

All For Fifty Cents

By RITA KELLEY

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He was a squat china piece with mercenary eye-holes and a slit down his back. It was a standing joke at Miss Folke's boarding "home" that when any one dropped a spot on the tablecloth he had to drop a coin into the pig's hungry sides. Once a week the porker was slaughtered and the proceeds used for flowers.

Miss Mattie was dressing for a walk one morning when the peaked landlady who quarreled with all her trades people came to the door, pig in hand.

"Miss Mattie," she said, "would you like to buy some flowers for the table?"

"Delighted!" Miss Mattie finished, pinning a huge bunch of violets on her gray coat. "What kind shall I get?"

"Well"—Miss Folke sat down on the edge of the divan and began shaking the pig—"there's carnations and roses, and they usually throw in some ferns or leaves. Just do as you please about it. I thought there was more money in here." She thumped the pig's head on her knee until the last coin fell out.

"Only 65 cents!" Miss Folke had a way of making people conscious of their shortcomings. The pig looked glum.

"But aren't you glad you didn't get your tablecloth all spotted up?"

"Oh, that isn't it. But we shall have to save some money for Easter Sunday, and you can get so few flowers for 50 cents." Miss Folke had a grievance against her trades people, and they retaliated by invariably giving her short measure.

"Well"—she stacked up a half dollar in pennies and nickels—"I guess that will have to do."

"How many ought I to get for 50 cents?"

"They'll turn up their noses at you at a florist's and give you two or three stale flowers that will all withered the second day. You'd better go to the street booth over by the 'L' station and tell them if they give you good flowers you'll come again."

"Stick up their noses at me!" said Miss Mattie, ignoring Miss Folke's suggestion. "Don't ever worry, Miss Folke. I'll get some flowers that will make you gasp with surprise and pleasure. I'd just like to see them stick up their noses at me," she threatened as she paused to smile bewilderingly at Miss Folke before closing the outside door.

She passed several exclusive florist's shops before she found one to her satisfaction. It was by far the handsomest of all. Gipping her 50 cents inside her glove, she swept in like a breath and stood in the midst of the most beautiful flowers she had ever seen. A remarkably handsome young man was standing in the rear beside a bank of palms, holding some small.

"Some flowers," she said, smiling and nodding at him.

He looked up surprised. Then, looking at some one behind the palms, he turned, spoke to one of the assistants and came forward eagerly.

"Now, what would you like?" He waved his hand gracefully toward the masses of roses and crimson carnations.

"Oh, beautiful!" breathed Miss Mattie in an ecstasy. "I should like"—she clutched the coins stowed away in her glove and smiled dazlingly—"a flower for a penny."

"What!" For a moment it looked as though the young man was going to prove disagreeable.

Miss Mattie's smile became momentarily more bewitching.

"Yes," she continued, whirling her muff alrily around her hand; "I just slaughtered the boarding house pig, and I want all the nice flowers you can give me for 50 cents. Aren't those lovely!" She pointed to some rare orchids.

The young man was amused. Miss Mattie was good to look at and had an unmistakable air of being accustomed to beautiful things. Yet 50 cents for orchids, which she distinctly seemed to favor! He coughed apologetically.

"Flowers are rather expensive," he ventured.

"Yes, I know," laughed Miss Mattie. "These must be terribly high." She touched the violets on her coat lingeringly. "Think of the money you extort from rich young men. And I've only 50 cents. It was all the pig could spare. We had to save some for Easter, you know, and no one got many spots on the tablecloth this week."

The florist answered her smile.

"The pig gets the money for the spots," she explained.

The young man looked as though he were immensely interested—in the pig.

"What would you like?" he asked again.

"I want just the most nice fresh flowers you can give me for a half dollar. It makes no difference what kind. They told me I couldn't get any for so little money." Miss Mattie smiled. The man bowed low.

"I'll see what I can do for you," he said and strode to the rear of the store.

Miss Mattie watched him admiringly as he stopped to speak to one of the men before he entered the ice room. She had not known such nice young men kept florist's shops. She moved a step or two to the right of the palms in order to see him more distinctly.

He was taking down one crimson carnation after the other, a spray of narcissus, some roses, an orchid. Miss Mattie looked away, afraid to trust her own eyes. He seemed rather an easily embarrassed young man—or was he amused? Miss Mattie did not dare to risk the doubt, for if he saw her observing him he might stop adding to the bunch. Miss Mattie had reasons of

her own for watching the florist as he took down as possible. It seemed in a way, her sphere of influence on the susceptibility of the young man.

When he emerged from the room, Miss Mattie said, "Oh!" Miss Mattie knew how to say it long and expressively.

The young man turned from the desk and looked at her. He flushed over so slightly and smiled.

"All those for 50 cents?" Miss Mattie had her muff under her chin. Her eyes were wide with wonder.

The young man laughed as he glanced from her to some one back of the palms.

"I wouldn't do this for every one, you understand. But I felt sorry for the pig."

"But there are too many. You can't afford to do it." Miss Mattie was refusing to take them from his hands.

His tone was businesslike.

"Yes, I can. The pig may demand some larger orders some day, and we shall be glad to fill them. Merely an advertisement, you know."

"Yes, indeed, we get loads of flowers, and this is the very prettiest shop on the street." She smiled. "Are you sure these are fresh? Because if they are I'm coming again Saturday."

His face wore a broad smile as he turned after bowing her out and met an irritable chap emerging from behind the palms.

"You're a nice one," complained the chap, "flirting with my lady."

"Jack," innocently, "is she really?"

"Of course. Didn't you see my violets on her coat?"

The young man laughed.

"Just cancel that order for those other flowers for Miss Cromer," he called to one of the men. "And put these down to my account." Then he turned to Jack. "Simpleton!" he observed.

"Why didn't you get into the game?" Jack shrugged his shoulders.

"You wanted to see what she would do. You don't deserve her, Jack."

"I suppose you think you do, palming yourself off as a florist."

They had passed out into the street and stood looking after the girl with the huge package of flowers. The florist looked squarely into the disagreeable eyes of the man facing him.

"Jealous!" he commented shortly.

"Yes, jealous, if you like. Are you going to be here next Saturday?"

The young man of the flowers brought his gaze back from the girl turning the corner.

"I'll go you even to win her," he said. "And I'll win."

Somewhat Confusing.

A certain member of the house of lords when traveling in Ireland took a fancy to a handsome Connaught lad and engaged him as footman.

"O'Brien," said his lordship to the new servant one morning, "see if your mistress is 'at home' today."

"That her ladyship is, your lordship," was the ready reply of the unsophisticated youth. "Sure, Oj just saw her ladyship go into the drawing room."

"You misunderstand me, O'Brien," said his lordship stiffly. "Go and ask your mistress if she is 'at home' today."

"Sure, now," muttered the puzzled footman as he obeyed. "If his lordship ain't quare! Why, Oj saw her ladyship with my own eyes! And now Oj've got to ask her that same, and she's in the house all the toime."

Then, thrusting his head into the drawing room, he asked, "Are you at home, my lady?"

"No, O'Brien; not today," replied his mistress, and the footman retired slowly in utter bewilderment.

"Well, well!" exclaimed nonplused Pat. "Where does she think she is, poor soul? Sure, it's mad she is, and the master too. More's the pity!"—London Mail.

Breaking It Gently.

The greatest error that a father can make is to omit to note the year that is at the top of the current almanac and to forget that his sons grow older each year. The father who thinks his nineteen-year-old son is still a child is liable to get a shock.

"Beg pardon, father," says the lad who wishes to break the news gently. "but do you mind if I bring a friend in to supper this evening?"

"I'll think it over, my boy."

"For a little music."

"Does your friend sing?"

"Has a beautiful voice," says the lad enthusiastically; "like a nightingale."

"Oh!" with incredulity. "What age?"

"About my own age, father."

"Well, you can bring your friend; but, mind, it's not to be made a precedent. I don't want the house overrun with them. And no staying late."

"She'll go back to her mother's at 10."

"She?"

"It's a young lady I've been fond of for some time, father," blurts out the lad, "and we are going to get married soon!"—London Star.

Vereschagin's War Pictures.

An art critic says of Vereschagin's war pictures: "The greater number of the artist's pictures were extremely poor as art, many of them rising not above peep show value, and not a few are utterly insincere. Vereschagin declared publicly that the chief value of his pictures was their faithfulness to scenes witnessed by himself, yet he depicted in 'Blowing From Guns in British India' respectable Mohammedans being slaughtered by British soldiers in uniforms of today, though nothing of the kind has occurred since the mutiny. He showed the 'Entry of the Prince of Wales' into an Indian city in the blinding sunlight, though the official artist who accompanied the king says that through a delay the entry was accomplished by night. The painter himself admitted to me that the picture of the British soldier left to die and fester alone in the jungle originally represented a Russian soldier, but was altered on account of the anger of the late czar."

To the Victor—The Spoils

By Hubert McBean Johnston

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When I got Phyllis alone in the conservatory I promptly proposed to her again. Fact is I wouldn't have come to the ball at all if it hadn't been that I intended to try again to win her.

"Jack," said Phyllis demurely, "wish you would bring me a drink of water. Dancing always makes me so thirsty."

Phyllis has changed the subject every time just about the same way. I knew there was no use arguing, so I went for the water. Only I brought lemonade instead.

But when a fellow comes back with the lemonade after such an incident as that and finds another chap holding the lady's hand and his other arm hovering suspiciously along the back of the chair I think he should feel jolly well sore. I know I did. As for Joe Haddon, he looked bored when I came in and half swore.

"I beg pardon," said I. "If I'm intruding—"

Phyllis' eyes twinkled, and I knew she was laughing at me.

Just then Dawcy Graham came in.

"This one is ours, Phyllis," said he, holding up his card; "the third waitz, you know."

"Thank you, Jack," said Phyllis as she drank the lemonade.

I went down to the smoking room for a cigarette to steady my nerves. I don't know and for that matter don't care what Joe did.

However, I had the better of him, for I took Phyllis into supper.

"Accept him, Phyllis," I growled surlily.

"Not yet," said Phyllis.

"Going to?" I questioned in the same tone.

Phyllis' brows met in a perplexed frown. She appeared to be pondering the problem very deeply.

"I've thought of a way to settle it between you," she condescended to reply at length. "Tomorrow morning I'm going up to Grovehurst Hall, and you and Joe are to run a race up there in your autos. The one who gets there first—will win the race," finished Phyllis lamely.

I knew what that meant. If Haddon's touring car wouldn't be able to beat my dinky little runabout it would be because he had a breakdown. I suppose I must have looked what I thought, for Phyllis looked at me inquiringly.

"Well," she questioned primly, "what is it now? Don't you think it is worth your while to enter that race?"

"The prize is worth it, Phyllis," said I, looking straight into her eyes. Phyllis blushed the sweetest rosy red. "But do you think the conditions are exactly fair?"

Phyllis' eyes twinkled.

"No," she said, "I don't; but, you know, beggars can't be choosers."

That settled it. I would make the run anyhow.

"Will there be a booby prize awarded?" I asked.

Phyllis shook her head. I was seized with a bright idea.

"You said you were going over yourself," I ventured. "I ought at least to have a consolation prize. Will you make the trip with me?"

Phyllis looked grave.

"I'm afraid it will look like favoritism," said Phyllis, "but I guess I can."

"Thanks," I said. "With a good mascot I'll stand a better show."

"Am I a good mascot?" asked Phyllis.

"May I never have a better!" I replied devoutly. "I'm willing to take chances on you for a good deal more than a motor race."

Phyllis liked that. Really, I feel as if I were quite clever at times. Then she took the wind all out of me again.

"The race will decide that," said she briefly.

If the way I fixed that runabout up for the run had anything to do with it I felt sure I ought to stand a chance at least. I got a repair man to look it over, and then after he was done I went over it myself and tapped every nut and bolt. As I was coming home I saw Joe Haddon driving down the river road.

"All ready?" said Phyllis as the clock struck 9 the next morning. And in a moment we had started the twenty miles. We hustled down the road like a monkey that had dropped its tail through the slot and twisted it around a trolley cable.

The cool November wind sent a great color up into Phyllis' cheeks, and a luxuriant golden lock fell loose and swept across her cheek. I was making up for any time we had or had not lost, and I wondered if she wasn't a bit nervous at the harebrained pace.

"Too fast, Phyllis!" I questioned.

"Just a little," she replied.

I pulled the lever open another notch, and we could actually feel the machine take a fresh jump forward.

Phyllis clutched at my arm.

"Oh!" she cried, with a terrified little scream. "I meant to go slower."

"Can't do it," I replied grimly.

"There's too much at stake on this race."

Phyllis looked at me from the tail of her eye.

"If we have a spill we'll be half-killed," she pouted.

"I'd have demonstrated my good faith anyhow," I retorted. "You'd know I'd done my best."

The runabout hit a stone that lay at the side of the road, and I'm certain

the front wheel traveled fifty feet before it hit the dust again.

"Oh," gasped Phyllis again, "do be careful, Jack, or we'll be killed!"

The machine was already going its limit or I would have opened it some more. I made the pretense of putting on more speed. I was having my revenge.

"I'm being careful," I said as well as I could for the wind, "but I've simply got to make it. Do you see Joe behind us?"

Phyllis could not see him.

"There are no auto tracks ahead," I observed. "If he's anywhere he must be back of us."

I sized up the track ahead and turned to look back. There was an auto behind us.

"Phyllis," I murmured reproachfully, "you said you couldn't see any one."

"That's not Joe," said Phyllis, with conviction.

"How do you know?" I asked. "It's a yellow car, and his is the only yellow touring car around here."

"I don't care," persisted Phyllis; "it's not Joe Haddon. So there!"

"We'll take no chances," I said maliciously. "It may be. You weren't even able to see an auto when you looked the first time."

"Do you think I'm deliberately lying to help Joe?" asked Phyllis telly.

"No," I answered, "but the issue is too important to trust to such poor eyesight."

"You goose!" said Phyllis irreverently.

The puff puff of the big machine was close behind us now, and I would have given worlds to have looked around and to see who was in it, but the risk was too great. Another mile and we would be at the Hall. So long as I kept the middle of the path the big car could not pass us. I determined to keep it.

"Get over," shouted a hoarse voice behind us. "That's not fair play."

"All's fair in war and"—I said it low and left the sentence unfinished. Phyllis heard it, and I felt her small gloved hand rest ever so lightly on my arm.

"Go it," she urged.

As we swung through the Hall gates and ran up the broad avenue the touring car passed us. It contained only Dawcy Graham.

I slowed down.

"Phyllis," I said, "did you know all the time that that was Dawcy?"

Phyllis nodded.

"And where's Joe?" I demanded.

"I don't know," replied Phyllis. "I told him 'No' last night."

"And what made Dawcy follow us?" I persisted, still unsatisfied.

"I thought it would add a little to the excitement of the chase," said Phyllis, nestling into the hollow of my arm, "if he were to borrow the machine and come too. Don't you think it did?"

But it didn't matter what I thought.

"If you hadn't been perfectly blind you'd have guessed it last night," said she.

The Impudent Reporter.

In the year 1874 the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, then the governor general of Canada, visited Chicago. Concerning that visit he has written: "The day following my arrival I spent in bed with a very bad nervous headache, a fact which was announced to the public in the morning by a sensational paragraph in all the papers to the following effect: 'His royal highness down with a colic! Doctor sent for.' In fact, all the time I was at Chicago the papers teemed with similar elegancies, the concluding leading article in the leading journal being headed 'Goodby, Old Dufferin.' Another paper devoted two of its columns to a description of an interview between one of its reporters and myself, in which I was described as sitting in a silk dressing gown, sucking sugar and water through a straw, while I communicated to my interlocutor—whom I always addressed as 'old fellow'—various state secrets and a minute detail of my private affairs, though, it is needless to say, the author of the narrative had never been within a hundred yards of me."

Easily Managed.

A famous lawyer once had a singular case to settle. A doctor came to him in great distress. Two sisters living in the same house had babies of equal age who so resembled each other that their own mothers were unable to distinguish them when they were together, and it happened that by the carelessness of the nurses the children had become mixed. How were the mothers to make sure that they received back their own infants?

"But, perhaps," suggested the lawyer, "the children weren't changed at all."

"Oh, but there's no doubt that they were changed!" said the doctor.

"Are you sure of it?"

"Perfectly."

"Well, if that's so, why don't you change them back again? I don't see any difficulty in the case."

An Appropriate Hymn.

There was a certain young minister who came to grief while delivering his first sermon.

He had dressed under a great deal of excitement previous to entering the church and neglected to fasten his necktie down behind.

During the course of his sermon the tie gradually slipped up over this collar until nearly every one in the congregation noticed his predicament and smiled radiantly at the situation. Concluding his remarks, the young minister, sparring for an opportunity to adjust the tie, said, "Let us join in singing hymn No. 58."

He had announced the hymn at random, not knowing the nature of the words. The congregation turned to the hymn, then gave a gasp and nearly strangled.

The hymn read, "Blest be the tie that binds."

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- Ash, per cent.....0.011
- Reducing sugar, per cent.....0.225
- Volatile acids, per cent.....0.027
- Amyl alcohol (fusel oil), per cent.....0.073

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