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### ALL THERE WAS TO IT

By GRACE KERRIGAN.

When Miss Lizzie Carford entered upon her duties as stenographer and typewriter with Ames & Co. she didn't look for any social side of it. There couldn't be any in a business office. She would ask for the respect that is due any girl or woman, no matter whether she has money and social standing or must earn her living.

Ames & Co. were middle-aged men and both married. Both were workers, and both quiet men. They had a small business, but a paying one, and their bookkeeper was also their cashier. He was a young man of twenty-four, and the newcomer was not favorably impressed with him. It is none of the stenographer's business whether the bookkeeper in his den is young or old—good-looking or ugly—social or surly. Neither Mr. Adams nor his partner were good at dictating, and they put the work off on the bookkeeper. Again, they would be the only occupants of the business for hours at a time, and if he was surly and gruff it would make things lonesome.

Mr. Watler Bardsley, the said bookkeeper, was in his den when Miss Carford called and was hired. There had not been a girl in that office in five years he had been there, but he never turned from his desk to look. She had a pleasant voice, but he didn't seem to hear it. After she had gone, and he was told by Ames that she was to take his place, his only comment was: "Very well, sir."

She was waiting for him next morning when he arrived. Mr. Bardsley did not bow. He did not introduce himself. He did not look at her.

She picked up the morning mail and carried it into his den and the girl was there for half an hour to twiddle her thumbs. Then he came out and sat down by the machine and started off with:

"Mr. H. O. Wharton—Dear Sir: You order of the 9th inst. at hand."

Miss Lizzie picked up pad and pen and wrote. There were five letters in all. He never paused to say "comma," "period" or "paragraph," but drove straight ahead, and when finished got up without a word and went back to his den. She typed the letters and laid them on the desk and when Mr. Ames came in they were signed and sent out to be mailed.

"Very well done," said Mr. Ames and that's all there was to it.

At noon Mr. Bardsley went out to lunch.

When he had disappeared Miss Lizzie went out to lunch. She was back first, and when he came in she did not look at him nor he at her. He could have said: "Nice day, Miss Carford?" And she could have answered: "Yes very nice."

But he didn't say and she didn't say. From her place by the machine she could look into the bookkeeper's den and see his back—always his back. After she had surveyed that back for three mortal hours, and could have drawn a war-map of every line and wrinkle, she turned and looked out upon the roof of the adjoining building. There was a clothes-line stretch ed across it, and on that line hung an old red flannel shirt. It flapped in the breeze. It fluttered like a wounded bird. There were moments when it almost ceased to breathe, as it were.

That shirt when new was a blood-red in color. It was now faded to the color of an old brick house in Tarrytown—the one where General Washington once stopped after licking the British to ask the owner for the temporary loan of his boot-jack. The shirt had four patches on it to cover four holes. The buttons were missing, and with increasing age it had shrunk. What was the romance—what the mystery of the old red shirt?

"Why, I thought you'd gone," it was the voice of Mr. Ames at her elbow. The girl had fallen asleep. The bookkeeper had departed without awakening her. Wasn't that the trick of a mean man?

Each day for the next month was like every other day. Outside of the dictation not ten words passed between the stenographer and the bookkeeper. They came and went with out noticing each other. It vexed and annoyed her for the first week and then she said to herself:

"He's probably mad because some one he recommended wasn't taken on instead of me, but if he thinks he'll get rid of me by paying the bear he'll find himself mistaken. I'm real glad to find one man in the city who isn't smirking around and bragging how smart he is!"

Then a son of Mr. Ames' partner came home on his vacation from college. He was a very fresh young man. He wanted to be a high roller, but his father was tight with money matters. He hung about the office a good deal, though neither the bookkeeper nor the stenographer was more than barely civil to him.

At the end of a week, Miss Lizzie noticed that the two partners were anxious and perturbed and held consultations. Some excitement also seemed to have got hold of the bookkeeper. There were three days of this, and then he disappeared and Mr. Ames took his place. It wasn't for the girl to ask why, but she naturally wondered over it. The routine continued about the same. At noon all went to lunch. The door of the bookkeeper's den, in which was the safe, was locked at such times.

At noon one day, instead of going out to lunch, the stenographer munched a big apple and buried her nose in a book she had brought down. A

quarter of an hour had passed when the door briskly opened and the fresh young man entered. He looked towards the den but not around the room. When he was sure no one was inside he produced a key and entered the den. He was inside not over two minutes, and when he reappeared he was stuffing greenbacks into his pockets. He locked the door behind him and then passed out of the office without having glimpsed the watcher.

For a moment the girl reasoned that he was the son of the partner, and had a right to go and come. Then she scented something wrong and put on her hat and hurried down to the street. The young man was just entering an auto in which sat waiting another young man.

"Get it!" queried the latter.  
"You bet!"  
"How much?"  
"Two hundred!"  
"Bully! We'll have a devil of a time!"

The stenographer was in the office when Mr. Ames returned from his lunch. He smiled amiably and passed into the den, but a moment later reappeared, white-faced and trembling. He looked at the girl and tried to speak, but could only stammer.

"Have you missed some money?" she asked.  
"Yes!"

"How much?"  
"Two hundred dollars! I counted it out just before going to lunch. Were you out to lunch?"

"Not today."  
"Then—then—"  
"Then I saw it taken! Had you missed money before?"

"Three times. Didn't you know that was why we turned away Mr. Bardsley? We couldn't say he embezzled it but we were forced to suspect."

"As that son of your partner took the money today he probably took the others. He has a key to the den. I sat right over there and saw him operate."

The partner was called in and informed of what had occurred, and together the two men took up the chase. The young man was run down and he made no denial. In fact, he laid the blame all on his father.

Miss Lizzie took the half-day off. In going home she saw Mr. Bardsley in a doorway. He looked at her but did not bow. She walked straight up to him and said: "You are the biggest cad and snob in the state, but you come along with me!"

He followed her to her home without asking a question, and when they were seated she asked: "Were you miffed because they gave me the place?"

"Why, I was glad of it!" he exclaimed.

"But you never spoke to me."  
"You didn't ask me to lunch."  
"—I daan't!"

"I was afraid you'd snub me!"

"Couldn't you have given me a good morning?"

"I wanted to awful bad, but—"  
Mr. Bardsley dared not look her in the face. He was blushing like a maiden over a marriage proposal. He was fumbling his hands—and moving his feet as if he would run away.

"I see," mused the girl as she studied him. "I have found a shy man, the only one in the world! That changes everything. You will get your place back, and in time—if you are not too shy—"

And in time she became the wife of a shy man, and he was not exhibited at a museum.

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### FORCED TO DECLINE OFFER

Distinguished Professor Must Have Thought He Was a Victim of Leap Year.

An undergraduate at Balliol having fallen ill, his sister came to nurse him, and the master of Balliol paid many visits to the young man's room. They frequently met the sister. There were numerous other visitors during the student's convalescence, and the young lady was greatly attracted by, and finally became engaged to, one of her brother's friends.

When her brother recovered and the young lady was about to depart the master came to say "Good-by." She thanked him warmly for his kindness to her brother, and concluded by saying that she had a great favor to ask of him. The master said that he would be delighted.

Without thinking that her remark was capable of two interpretations, she replied at once, "I should like you to marry me," meaning that he would officiate at the ceremony.

The master, in a state of great agitation, hurried from the room, exclaiming, "My dear young lady, I would be utter misery for both of us!"—London Answers.

### Waitress Had Not Aged.

He had just reached the philosophical stage when he slipped into a restaurant between bars for a bit to eat. He ordered. Then he sat staring ahead, quietly thoughtful in expression, and waited.

"It is admitted he did some waiting, too. What happened to his order couldn't be understood outside the peculiar convolutions of a restaurant kitchen, but he spent half an hour sitting there staring ahead of him.

At last it came. As the waitress put the order before him, he started from his deep study, as if he had forgotten he had an order coming. Then, looking up at the fair transporter of edibles, he said:

"You don't look a day older!"—Everybody's Magazine.

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