

.....
* THE PURPLE MOTH *
.....

By Isadore Benshingham

(Copyright by W. G. Chapman.)

"Now you've done it, Abner!" exclaimed Mrs. Post.

"Done what?" demanded her husband crossly, giving the hammer in his hand a last vicious bang across a nail head.

"Killed a purple moth — see, with the head of the hammer, and it's a nail sign."

"Sign, nothing!" growled Abner, wrathfully. "The only sign I'm interested in at the present time is the sign I'm nailing up right here and now, and it says, 'No Trespassing,' and the first one who questions it gets a dose of salt and pepper."

"You think you're quite right, Abner?" insinuated Mrs. Post gently.

"I know I'm right!" stormed back her better half. "See here, Maria, no milk-and-water sentiment! This here creek was on my land when I bought it, wasn't it?"

"Yes, Abner, but it's crooked and cut in on the other side so that neighbor Dodd has near a third of it."

"Let him keep it; let him keep it! That's all right!" shouted Abner. "I've no objection, but when he sets his visitors to fishing all over it and his cows wading in to muddy it, and intrudes on my land, let him look out. I'm going to stake it off and set up a barb wire fence. Then let him and crowd enjoy the two or three feet of shallow water to their hearts' content."

"I think you're wrong, Abner," protested Mrs. Post seriously. "It didn't used to be this way, but all neighborly and pleasant. I do hope because Mr. Dodd crowed over you a bit when you insisted about there being no likelihood of a war, and it came, that you won't harbor up a wicked grievance."

"Never mind about that," snapped her husband. "Dodd can't lord it

over me. The sign goes up and the fence later."

"And what about the young people?" voiced Mrs. Post gravely. "Bob Dodd and our Nell are all but engaged. Going to disturb their happiness?"

"Yes, I am!" fairly roared Post. "If I so much as hear of my daughter encouraging the son of an enemy I'll lock her up in a nunnery!"

Mrs. Post sighed and turned away. When she got home she had a good



Grabbed Up His Gun and Made Back for the Brook

crying spell. She knew her husband was in the wrong and lamented the fact and feared for the outcome. A neighborly row, she realized, was a thing to be dreaded where a man of the set ideas of her arbitrary husband was concerned.

Mrs. Post was superstitious. She had imbibed all current old-country lore regarding signs and tokens from