

THE DAILY SHORT STORY

A Good Catch.

By R. RAY BAKER.

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“EITHER of them would be a good catch,” said Mrs. Hendricks, bustling about the studio and setting things to rights. “I believe, though, I would take Mr. Seldon—if I was doing the selecting.” Mrs. Hendricks, erstwhile society matron, now “on her uppers,” and serving Clare Hawley as general business manager, social mentor, book-keeper, housekeeper and maid, punched a sofa pillow in the face and reversed it against the back of the divan, then stood off, arms akimbo, and surveyed the offending object with a no less critical eye than she would have used in arranging draperies in a royal palace.

Clare Hawley, artist, clad in dressing gown and slippers, smiled somewhat tolerantly at the subject interested her about as much as the price of ice in the arctic, and went on munching meditatively on a piece of dry toast while she reclined lazily in a deep, luxurious chair. Now and then she sipped from a cup of steaming coffee.

Success had been dwelling with Clare for three months. Her picture, “The Water Lily’s Dance,” had met with such favor, once it got on exhibition, that she was carried in twenty-four hours from the bottom rung of the ladder, where she had plodded and groveled and half starved, to the top where she worked when it struck her fancy and lived on the best the land afforded.

Much of her success with “The Water Lily’s Dance” was due to the efforts and influence of Mrs. Hendricks, who was largely responsible for placing the picture on exhibition; so when Mrs. Hendricks suffered a decided reverse in fortune through the eccentricities of Wall Street and came to her with a tale of woe, Clare gave her a place in the studio. Mrs. Hendricks never would have served any one else in the same capacity; but she worshiped art, and artists, and especially did she worship her protégé.

“Mr. Pontello, though, is the best looking,” Mrs. Hendricks observed, seizing a dustless duster and getting busy with it about the legs of a table. “And they’re both rich—that’s the best part of it,” she added as an afterthought, as though that phase of the subject had never before occurred to her.

Clare drained the coffee cup, wiped some remnants of toast from her lap and laid the cup and plate on the table.

“Oh, they’re both fine fellows, and both good-looking, and both very accomplished musicians, and both rich,” she said, standing and making a few alterations in the arrangements of her hair. “Mr. Seldon plays worse on the violin and Mr. Pontello has no peer at the piano.”

If Mrs. Hendricks could have become cognizant of the workings of Clare’s mind just then, she would have gasped with astonishment for neither the pale blue eyes of Mr. Seldon nor the midnight orbs of Mr. Pontello played even a minor role in the meditations of the procrastinating artist.

The picture that Clare visualized had to do with a country town. She visioned herself in a sunbonnet, and gingham dress walking along the creek in company of a freckled youth who was carrying her books.

The scenes shifted, and the new one might have been called “Six Years Later” if it had been part of a film play. In her fancy she was attending a barn dance, where country lads and lassies cavorted and coqueted and flirted in their rustic way, and all of them were smiling and happy, although none was handsome or accomplished or rich.

The music was furnished by a tall, gangling youth, mounted on a platform, sawing on a violin and stamping his foot loudly to make up for the absence of drums. The gangling youth was the freckled boy grown up.

Another scene showed Clare on the rear platform of the last coach of a train, which was moving from a station. The gangling youth stood on the platform, a forlorn-looking object, and Clare’s eyes, which hears as the train carried her out of sight.

Clare sighed, and took from a drawer of the table a letter which she opened and read. Her mouth took on a wistful expression, and her eyes glistened.

Mrs. Hendricks bustled into the room an hour later and found Clare busy at her easel.

“Have you decided, dearie?” she asked. “Have you chosen?”

“I have. At our little party tonight you will announce my engagement.”

grave as they listened. Clare actually cried.

CONFESSIONS OF A BRIDE

But my husband was not waiting at home to listen to my explanation, to kiss and to make up. It was a day of sad mischances. I determined to be ruled by them no longer. It was ridiculous to be so unhappy because Bob had not been at the other end of the wire when I tried to phone him; that I was undertaking a disagreeable exploit—for the honor of the family! It was absurd to let Ann Lorimer put her little finger in my domestic affairs.

I would have done with mischances, I would be master of my fate. I would model the remainder of the day in a sane and logical manner.

So I set to work in just the ordinary way of the average loving wife, the way which usually leads to success: I prepared an especially salty dinner for my loving husband. I spread the table with my finest linen and upon it I arranged the Copenhagen china which Bob approves so highly.

Then I put on a brand new frock which Bob had never seen, a becoming girlish thing of pale pink georgette, with a drapery of cream-colored chiffon cut like an apron, and liberally frilled, and tied with a huge soft bow just below my shoulder blades.

A wonderful white “cover-all” protected my dainty dress while I set in a row on the kitchen table all the ingredients for Bob’s favorite dish—a soufflé. When I heard Bob’s car on the drive I would stir all the things together and pop the dish into the oven. Then I would fling off my white apron and take to the edge of the garden and greet my man with a perfectly grand hug.

In my heart I believed that nothing in the world was important enough to come between me and my husband. I suppose that is trust of a supreme kind, the kind all men desire and few know what to do with when they get it.

When the preparations for the soufflé were completed I felt almost giddy. Moreover the bleu chémin, pink silk, and cream-colored chiffon made a French color combination which Bob would enjoy. I decided as I busied myself in my dining-room.

Bob was five minutes late, I noticed as I slipped my glass baking dish from its silver holder and set it ready for the soufflé mixture. But no matter. The odor of white lilacs intrigued me. I would have time to deck my table with them and as I gathered them I would plan just how to explain that unfortunate scene in the parlor.

Before I had anchored the unruly lilacs heads so that they would not drip upon my table cloth it was 15 minutes after the dinner hour. “No matter,” I repeated, although I was not often Bob kept our dinner waiting. I ran upstairs, pinned back a straggling tress, powdered my nose, and rubbed a wrinkle from between my eyebrows. Downstairs, once more, I relaxed and quite scientifically while I waited.

Thirty minutes after the dinner hour—and still no Bob! Perhaps an accident had happened to him. When I had last seen him, his car was leaping up the hill. It seemed to my excited imagination.

Forty-five minutes after the dinner hour—and my husband had not phoned to me! That was a new experience. I picked up the phone to call his father’s house and inquire about him. Perhaps his mother was ill. I took off the receiver and then rudely replied to the operator’s inquiry by hanging it up abruptly.

Why betray our domestic differences to my husband’s family? In my heart I knew I had no reason to worry about Bob. He was staying away from me because he was angry. He was jealous and he was making me pay. He would come, of course, in an hour or two.

I would try to wait patiently—but oh! the hurt of it! I felt as if I were enduring a quite unique hurt—as if no other woman had ever suffered so. But then, there was the Madame Butterfly music to prove the universal grief of the woman who waits for a man to come. Men like that music—Bob more than most men.

Two hours passed—and still no husband. I went over the pretty table I had set, wept over the wilted salad and the crystal bowl of strawberries, and the soufflé which never had had a chance to prove itself either a failure or a success.

Salt tears ran down my cheeks as I packed the food into the refrigerator and locked the rear doors of the house.

After I had gone upstairs, it occurred to me that I had forgotten to eat any supper. It also occurred to me that that little fool, Ann Lorimer, had caused a domestic tangle which might be hard to straighten out.

(To Be Continued.)

“COSTUME TAILLEUR” IS DESIGN FROM PARIS



By CORA MOORE, New York’s Fashion Authority. NEW YORK, June 8.—Designers of street costumes are providing us with a new thrill every other day or two, so while the “strictly tailored” suit is still highly approved of Fashion, it is difficult to resist the appeal of the gayer, more fanciful models.

Here is one, for instance, a “costume tailleur” as the Paris designer calls it, that suggests alluring possibilities for making over an old suit. Emily Stevens wears it in “Foot-loose.”

ADVENTURES OF THE TWINS

(By Olive Roberts Barton)

Ben Bbunny in Trouble.

After Ben Bunny had explained to his wife that he had traded his long ears for Scramble Squirrel’s lousy tail, he decided to go out and learn how to climb a tree. “Surely,” he muttered as he hopped along, for Nancy and Nick heard him, “I can climb now with those big ears of the top of my head and this nice tail to balance me.” He hadn’t noticed on his way out of his house that his tail had knocked over two chairs, and pushed all the pictures crooked. It kept Mrs. Bunny a whole day doing out the house again!

Ben decided on a hickory-nut tree to make his attempt at climbing, but try as he would he couldn’t get up any higher than a few inches.

“Shucks,” he said finally. “This tail’s no good! It’s heavy and it pulls me down. Oh, goodness! There’s Fleet the Fox. Funny, I didn’t hear him before.”

“Oh, goodness! There’s Fleet the Fox. Funny, I didn’t hear him before. How did he ever get so near? I’ll have to hurry like everything now.”

Off he scampered to an old tangle of briars he knew about. He knew, too, if he’d get there he’d be pretty safe. He grinned a satisfied smile as he thought of something else too.

“Wasn’t I wise to get rid of my ears, though!” he chuckled, running like anything. “They won’t give me away now, as they used to, for they’re safe on Scramble Squirrel’s head.”

He flopped into the thicket just in time, for Fleet was right at his heels.

But perhaps you’ve guessed what happened. Ben had completely forgotten all about his bushy tail which was sticking out behind him, and Fleet Fox grabbed it and bit off a good sized piece.

“Ouch!” cried the bunny, shivering with fright at his narrow escape. “I don’t like this tail at all, and I want my ears back! I shall go and see Scramble tomorrow.”

Nancy and Nick hurried back to Scrub-Up Land to tell Rubadub, the fairyman.

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SISTER MARY’S KITCHEN

(Copyright, 1920, N. E. A.)

Although both sugar and fruit may be scarce and high this summer every housekeeper feels the urge to “put up” a few cans of fruit and jars of preserves.

Even with the high cost of the raw materials there is no doubt but that home-preserved fruit is the cheapest and best.

When one buys preserves made of the choicest fruit one must pay for the labor and care that the home canner does herself.

The question of risk of spoiling involved in home canning is to be considered and unless a housekeeper is willing to give infinite care and patience, the chances are that her fruit will spoil and sugar and fruit be a total loss.

Menu for Tomorrow. BREAKFAST—Halves of grape-fruit French toast, syrup, coffee. LUNCHEON—Nut balls, baking powder biscuit, “sunshine” strawberry preserves, tea.

DINNER—Spanish steak, mashed potatoes, dandelion greens, asparagus salad, jellied prunes, coffee.

My Own Recipes. When fruit is made into preserves there is less danger of the fruit spoiling than in mere canning. Sugar is a preservative and is used in large quantities for preserved fruit. If I have preserves for luncheon, I seldom serve a dessert. If your family demands dessert, it will not pay you to use the amount of sugar necessary to make the sunshine preserves.

SUNSHINE STRAWBERRY PRESERVES. Select large, perfect berries, hull and wash carefully. Weigh. Use pound for pound of sugar and fruit. Put a layer of fruit in a porcelain preserving kettle, add a layer of sugar, then

berries and continue until all are used. Let stand over night. In the morning bring to a boil and simmer 5 minutes. Pour out onto big platters, cover with glass or mosquito netting and put outdoors in the sun until the syrup is thick. Stir occasionally, being careful not to break the fruit. Twelve hours of hot direct sunshine will cook the syrup enough. If glass is used it must be removed and dried frequently. Seal in jelly glasses or pint jars.

NUT BALLS. 1 cup cold cooked meat (finely chopped) 1/4 cup finely chopped blanched almonds. 1/2 teaspoon salt 1-8 teaspoon pepper 1 egg

Mix thoroughly and form into small balls the size of a walnut. 1 1/2 cups strained tomato juice. 1 tablespoon butter 1 scant tablespoon flour Salt, pepper and celery pepper.

Stir in flour and adding tomato juice slowly. Season. Put balls in a baking dish, pour over sauce and bake in a moderate oven for 20 minutes.

The meal that’s seasoned with contentment and eaten with the sauce of cheerfulness never causes an attack of indigestion.

MARY. An aerial freight and mail transportation system which will eventually employ 2000 airplanes in serving 70 American cities, will be inaugurated July 1, with Cleveland as its headquarters.

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Pro Rats. He was dining alone and had much time to puzzle over an unusual phenomenon he had noted.

“Why is it, Sam?” he said, addressing the waiter. “That poor man usually give larger tips than rich men?”

“Well, sir,” rejoined the woolly-headed knight of the napkins meditatively, “looks to me like de po’ man don’t want nobody to find out he’s po’ an’ de rich man don’t want nobody to find out he’s rich.”—Country Gentleman.

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IF THAT GUY CAN GET IN THE MOVIES I’VE STILL GOT A CHANCE! YES, I’VE GOT MORE THAN A CHANCE!