It was a miracle," the manager continued. "The bank will not forget it. But tell me, Forsythe, how in the world did you happen to be upon the spot when the thieves came out with their plunder, and what led you to suspect them?"

Forsythe never remembered his answer.

POULTRY

INCREASING EGG PRODUCTION

Poultry Raisers Will Do Well to Keep in Touch With What Leaders Are Doing.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

The methods favored by large poultrymen for increasing the productivity of their flocks are often applicable to the general farm or in the back-south poultry plant. Every poultry keeper will, therefore, do well to keep in touch with what the leaders are doing to increase their profits, says the United States Department of Agriculture. Certain localities in California, for instance, have become famous for their poultry and egg production, and the study that is given to these problems.



Obtaining High-Class Breeding Stock is Easier for the Small Poultryman When Sales Are Held.

lems by farmers, and the owners of big plants has resulted in a great improvement in their practices.

The county extension organization in Alameda county, California, has taken steps through its poultry division to raise the standard of all poultry in the county by improving the quality of fowls used in breeding flocks.

Owners of hatcheries in the county have entered into an agreement with the county extension organization to use eggs for incubation from selected breeding stock, excluding the incubation of eggs from the general run of fowls in the locality, with the understanding that the county extension organization shall furnish judges to pass on the desirability of birds selected for breeding.

This method of controlling the quality of the poultry in a county is expected to result in a rapid general improvement in the productivity of the flocks. It should also give the county a good reputation wherever hatching eggs or birds are sold.

Promising development that is being encouraged in the famous Petaluma poultry district is the consignment sale of cockerels. In this the poultry breeders have been following the lead of other growers of high-class fowls. Cattle breeders have been holding bulk sales for a number of years; sheep breeders have run sales; hog breeders have sales of hogs and of bred sows. In the case of cockerels no pedigree papers are supplied, as they are with other kinds of purebred live stock, but strict affidavits as to breeding go with each bird.

A White Leghorn cockerel sale was held in Sonoma county (the Petaluma district) October 15. The 14 "Pacific coast" breeders who consigned birds made sworn statements as to their breeding. According to the county agent, who was instrumental in putting on this sale, most of the 52 cockerels consigned represented unusually high breeding, many of them having pedigrees extending back eight or nine generations with trap-nest records. Most of them had inheritance records of more than 275 eggs in a year and some more than 300. The fact that 1,000 catalogues were issued shows the importance given to the first sale of this kind.

These two methods of flock improvement ought to be popular among poultry raisers in all parts of the country. They are practical, say the poultrymen of the United States Department of Agriculture, and they help to make good stock available to the average poultry raiser who in the past has had no assurance, other than the breeder's word, that he was getting birds of superior performance merit. Few dairymen, hog growers or beef-cattle raisers are also good live-stock breeders, but methods have been developed that make it possible for any good farmer to build up an excellent herd. It should be just as easy for a poultry raiser to improve his flock.

PREVENT SPREAD OF DISEASE

Roup and Other Contagious Ailments Are Difficult to Control—Separate Sick Birds.

Cold, damp, poorly lighted and ventilated poultry quarters favor the spread of such diseases as roup. Such contagious diseases as these are difficult and sometimes impossible to control unless given attention in the early stages. Wherever preventive measures fail, separate sick birds from the main flock as soon as there is a sign of disease and then obtain expert advice to effect a cure.

THE NEW FAMILY

By JULIA A. ROBINSON

The little village of Dumber was filled with excitement. A new family was to move into the place, a rare event for that remote country town.

The Cooney farm, as it was called, had long been vacant, and, indeed, now a new owner was coming, and interest ran high.

"His name's Jenkins," Mrs. Jones informed her neighbors. She had been making inquiries about the expected newcomers. "They've been living down in the city. He's got a wife but she's sick, and five children."

All were eager to see the new family arrive. Some of the women even went down to the small bus station. The whistle sounded, the train came to a stop, and the new family alighted, all of them. A trunk, well strapped, was set down on the platform, a hat and a bag.

"He's got a buggy," whispered Mrs. True. "Ain't it fine? The rest of the things must be coming later."

Mr. Jenkins looked about on his new neighbors, a broad smile on his face that won their hearts. He seemed a jolly sort of man, good-natured.

"Any of you got a horse I can borrow?" he asked. "My wife here ain't able to walk. My buggy came, but I need a horse."

"You're welcome to take one of ours," quickly responded Mrs. Choombs.

Mrs. Choombs soon returned. Mr. Jenkins, with thanks, harnessed the horse to his buggy, plied his family in and drove off.

Mrs. Bates, who lived nearest to the Cooney farm, was preparing her supper when there came a knock at the door. There stood one of the Jenkins children.

"Dad says, 'could you lend him a bit of wood?'" she asked, "an' ma, she wants a saucepan and a little flour."

"To be sure, dear!" responded Mrs. Bates.

In the morning another child came with the request: "Could you lend me a loaf of bread and a few potatoes, and Dad, he wants a shovel."

After a few days the neighbors began to talk among themselves.

"It's about time them things of theirs came," observed Mrs. Jones. "The things they've borrowed o' me and ain't never returned, I couldn't tell you."

"Why, I thought I was the only one who lent 'em things!" cried Mrs. Bates.

"The only one? Not much!" cried several voices. "I'm lendin' 'em things every day."

"Me, too," echoed Mrs. Gibbs. "They have borrowed my washboard and soap, baking tins, plates, even, and they never return a thing 'till I go after it. Not always then, especially if it's something to eat. I'm 'bout tired of it."

"He's borrowed my husband's shovel, his oxen and plough. Dan said he really couldn't refuse a newcomer, but he needed them himself," said another.

"It's too exasperating, but what can we do?" asked Mrs. Brown.

They talked the matter over for days. At last they decided on a plan they thought must be effectual to work a cure in the new family. Mrs. Jones was the first one to put it into effect.

Mary Jenkins came over, as usual and asked: "Can you lend Ma six eggs and a cup of sugar and a little butter? She's making a cake."

"Certainly," beamed Mrs. Jones, holding the basket in her arms.

In half an hour the child came back: "These eggs are all rotten! Ma can't use 'em," she complained, "and the sugar's got sand in it, and the butter don't taste good."

"Sorry!" exclaimed Mrs. Jones. "Those eggs were all I had. I remember the sugar got spilled an' the boys scraped it up. 'Spose they scooped up a bit of sand with it. Can't be helped now. Ask your ma to please excuse it this time."

The scheme was working well with Mrs. Jenkins, but how were the men to manage Mr. Jenkins? That was a more difficult matter and far more serious.

"Good morning, Neighbor Jones," Mr. Jenkins accosted with his usual smile. "Just lend me your harrow, I've gotter go over my land."

It hurt Mr. Jones to take the screws from his new harrow, for he knew it would fall to pieces, and it would take a good day to repair it, but for the sake of the cause he did it.

In short measure Mr. Jenkins came back, not smiling this time.

"What's the matter with the old thing?" he blurted.

"Why—why—it's broken!" cried Mr. Jones. "An' 'twas a new one, too. Maybe I can fix it, but 'twill take a lot o' time."

It was the same with everything Jenkins tried to do. Everything he borrowed fell to pieces.

It went on for a few days. Nothing that the Jenkins family tried to borrow was in working order. At last they began to understand.

"What'd we'd better go an' buy a few things for ourselves," said Mr. Jenkins to his wife. "Poke soon to be tired o' lendin'."

"Ain't that what I told you?" rejoined his wife. "You just go to town an' buy in a stock o' things an' we'll give 'em back everything they've ever lent us. New go!"

When the new things came, the rowlin' habit, all right, chuckled Mrs. Jones, and the rest laughed.

Two Rivals in Love

By DOROTHY WHITCOMB

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"What's the trouble, Lester?"

"Oh, nothing, that money won't cure."

"You'd find it an infallible medicine, you think?"

"I know it," declared Lester Martin and proceeded on his way grumpy and dejected.

Neal Dorman glanced almost pityingly after his friend. In a way they were rivals in love. That is, both visited weekly the same young lady, Miss Viola Morse, though on different evenings. Young Dorman was thrifty and steady, and he sometimes fancied that Viola rather admired those qualities. On the contrary Martin was always in a bit of a hurry, always grumbling at his bird's nest, and always living beyond his means.

A wonderful stroke of "good luck," as he termed it, came to him that very afternoon. As he was passing the one office building of the town a sign at an upper window halted him. It was Mr. Snow, the lawyer.

"Sit down, Mr. Martin," invited Mr. Snow. "I have heard from your grandfather," continued the attorney. "As you know, in your behalf I have tried to interest him as a relative and at least start you in some small business."

"Yes, yes," commented Martin rapidly, his eyes glowing with eagerness as he noticed a fluttering check pinned to the document in the lawyer's hand.

"He sends you one thousand dollars. He says he started in business on one-half that amount. It does not encourage me to believe that he will do anything further for you, but I presume your success or failure would be a test as to that."

"So the mean old hunk has loosened up at last, has he?" called Lester.

"I'm going to do things up brown," he secretly vaunted. "I'll give Viola the time of her life. Old Morse has a neat plum of a fortune and she's a stake worth playing for."

The foolish young man did what many a clever youth similarly circumstanced had done before him. There were new suits of clothes, some gorgeous neckties, a diamond pin and a removal from his former modest living quarters to a suite in the principal hotel of the place.

A note came for Viola one morning inviting her to drive over to a theater party at a nearby city in "my new sport car," and Martin alluded to the high social standing of some of the others who would make up the party.

Martin was very much put out to receive a courteous but definite reply to the effect that Viola had a previous engagement.

That evening Viola did indeed keep an engagement—a village musicale, and Neal Dorman saw her home and his excellent company somewhat atoned for what Viola had missed.

For a week Martin suffered and did not come near the Morse home. One afternoon he drove up to the place in his elegant car. It was one he had leased for a month, but he did not tell that.

It was a pleasant enough drive, although Martin rather disgusted her with his boasting of all the money he was spending. Just as they were passing a bridge the car turned over.

"Oh, dear—take care," warned Viola. Martin leaped free of the vehicle. This upset, spilling Viola to the ground. A cry of pain came from Viola's lips.

"Hurt?" inquired Martin.

"I fear my ankle is sprained. Oh, Mr. Martin, I feel so faint! won't you try to get me home to mother?"

"Why, Miss Morse!" cried an anxious voice, and running a wheelbarrow filled with bags before him Neal Dorman appeared on the scene. "I saw the accident. Tell me—are you injured?"

Viola explained weakly and pleaded to be taken home. In a trice Dorman had arranged the empty bags upon the wheelbarrow.

"It may not be very comfortable," he explained.

"Never mind that. I am in such pain. I want to see mother."

Neal's heart beat mightily as, transferring that delicate form to the barrow, Viola's soft hands clasped his neck.

He called at the Morse home the next morning to learn good news the moment he opened the garden gate. Viola was seated upon the porch conversing with her mother, therefore improved. These words floated to the ears of the blamless listener.

"After yesterday's experience with Mr. Martin, mother, of course never before that, still no, for—I love another."

And, casting his mind about to solve this riddle of love, Neal Dorman guessed it out that he was a favored one, indeed.

He found it out to a supply before he parted with Viola that morning.

There were no further remittances for Martin when that first thousand had been dissipated. Wedding bells were ringing the evening he slipped away from town, in debt and out of sorts, but they did not chime for him.

No Doubt.

"Miss Plain says you told her she was pretty. How does your conscience stand the strain?"

"Oh, I told her the truth."

"The truth? You don't really mean to say you think—"

"No, no, not I told her she was as pretty as the sun and moon. That's what I said."

"American Legion Weekly."

Dorothy's Odd Audience

By MALCOLM BROWN

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The wonderful afternoon had at last arrived. Dorothy Clifford was to make her debut as a pianist at Claridge hall, and Eustace, her fiance, was to be there.

Claridge hall was not the finest hall in the city. It was, however, one of the leading centers of music.

Dorothy had been educating herself as a pianist for seven years. She had many teachers, too. She had hoped to make music her life career, but many a girl who dreams of a life career surrenders it when the right man comes along. And with Eustace to care for, the piano had become a less valued friend.

"Still, Eustace," she had said, "I can play once in a while at first, even after we are married, and make a few extra dollars. Don't you think so?"

Eustace had been dubious, but Dorothy's father was emphatically in agreement with her.

"You're going to give that piano recital, anyway, Dorothy," he said.

Dorothy's father was not very worldly wise, but anyway he had his will. And so the fateful afternoon arrived.

When Dorothy arrived with her father and Eustace and saw the placards in front of the building her heart gave little throbs of pride. "Dorothy Clifford," they announced, in great black letters, under her picture.

"Dorothy Clifford," and then in smaller letters, "gives her pianoforte recital in Claridge hall—the last words very big again—on Friday next at 2:30."

Eustace squeezed her hand and her father twisted his white mustache and strolled along as proud as a king.

"Room 4, Miss Clifford," they told her inside. So Dorothy had to say good-by to her father and sweetheart and hurry round to the musicians' entrance. She walked up and down corridors for Claridge hall is quite a large place—and at last found room 4.

"They are waiting for you," said an old gentleman at the stage entrance—a little curly, Dorothy thought. The house was full.

Dorothy walked forward toward the grand piano, which, rather oddly, she thought, occupied a corner of the stage instead of the center, such a salute of hand-clapping broke forth that the tears came into her eyes.

She could hardly see to read the music that she unrolled and placed upon the stand.

The first part consisted of a Chopin nocturne. Dorothy sat down and struck the opening chords.

At first she was timid. It was her first appearance in public and the

presence of these strange, gleaming circles her a little, but before she had played half a dozen she had forgotten where she was in the joy of playing, and before she knew it the piece was ended. Dorothy got up and bowed.

To her amazement there was not a single hand-clap.

Not one person out of that vast audience had been sufficiently impressed to applaud. There was not a whisper. They sat in their seats in stony silence.

Dorothy controlled herself with difficulty. She went slowly out through the stage exit. She would not go back. She would go home, she—

"Dorothy! Where have you been?" It was Eustace, Eustace standing at her side. She tried to hide his tears that filled her eyes.

"Dorothy! That's the wrong room. That's Number 3. We have been waiting for you a quarter of an hour. The audience is getting impatient."

The absurdity of the mistake sent the girl into a reaction of hysterical laughter. To whom had she been playing, then? She would not yield now; she would go on the right stage and play her part. Otherwise, well, her father would have to pay back the box office receipts, and that would mean three or four hundred dollars, at least. Meekly she entered Number 4.

And as she entered just as hearts a round of applause greeted her as before. But when she entered the house went wild with enthusiasm. "Encore!" they yelled. They called for back three times in each of the first two parts and six times at the end. And as the sheets fall next day, Dorothy had "arrived."

"Who who were they, Eustace, she asked at the first opportunity.

Eustace threw back his head and laughed.

"Dorothy," he said, "your first public concert was given before the National Association of Dent Mutes."

Forty Duds.

The large owl often gathers a large quantity of food (including hares and rabbits, poultry and pigeons) for his mate and offspring; and the peasants have been known to utilize him as Elijah his ravens. There is an old tale that the ptarmigan makes stores of berries and buds beneath the snow, but there is no doubt that at least two species of woodpeckers store acorns, sticking them firmly into holes which are bored for the purpose in the tree stems. This is all the more interesting, if it be true, that what the woodpeckers really eat is not the acorn, but a kind of grub that develops inside it.

His Sole Attraction.

At least, I could not find any other wealth for your love.

Young Adored—If you did anything so foolish I should never love you.

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