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BILLY AND I.

They say they are going to shoot you, Old Billy, but don't you fret, for the fellow who dares to meddle with you must reckon with me, you bet; You're a poor old horse, Old Billy, and you aren't worth much, it is true, but you've been a faithful friend to me, and I'll see you safely through.

Shoot Old Billy? I guess not, though you may be old and gray, by the self-same stretch of mercy they'll be shooting me some day; I haven't much love for the fellows who follow the shooting plan; If they had more pity for horses and dogs they'd have more love for a man.

That's right, Old Billy, I like it—your muzzle against my face; We've had rattling times together, and once we won the race—Do you remember it, Billy, the dude that we downed that day? And the way he swore that an old farm horse should show his trotter the way!

Well, Billy, we're both great sinners, for we've both grown old, you know; And we've only a little further down the road to go; So we'll fare along together till the Master calls us home To the happy Home Land stables and our feet forget to roam.

They tell us that horses have no souls, and they all declare it true; That shows how little they know, Old Billy, and it proves they don't know you; Well, well, 'tis a mighty question, and quite beyond my ken— But the more I know of horses the less I brag about men.

You've been a good horse, Old Fellow, steady and brave and true; You have given us faithful service—done all that a horse could do; You have earned your keep; you shall have it; so live as long as you can— For justice is justice, and right is right, whether it's a horse or a man.

—Boston Transcript.

John's Mother-in-Law.

BY HELENA DIXON.

Of course your mother must have a home with us, Carrie. Widowed, and with no child but you, she naturally and rightly wishes to come to you. And only think how nice it will be for us all to have here. No more lonely hours for you while I am cooped up in that gloomy workshop of mine upstairs.

So spoke John Roylton as he rose from the breakfast table and caught up his chubby-faced boy, adding, as he perched his little two-year-old on his shoulder:

"And my little curly-head wants a grandmamma's experienced eye upon him to cut short his mischievous pranks. Don't you, Master Chatter-box?"

And away the little fellow was borne to the little room which John had called his "workshop." Technically speaking it was a studio, for Roylton was a painter, and the domestic little wife was left alone to write a letter inviting her widowed mother to her home.

"How like the dear old times it will seem to have mother with me," murmured Mrs. Roylton, as she folded and sealed her letter. "A woman wants some one to talk to beside such a dignified, methodical person as dear John, and I declare I don't see any one else in an age except now and then when some sour-visaged old maid or snuffing miss comes to have her portrait painted."

The Saturday following the posting of Mrs. Roylton's letter brought the expected guest to the Roylton cottage. Mrs. Perring was a very nervous, very lively and very eccentric old lady, who made it her boast that she was never idle a minute between daylight and bedtime.

When she became settled with the Royltons she applied herself assiduously to "putting things to rights." Every drawer, every chest, every cupboard, was ransacked and the contents of each arranged in accordance with the old lady's ideas of order. Even John's desk was rummaged, and every letter and paper peered into, just to find out in what particular niche one ought to be put.

In about a fortnight Mrs. Perring had the satisfaction of thinking that she had got things about the house in "good running order."

"There's only that outlandish paint shop upstairs—John's study-o, I believe Carrie calls it—but what's had a thorough ventilating, and the very first day John's away from home I'll make a new place of that."

Fortune smiled on Mrs. Perring's plans. John and Carrie and little Eddie were away, and the little old lady prepared herself for the onslaught. She donned her poorest dress, tied a napkin over her head to keep off the dust, rolled her sleeves above her scrawny elbows and went to work.

All day long the furniture in the artist's room flew vigorously around. Many articles denounced as "worthless rubbish" were hurled through the window into the back yard, while others that "might come in play for something, some day," were stowed away in the garret. A portrait, on which the paint was yet wet, was energetically dusted with a coarse towel; paints were mixed inconspicuously and brushes put through a scouring process till the old lady's back ached with the exercise, and her nose became the medium by

which copious streams of perspiration were conducted from her face.

When everything in the room was considered "done," Mrs. Perring made a dash for an adjoining closet, but she found the door securely locked. For a moment the worthy lady was in a quandary. How was she to straighten things in the closet? Do it she must and would, and very quickly Mrs. Perring bethought herself of a bunch of keys which happily she had brought with her. The keys were produced, and in triumph Mrs. Perring unlocked the door.

Seizing her broom she rushed into the closet. She came out shortly, however, and closed the door after her with a jerk and a bang.

John Roylton's mother-in-law had made a discovery!

Collecting her utensils she left the studio and went below in grim and dignified silence. She sat quietly knitting in the pleasant sitting room when John and Carrie returned. The steel needles flew out and in very spitefully. The cold, gray eyes looked directly down over the elongated nose, and were never once raised, not even to greet little Eddie.

When bedtime came the old lady rose in solemn silence and retired.

The next morning when John repaired as usual to his studio he uttered vehement sentences not at all in praise of his wife's mother.

"While he was engaged in undoing so far as lay in his power the mischief she had unconsciously wrought, Mrs. Perring was closeted with Carrie. The young wife's face was colorless, and her eyes were wild with anger and indignation as she listened to her mother's words.

"It's a beautiful face—the handsomest picture of a real person I ever saw. Great, dark eyes, that seem to look you through, hair as black as night and hanging in ringlets all about her face and neck. The skin is just like alabaster, so white and clear, and the lips look like ripe cherries for all the world."

Carrie sank back in a fainting condition, and her mother caught her in her arms.

"Oh, my poor lamb! that I should see you treated in this shameful manner. And John so dignified and proper seeming. The hypocrite! But I've mistrusted that his loving ways were all put on ever since I cleaned his desk and found scraps of poetry about love and such like nonsense."

"Mother, don't; you will kill me by your suspicions. I can't believe it. John cares for no one but me. He is too noble, too—"

"Take my keys, then, and go satisfy yourself. Go look at the siren's portrait in the closet. It isn't finished yet, I could see that, and I wish how I'd had presence of mind enough to give it two or three extra touches with the brush myself. No wonder you found his room locked so many times of late, and had to wait your artist's pleasure before you could enter. And that old woman in the alpaca hood that we've noticed going upstairs so many times of late isn't an old woman at all. I've made up my mind about her. She's the original of that portrait, and no mistake. See, there she goes up the steps now! Mighty careful she is, too, not to show her face. There—did you ever see an old woman with such feet and ankles? She's the woman!"

When the unknown woman had de-

parted, and the unconscious John was quietly eating his dinner, Carrie left the table under some pretext, and with the rusty key in her hand she ascended the stairs and entered the studio closet and stood before the painted portrait of a woman before whom her own charms sank into insignificance.

What was this beautiful creature to her husband?

Carrie's heart lay like a lump of lead in her bosom as she turned away and sought her mother.

Shortly after John returned to his labors, the two women—the elder, filled with virtuous indignation, the younger too utterly wretched even for tears—left the house, taking little Eddie with them.

Silently the poor wife followed her mother in quest of some quiet retreat wherein to pass the night. On the morrow Mrs. Perring had resolved on taking her charges into the country.

This was Carrie's birthday, and always heretofore, during the few years of their wedded life, John had remembered the day with a suitable gift, but to-day he seemed to have forgotten not only the present, but even that it was her birthday.

"Poor thing!" murmured Mrs. Perring, philosophically, as in a lonely room, Carrie clasped her boy to her bosom and wept passionately over her wrong.

"Poor thing! it's hard for her to beat at first. She loved him altogether better than he deserved, even were he true to her. It's best she should see him no more. Let her have her cry out and then she will be calm and a different woman entirely; strong to resent the insult and injury which that wretch has heaped upon her."

When the gloomy night was curtaining the earth in darkness, Carrie begged piteously to be permitted to look upon her old home once more. She would not enter the house—she might never again do that—but she could gaze a moment into the dear, familiar room. John might be in the pleasant sitting room as of old. She had left a note for him, and she longed to know how he bore the separation; whether he was rejoiced or sorry that she was gone.

"It's all nonsense," said Mrs. Perring, angrily, "but if you're determined to go I shall go along to keep you from rushing right into the villain's arms."

A cheerful light shone out from the uncurtained windows of the Roylton cottage as the two women stealthily approached near enough to gain a view of the interior of the room, where John, with bowed head, was walking to and fro over the carpet.

Carrie could not catch the expression of his face, but she saw that ever and anon he turned his gaze upon a painting on the wall—one which had never before hung there.

The young wife's face turned ghastly pale as, peeping close to the window she saw that the painting was the one she had seen in the studio closet.

Carrie was ready to faint, still she would not, could not, leave the window.

At length John paused before the portrait and spoke aloud.

Carrie heard his words and stood still a moment to gather in their meaning, then, heedless of her mother's remonstrance, she rushed with Eddie into the house.

Mrs. Perring, who had not heard a word of what had transformed Carrie from a breathing statue into her old joyous self, was too thoroughly provoked at what she considered her daughter's lack of spirit and self-respect to follow her immediately. When, however, she did so, she found husband and wife—the former with one arm supporting Eddie and the other encircling Carrie's waist—standing before the painting which, through Mrs. Perring's romantic suspicions, had wrought so much, though happily not irreparable, mischief.

A few words neatly written and pasted under the portrait—which, after all, was not a portrait, but purely the work of the artist's imagination—convinced Mrs. Perring that she was altogether wrong in her surmises, and that, after all, the woman in the alpaca hood might be as venerable as her appearance indicated.

"A Birthday Gift to My Wife."

These were the words which Mrs. Perring read, and then she managed to slip unobserved from the room, and ever thereafter John Roylton's mother-in-law was a model one.—New York Weekly.

The method employed by the captains of Nile boats to keep the natives away on landing is to turn the hose on them.

CHARACTER BUILDING.

How to Make Life a Glorious Thing Instead of a Drudgery.

What is it we all have in common, no matter what our environments? Life, that glorious opportunity to be, to do, and to grow, is ours. Life, with all its possibilities, the greatness of which we have not dreamed, is actually slipping by without our cognizance, because we are so occupied with the things which we think make us unhappy, and which have grown to tremendous proportions, magnified by our vision.

What matter it if others are rich or famous, so long as we have the one great chance in life which overshadows all these things, and is the only thing which will stand the test of time?

In a few years death will claim the rich and they must depart, leaving that for which they have labored all behind. But the character goes on forever.

Happiness being a condition of the mind, yours is the power to place happiness there by creating this condition, which you can do solely by your thoughts.

Thoughts which cause unrest or worry, you must cast out. This is not easy for those who have been accustomed to allow themselves to be constantly annoyed by these things.

Remember, first, to place character above all else, for there is nothing to be compared with it. And determine that, no matter what else you have in life, this you will acquire. This determination will alter your frame of mind, and, when firmly fixed, will change the appearance of conditions and surroundings.

All thoughts which are not character builders you must banish, and you must view everything in this light. This cannot be done at once, and is only achieved after many trials.

Always see what you have to be thankful for when depressed or unhappy. This mental inventory will make lighter any load. Don't worry about anything, for it does no good, and only lessens your opportunity for helping yourself.

If you are character building there is nothing that can come to you which cannot be used as a step onward, if looked at in the right light, and anything which will place you a step forward cannot bring harm.

Always look on the bright side of everything, for there is always a bright side to everything if we will but see it. Cast out all thoughts of anger or rage, and never allow yourself to lose your temper.

School yourself in conquering fear of all descriptions. To him who builds character there is nothing to fear. And just in proportion as you obtain this mental balance you will find happiness everywhere, and life will become a glorious thing, instead of a drudgery.—New York Weekly.

Race Suicide in New Hampshire.

The entire Legislature of New Hampshire, including the Governor's Council, comprises 418 men. A vast majority of these men are native born, more than two-thirds of them being descended from a long line of New England ancestors. Of these 418 men the State has a right to expect at least 333 children, being two apiece. The actual number, however, according to the Manchester Union, is 634, or a little more than a child and a half for each man. Of the whole number 355 are married, 275 are fathers, 80 are childless, and 63 are unmarried or widowed. Of the 275 fathers 94 have one child each, 73 have two, forty-seven have three, 25 have four, 18 have five, 6 have six, 5 have seven, 2 have eight, 3 have nine, and 2 have ten each. Of the fathers of six children or more each, nearly two-thirds are of foreign birth, chiefly, French-Canadian. If these foreign-born representatives, therefore, were eliminated from the list, the showing would be still less favorable.

American Cars Lead the World.

In the closing months of 1904 it became manifest that American cars were being improved so much that the imported articles no longer would be worth the difference in price, and some of the new models offered for 1905 promised to be in every way equal to the products from abroad. The European makers had five years of experience before the Americans began to build, but the Americans began a couple of years ago to copy and profit by that experience, and now they have about overtaken their mentors and are ready to outstrip them. Considering these things, the day of faith in American automobiles may be said to have dawned.—Country Life in America.

THE TWINS.

We're twins—an' my name's Lucy Brown An' her name's Lulu; I'm called "Lou," An' everybody in 'is town 'Ey call my sister 'at name, too. An' folks, 'ey come to see us here, An' we ist have th' mostes' fun 'Cause ever'body say: "Oh dear! 'Wy, 'is one is th' nuther one!"

My papa sometimes look at me, An' say, "Well, Lulu, how you grow!" An' nen I laugh, an' nen, w'y, he Say goodness sakes! he'll never know Which one is which. An' nen I say 'No one can tell us twins apart 'Cause we're together anyway. An' nen he holler, "Bless your heart!"

My mamma never gets us mixed; She always knows my twin 'in me. An' papa say she's got us fixed. Our clo'es, or hair, so's she can see. But mamma hugs us bofe up tight An' kisses us, an' pats our curis, An' says a maver's always wite An' always knows her preshus girls.

But nuther folks 'ey ist can't tell— An' onest when Lulu climb a tree An' couldn't hold, w'y, when she fell Th' doctor thought 'at she was me. Nen we all laugh, an' he ist say 'It's all in how th' notions strike, 'At bofe o' us looks ist one way, 'But 'at I look th' most alike! —Wilbur D. Nesbit, in Harper's Magazine.

FLASQUES OF FUNK

"How is your boy Alfred succeeding at college?" "I'm afraid we'll find out pretty soon that he's been running into debt. He's writing to us once a week now."—Chicago Tribune.

Bobby Shaftoe's gone to air, Silver side-combs in his hair; See him sailing—way up there? Pretty Bobby Shaftoe!

Henderson—"Let's see, they call the man that runs an automobile a chauffeur, don't they?" Uncle Joseph—"Well, down our way they call him worse names than that."—Boston Transcript.

"You're wasting a lot of time and money trying to capture that widow." "Why? Don't you think she'll marry me?" "Sure; she told me the night she met you that she was going to."—Houston Post.

"Why have you engaged in such a disreputable business?" we asked. The thief hung his head. "An extravagant family," he faltered, "has not permitted me to accumulate enough to make the business respectable."

Brown—"What did your wife say last night when you began to explain why you didn't get home earlier?" Green—"She said my originality compared favorably with the jokes in an almanac."—Chicago News.

Life ain't no dream, my honey, But dis is understood; You can't buy love with money— But—money's mighty good! —Atlanta Constitution.

Hilda—"Well, there's one thing I can say. I never made a cloak of my religion." Bertha—"No, dear, there's not enough of it for that. Might be enough, perhaps, to make you a pocket handkerchief."—Boston Transcript.

Teacher—"Yes, 'revive' means to 'come to.' Now, can you give a sentence, Tommy, containing that word?" Tommy—"Yes, ma'am. If two apples cost five cents, what will four revive?"—Catholic Standard and Times.

"You enjoy a classical composition more after you have heard it a few times." "I don't know," answered Mr. Cumrox, "whether I enjoy it or whether I get used to it and don't notice it so much."—Washington Star.

Mrs. Binks—"I must get a thermometer. John likes to see what it registers every morning." Mrs. Jinks—"This is a good time to get one, dear. They're much lower than they were three months ago."—Cincinnati Commercial-Tribune.

"Say, ma," queried little Dolly, "what is a miser?" "A miser, my dear," answered the diplomatic mother, as she glanced across the table at her husband, "is a man who thinks his wife's hat should not cost any more than his own."—Chicago News.

The Newer Japan.

Pierre Loti thinks, as do many of us when we revisit the scene of our early loves, that Japan has deteriorated. War, even in 1900, he saw to be inevitable, but this saddens him less than the substitution of American bars for the picturesque tea houses and the general spread of drunkenness among the lower orders. Formerly, he says, if you saw a drunken man in Nagasaki he was sure to be a European; but now the sailors as well as the civilians of Nippon are often to be found boozing and quarrelling in cabarets.—Pall Mall Gazette.