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CHRISTMAS

THERE'S a little old man with silvery hair
An' a long white beard 'at flies in the air,
With twinkin' black eyes an' a rosy, red
face,
An' 'nct a year he comes to our place,
An' our little maid
An' our little man
Ez anxious to see 'im soon's they can.
But you better take keer, fer some folks say
'At it yer naughty he'll fly away,
An' quicker 'a you kin whistle—pew—

Away he's gone up the chimney flue!
So our little maid
An' our little man
Ez tryin' to be jest ez good's they can.
But of yer good an' 'bey yer pa
An' 'don't never cry an' vex yer ma
He'll fill yer stockin's with games an' toys
An' nuts an' sweets an' all sorts o' joys.
So our little maid
An' our little man
Wants Santy to come jes' as quick 's he can.

withstanding the increasing familiarity of the acquaintanceship, Marjorie knew no more of his personal affairs at the end of nine months than she did during the first week.

There was one other subject on which he was equally reticent, and that was the discussion regarding the rhyme for "Rachel." The remarkable offer in connection with this matter was a subject of unending curiosity and discussion in literary circles; but Carter Dillington pointedly avoided every allusion to it. To Marjorie, on the contrary, it was one of alluring interest.

She hesitated a long time before venturing to speak to Mr. Dillington about it. His peculiar aversion to the whole matter embarrassed her. The mere mention of the name "Rachel" disturbed him, and her occasional efforts to lead the conversation around to the subject were promptly frustrated.

Finally, however, she decided to appeal to him for help. Only one more week remained, and she beheld her dreams of wealth fading into the dull reality of drudgery. So, as he was about to take his departure after a short call on Christmas eve, she said suddenly: "If a person were to find a rhyme for 'Rachel' it would make him famous, wouldn't it?"

"I suppose it would," he answered dryly.

"And it would make him rich?"

"Oh, yes." Then in the same breath he abruptly changed the conversation.

Mr. Benjamin F. Morton. He was a trifle eccentric, and one of his hobbies was writing poetry. He took a great fancy to a nephew of his and spared no money to have the boy well educated. The old gentleman himself had a very limited education, and he was determined that his nephew should not be handicapped as he had been. Well, just about the time the boy got through college the old gentleman struck a snag in this poem of his about Fedora Lillian Hildegarde et al., and he called upon his nephew to help him out with a rhyme for "Rachel." The young man informed him that there was no such rhyme, but his uncle refused to believe it. He insisted that as the lad had had a college education he could find a rhyme if he chose. Well, the upshot of it was that the old gentleman took it into his head that his nephew was obstinate and ungrateful, and he cast him off. A short time before he died, however, he finally concluded that perhaps there really was no rhyme for "Rachel," and he decided to reinstate his nephew in his will; but with this proviso: That a rhyme should first be advertised for and that should any person produce such a rhyme within a year, then the money should go to such person, instead of the nephew.

"As the executors, we, of course, followed the provisions of the will, but we were definitely satisfied there was no such rhyme. And yet you say you have found one. I am free to say it seems incredible, incredible. Still, at the same time, the offer is a bona fide."

A Song for Christmas

HANT me a rhyme of
Christmas—
Sing me a jovial song—
And though it is filled with
laughter,
Let it be pure and strong

Sing of the hearts brimmed over
With the story of the day—
Of the echo of childish voices
That will not die away—

Of the blare of the tasseled bugle,
And the timeless clatter and beat
Of the drum that throbs to muster
Squadrons of scampering feet.

But, O, let your voice fall fainter,
Till, blent with a minor tone,
You temper your song with the beauty
Of the pity Christ hath shown,

And sing one verse for the voiceless;
And yet, ere the song be done,
A verse for the ears that hear not,
And a verse for the sightless one.

For though it be time for singing
A merry Christmas glee,
Let a low, sweet voice of pathos
Run through the melody.

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

The Rhyme for Rachel

By Clifford Howard

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Seated in a street car, Miss Marjorie Hollis was absorbed in the latest issue of the Literary Post. It contained this week a most unusual announcement, and it was this which now occupied her attention to the exclusion of all else. The announcement read as follows:

We, the undersigned, executors under the will of a person whose name we withhold for the present, desire to announce that, in accordance with the terms of said will, the sum of \$250,000 will be paid to the first person who will submit to us a rhyme for the name Rachel. This bequest is based on the following conditions, viz.: 1. The rhyme must be a legitimate one. Dialect, foreign or invented words will not be considered. 2. This offer is limited to one year, dating from December 31, 1909.

In explanation of the foregoing offer it is deemed proper to state the following facts: Among the effects of the testator above referred to is an unfinished poem addressed to a lady whose full Christian

name was Fedora Lillian Grace Lorain Hildegarde Louise Rachel. The said poem was written by the testator for the purpose of bringing into rhyme each one of the names aforementioned. He succeeded in writing six stanzas, in which the first six names were respectively introduced in accordance with his aforesaid purpose; but he was unable to complete the poem because of his failure to find a rhyme for the last name—Rachel. For certain personal reasons he provided in his will that an attempt be made, in the manner above set forth, to discover such a rhyme.

As full conditions and all necessary information are contained in the foregoing announcement, the undersigned must decline to consider any inquiries for further explanation.

DUNBURY & BORDEAU,
Attorneys-at-Law, Washington, D. C.

Circumstances compelled Marjorie Hollis to earn her living, and against these circumstances her aristocratic and artistic soul waged constant rebellion. Her family and her acquaintances generally regarded her as a spoiled child, troubled with extravagant tastes and a lack of practical sense. On her side, she felt that she was not understood nor properly appreciated—until she met Carter Dillington.

Like herself, Mr. Dillington was poor and had literary aspirations, and Marjorie felt that in him she had at last found a sympathetic fellow-mortal.

He accepted special invitations to the house, but rarely called of his own accord, appearing content to ride home with her in the evening. He was excessively reserved—that was one of his peculiarities—so that



Tick tack, tick tack,
Three minutes to eight by the
nursery clock,
Tick tack, tick tack,
"D'you fink it's nearly twelve
o'clock?"

Tick tack, tick tack,
"Supposing he's forgot us,
Jack!"

Tick tack, tick tack,
"Won't nurse be cross when
she comes back!"

Tick tack, tick tack,
"Did anyone hear Father
Christmas knock?"
Tick tack, tick tack,
(It was nurse who came with
a loaded sack!)

R. M. B.

"Perhaps, Miss Hollis, it may interest you to know that I expect in the next week or two to come into possession of a small fortune, and I hope then to be married;" and holding out his hand he bade Marjorie good night.

"Good night," she responded mechanically; and as the door closed she staggered into the parlor, and, throwing herself upon the sofa, burst into a torrent of passionate tears.

Suddenly her sobbings ceased. She sat up, bewildered, startled. In the midst of the turmoil of her troubled spirit there had burst upon her—without warning, without thought—a rhyme for "Rachel!"

Two days later Marjorie Hollis was in Washington; and on the morning of December 27 she walked into the office of Dunbury & Bordeau and quietly announced to those two gentlemen that she had come to claim the \$250,000 for a rhyme for "Rachel."

For a moment the two men stared at her without uttering a sound.

Mr. Dunbury was the first to find his voice. "Impossible!" he ejaculated. Then noticing the sudden flush upon the girl's face he checked himself. "Pardon me, my dear young lady! I did not mean to doubt your word; but you have astonished us beyond measure. Let me explain," and he placed his chair beside hers.

"The extraordinary offer to which you have responded was made in compliance with the will of our late client,



"Impossible!" He ejaculated.

mate one. It will certainly prove a most astonishing revelation to us and—to the nephew, Carter Dillington."

Marjorie felt that she was about to faint.

"May I have just a moment to think?" she asked faintly.

"Certainly, certainly! I did not mean to hurry you. Of course, I understand, you feel a trifle agitated; but take your time, and you'll recall the rhyme in a minute or two."

Several moments passed in silence. Then Marjorie arose. She faced the two lawyers, and with a tremor in her voice that she struggled bravely to subdue, she said slowly: "I have not forgotten the rhyme; but—but I have decided not to submit it."

It was New Year's day when Marjorie again saw Carter Dillington. He called late in the afternoon. Why had he come? she asked herself. Was it to torment her? To cause her wounded heart to bleed afresh? He appeared not to heed her constrained manner, nor the quick flushes that reddened her cheeks.

"Marjorie," he said suddenly, with an impulsiveness and a familiarity he had never before manifested; "you have wished me a happy New Year. Do you know that it is you alone who can make the year happy for me—supremely happy? I did not dare express my feelings before I was absolutely sure that I could offer you the comforts and the pleasures you deserve. Now, I am independent—

wealthy; and you, Marjorie, will you share my fortune with me?"

It was late ere the lovers were ready to part. "Is it any wonder," he was saying, as he lingeringly prepared to leave, "that I avoided the subject of my uncle's outlandish offer? Supposing that by some possibility there had been a rhyme for 'Rachel,' supposing some one had succeeded in finding it! But thank fortune, dear, there is none!"

"Yes, but there is a rhyme for 'Rachel,'" she answered softly, casting down her eyes to hide her sudden emotion. "Would you like to hear it? Let us sit down here, on the sofa, and I will tell it to you."

She waited a moment after they were seated, and then in a half tremulous whisper she recited the following lines:

"A fitting rhyme has long been found,
For each and all of these—
Fedora, Lillian, Grace, Lorain
And Hildegarde, Louise;
And in these names themselves we find
The hidden rhyme for Rachel;
For, lo, the letters of these names
Are F. L. G. L., H. L."

Then in the quiet glow of the midnight firelight she told him her little story.

Many persons find themselves affected with a persistent cough after an attack of influenza. As this cough can be promptly cured by the use of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy, it should not be allowed to run on until it becomes troublesome. Sold by all druggists.



A Mistletoe Bow-Wow



The Christmas Tree