

## By Order of Court

By Archey Cameron New

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Sleepy desolation settled more thickly on the courthouse square at placid Euclid Corners as the mercury steadily rose in the tube and the county seat sizzled under the fierce summer heat. Even the few horses hitched outside the general store while their masters dawdled on the steps with old Zeb Marks, were too lazy to brush aside the flies that swarmed about their sweaty flanks.

In the old courthouse across the square the county clerk and his single assistant, perched upon their high wooden stools, scrawling at the docket, bemoaned the fate that kept them there while the summer recess afforded some of their more fortunate brethren a chance to get away to cooler climes. But off in one corner of the old gray building, in a small chamber, rather imperfectly cooled by a large electric fan, lounged one individual who seemed to care not whether the rest of the world was sizzling. For behind a desk, heaped high with law books, stenographers' copies, blueprints and papers of every description, his feet encased in large, roomy gaiters, and resting on the desk before him, a huge silk "kerchief" wrapped about his seamy neck and an old green eyeshade perched atop his broad, humorous nose, old Judge Bates sat drowsily staring at the printed page before him, his thoughts afar off.

And into his musings, as if it were a dream, there stole the sounds of the rustle of a woman's dress, and suddenly he turned his head toward the half-opened door, and brought his feet abruptly to the floor. For a young, deliciously cool little apparition in a thin blue frock, revealing a white, rounded throat and a slender, graceful figure from the top of her glorious golden head to the tip of her tiny slippers, advanced toward him, a troubled look in her big blue eyes.

"Well, bless my soul!" exclaimed the judge, kindly, rising and extending his horny brown paw and grasping her slim white hand cordially; "little Ruth Marston. What brings you in town today?"

"I came—for advice," faltered the girl nervously.

"Well, this is the place," said the other, smilingly. "Here—sit down." And he graciously brushed the dust from an old armchair and beckoned the orphaned daughter of his old law partner to be seated. "What is the trouble?"

She regarded him a moment in doubt, then plunged ahead.

"I—er—if—er," she stammered, and he leaned forward and patted her hand reassuringly.

"Go ahead," he urged, in a kindly tone. "Don't be afraid, Ruth. You're just like my own daughter. Is it—er—a love affair?"

She stared and looked into his keen eyes before replying.

"Yes—yes," she admitted, blushing furiously. "I—wanted to know if I could—that is, can a young man—go back on you whenever he wants to?"

The old judge whistled.

"So," he exclaimed. "Is that it? Who's the feller? Is he—all right, Ruth?"

"I—I don't know as I ought to tell you," she continued, "but I thought maybe I could sue him for breach of promise."

"What?" almost yelled the judge. "A daughter of Sam Marston suing a man for breach of promise? Never. My dear girl, where's your pride? The idea!"

She dropped her eyes and blushed more furiously than ever.

"Well, I thought—" she started, then breaking into tears, she cried, through clenched hands, "but, judge, I love him so! And I do want him. He's so fine, so noble. And maybe it's my fault. He—"

The judge, who was gazing at her sympathetically, felt a wave of paternal interest surge through him, as he reached forward again and patted her arm.

"Come, come," he soothed her. "Brace up and tell me all about it. Breach of promise suits never bring 'em back. Maybe there's another way. Tell me, who's the man? And what's the trouble?"

"It's John Summers," she answered brokenly, and the judge jumped again.

"Not that young feller that's practicing law over 'th' way?" demanded the judge, incredulously. "What! Well, see here, he's a nice boy. Tell me the rest."

"Well," she continued, "he was going with me until papa died. Then he started to grow cold. He stopped coming to the house, except once in a while, and then he didn't come at all. And—now he's going with the girl next to us. They moved here from the city six months ago, and he's boarding at her house. They're always together. What can I do?"

The judge bit an end off his plug of tobacco and settled back in his chair to think. Young John Summers! Why, he was one of the brightest and finest young men that practiced before him. Upright, honorable, always courteous to the court and considerate to

his clients—what few he had! There was something back of it. But what? For a few moments he shut his eyes, and it seemed to her that he had drowsed off again. The old clock on the wall ticked away the minutes and she was getting impatient—a bit angry—for it seemed as if her father's friend had deserted her in her hour of extremity, when his eyes opened and he brought his fist down on the desk heavily, jolting a few papers to the floor.

"See here," he told her, "you leave this to me. I'll tend to it."

"But, judge," she demurred, gently, "I—I have no right to trouble you—about that. You—"

"Never mind!" he interrupted, running his hand contentedly over his broad, bald pate. "Jes' leave it to me. Us old fellers don't have much fun these days. Nothin' new to interest us. This here business will give me something new to think about. Now, you jes' run along, and come back here—let's see—a week from today. That's it—a week from today."

And he settled back again in his chair and seemed to be drowsing. She started to speak, then checked herself, and, looking at him doubtfully, half lovingly, she tiptoed from the room and closed the door.

A clean-limbed young man, with a girl at his side, emerged from the Burns cottage, laughing merrily. They swung down the village street in step, he carrying a suitcase, and she a large box. On the opposite side, from behind the wide trunk of an oak, he stepped a gray-haired but vigorous old gentleman, and, staring after them, he shook his fist at their backs menacingly.

"Well, John Summers," grated Judge Bates between his teeth, for it was he who had been watching the house opposite for nearly an hour. "So you're jittin' Ruth, eh?" He started to mutter something else, when a sudden resolution seized him and he swung across to the watched cottage and rang the bell.

"Judge Bates!" exclaimed Mrs. Burns in surprise, as she opened the door. "What brings you here?"

"I want to see young Summers," he answered, jumping at an excuse.

"Why, you just missed him," answered the woman; "he and Katherine just left. She's going back to the city for six weeks. He's taking her to the station. You see, Kit's going to marry John's brother. He works up in the city. Wanted her to come up and help pick out the furniture."

Judge Bates stood and gasped. She stared at him in amazement, and he caught her stare and brought himself back to earth with a bump.

"Can—I—er—would you," he stammered confusedly, "show me his room? I—er—I'd like to see how the young man is fixed."

"Why—no!" answered the surprised Mrs. Burns, taken aback at the unusual request. "This way, judge."

Judge Bates prowled about John Summers' room, and several times paused and took various photos in his hand, then set them down without comment. Five minutes later he left the house, but a humorous twinkle had set in the corners of his keen old eyes and there was a grim set to his lips, as he quibbled back toward the courthouse.

It was early morning, three days later, as Judge Bates sat across his desk from John Summers. For several seconds he had stared at the young man silently, then he broke into speech.

"You're a funny mixture, Summers," he was saying. "You're a whopping big fool, and a darn fine man. I kinda reckoned you was a bit proud. But th' fool part of it is—stoppin' speakin' to a girl jes' 'cause she's got money an' you haven't. Hang it, boy, haven't you got gumption enough to be lookin' forward? D'y'e expect t' be poor all your life? Y' got th' counselin' for th' plow works over t' Grandin. An' you're th' lawyer for the two Smith old maids. You're gettin' on. What's the matter with you?"

"But I haven't as much as Ruth has, judge," stubbornly persisted the young lawyer. "And I don't want her for her money."

"Stop!" thundered the judge, bringing his fist down upon the desk. "Stop before I—before this court loses its temper. Now, see here, you proud young fool, God bless you. I'm trustee for Ruth's money and her two brothers and sister, besides. Now I'm getting too old for that job. It's about time it went to a younger man. The law allows 7 per cent commission on the estate. That, with what you've got now, will be as much as Ruth's got. D'y'e see?"

"Yes, but—" John started to protest, but again the judge exploded.

"No buts," he snapped; "you're appointed trustee for the Marston estate—to take effect at once. It's—it's an order of this court. And what's more—ye'll find Ruth over there in the next room. You've had your fill at looking 'round your room at her picture. Now, go get a good look!" And a second later a resounding smack from the next room acquainted Judge Bates with the fact that the order of court had been obeyed.

**Knockers.**

"Oh, well, her complexion is the real thing, at any rate."

"I don't care. Her smile is artificial."

"That's not so bad."

"Furthermore, she kisses all her woman friends effusively. That's a sure sign of a deceitful nature."

**Just So.**

"It might help a lot."

"Oh."

"If some of our bureau fighters would take their ferocity to the front."

## APATRIOTIC SERVICE

Dr. Peatfield Delivers a Splendid Sermon in Behalf of Our Boys at the Front.

Pastor Compares American Justice With the Tyranny and Cruelty of the Diabolical Kaiser.

After a splendid patriotic anthem by the choir, Dr. Peatfield, in harmony with the proclamation of the president that last Sunday should be observed as a day of prayer for the success of the American troops, said, among other things, in the Congregational church:

We have many reasons to be proud of our nation's president, particularly during the last year. His communications to the governments of Europe have been characterized by a splendid idealism, by a sense of justice, honor and impartiality that will make them long to be remembered, while his proclamations to the world in general, and in particular that document of last April, setting forth the crime and treachery and shame of Germany, will be immortal in the annals of human history. But no communication he has ever framed, no proclamation he has ever uttered, no document he has ever signed is so significant and more far reaching than this last proclamation calling America to prayer.

Let us notice first of all that this appeal of our president indicates that he is conscious of the fact that behind all physical forces there is a great spiritual reality involving the principles of righteousness emanating from God himself. Behind the most terrible guns and most formidable battleships, at the back of the most irresistible armies with their fearful engines of war, is something infinitely bigger and more mighty. Back of these things and mightier, is man, and in the mind of man a force, unlimited, eternal, infinite—the force of inspiration based on conviction. At the back of every war there have been operating invincible and mighty forces. Every war that was ever fought was but an outer expression of the conflict of unseen forces. When Waterloo was being fought it was not merely British versus French, but it was the conflict of British justice with Napoleonic tyranny. When our civil war took place it was not merely a struggle between the north and the south, but between the essential principles of right and wrong—the right of freedom against the wrong of slavery. And today, in this most terrible war the world has ever known, the real forces are not the armies and guns and equipment of the allies against the Germans, but rather mighty principles, unseen but felt more rigidly every day. Behind all our men, guns and ships are the irresistible forces of righteousness, justice and democracy, and operating in and through the German forces is the power of greed, cruelty, tyranny, and the maddening lust for power. Yea, behind the physical forces and those of our allies is the great God of righteousness, and behind and in the forces of the kaiser is the very devil and the minions and agents of hell.

Hence the president calls us today to pray. He knows, and he wishes us all to know, that this war is bigger than nations. It is being fought between mightier things than armies and navies. It is a war between the eternally opposed forces of right and wrong, justice and injustice. And because the president knows that God and justice are forever one, and because he knows that America is fighting, in the last analysis, for the very issues for which the Son of God died, he commands the nation today to pray.

Another point: The president calls us to prayer because of the justice and righteousness of the terrible business to which we have put our hands. We have gone to war for two reasons: First, because of the conduct of a power, which for fifty years has been preparing under the guise of commerce and industry to throttle the rest of humanity, and to cram down the throat of civilization its so-called "kultur." We have gone to war because of the arrogance of a nation which regards its solemn treaties as merely "scraps of paper," a nation, powerful and tyrannical, which has mercilessly crushed a smaller neighboring nation for no reason but one worthy of hell itself; a government which has conducted wholesale murder of women and innocent children wherever they came within reach, sinking them in the deep ocean and watching them perish, or dropping bombs upon them while they slept in their homes. We have gone to war with a nation whose army is so brutal that it has ravished the noblest womanhood and girlhood, compelling their male friends to stand by and witness the debauchery at the point of the bayonet. This is one reason why we have gone to war. We have heard the cry of little children mutilated by the Huns; we have seen the piteous appeal of helpless women and girls, the victims of Prussian bestiality; we have listened to the agony of mothers

and wives, robbed of all that they had, and finally compelled to witness their husbands and fathers dragged off into Hohenzollern slavery. And friends, this went on until America could look and listen no longer. The tide of anger kept steadily rising, the fires of indignation grew fiercer and fiercer, the noble desire to protect the weak and helpless from the hand of the brute grew more and more intense, until at last we could endure it no longer, and our nation drew the sword in the defense of womanhood and childhood, and in the name of justice and liberty, and today our splendid president calls us to pray to the source of the very passion that animates us—God himself.

But further, from the purely national point of view, we have entered this conflict because we as a nation had been wronged again and again, and our citizens ruthlessly murdered time after time. Before this war broke out every nation accepted the law that no merchant vessel should be sunk unless the lives of both passengers and crew were first made safe. Notice, if a German army should capture a Belgian town, and as the soldiers marched through the streets they should begin to fire upon the women and children, the world would gasp with horror. But this is far less brutal than sinking a shipload of people without warning. On land, those who were wounded might be rescued and treated in a hospital, while many would seek safety in flight. But on sea there is no chance for the wounded, there is no opportunity for any to escape, the remorseless ocean swallows them all. And this is what Germany has been doing from the very beginning, and no less than 204 American citizens found a grave in the depths of the ocean in two years.

Because of the righteousness of our stand, first from the world wide point of view, to protect the weak and victimized, and second from our national point of view, our president earnestly appeals to us to pray.

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