

Bowser's Night Off

He Differs With His Wife Concerning How He Returned to His Home—Was Invited to the Club. The Next Morning He Felt Depressed and Lonesome, but Mrs. B. Knew the Symptoms

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I THINK," said Mr. Bowser as he rose from the dinner table. "I think I'll just look in on the club this evening. I haven't been around for a long time, and two or three of the members were speaking to me today about it. I don't suppose you have any objections, have you?"

"Not in the least," replied Mrs. Bowser. "As you say, you haven't been there for a long time."

"There may be a little speaking, as some prominent man from Chicago is to be there, and it is quite likely I'll be called upon. If so—"

"You will decline, of course."

"Why should I decline?"

"Because the only speech you have is something about the labor question, and that won't be exactly the thing to



"THERE MAY BE A LITTLE SPEAKING."

get off at a club. You will respectfully decline, of course, on account of a sore throat."

He growled around for a time and said something about passing the evening in a saloon, but finally dressed himself and departed, saying that he might not be back for a month. That was at 9 o'clock in the evening. The next thing he knew Mrs. Bowser was waking him up, and it was 8 o'clock next morning. He got up slowly out of bed, yawning and stretching, and observed:

"I believe we are going to have an awful storm by tomorrow. I feel lonesome and depressed this morning, and I ache as if I was coming down with rheumatism."

"Y-s-s," replied Mrs. Bowser without raising her eyes.

"I suppose you are tickled half to death all over that little joke you came on me last night?" he continued.

"Joke? I do not know what you mean."

"I can appreciate fun as well as the next person, but it mustn't be carried too far—not too far, Mrs. Bowser. I went down to the club last night for the first time in three months. You were put out at my going. I didn't get home until half-past 10 o'clock, and as—"

"It was exactly 1 o'clock, Mr. Bowser."

"Never! I looked at my watch as I opened the front door. As I was say-

"Yes; your condition last night accounts for your depressed spirits today. It is not going to storm, Mr. Bowser. The predictions are for clear weather for the next three or four days to come."

My condition last night? By the great horn spoon, but you must have lost your senses. Do you mean to say that I came home drunk?"

"No, not exactly drunk. I believe you men folks use a term called swizzled, don't you? You were not drunk, but swizzled. I had to help you upstairs. I started to undress you, but you cried out, 'G'way f'm me or I'll knocker blamed head off!' And I went away."

"Wo-woman, you are crazy!" gasped Mr. Bowser, who was so weak in the knees that he had to sit down.

"You did manage to get your coat off, I believe," she placidly continued, "but that tired you out, and when you awoke this morning you were surprised to find that you had slept in your hat and shoes and most of your clothing."

"I—I slept in my hat, did I?" murmured Mr. Bowser.

"Yes, and several times before morning you also talked through your hat. I believe you men folks make use of such expression, don't you? When you awoke and realized the situation you thought I had been trying to be funny."

"Mrs. Bowser, you—you didn't get a telegram that your mother was dead?"

"Oh, no! Mother is enjoying splendid health. Nothing has happened to suddenly dethrone my reason, Mr. Bowser."

"But you are a great hand to dream vivid dreams. Your dreams are sometimes so realistic that you scream out and wake me up."

"Yes, I know, but I don't get out of bed and go downstairs and find you on the steps. It doesn't take me twenty minutes to get you upstairs, and you don't kick over chairs and yell out that you can lick the whole police force. It is no use to deny facts, Mr. Bowser. You say it was half past 10 o'clock?"

"I'll stake my life on it!"

"And yet I looked at your watch, and it had stopped at 9:40."

Mr. Bowser simply sat and glared at her with open mouth.

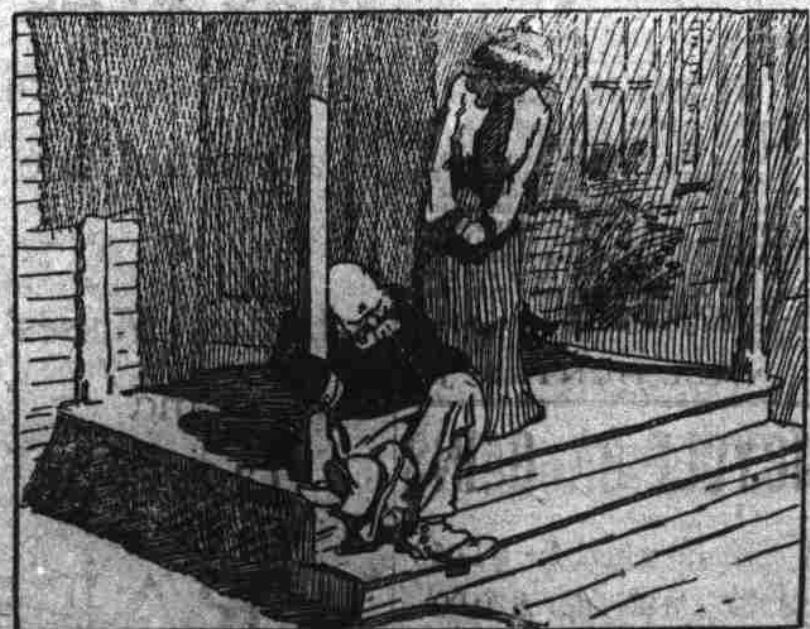
"I'm not complaining," she quietly continued. "It isn't such a dreadful thing for a husband to go to a club and come home swizzled and go to bed with his clothes on. I expect that nine out of ten do it; only they shouldn't get up next morning and lay it all on their wives, you know."

There was silence for the next two minutes—silence so thick that it could have been sliced off like cold ham. Then Mr. Bowser resumed his dressing and said:

"I am charged with having come home in an inebriated condition last night. That charge is made by my wife. I do not know what her object is, but—"

"We might call it rheumatism," interrupted Mrs. Bowser. "Rheumatism does act that way sometimes, doesn't it?"

"Woman, you have reached the limit—the dead line! For your sake I have borne much. Hoping that you would



"YOU WERE SITTING ON THE STEPS WITH YOUR ARM AROUND ONE OF THE POSTS."

ing, the result was that I slept unusually sound, and you took advantage of the circumstance to indulge in some funny business."

"Mr. Bowser, when I heard you fall against the front door the bells were just striking 1."

"What! What! I fall against the front door?"

"You did, and when I went down you were sitting on the steps with your arm around one of the posts. I had considerable trouble to induce you to come in."

"Mrs. Bowser, have you gone crazy?" shouted Mr. Bowser as he stood up and gnawed and swallowed and turned red and glared at her.

"No, dear."

"Then you intend to insult me if I come home at 1 o'clock and fall against the door and you found me hugging the railing and I had to be coaxed into the house, the inference is plain."

in time settle down into a loving, sensible wife. I have put up and put down and exercised the patience of a saint. This ends it!"

"Your lawyer will see me some time during the day, I suppose?" queried Mrs. Bowser as he started to go downstairs.

"He will; he will! He will be instructed to arrange everything as amicably as possible!"

At the breakfast table, however, Mr. Bowser made a lightning change and suddenly became very jolly, and as he finished the meal he pulled out the family pocketbook and said:

"Mrs. Bowser, you've been cut rather short for the last two or three weeks, and you'd better take this twenty out of even you up. I'll get tickets for the theatre tonight, and tomorrow you'd better go down to the cloak sale and see what you can find to suit you."

M. QUAIN.

The Fastidious Man And the Waiter

"I was much amused the other day," said the man with the raveled cigar, "by a conversation that took place in a certain little cafe downtown between a fastidious patron and the waiter assigned to the task of serving him."

"As I was sitting near the fastidious patron I could not fail to overhear his orders, the exactitude of which were most edifying. I saw that the waiter had, as I had, too, immediately sized up the man. He had a nasty, irritating little cough, and he sipped ice water while giving his order. The conversation ran about this way:

"Bring me a pot of coffee," said the finicky customer, "a pot, mind you, not a cup of coffee, but a pot of it. And it must be hot—hot and strong. Don't forget that. Also a tenderloin steak, rare. Please remember that, waiter. And don't have any fat on it. I can't bear the sight of fat in the morning."

"Very well, sir," said the waiter politely; "no fat."

"And bring me some dry toast; hot, remember—hot toast—and leave it made of stale bread. And see that it is toasted outside and not soggy within. I hate soggy toast. Please bear that in mind."

"Very good, sir," replied the waiter; "not soggy within."

"Also some sliced tomatoes," continued the man. "And take the ice from them and drain them. I want my tomatoes dry; understand, dry, not wet! Don't forget!"

"Yes, sir," responded the waiter; "tomatoes must be dry."

"And now let's see, let's see. Oh, yes. Bring me some fried eggs. Be sure that they are perfectly fresh—perfectly fresh. And I desire them fried on one side only. You won't forget that!"

"Oh, no, sir," ejaculated the waiter; "I'll not forget. And which side, sir?"

—New York Times.

The Sarcastic Father.

Old Attorney—Another blunder! I am almost discouraged with you. There is but twice a day that I feel you to justify the term "rising young attorney."

Old Attorney's Son—And what is that?

Old Attorney—When you're coming up in the elevator, morning and noon.—Baltimore American.



All the Better For Her.

Fweddle—I told Kitzie Kicker that the gov'ner was aw'fully mad because I had no bwains.

Aigle—And what did she say, deah boy?

Fweddle—She said she'd be aw'fully mad if I had.

A Harrowing Memory.

It was at a funeral, and a somewhat lachrymose old minister was officiating.

Referring to his long acquaintance with the deceased, he said:

"Ah, brothers and sisters, many a time have I dandled this corpse on my knee!"—Lippincott's.

His Preference.

He—Life is simply one grand chase. If you are not among the pursuers you must be one of the pursued.

She—Will you run with the hounds or fly with the deer?

He—I will fly with you, dear, if you please.—Kansas City Journal.

Thanks Well of Himself.

"Isn't it strange," remarked Mrs. Billings to her husband, "that I can never get a good bargain in shoes?"

"You did once," said her husband.

"When was that?"

"When you got me."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Self Control.

"Have you ever shed real tears while acting?" asked the inquisitive girl.

"No," answered Mr. Stormington Barnes. "I have felt it sometimes, but I make it a rule never to let my box office cares intrude in my art."—Washington Star.

A Sort of a Twister.

Coifax—And so you think she was glad to see you?

Dunley—Oh, yes. Almost the first thing she said was that she wished she had known I was coming.—Boston Transcript.

The Unassuming Barber.

Lawson—What did the convention of barbers say when you addressed them?

Dawson—Why, do you know, I hadn't been talking three minutes before they all began shouting, "Next!"—Somerville Journal.

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