

THE CELINA DEMOCRAT

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THE HOODOO

By Rosalind Morse

Mame was out of sorts. She felt that she had every reason to be, and nursed her wrath accordingly. The floor walker, at other times her beau ideal of manly perfection, after causing her a smile of condescending affability which passed unnoticed, walked on down the aisle in recited astonishment.

Who, pray, was Mame to ignore one of his standing, and—er—good looks? A customer whose station in life and whose question afforded excellent opportunity for repartee received merely an absent-minded "Two aisles down," as Mame stared resentfully at Bessie's massive golden pompadour, which rivaled in luster the silver she was selling at the wall counter. Mame sold jewelry, so called through courtesy.

And had she not every reason to be incensed? It was the same old story. For two years she had gone with Jim. During that time she had made herself over into the kind of girl he professedly admired. Had she not left off at least half her puffs at his request? Had she not lowered her cherished pompadour to quite common and unnoticeable dimensions? Her swell earrings had been sacrificed at the altar of love, one by one her near-diamond rings had followed suit, and last, oh crowning grief, her purple hat.

She no longer flirted with the other fellows; no more did she feel it a necessity to go out every night of her life. In short, her every habit had been changed to please this exacting beau.

What had happened? Two weeks ago she had introduced him to her very best lady friend, the girl to whom she daily laid bare her heart, to the great discomfiture of customers; the one, in short, whom, next to Jim, she most loved and trusted. What was the result? Bessie, who was, and who gloried in being, all the things she had ceased to be at Jim's request, and then some, instantly attracted that individual's feeble attention to the exclusion of all else.

Would Bessie give up her jewels and pompadour? Not she! She shone more resplendent each day in the things—bitter thought—with which Jim presented her. Would she stay at home evenings? Jim took her to a new and more attractive place every day as soon as work was over, while the deserted Mame was hourly forced to watch the glow of triumph in the eyes of the now despised Bessie.

At this point in her reflections she was interrupted by a customer who, she was dimly aware, had spoken several times. She forced herself to pay attention.

"I would like something to give a little girl of 10 on her birthday. Can you suggest anything?" asked the young woman.

Mame tore her glance from the wall counter and turned it on her wares.

"Those hatpins are awfully swell; 98 cents," she remarked.

"She doesn't wear hatpins yet," meekly suggested the wood-be purchaser.

"No, of course not," agreed Mame. "There's those pocketbooks, genuine German silver, marked from \$1. We're selling a lot of those, and there's these little opal rings, real opals, four ninety-eight."

"I think I'll take one of the little purses. Opals are so dreadfully unlucky, you know."

Mame's interest was at last awakened; in a daze she made out the check and handed over the change. Unlucky, were they? She cast a half-furtive glance at the unconscious Bessie, which changed to a smile of pure hypocrisy as she happened to turn around.

"Say, Bessie," she called to her, "when do you go to lunch? Let's go together."

Bessie, rather overwhelmed at this powerful overture after a week of conspicuous snubs, assented with alacrity. The die was cast.

At lunch they chatted over every known subject, except Jim.

"What are you going to get for a hat this winter, Bessie? I'm afraid I've got to wear my last winter's black one."

"I thought I'd get a lavender one. It goes so well with my hair, don't you think so?" Bessie replied in what seemed to Mame snug satisfaction.

"Yes," said Mame, gritting her teeth, "you go out so much you really ought to get a new one. It's your birthday next week, isn't it? I'm going to send you just a little something to show you I'm sorry I've been so cross."

The two kissed each other effusively, and smiled at each other at intervals all the afternoon. Mame's heart adamant against these wiles.

On the morning of her birthday Bessie was surprised and much affected at receiving a little box containing a dainty opal ring from her loving friend, Mary.

Mame was on hand very early Monday morning, though she was so nervous that she arranged her curls, made of real hair, in five different ways before Bessie arrived, to all appearances, as healthy and happy as ever, and overflowing with gratitude and pleasure in her new ring. All the morning she struck attitudes which best displayed it until Mame was aghast. Had she only added to her rival's charms? Would nothing happen to avenge her? She thought with dismay of the \$4.98 with which she had intended to buy her new shoes, and which now lay in the coffers of R. H. Marsh in exchange for her friend's bauble. Really her last year's shoes were so bad. Tears of vexation filled her eyes.

"What else did you get?" she asked that noon at lunch. She was determined, you see, to keep posted.

"Well, I got the dandiest pair of

(Continued on eighth page.)

REFORMATION OF CALLOPE

(Continued from last week)

tactics in kind. Choosing with a rapid eye the street from which the weakest and least accurate fire had come, he

invaded it at a double quick, abandoning the unprotected middle of the street. With rare cunning the opposing force in that direction, one of the deputies and two of the valorous volunteers, waited, concealed by beer barrels, until Callope had passed their retreat and then peppered him from the rear. In another moment they were reinforced by the marshal and his other men, and then Callope felt that in order to successfully prolong the delights of the controversy he must find some means of reducing the great odds against him.

Not far away was the little railroad station, its building a strong box house 10 by 20 feet resting upon a platform four feet above ground. Windows were in each of its walls. Callope made a bold and rapid spurt for it, the marshal's crowd "smoking" him as he ran. He reached the haven in safety, the station agent leaving the building by a window.

Patterson and his supporters halted under protection of a pile of lumber and held consultations. In the station was an untried desperado who was an excellent shot and carried an abundance of ammunition. For thirty yards on each side of the besieged was a stretch of bare open ground.

Standing near was a hand truck used in the manipulation of small freight. It stood by a shed full of sacked wool, a consignment from one of the sheep ranches. On this truck the marshal and his men piled three heavy sacks of wool. Stopping low, Buck Patterson started for Callope's fort, slowly pushing this loaded truck before him for protection. The posse, scattering broadly, shouldered his to the besieged in case he should slip himself in an effort to repel the juggernaut of justice that was creeping upon him. Only once did Callope make demonstration. He fired from a window, and some tufts of wool spurted from the marshal's trustworthy bulwark.

The marshal was too deeply engrossed in steering his protected helplessly to be aware of the approach of the morning train until he was within a few feet of the platform. The train was coming up on the other side of it. It stopped only one minute at Quick-sand. What an opportunity it would offer to Callope! He had only to step out the other door, mount the train and away!

Abandoning his breastworks, Buck, with his gun ready, dashed up the

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steps and into the room, driving open the closed door with one heave of his weighty shoulder. The members of the posse heard one shot fired inside, and then there was silence.

At length the wounded man opened his eyes. After a blank space he again could see and hear and feel and think. Turning his eyes about, he found himself lying on a wooden bench. A tall man with a perplexed countenance, wearing a big badge with "City Marshal" engraved upon it, stood over him. A little old woman in black with a wrinkled face and sparkling black eyes, was holding a wet handkerchief against one of his temples. He was trying to get these facts fixed in his mind and connected with past events when the old woman began to talk.

"There now, great, big, strong man! That bullet never fetched you—jest skeeted along the side of your head and sort of paralyzed you for a spell. I've heard of such things afore. Concus-sion is what they names it. Abel Watkins used to kill squirrels that way—barkin' 'em, Abe called it. You jest been barked, sir, and you'll be all right in a little bit. Feel lots better already, don't you? You jest lay still awhile longer and let me bathe your head. You don't know me, I reckon, and 'tain't surprisin' that you shouldn't. I come in on that train from Alabama to see my son. Big son, ain't he? Lands, you wouldn't hardly think he'd ever been a baby, would you? This is my son, sir."

Half turning, the old woman looked up at the standing man, her worn face lighting with a proud and wonderful smile. She reached out one veined and calloused hand and took one of her son's. Then, smiling cheerily down at the prostrate man, she continued to dip the handkerchief in the waiting room tin wash basin and gently apply it to his temple.

"I ain't seen my son before," she continued, "in eight years. One of my nephews, Elkannah Price, he's a conductor on one of them railroads, and he got me a pass to come out here. I can stay a whole week on it, and then I'll take me back ag'in. Jest think, now, that little boy of mine has got to be a officer—a city marshal of a whole town! That's somethin' like a constable, ain't it? I never knowed he was a officer. He didn't say nothin' about it in his letters. I reckon he thought his old mother 'd be skeered about the danger he was in. But, laws, I never was much of a hand to git skeered. 'Tain't no use. I heard them guns a-shootin' while I was git-ting 'out of the depot, but I jest walked right along. Then I see son's face lookin' out through the window. I knowed him at once. He met me at the door and squeezed me most to death. And there you was, sir, a-lyin' there jest like you was dead, and I 'lowed wed see what might be done to help set you up."

"I think I'll sit up now," said the concussive patient. "I'm feelin' pretty fair by this time."

He sat, somewhat weakly yet, leaning against the wall. He was a rugged man, big boned and straight. His eyes, steady and keen, seemed to linger upon the face of the man standing so still above him. His look wandered often from the face he studied to the marshal's badge upon the other's breast.

"Yes, yes; you'll be all right," said the old woman, patting his arm. "if you don't get to cuttin' up ag'in and havin' folks shootin' at you. Son told me about you, sir, while you was layin' senseless on the floor. Don't you take it as meddlesome for an old woman with a son as big as you to talk about it. And you mustn't hold no grudge ag'in my son for havin' to shoot at you. A officer has got to take up for the law—it's his duty—and them that acts bad and lives wrong has to suffer. Don't blame my son any, sir. 'Tain't his fault. He's always been a good boy—good when he was growin' up and kind and 'bedient and well behaved. Won't you let me advise you, sir, not to do so no more? Be a good man and leave liquor alone and live peaceably and godly."

The black mittened hand of the old plenderer gently touched the breast of the man she addressed. Very earnest and candid her old, worn face looked. In her rusty black dress and antique bonnet she sat, near the close of a long life, and epitomized the experience of the world. Still the man to whom she spoke gazed above her head, contemplating the silent son of the old mother.

"What does the marshal say?" he asked. "Does he believe the advice is good? Suppose the marshal speaks up and says if the talk's all right?"

The tall man moved uneasily. He fingered the badge on his breast for a moment, and then he put an arm around the old woman and drew her close to him.

"I says this," he said, looking squarely into the eyes of the other man, "that if I was in your place I'd follow it. If I was a drunken, desp'r'te character, without shame or hope, I'd follow it. If I was in your place and you was in mine I'd say: 'Marshal, I'm willin' to swear if you'll give me the chance I'll quit the racket. I'll drop the tan-

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