

WHERE THERE'S A WILL

MARY ROBERTS RINEHART

AUTHOR OF *The Circular Staircase, The Man in Lower Ten, When a Man Marries*
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SYNOPSIS.

Minnie, spring-house girl at Hope sanatorium, tells the story. It opens with the arrival of Miss Patty Jennings, who is reported to be engaged to marry a prince, and the death of the old doctor who owns the sanatorium. The estate is left to a scapergo grandson, Dicky Carter, who must appear on a certain date and run the sanatorium successfully for two months or forfeit the inheritance. A case of mumps delays Dick's arrival. Mr. Thoburn is hetering about in hopes of securing the place for a summer hotel. Pierce, a college man in hard luck, is prevailed upon by Van Alstyne, Dick's brother-in-law, to impersonate the missing heir and take charge of the sanatorium until Carter arrives. Dick, who has eloped with Patty's younger sister, Dorothy, gives, and the couple go into hiding in the old shelter house. Fearing to face Dorothy's father, who is at the sanatorium, Dick arranges with Pierce to continue in the management of the property. Julia Summers, leading lady of Pierce's stranded theatrical company, arrives. She is suing Dicky for breach of promise. The prince, under the incognito of Oskar von Inwald, arrives at the sanatorium. Barnes, character man with Pierce's show and a graduate M. D., takes the place of sanatorium physician. Pierce, who is very much interested in Patty, shows a strong dislike for Inwald. Dick becomes peevish over the independent manner in which Pierce is running the sanatorium. Miss Summers discovers that the Dicky Carter she is seeking is the owner of the sanatorium. Dick, in attempting to steal his love letters from Miss Summers, breaks into the wrong room and gets the wrong letters. Miss Summers' dog has been converted from overeating. The patients believe it has been poisoned by the doctor.

with my knife. Why don't you wear overboots?"
"I never have a cold!" she retorted.
"Why, Minnie, is that you?"
"Quick," I panted. "Thoburn and Mr. von Inwald coming—basket—lantern—over the shelter-house!"
"Great Scott!" Mr. Pierce said. "Here, you girls crawl over the fence; you'll be hidden there. I'll run back and warn them."
The lantern was swinging again. Mr. Thoburn's grumbling came to us through the snow.
"I can't climb the fence!" Miss Patty said pitifully. But Mr. Pierce had gone.
I reached my basket through the bars and climbed the fence in a hurry. Miss Patty had got almost to the top and was standing there on one snow-covered rail, staring across at me through the darkness.
"I can't, Minnie," she whispered hopelessly. "I never could climb a fence, and in this skirt—"
"Quick!" I said in a low tone. The lantern was very close. "Put your leg over."
She did, and sat there looking down at me like a scared baby.
"Now the other."
I put them both over I'll fall."
"Hurry!"
With a little grunt she put the other foot over, sat a minute with agony in her face and her arms out, then she slid off with a squeal and brought up in a sitting position inside the fence corner. I dropped beside her.
"What was that noise?" said Thoburn, almost upon us. "Something's moving inside that fence corner."
"It's them deers," Mike's voice this time. We could make out the three figures. "Darned nuisance, them deers is. They'd have been shot long ago if the springhouse girl hadn't objected. She thinks she's the whole cheese around here."
"Set it down again," Mr. von Inwald panted. We heard the rattle of bottles as they put down the basket, and the next instant Thoburn's fat hand was resting on the rail of the fence over our heads. I could feel Miss Patty trembling beside me.
But he didn't look over. He stood there resting, breathing hard, and swearing at the weather, while Mike waited, in silent agony, and the von Inwald cursed in German.
After my heart had been beating in my ears for about three years the fat hand moved, and I heard the rattle of glass again and Thoburn's groans as he bent over his half of the load.
"Come on," he said, and the others grunted and started on.
When they had disappeared in the snow we got out of our cramped position and prepared to scurry home. I climbed the fence and looked after them. "Humph!" I said, "I guess that basket isn't for the hungry poor. I'd give a good bit to know—" Then I turned and looked for Miss Patty. She was flat on the snow, crawling between the two lower rails of the fence.
"Have you no shame?" I demanded. She looked up at me with her head and half her long sealskin coat through the fence.
"None," she said pitifully. "Minnie, I'm stuck perfectly tight!"
"You ought to be left as you are," I said, jerking at her, "for people go come"—jerk—"tomorrow to look at"—jerk. She came through at that, and we lay together in the snow and like to burst a rib laughing.
"You'll never be a princess, Miss Patty," I declared. "You're too lowly minded."
She sat up, suddenly and straightened her sealskin cap on her head.
"I wish," she said unpleasantly, "I wish you wouldn't always drag in disagreeable things, Minnie!"
And she was sulky all the way to the house.
Miss Summers came to my room that night as I was putting my hot-water bottle to bed, in a baby-blue silk wrapper with a band of fur around the low neck—Miss Summers, of course, not the hot-water bottle.
"Well!" she said, sitting down on the foot of the bed and staring at me. "Well, young woman, for a person who has never been farther away than Finleyville you do pretty well!"
"Do what?" I asked, with the covers up to my chin.
"Do what, Miss Innocence!" she said mockingly. "You're the only red-haired woman I ever saw who didn't look as sophisticated as the devil. I'll tell you one thing, though." She reached down into the pocket of her dressing-gown and brought up a cigarette and a match. "You never had me fooled for a minute!" She looked at me over the match.
I lay and stared back.
"And another thing," she said. "I never had any real intention of marrying Dicky Carter and raising a baby sanatorium. I wouldn't have the face to ask Arabella to live here."
"I'm glad you feel that way, Miss Summers," I said. "I've gone through a lot; I'm an old woman in the last two weeks. My hair's falling from its having to stand up on end half the time."
She leaned over and put her cigar-

ette on the back of my celluloid mirror, and then suddenly she threw back her head and laughed.
"Minnie!" she said, between fits. "Minnie! As long as I live I'll never forget that wretched boy's face! And the sand boxes! And the blankets over the windows! And the tarpaulin over the rafters! And Mr. Van Alstyne sitting on the lawnmower! I'd rather have had my minute in that doorway than fifty thousand dollars!"
"If you had had to carry out all those things—" I began, but she checked me.
"Listen!" she said. "Somebody with brains has got to take you young people in hand. You're not able to look after yourselves. I'm fond of Alan Pierce, for one thing, and I don't care to see a sanatorium that might have been the child of my solicitude kidnaped and reared as a summer hotel by Papa Thoburn. A good fat man is very, very good, Minnie, but when he is bad he is horrid."
"It's too late," I objected feebly. "He can't get it now."
"Can't he?" She got up and yawned, stretching. "Well, I'll lay you ten to one that if we don't get busy he'll have the house empty in thirty-six hours."
"I don't know," I said. "I don't know of Thoburn's scheme, and it turned me cold."
Doctor Barnes came to me at the news stand the next morning before gymnasium.
"Well," he said, "you look as busy as a dog with fleas. Have you heard the glad tidings?"
"What?" I asked without much spirit. "I've heard considerable tidings lately, and not much of it has cheered me up any."
He leaned over and ran his fingers up through his hair.
"You know, Miss Minnie," he said, "somebody ought kindly to kill our friend Thoburn, or he'll come to a bad end."
"Shall I do it, or will you?" I said, filling up the chewing gum jar. (Mr. Pierce had taken away the candy case.)
Doctor Barnes glanced around to see if there was anyone near, and leaned farther over.
"The cupboard isn't empty now!" he said. "Not for nothing did I spend part of the night in the Dicky-bird's nest! What do you think is in the cupboard?"
"I know about it," I said shortly. "Liquor—in a case labeled 'Books-breakable—'"
"Almost a goal. But not only liquors, my little friend, Champagne—cases of it—caviar, canned grouse with truffles, lobster, cheese, fine cigars, everything you could think of, exotic, exotic and narcotic. An orgy in cans and bottles, a bacchanalian revel; a cupboard full of indigestion, joy, forgetfulness and katesenjammer. Oh, my suffering palate, to have to leave it all without one sniff, one sip, one nibble!"
"He's wasting his money," I said. "They're all crazy about the simple life."
He looked around and, seeing no one in the lobby, reached over and took one of my hands.
"Strange," he said, looking at it. "No wags, and yet it's been an amphibious little creature most of its life. My dear girl, our friend Thoburn is a rascal, but he is also a student of mankind and a philosopher. Gee," he said, "think of a woman fighting her way alone through the world with a bit of a fat like that!"
I jerked my hand away.
"It's like this, my dear," he said. "Human nature's a curious thing. It's human nature, for instance, for me to be crazy about you, when you're as hands-off as a curly porcupine. And it's human nature, by the same token, to like to be bullied, especially about health, and to respect and admire the fellow who does the bullying. That's why we were crazy about Roosevelt, and that's why Pierce is trailing his kingly robes over them while they lie on their faces and eat dirt—and stewed fruit."
He reached for my hand again, but I put it behind me.
"But alas," he said, "there is another side to the human nature, and our friend Thoburn has not kept a summer hotel for nothing. It is notorious, my dear, especially as to stomach. You may feel 'em prunes and whole-wheat bread and apple sauce, and after a while they'll forget the fat days, and remember only the lean and hungry ones. But let some student of human nature at the proper moment introduce just one fat day, one feast, one revel—"
"Talk English," I said sharply.
"Don't break in on my flights of fancy," he objected. "If you want the truth, Thoburn is going to have a party—a forbidden feast. He's going to rouse again the sleeping dogs of appetite, and send them ravening back to the Plaza, to Sherry's and Del's and the little Italian restaurants on Sixth avenue. He's going to take them upon a high mountain and show them the wine and softness of the earth, and then ask them if they're

going to be bullied into eating boiled beef and cabbage."
"Then I don't care how soon he does it," I said despondently. "I'd rather die quickly than by inches."
"Die!" he said. "Not a bit of it. Remember, our friend Pierce is also a student of human nature. He's thinking it out now in the cold plunge, and I miss my guess if Thoburn's skyrocket hasn't got a stick that'll come back and hit him on the head."
He had been playing with one of the chewing gum jars, and when he had gone I shoved it back into its place. It was by the merest chance that I glanced at it, and I saw that he had slipped a small white box inside. On the lid was written "For a good girl," and inside lay the red puffs from Mrs. Yost's window down in Finleyville. Just under them was an envelope. I could scarcely see to open it.
"Dearest Minnie," the note inside said, "I had them matched to my watch, and I think they'll match yours. And since, in the words of the great Herbert Spencer, things that

put a small package on the counter, and stared at me over it. "There's treachery here, black treachery." She pointed one long thin forefinger at the bundle.
"What is it? A bomb?" I asked, stepping back. More than once it had occurred to me that having royalty around sometimes meant dynamite. Miss Cobb showed her teeth.
"Yes, a bomb," she said. "Minnie, last night, when the Summers woman was out, goodness knows where, Blanche Moody and I went through her room. We did not find my precious missives from Mr. Jones, but we did find these, Minnie, tied around with a pink stocking. Minnie, I have felt it all along. Mr. Oskar von Inwald is the prince himself."
"No!"
"Yes. And more than that, he is making desperate love to Miss Summers. Three of those letters were written in one day! Why, even Mr. Jones—"
"The wretch!" I cried. I was suddenly savage. Miss Cobb was reaching out for the bundle. I snatched it from her.
"Give me those letters instantly," she cried shrilly. But I marched from behind the counter and over to the

"I was looking for you," he said to her. "The bishop has just told me. There are no obstacles now."
"None," she said, looking up at him with wretchedness in her eyes, if he had only seen. "I am very happy."
"She was just saying," I said bitterly, "how grateful she was to both of us."
"I don't understand."
"It is not hard to understand," she said, smiling. I wanted to slap her. "Father was unreasonable because he was ill. You have made him well. I can never thank you enough."
But she rather overdid the joy part of it, and he leaned over and looked in her face.
"I think I'm stupid," he said. "I know I'm unhappy. But isn't that what I was to do—to make them well if I could?"
"How could anybody know—" she began angrily, and then stopped. "You have done even more," she said sweetly. "You've turned them into cherubs and seraphims. Butter wouldn't melt in their mouths."
He smiled.
"My amiability must be the reason you dislike me," he suggested. They had both forgotten me.
"Do I dislike you?" she asked, raising her eyes to mine.
"I thought about it, but I'm sure I don't." She didn't look at him, she looked at me. She knew I knew she lied.
His smile faded.
"Well," he said, "speaking of disliking amiability, you don't hate yourself, I'm sure."
"You are wrong," she retorted. "I loathe myself." And she walked to the window. He took a step or two after her.
"Why do it at all?" he asked in a low tone. "You don't love him—and can't. And if it isn't love—" He remembered me suddenly and stopped.
"Please go on," she said sweetly from the window. "Do not mind Minnie. She is my conscience anyhow. She is always scolding me; you might both scold in chorus."
"I wouldn't presume to scold."
"Then give me a little advice and look superior and righteous. I'm accustomed to that also."
"As long as you are in this mood, I can't give you anything but a very good day," he said angrily, and went toward the door. But when he had almost reached it he turned.
"I will say this," he said, "you have known for three days that Mr. Thoburn was going to have a supper tonight, and you didn't let us know. You must have known his purpose."
I guess I was as surprised as she was. I'd never suspected she knew.
She looked at him over her shoulder.
"Why shouldn't he have a supper?" she demanded angrily. "I'm starving—we're all starving for decent food. I'm kept here against my will. Why shouldn't I have one respectable meal? You with your wretched stewed fruits and whole-wheat bread! Ugh!"
"I'm sorry, Thoburn's idea, of course, is to make the guests discontented, so they will leave."
"Oh!" she said. She hadn't thought of that, and she laughed. "At least," she said, "you must give me credit for

CHAPTER XIII.—Continued.
I did my best to leave them alone on the way back, but Miss Patty stuck close to my heels. It was snowing, and the going was slow. For the first five minutes she only spoke once.
"And so Miss Summers and Dicky Carter are old friends!"
"It appears so," Mr. Pierce said.
"She's rather magnanimous, under the circumstances," Miss Patty remarked demurely.
"Under what circumstances?"
I heard her laugh a little, behind me.
"Never mind," she said. "You needn't tell me anything you don't care to. But what a stew you must all have been in!"
There was a minute's silence behind me, and then Mr. Pierce laughed too.
"Stew!" he said. "For the last few days I've been either paralyzed with fright or electrified into wild bursts of monomania. And I'm not naturally a liar."
"Really?" she retorted. "What an actor you are!"
They laughed together at that, and I gained a little on them. At the corner where the path skirted the deer park and turned toward the house I lost them altogether and I floundered on alone. But I had not gone twenty feet when I stopped suddenly. About fifty yards ahead a lantern was coming toward me through the snow, and I could hear a man's voice, breathless and gasping.
"Set it down," it said. "The damned thing must be filled with lead." It was like Thoburn.
The snow, another voice retorted, "Mr. von Inwald's." "I told you to take two trips."
Thoburn retorted, breathing hard. "Stay up all night to get

put them both over I'll fall."
"Hurry!"
With a little grunt she put the other foot over, sat a minute with agony in her face and her arms out, then she slid off with a squeal and brought up in a sitting position inside the fence corner. I dropped beside her.
"What was that noise?" said Thoburn, almost upon us. "Something's moving inside that fence corner."
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Pierce. They had stopped in the shelter of the fence corner and were was on his knees in front of me. I was so astounded that I forgot the moment what had brought me here.
"A second," he was saying. "It's a cold. Get up off your knees, you'll freeze."
"I had a cold. I'll scrape it off

put them both over I'll fall."
"Hurry!"
With a little grunt she put the other foot over, sat a minute with agony in her face and her arms out, then she slid off with a squeal and brought up in a sitting position inside the fence corner. I dropped beside her.
"What was that noise?" said Thoburn, almost upon us. "Something's moving inside that fence corner."
"It's them deers," Mike's voice this time. We could make out the three figures. "Darned nuisance, them deers is. They'd have been shot long ago if the springhouse girl hadn't objected. She thinks she's the whole cheese around here."
"Set it down again," Mr. von Inwald panted. We heard the rattle of bottles as they put down the basket, and the next instant Thoburn's fat hand was resting on the rail of the fence over our heads. I could feel Miss Patty trembling beside me.
But he didn't look over. He stood there resting, breathing hard, and swearing at the weather, while Mike waited, in silent agony, and the von Inwald cursed in German.
After my heart had been beating in my ears for about three years the fat hand moved, and I heard the rattle of glass again and Thoburn's groans as he bent over his half of the load.
"Come on," he said, and the others grunted and started on.
When they had disappeared in the snow we got out of our cramped position and prepared to scurry home. I climbed the fence and looked after them. "Humph!" I said, "I guess that basket isn't for the hungry poor. I'd give a good bit to know—" Then I turned and looked for Miss Patty. She was flat on the snow, crawling between the two lower rails of the fence.
"Have you no shame?" I demanded. She looked up at me with her head and half her long sealskin coat through the fence.
"None," she said pitifully. "Minnie, I'm stuck perfectly tight!"
"You ought to be left as you are," I said, jerking at her, "for people go come"—jerk—"tomorrow to look at"—jerk. She came through at that, and we lay together in the snow and like to burst a rib laughing.
"You'll never be a princess, Miss Patty," I declared. "You're too lowly minded."
She sat up, suddenly and straightened her sealskin cap on her head.
"I wish," she said unpleasantly, "I wish you wouldn't always drag in disagreeable things, Minnie!"
And she was sulky all the way to the house.
Miss Summers came to my room that night as I was putting my hot-water bottle to bed, in a baby-blue silk wrapper with a band of fur around the low neck—Miss Summers, of course, not the hot-water bottle.
"Well!" she said, sitting down on the foot of the bed and staring at me. "Well, young woman, for a person who has never been farther away than Finleyville you do pretty well!"
"Do what?" I asked, with the covers up to my chin.
"Do what, Miss Innocence!" she said mockingly. "You're the only red-haired woman I ever saw who didn't look as sophisticated as the devil. I'll tell you one thing, though." She reached down into the pocket of her dressing-gown and brought up a cigarette and a match. "You never had me fooled for a minute!" She looked at me over the match.
I lay and stared back.
"And another thing," she said. "I never had any real intention of marrying Dicky Carter and raising a baby sanatorium. I wouldn't have the face to ask Arabella to live here."
"I'm glad you feel that way, Miss Summers," I said. "I've gone through a lot; I'm an old woman in the last two weeks. My hair's falling from its having to stand up on end half the time."
She leaned over and put her cigar-

ette on the back of my celluloid mirror, and then suddenly she threw back her head and laughed.
"Minnie!" she said, between fits. "Minnie! As long as I live I'll never forget that wretched boy's face! And the sand boxes! And the blankets over the windows! And the tarpaulin over the rafters! And Mr. Van Alstyne sitting on the lawnmower! I'd rather have had my minute in that doorway than fifty thousand dollars!"
"If you had had to carry out all those things—" I began, but she checked me.
"Listen!" she said. "Somebody with brains has got to take you young people in hand. You're not able to look after yourselves. I'm fond of Alan Pierce, for one thing, and I don't care to see a sanatorium that might have been the child of my solicitude kidnaped and reared as a summer hotel by Papa Thoburn. A good fat man is very, very good, Minnie, but when he is bad he is horrid."
"It's too late," I objected feebly. "He can't get it now."
"Can't he?" She got up and yawned, stretching. "Well, I'll lay you ten to one that if we don't get busy he'll have the house empty in thirty-six hours."
"I don't know," I said. "I don't know of Thoburn's scheme, and it turned me cold."
Doctor Barnes came to me at the news stand the next morning before gymnasium.
"Well," he said, "you look as busy as a dog with fleas. Have you heard the glad tidings?"
"What?" I asked without much spirit. "I've heard considerable tidings lately, and not much of it has cheered me up any."
He leaned over and ran his fingers up through his hair.
"You know, Miss Minnie," he said, "somebody ought kindly to kill our friend Thoburn, or he'll come to a bad end."
"Shall I do it, or will you?" I said, filling up the chewing gum jar. (Mr. Pierce had taken away the candy case.)
Doctor Barnes glanced around to see if there was anyone near, and leaned farther over.
"The cupboard isn't empty now!" he said. "Not for nothing did I spend part of the night in the Dicky-bird's nest! What do you think is in the cupboard?"
"I know about it," I said shortly. "Liquor—in a case labeled 'Books-breakable—'"
"Almost a goal. But not only liquors, my little friend, Champagne—cases of it—caviar, canned grouse with truffles, lobster, cheese, fine cigars, everything you could think of, exotic, exotic and narcotic. An orgy in cans and bottles, a bacchanalian revel; a cupboard full of indigestion, joy, forgetfulness and katesenjammer. Oh, my suffering palate, to have to leave it all without one sniff, one sip, one nibble!"
"He's wasting his money," I said. "They're all crazy about the simple life."
He looked around and, seeing no one in the lobby, reached over and took one of my hands.
"Strange," he said, looking at it. "No wags, and yet it's been an amphibious little creature most of its life. My dear girl, our friend Thoburn is a rascal, but he is also a student of mankind and a philosopher. Gee," he said, "think of a woman fighting her way alone through the world with a bit of a fat like that!"
I jerked my hand away.
"It's like this, my dear," he said. "Human nature's a curious thing. It's human nature, for instance, for me to be crazy about you, when you're as hands-off as a curly porcupine. And it's human nature, by the same token, to like to be bullied, especially about health, and to respect and admire the fellow who does the bullying. That's why we were crazy about Roosevelt, and that's why Pierce is trailing his kingly robes over them while they lie on their faces and eat dirt—and stewed fruit."
He reached for my hand again, but I put it behind me.
"But alas," he said, "there is another side to the human nature, and our friend Thoburn has not kept a summer hotel for nothing. It is notorious, my dear, especially as to stomach. You may feel 'em prunes and whole-wheat bread and apple sauce, and after a while they'll forget the fat days, and remember only the lean and hungry ones. But let some student of human nature at the proper moment introduce just one fat day, one feast, one revel—"
"Talk English," I said sharply.
"Don't break in on my flights of fancy," he objected. "If you want the truth, Thoburn is going to have a party—a forbidden feast. He's going to rouse again the sleeping dogs of appetite, and send them ravening back to the Plaza, to Sherry's and Del's and the little Italian restaurants on Sixth avenue. He's going to take them upon a high mountain and show them the wine and softness of the earth, and then ask them if they're

going to be bullied into eating boiled beef and cabbage."
"Then I don't care how soon he does it," I said despondently. "I'd rather die quickly than by inches."
"Die!" he said. "Not a bit of it. Remember, our friend Pierce is also a student of human nature. He's thinking it out now in the cold plunge, and I miss my guess if Thoburn's skyrocket hasn't got a stick that'll come back and hit him on the head."
He had been playing with one of the chewing gum jars, and when he had gone I shoved it back into its place. It was by the merest chance that I glanced at it, and I saw that he had slipped a small white box inside. On the lid was written "For a good girl," and inside lay the red puffs from Mrs. Yost's window down in Finleyville. Just under them was an envelope. I could scarcely see to open it.
"Dearest Minnie," the note inside said, "I had them matched to my watch, and I think they'll match yours. And since, in the words of the great Herbert Spencer, things that

put a small package on the counter, and stared at me over it. "There's treachery here, black treachery." She pointed one long thin forefinger at the bundle.
"What is it? A bomb?" I asked, stepping back. More than once it had occurred to me that having royalty around sometimes meant dynamite. Miss Cobb showed her teeth.
"Yes, a bomb," she said. "Minnie, last night, when the Summers woman was out, goodness knows where, Blanche Moody and I went through her room. We did not find my precious missives from Mr. Jones, but we did find these, Minnie, tied around with a pink stocking. Minnie, I have felt it all along. Mr. Oskar von Inwald is the prince himself."
"No!"
"Yes. And more than that, he is making desperate love to Miss Summers. Three of those letters were written in one day! Why, even Mr. Jones—"
"The wretch!" I cried. I was suddenly savage. Miss Cobb was reaching out for the bundle. I snatched it from her.
"Give me those letters instantly," she cried shrilly. But I marched from behind the counter and over to the

"I was looking for you," he said to her. "The bishop has just told me. There are no obstacles now."
"None," she said, looking up at him with wretchedness in her eyes, if he had only seen. "I am very happy."
"She was just saying," I said bitterly, "how grateful she was to both of us."
"I don't understand."
"It is not hard to understand," she said, smiling. I wanted to slap her. "Father was unreasonable because he was ill. You have made him well. I can never thank you enough."
But she rather overdid the joy part of it, and he leaned over and looked in her face.
"I think I'm stupid," he said. "I know I'm unhappy. But isn't that what I was to do—to make them well if I could?"
"How could anybody know—" she began angrily, and then stopped. "You have done even more," she said sweetly. "You've turned them into cherubs and seraphims. Butter wouldn't melt in their mouths."
He smiled.
"My amiability must be the reason you dislike me," he suggested. They had both forgotten me.
"Do I dislike you?" she asked, raising her eyes to mine.
"I thought about it, but I'm sure I don't." She didn't look at him, she looked at me. She knew I knew she lied.
His smile faded.
"Well," he said, "speaking of disliking amiability, you don't hate yourself, I'm sure."
"You are wrong," she retorted. "I loathe myself." And she walked to the window. He took a step or two after her.
"Why do it at all?" he asked in a low tone. "You don't love him—and can't. And if it isn't love—" He remembered me suddenly and stopped.
"Please go on," she said sweetly from the window. "Do not mind Minnie. She is my conscience anyhow. She is always scolding me; you might both scold in chorus."
"I wouldn't presume to scold."
"Then give me a little advice and look superior and righteous. I'm accustomed to that also."
"As long as you are in this mood, I can't give you anything but a very good day," he said angrily, and went toward the door. But when he had almost reached it he turned.
"I will say this," he said, "you have known for three days that Mr. Thoburn was going to have a supper tonight, and you didn't let us know. You must have known his purpose."
I guess I was as surprised as she was. I'd never suspected she knew.
She looked at him over her shoulder.
"Why shouldn't he have a supper?" she demanded angrily. "I'm starving—we're all starving for decent food. I'm kept here against my will. Why shouldn't I have one respectable meal? You with your wretched stewed fruits and whole-wheat bread! Ugh!"
"I'm sorry, Thoburn's idea, of course, is to make the guests discontented, so they will leave."
"Oh!" she said. She hadn't thought of that, and she laughed. "At least," she said, "you must give me credit for



"Last Call to the Dining Car, Minnie."



"I Stood in Front of Her."

not trying to spoil Dick and Dolly's chance here."
"We are going to allow the party to go on," he said, stiff and uncompromising. It would have been better if he'd accepted her bit of apology.
"How kind of you! I dare say he would have it, anyhow." She was sarcastic again.
"Probably.