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The Rivals

By ALVAH JORDAN GARTH

(Copyright, 1919, by Western Newspaper Union.)

Two young men met on the crowded city street and shook hands, gingerly rather than suspiciously. Each scanned the other in a fathoming sort of way, as though seeking to read his thoughts or to determine from general appearance or facial expression how the world had fared with him, for they had not met to speak for two years.

There was a sharp contrast between the two. Alden Dale, plainly but neatly dressed, suggested the student and thinker.

Garland Eyre, flashing eyed, mobile of lips, restless and erratic in his movements, suggested the typical broker, ever on the alert and under a strain. He covertly observed the suit-case, momentarily constructing a theory as to its presence. "Off on a train, I see!" he remarked.

"Why, yes," replied Alden in his straightforward way. "I'm going home for a week or two."

"Wish I could arrange to do that. Believe I'll try," said Eyre, his underlying purpose camouflaged, for Alden detected the thin disguise of general-ity. "I'd like to loaf around the old burg for a spell. How have the fates dealt with you, Dale?"

"Pleasantly," answered Alden. "I was admitted to the bar in August and they honored me with an appointment with the Law Protective League. The compensation is only a livelihood, but it is useful work and fine legal train-

ing, and I have written a book or two, and that has helped out."

"Show me something!" bolted out Eyre, and he took a bankbook from his pocket. "That's me!"

His were all money values, as he showed the chronicle of bank balances approximating thirty thousand dollars. "Promoted the Casa Grande Realty company, you know," he said.

"Why, I read something lately in the newspaper that the company had failed," observed Alden.

"Yes, we hit a snag and they landed a receiver down on us," admitted Eyre lightly, "but we reorganized. Money coming both ways, see? The investors have come on with a pro rata assessment, so we are still gathering in the shekels. Got to attend a meeting of the directors," he added, glancing at his watch and flashing his bediamonded hand effectively, "so good-by. I say, though, a pretty neat surplus for two years, eh?"

Alden went on his way immersed in thought. There was a strong distaste in his mind as he reflected over what Eyre had just told him. The Casa Grande had been denominated a swindle in the public prints. "Milked dry by its exploiters," it was declared. "Two years!" The words comprised a text for some meditation. When the two young men had left their native village both were in love with Myrtle Robbins. By a queer coincidence both had decided to try their fortunes in the city, and in turn they had visited bluff, straightforward Peter Robbins and had intimated their feelings toward Myrtle.

"Well," said Mr. Robbins, "what you are after is to get me to allow Myrtle to keep up a correspondence with you? Plainly—no. You are promising young fellows, and I wish you all kinds of luck, and Myrtle likes you both, but she is too young to think of a beau. In two years, when you have shown

your business mettle, come back here, and that has helped out."

So Alden and Eyre had to be content with that, and now the two-year period was up and the one thought in the mind of Alden was Myrtle. And Garland Eyre attended no directors' meeting, but, hurrying to his hotel, packed his grip forthwith and reached Virden one train later than Alden.

"In a showdown I feel pretty sure that old Robbins will favor my fat bank roll," he chirped complacently, and, being of the brassy, push-ahead kind, by nightfall of the next day all Virden knew of his diamonds and gaudy attire and bank roll. When that evening he called at the Robbins home it was in a big hired motorcar, and he spent two hours talking mainly of himself and his glittering prospects for wealth. He flattered he had impressed Myrtle greatly, attributing her subdued manner to awe and admiration.

If he had been present during the visit of Alden the following evening, however, Eyre would not have felt so sure of himself. Father and daughter had heard of his work in the city, particularly of his writings. The modest young author was duly delighted when he found both Myrtle and her father familiar with the same. Before the week was out, in turn the young men called upon Mr. Robbins requesting permission to pay their addresses to Myrtle.

Alas! for the lofty aspiration of the reorganizer of Casa Grande. The morning paper announced the issuance of a fraud order against its promoters and a levy on the stockholders against all their bank funds, including Eyre's thirty thousand dollars. The latter found it judicious to return at once to the city to untangle his involved business affairs.

When Alden Dale called upon Mr. Robbins next day the latter viewed him with an approving eye.

"To help you on your way, Dale,"

said the old man, paternally, "I'll say that Myrtle has kept your photograph on the wall of her room ever since you went away. If she likes you as well as she did your books your case is won and—I'm agreeable!"

"Pigs in the Blankets"

By SAIDE E. BALCOM

(Copyright, 1919, by the Western Newspaper Union.)

"Will be with you noon train. Can stay over one night.—Bach."

This was the telegram that Nelson Wright received at his office and instantly the dull day was transformed. He sprang to his feet briskly and snatched up the telephone receiver, calling in turn three close male friends who were favorite chums.

If there was anybody in the world whom Nelson particularly liked it was this electrifying "Bach." Joyfully he hailed one and each of his chums. "I've told you about Bach. Well, he'll be here today, so hold yourself open for supper."

He had known Bach for two years when he was working in the city. When Nelson returned to his home town and put out his shingle as a budding attorney he had kept up a regular correspondence with this price of good fellows. He had known that Bach was off on a jaunt for a month and was duly delighted to learn that on his way home he would stop over at Springdale.

Bach, as Verne Dayton was familiarly designated, was not over twenty-five but was an avowed woman hater

and confirmed society hermit. Outside of that he was the most munificent and jovial of hosts and entertainers.

Chef as well as host, Bach had become an expert in the preparation of dishes that would appeal to the most critical of bon vivants. The little kitchen of the suite was his kingdom half the evening, while he pottered around with every latest accessory of cookery to provide a perfect meal.

"Bliss the better sex!" he was wont to observe chivalrously, "but none in my blasted life. Think of it, fellows; from ten to sixteen the special victim of a parsimonious step-mother whose cooking was sparse as it was sloppy. I recall mackerel every day drowned in a greasy gravy that even the flies wouldn't touch. Evenings, inevitable and unvaried yellow corn meal and molasses. After my father's death I was relegated to an aged aunt. Poor soul! She did her best but she had no more appetite than a bird and forgot that I had one. I was literally starved to death. At nineteen I was alone in the world and thrown upon that desolate rock of refuge, a cheap boarding house. Do you wonder, when I made a lucky hit in business and had the means to do as I liked I eschewed cooks and became fastidious as to cookery? True, there are some meals to be had for a small fortune, but give me my own frying pan at my own fire-side and I am content."

Bronzed, clear eyed, bright faced, it was a little after noon when Verne entered Nelson's office to receive a hearty welcome.

"Had the time of my life!" declared Verne in his boyish, wholesome way. "A tent, a campfire, nature, and cookery to my individual taste."

"We want some more of it," returned Nelson fondly, "right here, in this town, and tonight. I've invited

three friends who have heard of your wonderful culinary genius. See here, my mother and sister are away in the next town for a couple of days. I'm going to give you the key to the house and I want you to get and prepare the ingredients for one of your famous welsch rarebit treats."

"Well, I'll do just that!" answered Verne with animation. "It will seem good to get back to a real home kitchen."

At five o'clock that afternoon Lorena Wright returned home. She paused in surprise as she noticed that the kitchen window was open and adorned with one of her aprons and fluttering about table and stove, was the self-constituted cook. He observed her and looked startled and then sheepish, but the sweet smile on Lorena's face as he revealed who he was and his mission, not only restored her complacency, but presented the unspoken opinion that his chum's sister was worth looking at twice. The invited guests arrived, the rarebit was really a work of art, and Verne was invited to supper the next evening.

"I have got a new delicacy I wish to try," explained Lorena, and Verne somehow was glad to protract his stay. When a puzzling new dish was set on the table the next evening he dispatched his share with all the appreciation of a delighted connoisseur.

"I never enjoyed such a reflection!" he insisted enthusiastically. "What is it, Miss Wright?"

"Pig in blankets they call it," explained Lorena. "Shall I give you the recipe? It is somewhat elaborate. You wash some oysters and roll them up in thin strips of bacon and skewer them with a small toothpick, sprinkle pepper, dip in melted butter, broil on hot toast, garnish with lemon and white celery, and there you are." Two weeks later Verne Dayton re-

appeared at Springdale. Of course Nelson invited him up to the house.

"Miss Wright," said Verne, "no one can follow out that recipe like you. I simply had to come back to try another feast of those 'pigs.'"

And later out of hearing of others as he supposed, Verne remarked to Nelson: "What I've really come for is to get better acquainted with a pretty girl and a perfect cook."

And Lorena overheard and covered her face with her hands, blushing—and was glad.

A Waiting Game.
"Suppose you wait here in this comfortable seat while I match these two samples of ribbon," said Mrs. Simon sweetly to her husband, who had been entrapped into going shopping with her.

When she came back she said contentedly: "Have I kept you waiting an unpardonable long time, you poor dear?"

"Oh, I haven't minded it," he said cheerfully. "I just jumped on a car and ran up to the football match, and then I took a little spin in Jack Dance's new car. Did you match the samples?"
"One of them. It's so provoking, I shall have to come in again tomorrow, for they are just closing the shop."—London Ideas.

