



WHEN THE EMBER BLAZE AGAIN

By ByRON WILLIAMS

BEFORE the fading embers of a grate fire, Parrish Morton sat alone. Outside, the snow was falling in nebulous, transcendent beauty, clinging to the coats of merry makers on their way to Christmas eve festivities and swathing all in a filmy scarf of white.

And all the Christmas eves to come! How cheerless and how lonely they would be with Verona gone—Verona who had come to him from the death-bed of a strangely beautiful woman in New Mexico.



Their Lips Met in a Plianting Kiss.

ness threw its mourning robe across the canyon, the woman died!

And he had taken her home with him and placed her in the hands of his capable housekeeper and as time passed and no record of her kin could be found, he had advanced her into his heart—into the most sacred corner of his great heart—and watched her grow into a beautiful maturity, a full blown rose of womanhood with eyes like the depths of quiet brooks and the face of an angel, with red lips ruddier still and tantalizingly sweet!

And then the blow fell! The realization that he loved her and that he, her protector, must preserve her against that love, for she was but 17 and he was 33, then—and he had promised her mother out in the New Mexican foothills that he would care for her and keep her from the pitfalls as best he could!

Ah, how lonely the place was when he had sent her away to school, to a distant school where he might not have to endure the pain of seeing her often—and how she had looked into his eyes at parting with the half pleading, half understanding eyes of a young rabbit suddenly met face to face in some leafy hollow in the autumn woods!

He had kissed her in his old, paternal way and her heart aggrieved had sent subtle glances of bewilderment to flash and play within those orbs whose depths he dared not sound!

his return, she had written him that she had made plans for Christmas that might detain her at Sussex, but she wished him a very merry Christmas, wished that he might find his heart filled with joy at again being beneath the old roof-tree, wished that this Christmas might be the happiest of all the Christmases he had ever experienced, and lastly assured him that she was sending him a memento of the season, which she hoped he would cherish and love for her sake.

Parrish Morton repeated the words sadly: "For her sake! Ah, for her sake!"

If she but knew what he would do for her sake, were it possible! But, no, she was not for him. The violet and the cosmos are incongruous. Youth and late summer are not born to trip hand in hand across the fields Elysian into Agapezone.

The bell rang sharply. He heard Phipps' soft tread upon the stairs, and listened. Yes, it was she. There was no mistaking the rippling cadence of that sweet-throated bird of passage. Turning, he pressed a button and the room was sparkling with light. At the top of the stair he stood hesitating, striving to gain control of himself. At the foot, she paused, made him a mock "courtesy" and held out her arms:

"Oh, Par, dear old Par, I have brought you your Christmas present instead!"

The attitude, the look in her eyes, the irresistible enchantment of her beauty flooded him with impelling power. What did she mean? Was it herself she was offering? For a brief moment he stood awaying to the mighty impulse within him. Standing stupefied there, he remembered, as she bounded toward him! He must not—he could not—

And then, as he was about to sweep aside all the positiveness of his duty, all the negatives and forbearances and give free impulse to his heart, there came a step behind her. She heard and turning as she was about to enter the yearning haven of his eager arms, cried:

"Oh, pardon me, Mr. Morton, let me introduce Marshall Marriott. He—"

Suddenly the stairs went black before him. He realized now! She was bringing him a Christmas surprise, the man she loved, the—

Somehow he managed to greet the stalwart young fellow with the frank eyes. In a maze of conflicting pain and surprise he did the duties of a host, and when Verona and her escort had been shown to their rooms to dress, he slipped into the den and cast himself into the great arm chair before the pulseless coals of the fire place.

"Lost! Lost!" kept ringing in his ears, and with a groan of anguish he once more buried his face in his hands and gave way to a man's grief. In vain he tried to reason with himself that it were better so. He should not have expected or even dared to think it might have been otherwise. He was too old for her. She was sunshine, he was the somber cloud—but, oh, how he loved her! And for the moment he had thought she meant to give herself. The misery of it all! The heartache of it!

Suddenly, behind him he heard a rustle, the fro-frou of a woman's gown, and over the side of his great chair a warm arm stole softly against his neck.

"Oh, Par, what is it, dear? What have I done? What—"

Instinctively in the darkness he felt the frightened rabbit look, the appealing gaze. Summoning all his reserve strength, he said, with scarcely a tremor in his voice:

"Nothing dear, nothing to offend. I am glad—glad for you, if he is worthy. If—"

CHRISTMAS REUNION

HOW TO MAKE THE HOLIDAY PARTIES MOST ENJOYABLE.

A Number of Games That Will Prove Pleasing for Both Old and Young at the Yuletide Season.

By Mary Dawson. The wealth of new games is so great of late years that the entertainer is apt to overlook the splendid old games, many of which have never been surpassed, if, indeed, we can equal them. Old favorites are specially good for Christmas reunion gatherings because in most cases they require no advance preparation and are easily grasped by the few to whom they are unfamiliar.

One such sport is that called "acting adjectives." To play it one member of the company leaves the room, and each person remaining agrees upon a certain adjective, which he or she will act out when called on to do so. When the retiring player is recalled he asks someone in the group a question. This player must then answer in a way which will illustrate the adjective assigned to him. Thus, a player who has taken the word "noisy" will bawl his reply, and at the same time contrive to let a book fall to the floor with a loud clap.

The man or girl representing "facture" must reply in as few words as possible, and so forth. As soon as the guesser has divined one of the concealed words he takes a chair in the circle, while the person whose adjective he guessed withdraws from the room.

"Magic music" makes a lively number in the program, played in this way. One person is chosen to hide the coin or ring. All the rest withdraw, with the exception of the person who will play the piano. The person holding the ring then hides it, acquainting the musician with its whereabouts, and the company is readmitted.

The players now arrange themselves in a row, each one with his hands on the shoulders of the person in front of him. One player, the leader, heading the procession. When the music starts the line of boys and girls goes off in search of the ring, guided in this by the music. This, of course, plays loud and cheerily as the object is approached, slow and dolefully when the procession is headed in the wrong direction, and faintest when they are furthest from the prize.

"Thought transference" is not precisely a game of contest, but there are few better ways to interest a party of guests, and whatever the psychological explanation of the phenomenon, it never fails to create amusement. To arrange it the person to be "subject" is sent out of the room. Two players are appointed to transfer the thought, and these decide upon what simple stunt the player will be required to perform. Thus, he may be required to pick up a book, to arrange a cushion, or to touch the keys of the piano. The rest of the company is informed what the required stunt will be.

The "subject" is then readmitted, and those who are to guide him stand on each side and hold his hands. These thought transferers, as well as the rest of the company, then center their minds upon the thing to be done. In eight cases out of ten the "subject" then wends his way, still holding the hands of the other two, towards the appointed object, and does what is required of him.

It is most exciting. The audience will probably demand several "subterfuges" and experiments before their curiosity is sated.

A new game which will appeal to active, lively girls, as well as to the boys, is color base. This is a splendid frolic for the hall or living room, and can be played in quite close quarters.

Each member of the company but one is given a certain color or shade which will represent his personal safety, since, when standing with a foot or hand on something of that color he cannot be tagged. The remaining player is made "catch" and pursues the fugitives around the room. He must remember the colors given to each, as the pursued, when in a tight fix, will try to deceive him by touching some color not their's.

When the catch succeeds in catching some one off base and tagging him he changes places with the person caught. It adds to the fun to give the catch a long, flexible stick with a handle of raw cotton dipped in flour tied to one end, with which to tag.

Now for a sit-down game while legs and arms are resting and players take breath. A good one is a contest seeing who can write down the longest list of words suggesting or belonging to the Yuletide season. Pass around blank cards and pencils and allow 15 minutes for working up the lists. Such a list will include the words, holly mistletoe, St. Nick, Christmas carol, waits, yule log, gift, greeting, Christmas box, snapdragon, holidays and a long list of related terms. Give a prize to the player whose list proves longest.

To carry the fun a bit further on, get two pictures as large as possible, representing the Christmas saint "Ads." or illustrations from back numbers of periodicals will do. Cut each picture into six or eight pieces and hide the pieces in odd nooks and corners around the room. When the signal is given players hurry away in search of the fragments. As soon as a player has found a piece he ceases to search, and all those who have found mosaics commence to patch them together. All those who do

fragments are entitled to draw for the prize—a Christmas book. This makes a most exciting scramble game, since it is not until both pictures are completed that the unsuccessful players give up hope.

When the company does not include children too young to read or write, composing a Christmas story makes a pleasant pastime. The players are given penny blank books and pencils and each is called on to name a word which must be woven into the story each writes. These words everybody puts down. Twenty minutes is allowed in which to think out Christmas stories or incidents and for putting them into words. At the end of the contest the stories are read aloud and voted on. The best is awarded a prize. If any story fails to include all the given words it is not entered in the competition.

The best place to play this game is around a large table which affords room for the different papers, pencils and elbows.

Have for the centerpiece of the supper table at this Christmas party a large cake loaf in white, with wreath or artificial holly and a crown of red candles. In the center have a tiny Santa Claus, with or without reindeer, and a sleigh.

From the cake run scarlet ribbons, terminating in souvenirs at the different covers.

Serve for the refreshment hot oyster soup and crackers, cold sliced tongue and potato or chicken salad, followed by ice cream and cake or a dainty jelly or custard. Then coffee, wafers and cheese.

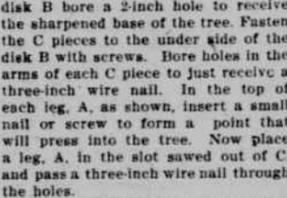
Wrap tiny bonbons in squares of tinfoil and pour a little alcohol over them on a metal tray. Let the guests snatch them from the flames with their fingers.

FOLDING STAND FOR TREE

One That Can Be Easily Made and Which May Be Kept for Future Use.

The accompanying cut shows a simple way to make a support for a Christmas tree, says the Scientific American. The material should be of hard or tough wood that will not split easily.

Make three pieces like A, of 7/8x2-inch strip, also three pieces like C, of



Folding Tree Stand.

PRETTY NECKPIECE OF LACE



Girls are busy these days making elaborate neckpieces of lace and satin, or net and ribbon. The one shown in the sketch is made from white figured flet net attached to a high, boned stock of black satin. The bow in front, and the jabot, are merely pinned on and can be replaced by others.

Christmas Decoration.

A simple Christmas decoration for the dining room is to hang the chandelier with greens and holly and from that carry loosely long ropes of ground pine to each corner of the room, thus making a canopy for the table. A bit of mistletoe skillfully introduced where all will have to pass under it in leaving the room may add to the fun. In the center of the table lay a tray, and on this a glass or copper bowl of holly, frosted as though it had just come from the wintry field. For the favors to be laid down by the place cards there are tiny earthen pots with miniature decorated Christmas trees.

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