EQUAL PARTNERS

By HOWARD FIELDING

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"I know nothing whatever about it," exclaimed Alden. "I did not send him here and had no idea he was coming."

He turned to Elmendorf with a sharply questioning glance.

"Well, you can search *me*," said the detective.

"You mean that you know nothing about it?" asked Kendall anxiously.

"Less than nothing," responded Elmendorf, "and I'm giving you straight goods too."

There was a knock at Kendall's door, and he admitted a nurse, who said that Miss Maclane wished to see him. He did not wait to speak a single word, but hurried away. Alden tried to get an explanation from the nurse, but she professed to have none.

For nearly an hour the two men waited with impatience, which finally passed Alden's power of endurance.

"I must get some word from her," he said after much pacing of the floor. "There must be serious danger or he would not stay so long."

Elmendorf pointed out the obvious possibility that Kendall might long since have answered Miss Maclane's summons and have gone upon any of a hundred other duties, but Alden would not be thus quieted. He went out to the office to ask in what way he could communicate with the doctor, and within a minute after his departure Kendall entered the room.

He had a large glass jar in his hand, which seemed to contain milk. This he set down upon the table and immediately touched an electric button.

"How is she?" asked Elmendorf in a tone betraying the most earnest solicitude.

"Better, better," replied Kendall. "I think there's no longer any danger. Where is Mr. Alden?"

"No longer any danger!" exclaimed Elmendorf, ignoring the question. "Has there been any?"

"Well," said Kendall, "she fainted again."

"Again!"

"The first time was just before you came up," said Kendall. "Don't say anything about this. We had just given her a little luncheon, and I thought perhaps she might have had some small stomach trouble; oppresses the heart sometimes, you know. But I don't like this second attack. Heart failure after the injury and the nervous exhaustion wouldn't be the most unlikely thing in the world, you know. Ah! Come here, George."

The last words were addressed to a youth in uniform who had answered the doctor's ring. Kendall gave him some money and whispered to him near the door. When he turned, as George started, he saw Elmendorf standing rigid, with his blue eyes unusually wide open.

"What do you want of two white mice?" he demanded.

"Really, now"— Kendall began.

"Look here," interrupted Elmendorf. "If there's anything of that kind going on, I'm the man you need. Don't hide anything from me; for the little girl's sake, don't do it, doctor."

Kendall bit his lips and hesitated. Then he said suddenly, as steps were heard in the hall:

"Get him out of here and come back."

Alden entered and stopped short, in his own peculiar fashion, with his eyes on the doctor.

"It's all right," said Kendall. "Miss Miller showed some indications of weakness, but is doing nicely now. I should think you might see her about 5 o'clock."

"Well, doctor, I'm glad everything's all right," said Elmendorf. "I began to be anxious, you were so long away. But what you've said has made me feel easy again, and so I think the best thing that Mr. Alden and I can do is to try to get some light on Mr. Robinson's strange conduct. The man may have struck some kind of a clew and have rushed right off to verify it without waiting to consult anybody."

"I didn't think of that," responded Alden. "It may be that you've found the explanation."

"I would suggest that you go to his house," said Elmendorf. "Meanwhile I'll telephone to your office and one or two other places and see if I can get track of him. But the likeliest place is his house. Wait there for me. I'll join you before 3."

This arrangement was agreed upon, and the two men went out together. Elmendorf was busy with the telephone for half an hour, but he failed

He sat down and rested his head on his hands.

to extract valuable information from any person with whom he talked, although the chief of the detective bureau was one of them.

Returning to the hospital, he went at once to Kendall's room. In answer to his rap and the sound of his voice the door was unlocked and he was admitted. In passing he glanced searchingly at Kendall's face, which wore an expression of extreme anxiety; then he advanced to the table in the middle of the room, from which he lifted a newspaper, thus revealing the bodies of two little white mice.

Elmendorf regarded them with a look of horror.

"Good Lord!" he gasped. "You don't mean it?"

Kendall nodded. Then he sat down and rested his head on his hands for a few seconds, while Elmendorf gathered breath and heart for the next question.

"What was in the jar—milk?"

"No," replied Kendall. "It is a kind of liquid food preparation. The basis of it is milk; but, unfortunately," he added, looking up at the detective, "it will keep."

"Been in the room several days, you mean?" said Elmendorf. "If it was ordinary milk that had been dosed, we could narrow it down to a few hours. But this stuff—why, absolutely everybody connected with the case has had a chance at it."

"How shall I tell her?" muttered Kendall.

"Her?"

The doctor gave a nervous start.

"Miss Maclane," he said. "This will be a hard story for her to hear."

"You are right," replied Elmendorf, "after all the care she's taken, the devotion she's shown to that poor child, who was nothing to her—worse than nothing, in fact—an enemy, you might say."

"Now, look here"— exclaimed Kendall hoarsely as he got upon his feet.

"No, no!" cried Elmendorf. "I don't mean to accuse her. That would be absurd. We mustn't waste time. What was the poison?"

"I don't know," replied Kendall. "Of course there was no time for analysis. That's why I tried it on these small animals. It's some kind of a heart depressant—the very thing to use in a case of this kind, where the condition is one of weakness and especially where there is an injury in the region of the organ."

"But didn't these mice show any symptoms that you could recognize?" asked Elmendorf.

"No; nothing definite I could name several poisons that would answer all the requirements. It isn't necessary to know immediately. The treatment would be the same in any case. And the danger is over, I believe."

"Unless it's somewhere else," said Elmendorf; "in her medicines, perhaps."

"That wouldn't be possible without assuming something that can't be assumed—not in my presence, at any rate."

"You mean that Miss Maclane"—

"Precisely," said Kendall. "And as there can be no thought of such a thing we conclude that this infernal thing"—and he tapped the jar with his knuckles—"which was handy for everybody, wide mouthed and all that—Oh, I have been an idiot!"

"She's been having this right along," said Elmendorf. "That might indicate"—

"Nothing until we know just what the stuff is and how much of it we have to deal with," replied Kendall. "The effects observed may come from what she ate this noon or be the general result of small, repeated doses."

"There's one thing," said Elmendorf with decision—"this villainous act must have been done by somebody who knew that the food was there, by some one who had been in the room several times"—

"Don't!" groaned Kendall. "By heavens, I can't bear to think of it! I like Alden. I can't believe this of him. And—and she loves him; she loves him just as much now as ever."

"Miss Maclane?" said Elmendorf. "My friend, I don't believe it."

Kendall looked up at him with a blank stare and shook his head.

CHAPTER XVI.

ELSIE PERPETRATES A JEST.

"THEY say," remarked Elsie, "that people always feel particularly well just before they die. Do you remember Bernhardt in 'Camille,' the very last words before she dies in Armand's arms: 'I shall live! Ah, how well I feel!' How I cried when she said that! And then Gaston says, 'She sleeps.' Isn't that a lovely scene?"

"As it came to your mind at this moment," said Brenda, "I joyfully infer that you are feeling very much better."

"You must think I am silly to talk so much about dying," said Elsie. "I am soggy with sentimentality."

"You have mentioned it on just four occasions," said Brenda, "including this, but it seems often to us because we don't wish to lose you and to yourself because really and truly you don't wish to die. On the whole, you have been as cheerful as any girl could possibly be under the circumstances, and as for your sentimentality, my dear, I'd give the world to have some of it myself."

"I was going to say," continued Elsie, "that my motive for continually harping on it is that you may know I am not afraid, and afterward you may tell Mr. Alden."

This exchange of pleasantries upon a cheerful subject occurred during the time when Kendall was experimenting with the white mice.

"I must have been pretty near it the last time," said Elsie. "It was double. I scarcely knew what was the matter when it began, even though I'd fainted such a little while before. It was like drifting, drifting away. You are surprised. You think you must stop, and before you really have time to be frightened you are gone. But I waked just for a second—just long enough to remember and realize; then down, down, down, sideways to the left there, slipping away from the room and the light. The last was a sensation that they were lowering me into the ground. But I'm going to be cremated. You've promised me that, Brenda."

Then, catching the expression of amused horror—if that can be—on Brenda's face, she laughed with the most delicious and clear sound, like the singing of birds.

"Oh, but it hurts to laugh," she said. "You mustn't make me do it."

"I?" cried Brenda. "You're the first that ever accused me of being amusing."

"Do you know," said Elsie, "that of the two of us you're the blue one? It's much more cheerful to talk about dying than to 'roast' oneself as you do."

"Roasting is popularly supposed to be one step beyond dying," replied Brenda. "But I suppose the roasting you mean is the saying of uncomplimentary things. My child, I can't help it; I suffer by contrast."

"With me?" cried Elsie. "Now you really are amusing. If I had your hair and eyes! Well, that's absurd, of course. But do you know I lie here imitating your ways, your calm, gentle, sweet way of doing things? I'm studying you, Brenda, and if I were to

He came back with a tumbler.

play a society part again you'd see! This is the way you say: 'Good morning, Dr. Kendall. * * * Ah, thank you so much. * * * Shall we see you again soon? * * * Goodby.' You make all the little things mean something. That's dignity, personality. I haven't any more than a blade of grass, but I'm gaining on it. If I live another week, I shall die and go to Daniel Frohman's No. 1 company instead of to heaven. I'd rather."

"Do I speak like that when I address Dr. Kendall?" said Brenda, with a slight access of color. "Well, it may be so. You are very clever, my dear."

"This is the way you hold your arms when you walk," said Elsie. "Isn't that pretty? Of course I can't do it very well lying down, but see the fingers and the ease of the wrist. Were you taught to do that?"

"I used to have a governess who was crazy on Delsarte," replied Brenda. "But she presently went crazy on all other subjects also, and we had to send the poor thing to an institution. I was not aware of my debt to her."

"You owe her a great deal," said Elsie. "I wish I'd had a lunatic of that kind in my family. I couldn't afford to have much teaching. Of course I had some, but when I found what my mother was enduring in order to pay for it—well, I took an engagement with the first thing that came along. And it was a barnstorming crew! We gave six plays a week, and I had to learn a long part in every one of them. The second Monday, in the afternoon, the leading lady came into my room and found me huddled up on the floor in the corner gibbering—just gibbering, that was all—words out of all the plays, as she told me afterward, all jumbled together, and I was cross eyed with sitting up all night studying under little flickering gas jets. Yes, that's the way she found me, and the room was as cold as a barn too. I had the bed quilt wrapped around my shoulders and my arm through a hole in it.

"The leading lady yelled to the juvenile man, and he really was juvenile—about 18, as I remember. She said, 'Go get a glass of brandy!' The juvenile man went down to the bar and came back with a tumbler solid full. He had to carry it carefully in order to keep from spilling any. The leading lady was a temperance woman. She never touched a drop of wine, and, in fact, she was a regular straitlaced New England pilgrim, but somebody had told her once that brandy was good for the thing that I had—'white brain,' we call it. The juvenile man didn't know how much brandy a person ought to take, and I—well, I didn't know anything. So I drank it all, and then I lay down on the bed, and the leading lady covered me with everything she could find, and pretty soon the bed got up and stood on the ceiling, and I didn't care at all.

"When it came time to go to the theater (Brenda, it's disgraceful, but I was so—so drunk that I couldn't walk straight) the leading lady got me up and told the juvenile man to walk me around the block, and he walked me around about fifty times in the snow. We were in a little Minnesota town, and it had snowed for a week. When he took me to the theater, I was perfectly sober, and I didn't care for anything. I had no troubles whatever. I walked up to the stage manager, and I said cheerfully, 'Well, what do we play tonight?' He told me, and I couldn't remember ever to have heard of it, but I got out my part and studied it while I was making up.

"When I went on, I knew about half of my first scene, which was the longest one I had in the play. But I didn't care. I'd always been troubled with stage fright more or less, but not this time—not a fright. When I forgot, I waited calmly for the prompter, who was off left, having a fit. By and by I had to go across right and sit down by a table. I knew I couldn't hear the prompter there, so I walked over and got the table and dragged it clear across the stage, and the audience applauded because I did it so naturally.

"Then I went crazy, and what happened afterward I scarcely know. But when I came off after the thrilling climax of the scene I fell into the leading lady's arms, and she hugged me up tight. She said: 'You never played so well as that before. You were like Julia Marlowe.' And she kissed me on both cheeks. Julia Marlowe was my idol then, and I cried with heavenly joy on the leading lady's neck. That's all true, just as it happened, Brenda, and I never had stage fright afterward."

"Poor little Elsie!" said Brenda, kissing her. "It was a hard school where you were taught."

"It was," said Elsie. "Yet I think I wouldn't have amounted to much anyway. How could any mortal man fail to see the difference between you and me?"

"My child," said Brenda, "no man can. Why, the brass knobs on the posts of this bed know the difference between you and me—the vital, essential difference. They love you in their little brass hearts. Everybody loves you. Dr. Kendall, for a cold blooded sawyer of bones who could amputate my head without a trace of emotion, takes your hand with the eternal reverence of man for woman, and when he gives you pain I can see his own heart shrink. But he treats me as if I were a gentleman whom he had met at the club."

Elsie opened her eyes so wide that they seemed to light the room as she stared at Brenda, whose cheeks were flushed by her unusual earnestness.

"I am glad to hear you speak like that," she said.

Brenda rose and walked across to the window. Then she returned to the bed and took Elsie's hand.

"I am going to open my heart to you," she said. "It was not because Clarence Alden preferred you to me that I lost my self control that last day. I cared nothing for you, despised you; I admitted no comparison. It was because, though the intensity of his own nature for a time deceived him, he never really loved me at all. Nobody ever loved me. I am called good looking, even a beauty, in the society columns of the papers, and I am so rich that I have attracted many men. But not one of them was able to present even a creditable counterfeit of love (though some of them could counterfeit almost anything else, from good breeding to the national currency) until Mr. Alden entered the lists. That's hardly fair to him; he was sincere, but mistaken."

"Yet I didn't have at all the feeling that I have now," she continued. "It was only that last day that I became enraged, mostly at myself. It is since I have come here, since I have known you, the most womanly of God's creatures, that I have had some true comprehension of my own lack, some honest sorrow for it."

"Only since you have been here," said Elsie. "How remarkable! But, Brenda, it is sweet of you to talk this way to me, and I am so glad, so very glad! How long have you known Dr. Kendall?"

"What a queer question!" said Brenda. "About two years, but we haven't met a dozen times. By the way, he is going to be married."

"He is going to be married!" exclaimed Elsie. "To whom?"

"I don't know," Brenda replied. "From something he said the other day, I judge there's a difficulty. I don't know the lady's name."

"Well," said Elsie, letting her head sink back on the pillow as one relieved, "you will when it happens."

"If you mean that he cares anything for me, you are quite mistaken," said Brenda. "His manner when he is in this room should show that. I am nothing—a piece of furniture. Do you know, it has inspired me with something like jealousy—jealousy merely of the difference between you and me, which is the theme we started with."

"I'll show you what Dr. Kendall thinks of that difference," said Elsie. "Wait till he comes in here again. I'll suggest that you're going away, and then you watch him. He'll know that I'm going to stay till I'm carted away. But watch him."

"You must not do it," said Brenda. But Elsie insisted that she should, and they were still having a cheerful little quarrel about it when they were interrupted by Kendall's familiar rap.

The doctor entered, looking very serious, but his brow cleared at the sight of Elsie.

"Upon my word," he said, approaching the bed, "you are the miracle of our species."

"I am so well," replied Elsie, "that Brenda is thinking of deserting me."

Kendall had been holding Elsie's hand. He dropped it and slowly straightened his tall figure till he stood erect. The dead white mice seemed to be dancing before his eyes.

"You can't mean it," he said, and his face was bluish gray as he thought of the certain inference that Elmendorf would draw from Brenda's departure at this time. "Brenda"— he began, "I truly beg your pardon"—

"That is my name," she said, "and I shall always answer when you speak it."

"I thank you from my heart," said he. "And—Brenda, you mustn't go—not now. I can't explain. I was taken unaware and may have said too much already. Upon my soul, I don't know what I have said. But don't leave us now"—

In his excitement his voice broke in a queer little sob.

"I had no idea," said Brenda, "that my presence was so important."

"I can't think of anything earthly that is more important than your presence here," he said, with such impressive earnestness as would have carried conviction to any woman's heart. "This must seem strange to you, this sudden outburst, but I am nervous, overstrained. You must pardon me. I cannot tell you all I mean"—

"Go on," said Elsie. "Don't mind me."

And she put her fingers into her ears. Then for the first time Kendall comprehended the preposterous construction of which his words were susceptible. His face suddenly blazed with color.

"We—we really need you," he stammered, "both of us. Tell me that you will stay."

"I had no intention of going," said Brenda in a strange and stifled voice. "It was only Elsie's joke."

"Thank heaven!" exclaimed Kendall, and he took both of Brenda's hands. "I

"I have your promise!" said he.

can't be sure of what you think I mean, but"—and he threw back his head with a fine, strong air—"whatever it is, I mean it from the bottom of my soul!"

He still held her hands, but not at all in the society fashion which Brenda had recently deprecated.

"I have your promise?" said he.

"I can't be sure of what you mean," she answered, smiling, "but whatever it is you have it!"

They looked straight into each other's eyes for a moment. Then they laughed together like happy children. Kendall's hands closed more tightly upon hers. He released them gently and inclined his head as he turned and left the room.

"Well, considering that that was only a little joke," said Elsie, "I don't think I ever saw so much for the money."

"What could the man have meant?" exclaimed Brenda.

"He probably meant," said Elsie, "that you were nothing more to him than a gentleman whom he had met at the club."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE RUNAWAY.

BRENDA sat down by the bed, and she looked very beautiful, a circumstance upon which Elsie did not fail to comment with great satisfaction.

"You will be very happy," she said. And then she heaved a little sigh, presumably for herself.

"My dear child," replied Brenda, "this is altogether too sudden and incomprehensible to suit a conventional person like myself. This weird flirtation of the madhouse which Dr. Kendall and I seem to have begun in a manner shamelessly public may be only the temporary aberration of our minds and have nothing to do with our hearts. I hope it will strike in; I do most devoutly. Then you and Clarence could arrange your agreeable romance without remorse"—

"That is ended," said Elsie. "In fact, it never began. Brenda, you opened your heart to me; let me open mine to you. I want some one in the world, some one whom I care for, to know the whole truth."

"Are you sure you really wish to trust me with this confidence?" asked Brenda earnestly. "You do not really know me. Your mother may soon be with you."

"I would never tell my mother," said Elsie sadly. "She has had trouble enough. As for trusting you, knowing you—why, it seems to me that we have been here together since the dawn of recorded history and you were my friend the first minute. I'm afraid you may not care to be after you have heard the story, but I don't want to hold you by false pretenses. So hear me, Brenda."

"It will not excite you? It will not make you ill again?"

"It would excite and worry me if I should stop now after I have made up my mind," said Elsie. "Listen. You shall know everything but a name. I can't tell you that."

Brenda was silent. She was saying to herself: "I am afraid. My heart is trembling for this girl."

"It doesn't matter when, it doesn't matter where," continued Elsie, "but when and where fate pleased I met a man who took a great liking to me. I know little now, and I knew far less then, though it wasn't so long ago. He was an educated man, and I was not an educated girl, but I wished that I was. We met in a merry party, and I expected him to talk frivolity. He didn't. His conversation was very improving. Oh, he took a deep interest in my mind.

"What idiots girls are! Why, this man read me like a book. He saw that I was full of yellow covered ambitions and ten cent aspirations. He had probably seen a great many girls equally deserving of encouragement. I thought he was splendid. I put my hand in his and prepared to ascend the hill of learning.

"It was a supper after the theater, and we rode to my house together in a hansom afterward at 2 o'clock in the morning, and the chaperon of our supper party rode in another direction in another hansom with another man. My escort talked about the 'Rubaiyat' of Omar Khayyam, and I then first appreciated the beauties of that sublime composition. Afterward he spoke of my work in a very earnest and encouraging way. He let me know that he had been quite a student of the drama and that his criticism and advice would be of the greatest assistance. That, at least, was the inference. Finally he bade me good night on the doorsteps, with a gentle sadness in his manner which let me know that there was a romance in his life. That made me feel safe, for at that time I surely did not want him to fall in love with me, and I still retained the delusion of my earlier years that romances in a person's life acted like vaccination.

"The gentleman called upon me the next afternoon, and he was very entertaining as well as instructive. He brought me a large book. I forget what it was about. The next day he took me out to dinner, and I remember that he gave me some very shrewd and helpful criticism about my work. Then I didn't see him for two whole days, and I began to miss him very much. At that time I was lonely. My girl friends in the profession were all out of town, and some of the men in the company who wished to be kind to me were rough in their ways—not at all like the cultured gentleman whose acquaintance I had been so fortunate as to make."

"But didn't you ask about him?" said Brenda. "Didn't you find out how he stood socially?"

Elsie laughed.

"How was I to find out any of those things?" she said. "The world is a big place, in the midst of which is society as you know it, a little mutual insurance company for the purpose of protecting its members, especially the younger ones, against accidents. I only knew that I liked this man and that he seemed to be a true friend to me. What other guide was I to have except my own beautiful ignorance?"

"I don't know," said Brenda aloud, but to herself she was saying: "The more wrong she has suffered the more I want to help her. I won't let anything take her away from me."

"Presently I heard the story of the romance in his life," continued Elsie. "It appeared that the gentleman was married—most unhappily. Where was his wife? He had permitted her to obtain a divorce. This was pure generosity on his part. He would rather suffer an injustice than attack in the courts the woman he had sworn to love and cherish. He mentioned several high society precedents for this conduct. In fact, he convinced me that divorce was, upon the whole, a mark of distinction in these days. It appeared that his was a sort of limited divorce which did not permit him to remarry, but after this aspect of it had been presented to me on several occasions he discovered that he could marry under certain conditions with the full sanction of the law and heaven.

"Well, Brenda, let's be fair. I wanted to marry the man. I persuaded myself that I was in love with him. I wasn't. I can see that now. I wasn't within a million miles of loving him, but I was ready to be loved, Brenda; that's the truth about it. My heart was full of tenderness, and I saw the whole world rose tinted in the light of the dawn of love. That's poetical. But wait a minute. I am coming to something very unromantic. I wrote this story, Brenda—wrote it all down for a great heart thrilling novel—and then had sense enough to burn it. But that helps me to tell it straight, and you'll catch fine phrases now and then, but you won't laugh at me.

"Well, we were engaged, of course. My fiance presented me with a diamond ring, and diamonds are my soul's delight. After I got this one I used to keep a little light burning in my room at night so that I might see it sparkle if I happened to be wakeful. I subsequently learned that there was a financial irregularity involved in the obtaining of the glittering gem, but I did not learn that until after it had passed out of my possession."

"Where did fate find this precious rascal?" whispered Brenda. "And why did fate send him to you?"

"Why did fate send a good man afterward?" said Elsie. "Why not before? Well, 'the moving finger writes and, having writ, moves on'— It was to be, finally the gentleman announced that a marriage under the laws of the state of Pennsylvania would meet the requirements of the situation. I was a good deal startled by this definite suggestion, and I wrote to my mother on the subject for the first time. The gentleman took the letter to post, and it has not been delivered yet, thank heaven!

"Before it was time to get an answer sudden business of great importance called my fiance to Philadelphia. How opportune! Well, Brenda, I packed a little hand bag and went. What must you think of me?"

Brenda bent down gently and kissed Elsie's hand and held it against her face.

"I don't know the story yet," she said, "but you have portrayed a thorough scoundrel. And you have also shown me a trusting and true hearted girl who went to be married with an innocent heart. Blessed heaven! Think of a man for whom a young and pure girl will go out into the world like that, as if to walk in the fields! Should not every fiber of his soul be thrilled to loyalty for all his life?"

"The gentleman in question had no soul," said Elsie. "I think he will be spared all punishment hereafter, as the brutes are. Let us proceed, Brenda, dear. The remainder of the story is not long. We took the 11 o'clock train and reached Philadelphia in time for luncheon. Our marriage was to be kept secret for awhile, and there seemed to be some slight objection to the public dining room of the hotel where our hansom set us down. However, we lunched there quite hastily, for I had no appetite. Then we re-entered the hansom and went to look for a minister. We had remarkable difficulty in finding one, considering that Philadelphia is a large city full of churches, but we finally succeeded. Then it appeared that we had neglected to comply with certain formalities, but the clergyman was able to rectify the matter, and so we were married pitifully, as I see it now, with stupid old servants and a chance laborer who happened to be at work in the house as our witnesses.

"When we got back to the hotel, it was 6 o'clock, and I was nearly famished. We hurried right into the dining room, and my husband ordered a great spread, with champagne, for our miserable celebration, and now I will tell you the unromantic part. In the midst of that dinner, and while I fancied that I was eating with a splendid appetite, I was suddenly seized with the most awful pain that ever devastated my poor little stomach. Yes, Brenda, it was a regular, terrible stomach ache—just pain, without a bit of nausea. I felt as if some one had my stomach in his hand—a hand about the size of Captain Neale's—and was crushing it to pieces.

"My husband said he guessed it would soon pass away, but it didn't, and so he left his dinner and ran out to a drug store to get me something to take. When he came back, I took it, and I didn't feel any worse, because that wasn't possible, but I certainly felt no better. In a few minutes I began to realize that I was going out of my wits. I talked insanely and saw things that weren't there. The next thing I knew we were riding up in an elevator, and it seemed to go up for a week. Then there was a woman leading me along a hall and into a room, and she began to take off my clothes in the bedroom of a little suit. I stared at her and asked her who she was.

"'I'm the assistant housekeeper,' she said. 'I belong to the hotel.'

[CONTINUED.]

Love Marriages.

"Was it a love marriage, do you think?"

"Certainly. All marriages are love marriages."

"Isn't that rather a sweeping statement?"

"Not at all. There are love of adventure, you know, love of luxury, love of advertising and various other kinds of love. There is no need of going into details when one speaks of a love marriage."

He Wasn't Surprised.

"See here! I found two pebbles in the milk bowl yesterday!"

"I'm not surprised, ma'am. The water is very low just now in the brook where the cows drink."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Pneumonia Follows a Cold.

But it never follows the use of Foley's Honey and Tar. It stops the cough, heals and strengthens the lungs and affords perfect security from an attack of pneumonia. Refuse substitutes. Denton & Ward.

A married man isn't necessarily a Hercules because he is fond of his club.

Foley's Kidney Cure makes the kidneys and bladder right. Contains nothing injurious. Denton & Ward.

When beggars cease to ask you for alms it is time for you to change your tailor.

Raw or Inflamed Lungs.

Yields rapidly to the wonderful curative and healing qualities of Foley's Honey and Tar. It prevents pneumonia and consumption from a hard cold settled on the lungs. Denton & Ward.

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The 1902 World Almanac and Encyclopedia is on sale by all newsdealers throughout the country for 25 cents. When ordered by mail 10c extra for postage must be inclosed to the World, New York.

A wise man never wants what he can't get.

Cough Settled on her Lungs.

"My daughter had a terrible cough which settled on her lungs," says N. Jackson, of Danville, Ill. "We tried a great many remedies without relief, until we gave her Foley's Honey and Tar which cured her." Refuse substitutes. Denton & Ward.

Money can always make the mare go in time to lift the purse.

Foley's Honey and Tar.

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Cures bronchitis and asthma.
Cures croup and whooping cough.
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Being daughters of Eve, young ladies are of course partial to twilight.

A Severe Cold for Three Months.

The following letter from A. J. Nusbaum, of Batesville, Ind., tells its own story. "I suffered for three months with a severe cold. A druggist prepared me some medicine, and a physician prescribed for me, yet I did not improve. I then tried Foley's Honey and Tar, and eight doses cured me." Refuse substitutes. Denton & Ward.

There is evidently electricity in a cornfield, because it produces shocks.

Dangers of Pneumonia.

A cold at this time if neglected is liable to cause pneumonia which is so often fatal, and even when the patient has recovered the lungs are weakened, making them peculiarly susceptible to the development of consumption. Foley's Honey and Tar will stop the cough, heal and strengthen the lungs prevent pneumonia. Denton & Ward.

The kleptomaniac regards things from an abstract point of view.

La grippe coughs yield quickly to the wonderful curative qualities of Foley's Honey and Tar. There is nothing else "just as good." Denton & Ward.

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Pekin Ducks, stock of Wm. Bereiter, La Salle, Ill. Drakes $1.00, Ducks 75 cents. I also have Pure Bred Toulouse Geese for sale, stock of C. C. Shoemaker, Freeport, Ill. Ganders, weighing 20 lbs apiece $2.00, Geese $1.50. Address MRS. J. C. BELKNAP, Ryan, Ia. 46tf

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Improvement of Corn.

"Uncle Henry" Wallace, is devoting a good deal of space in his paper, Wallaces' Farmer to the improvement of Iowa Corn. He calls attention to the fact that while the Iowa Farmer has been improving his live stock for twenty years and more he has given very little attention to the great Iowa crop, corn. Among the many articles which have appeared in Wallace's Farmer on this subject has been a series by Prof. Shamel, of Illinois, the corn expert, and these are illustrated by a number of photographs showing different varieties of corn, perfect and imperfect ears, the most profitable to raise, etc. The average Iowa farmer thinks he knows as much about corn as anybody does but we miss our guess if he cannot learn a lot from these articles in Wallaces' Farmer.

In this connection we wish to say that Wallaces' Farmer is one of the best agricultural papers that comes to this office. It is handsomely printed on paper of fine quality, filled with attractive illustrations, and in addition to its regular features, its editorials by "Uncle Henry," its departments of Dairying, Horticulture, the Hog and Poultry, its Home Department, for the women; contains full reports of the leading fairs, live stock shows, and sales, agricultural meetings, etc. It is published weekly at Des Moines, Iowa at $1.00 a year, all subscriptions payable in advance and the paper stops when the time is out. We can send Wallaces' Farmer and the Democrat both one year for only 2.25 and you get one of our nice premiums. Apply at the Democrat office.

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