

A Page of Interesting Short Stories

Of Course He Had Her Left

By Abner Anthony



WHEN that memorable afternoon at Mrs. Elliott's tea, Mrs. Frederic Scott Dibble carried her cup over to the sofa and sat down in the sight of the whole company to drink tea with Fanny Wheeler, Fanny's young soul soared and her heart pounded with joy. For to be noticed thus publicly by the great lady seemed to her to be the very cap sheaf of human happiness.

Mrs. Frederic Scott Dibble was a very great lady indeed—as millions of money, some sixty years for culture, and French gowns could make her. It is true that back in the old, old days before her husband got to be president of a famous bank she had cooked her own dinners and been glad to have dinners to cook. But nobody remembered this now, or, if they did, refrained from mentioning it. She condescended to recall certain acquaintances and went about to their houses or asked them to extravagant

garden parties. For three months the people who knew her and those who longed to know her were under a tremendous strain. Of these latter folk Fanny Wheeler was one.

Fanny Wheeler had come to town from nowhere. She always had been poor; she had no prospects. Her husband kept the grocery store. But Fanny had ambition. She was a climber by nature. First she climbed into the good graces of her neighbor, Mrs. Hallam, and then by way of Mrs. Hallam she climbed into that select organization known as the Woman's Club. And now by way of the Woman's Club it seemed that she was about to climb into the favor of Mrs. Frederic Scott Dibble.

Fanny went home with her head in a whirl. Sam found her flushed and palpitating when he returned to supper.

"Oh, Sam!" she cried. "I wish you could have seen her things and her pearl necklace. If a single one of her diamonds had dropped in my lap you could give up your old grocery store and I could be a lady for the rest of my life."

"Pshaw!" said Sam. He smiled at her through his spectacles. Sam was too tired usually to show enthusiasm, but he allowed Fanny to have her way. "I'd like to get some of her trade," he added. "She just about keeps Banks going."

But Fanny was a thousand miles above the grocery store just then sailing in the ether of her own imagination.

This was on Thursday. Next Thursday the Woman's Club called a special meeting and elected Fanny Wheeler as secretary. There was a whisper that Mrs. Frederic Scott Dibble had suggested this. "Oh, Sam! This is a step forward, indeed," Fanny sighed happily.

"You bet. Mrs. Dibble's housekeeper phoned in a \$13 order this morning," replied Sam. But Fanny did not hear him.

When two weeks later Mrs. Dibble invited the Woman's Club to a luncheon at Green Flat Fanny went in a new gown that made her look at once young, unsophisticated, and refined. Fanny was amazingly pretty, with lots of animation. Life began to be a feverish delusion

for Fanny. She worshipped wealth and the things of wealth. She looked upon Mrs. Dibble as being beloved of fortune, to be at once respected and revered. Her own life and pleasures dwindled as Mrs. Dibble expanded before her. She would have laid down her best frock for the great lady to walk upon.

Mrs. Dibble without doubt had taken an immense fancy to Fanny. She found in Fanny's exuberant youth and joyous beauty an exhilaration that was beneficial as well as delightful. It seemed she could not have enough of it. She began to take Fanny out in her car, to ask her to the house, to call upon her.

Soon Fanny found her whole time engaged. She fretted if she did not hear from Mrs. Dibble and anxiously imagined that she had fallen from grace. When she did hear she was too excited to attend to minor matters. She neglected her housework. Many a night Sam came home to get his own supper. "I've been with Mrs. Dibble all afternoon," Fanny would say, "and I'm tired

and headachy. I don't care for supper. We had cakes and ices. Oh, get anything you like! Only let me alone."

Once Sam attempted to get further information.

"What did I do? I played bridge with her. She always wins. She's so clever at cards. Oh, I wrote a few letters for her, too. Her social secretary failed to please—Mrs. Dibble objected to her personality and so dismissed her." She is expecting another secretary in a few days. Until she arrives I have offered my services to Mrs. Dibble. She will send her car for me at 10:30 each morning. I shall lunch with her and return at 4. Oh, Sam, isn't it wonderful?"

"Hum!" sneered Sam. "How much will you get for it?"

Fanny flushed. "Sam Wheeler, you degrade friendship when you get a commercial value upon it in this way. The word pay has never passed between Mrs. Dibble and me. It is the last thing I think of. I'm only happy to be of service to her."

Sam rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "I've heard of such things," he said in his low voice.

"What things?" Fanny's tone had an edge.

Sam sighed and shook his head. "Never mind what. But it's all right, Fanny," he said.

For ten days Fanny was completely at Mrs. Dibble's beck and call. Every afternoon she came home tired and peevish. Every morning she overslept, while Sam rummaged the larder for his solitary breakfast. But Sam was silent. Sometimes, however, Fanny caught him looking at her in a way that made her more irritable than she was.

Two days later Fanny came home at noon. She walked into the house, surprising Sam, who sat drinking cold tea and eating bread and butter and ham, which he had brought boiled and sliced from his own store. "I didn't hear the car," he remarked, glancing up. "Forgot anything? Going right back?"

Fanny shook her head, started to take

off her hat, then sat down at the table and burst into tears.

"Great Scott, Fanny!" Sam sprung up and got her into his arms. She leaned against him sobbing.

"I've been—so misused," she said. "I got two letters mixed—and she—called me an—ignoramus. And the housekeeper says that's the way she always talked to her secretary. I let her understand that I was no secretary. I wasn't getting a cent of pay. I just did it to favor her. And—then I came home. Oh, Sam!"

"What, dearie?"

"I ought to have known better. It served me right. I thought she was what she seemed, and she's just a horrid old, tempery woman, for all her money. I've—I've put up with everything these last ten days just to keep in with her, and now—"

"Never mind," said Sam. "You've got me left."

Fanny flung her arms about his neck. "Thank heaven for that!" she cried.

The Secret In Their Hearts

By Joella Johnson



HEY had been playmates; keeping house, making mud pies and planning what they would do when they "grew up." But Robert's father had purchased a new business in the West, and after selling his shop and home had gone on to get a new home for Robert and his mother, who followed him two weeks later.

Jean missed her little comrade and neighbor very much at first, but as she soon started to school and made new friends her small playmate was forgotten, only as from time to time her mother or father spoke of their former neighbors.

As the years passed Jean grew to be a beautiful, brown-eyed young woman.

At school she was popular; and it seemed to her classmates that no social reception or any sort of entertainment was quite right unless Jean was there.

She graduated from the high school and spent the summer before entering college, sewing and studying. Her best times were spent with her piano and violin. On more than one pleasant afternoon, with some companion, or sometimes with a number of classmates, Jean would tramp to the lake, there to spend the time swimming or boating. All of her friends were treated alike by her; she had many, but no special one. She was just a happy girl, liked by all who knew her.

Her friends were loath to have her go, but the summer passed, and just four days after her farewell party she had experienced her first day at Oberlin College, where she was to take up

once more her study of music. She was homesick, but not for long; for soon as in high school she was the leader in all affairs. She loved her work and practice was like play to her.

On each of the different holidays she was invited to the home of some friend. Her roommate claimed her at Christmas. Jean had planned to go home at this time, but as she had no examinations at midyear and would have a longer vacation then, Christmas recess found her at Alice Fones's.

It was the custom of the alumni association to which Alice belonged to hold a reunion on New Year's eve. This year it was to be a masquerade banquet. The girls had great fun planning and making their costumes.

Alice dressed as a nurse and Jean made a charming milkmaid. The grand march was led by Uncle Sam and Miss

Liberty. Jean's partner at the table was a farmer—a strong-looking youth with large straw hat, blue checked overalls, tan shirt with sleeves rolled up, showing arms from which the summer's tan had not yet worn off.

Each tried to identify their friends behind each of the masks. Believing that no one knew her, Jean talked freely of her home and high school doings. Her former boy was very much interested and asked many questions. In fact they conversed so steadily that Alice's attention was called that way, and she felt glad that her guest was enjoying herself so well.

After the last course had been served and finished and they had unmasked, Jean was kept busy as Alice introduced her to this and that friend. Jean was eager to know her partner.

"And," said Alice, "Miss Gray, this

is our class president, Mr. Allyn." Miss Fones, called someone from the hallway, "is wanted at the phone."

"All right, Jean; I'll leave you with your former boy."

"It seems to be your fate to entertain me, Mr. Allyn, doesn't it?"

"'Tis a welcome chance, I can assure you. How do you like it here?"

Jean was radiant as she talked. "It's lovely and I'm having a good time at Alice's. Her people are so like my own. But I do miss our New England hills and stones; of course, I mean rocks."

"Yes, mother tells of my arrival here as a small child, how that about the first thing I said was 'Gee, dad, where am I going to slide down hill!'"

"Then you used to live in the East?"

Robert was amused. "Yes, until I

was seven years old I lived at C—."

In excitement Jean asked: "Is your first name Robert?"

"Yes, and I am the blacksmith's boy that you played with. Mother used to tell me about you and I remember Granite Lake; so when you told me about your home I thought I knew you and I was sure when Alice called you Jean—"

"Two more couples," called the leader.

"Come Jean, you and Robert join us," said Alice.

So they were soon lost in the set, and had no other opportunity of further renewing acquaintances that evening. But before leaving Robert had obtained permission to call the following day.

That night Jean learned from Alice

how Robert had been in her class at school and was then studying at Yale.

Robert and Jean made much of the remaining days before they must go back to college. They went sleighing and skating, and it was while they were resting at a skating party on the evening before Jean must go that Robert asked: "Jean, do you remember how we used to play house? Do you remember our secret?"

"Yes, what don't kids imagine! I know my cousin's little boy is always making believe."

"But, Jean, I love you and would like to have our childhood dream come true. Could you love me, Jean?"

Jean was very happy as she answered: "Yes, Robert, and do you know I have often wondered why I cared for no one especially? I know now that my heart was keeping our secret."

And She Was a Lucky Girl

By Elsie Endicott



IT was "milk check" Saturday and the town was full of farmers and their wives, who upon this one day of the month had plenty of money to spend and spent it. Fortner's got a goodly share of their trade. And Lois Glyn, who worked at Fortner's did much of the selling. They said at Fortner's and outside, too, that Lois Glyn moved quicker than most people could think and that she could wait on two customers to anybody else's one.

Lois had been at Fortner's three years. She had gone from the school-room to the counter. When her father died and her mother was laid low with a wasting nervous disease, the girl saw her duty and did it. She earned \$8 a week, and with the little her father had left, she and her mother were able to

live and keep out of debt. They had four rooms close to Fortner's, and Mrs. Glyn kept them and made Lois's clothes and her own when she was well enough.

Lois dreaded "milk check" Saturday. Especially she dreaded having to wait upon old Mr. Shad.

When she saw him worming his way through the crowd toward her, she shuddered with aversion. He was so ugly, his worn fur coat smelled so horribly of cow and there was tobacco juice in his white whiskers. The other girls refused to wait upon Mr. Shad. Lois had begun to wait upon him out of pity, and now he would have no one but her.

"There's your lamb!" Ella Landis nudged Lois maliciously. "He's got his eye on you already. Better look out. Some day he'll kidnap you and carry you home in the pocket of that old fur coat."

"Oh, don't!" Lois murmured. "He'll hear you." She glanced up with a smile. After all, he couldn't help being

old and disagreeable.

"Ah, here you be," said old Mr. Shad, and he looked down at her with his twinkling blue eyes. "I want some turkey red calico to take him to the old woman."

"In just a minute, Mr. Shad," Lois said. She deftly wrapped a dozen small articles into a neat parcel and tied it and shoved it across the counter to a dingy woman who had a roll of bills as big as Lois's wrist. The sight of so much money made the girl giddy. If she had it she would send her mother to a sanatorium for treatment, she would—

"Now, Mr. Shad," she faced him pleasantly. "Turkey red calico, you said?" She hoisted a big piece from the counter.

Mr. Shad began to consider it. He held it up to the light, he whistled under his breath, he asked twenty-nine questions concerning it. He was taking a lot of time. Three times Mr. Fortner cast a critical eye at Lois, three times

the little bell that called a clerk rang, and once he came by and spoke to her sharply. "Most through there, Miss Glyn?"

Lois was beginning to be scarlet but she knew it was useless to try to hurry old Mr. Shad. She stood patiently answering his questions and showing him more turkey red calico. Ella Landis, slipping behind her, pinched her.

"Morgan Wright and his mother have come in and I'm going to wait on them. Don't you wish you were me?" she whispered.

Across the crowd Lois could see Morgan Wright's beautifully tailored shoulders and his mother's sable furs. She drew one quick breath, then became calm again. She was a fool to let the sight of him stir her like this. There was more than the counter between them. And though they had been in the same set and he had appeared to be partial to her, that was three years ago, when her father was living and she had

had some chance. She was only a shop-girl now, while Morgan was lifting the Wright name higher than ever with that wonderful inherited ability of his.

When presently Morgan and his mother approached her she kept her eyes upon the calico and pretended not to see them. At that moment old Mr. Shad came to a decision.

"Wa'al, lettle girl, he drawled in his loud voice, "I'll take half a yard of that there. Ella just wanted 'nough to finish out them blocks she's piecing. And here's something to pay you for your trouble." He laid a box on the counter before her. "It's just one of them young Plymouth Rock roosters that Eliza dressed for ye. She said she knew I bothered ye a good deal and ye was deserving of some return. But I'll tell ye right now I'd never come into this here sheshing if it wasn't fer you and yer kind little ways."

Lois gasped. Her face was like a peony. The whole store had heard and

seen. Mr. Fortner was glaring. She wanted to hide under the counter, away from all those eyes, and especially that coldly bright smile of Morgan Wright's mother. Ella Landis was having a spasms of giggling at the cash register. Oh, it was awful! And yet, somehow, when she looked up into the old man's face she was touched. He was evidently waiting for her to say something kind and she said it. Her voice came low, but clear and very sweet. "Thank you, Mr. Shad. And please tell Mrs. Shad that I thank her, too. I'm only too glad to wait upon you at any time."

And then something unbelievable happened. Morgan Wright put his correctly ulstered arm about Mr. Shad's mangy fur shoulders and drew all the attention to himself by so doing. "Hello, Ebenezer!" he cried. "How are you? And how's the good wife? When you get time come-over to the office and I'll look up that little matter for you that we've been talking about."

"I will Morg, I will. I'll come now," said Mr. Shad. "Never mind the caller, lettle gal. I'll be back for it later." As he followed Morgan away Lois heard him say, "Ain't she a wonder, that lettle gal?"

And Morgan answered. "She sure is, Ebenezer."

Mrs. Wright was leaning over the counter and her smile was something more than coldly bright. "I know you're very busy, Miss Glyn," she said, "but I just want to ask about your mother. I've been intending to call for some time, but you know how rushed I am. However, Morgan and I will be round tomorrow afternoon to take you both motoring. The air will do your mother good. You can be ready as early as 2 o'clock."

Lois never knew what she said. She felt as if she were asleep until Ella Landis spoke in her ear.

"You lucky girl!" said Ella Landis, jealously.

Byways In the Land of Popular Science

By A. Scientist



Treasure Finder.—HE wealth scattered around the floor of the ocean in the shape of sunken boats supposed to have been laden with rich cargo has always been a source of fascinating interest, and many a man and corporation have been financially wrecked in the efforts to recover the treasure supposed to be buried under the marine wrecks.

In order to enable these buried boats to be located more readily a one-man boat has been designed by which it is possible to carefully scan the floor of the ocean.

Hereafter the exact location of these hulks has been a matter of conjecture, and therefore difficult and even impossible to find after years, but with this

new craft a minute and accurate survey of the bottom may be made in a leisurely manner, if it is within a reasonable distance of the surface.

The craft has the appearance of a mammoth fish, just large enough to accommodate and entirely surround the outstretched form of a man, and also some propelling machinery, and as the boat is moved along under the surface the passenger is enabled to peer through a window in the bottom, and thus he is enabled to guide the boat from point to point and at the same time to make a survey of the bottom.

Non-Burning Celluloid.—The soybean, whose merits have been widely proclaimed, may rid celluloid of its serious drawback—high inflammability. A celluloid substitute which will not burn has been made from this useful vegetable, according to advices from

Japan. It is called "Safelite," being the invention of Prof. S. Sato, and is produced by coagulating the glue of soybean with formaline. A company has been formed and will build a factory in Tokio, from which production will begin next autumn.

Foot-Power Swing.—The motion of the porch swing dies down quickly after it has been started on its back-and-forth movement and has to be started all over again. With a new design of swing which has been patented recently, the essential movement is imparted by a gentle movement of the foot as it reposes on the rest.

The invention particularly relates to swings which are suspended by means of flexible connections such as chains from an overhead support, the object being to provide a swing of this nature, the movement of which may be readily

and quickly controlled by the occupant.

The structure is simple, inexpensive and durable, and a very slight movement of the foot keeps the seat in motion.

Headlights for Surgeons.—Quite a radical revolution has been made in the matter of illumination, for it has been found to be much more economical to have a small, low-powered lamp in the immediate vicinity of the work and is much superior to a number of high-powered lamps scattered around in the remote distance.

By the latter system much useful energy is lost, while by the former it is conserved. Following this out, nearly all modern machines have facilities for mounting small lamps at convenient places about it, and in this line is the headlight designed for surgeons, dentists and others of similar vocations.

The light is mounted on the forehead in such a position that the rays from it are directed upon the work at hand. The current is supplied from batteries secured to the belt.

Stream Flow Check.—In the irrigation districts the water is held very valuable, especially where the supply is more or less limited and uncertain in its delivery. In these districts the construction of a permanent dam by one man is regarded as a serious infringement of the water rights of all those who may be located on the stream below, and is at once resented by them.

It has been discovered that the water may be sufficiently backed up to greatly increase its efficiency as it passes along by a dam of plant ropes, which can not be objected to by the land owners along the lower stream. This new system has been recently tried with great success

in California, where the inventor lives.

Several anchor lines are stretched across the stream and secured by some suitable means, a number of small plant ropes are secured to these and their ends allowed to float at will in the passing water with the result that these floating lines after sufficient resistance for the water to back it up to a considerable degree.

Life-Saving Skirt.—If you should see a damsel strolling on the beach with a six-inch skirt, don't hastily conclude that the lady is part of a beach ballet. The abbreviated garment may be one of the new life-saving skirts which have just been invented.

The skirt is made of a fabric which is capable of holding air, and it has a tube attachment by which it may be readily inflated when there is a call for its services.

The skirt ordinarily hangs about the waist of the wearer, but when inflated the lower portion may be secured under the armpits so as to be most effective in supporting its burden.

Making Floors Safe.—The floorwork plates of many factory floors are apt to become slippery and unsafe, and to obviate this powdered sal ammoniac is used as a corroding agent.

A small quantity is mixed thoroughly with a large quantity of fine sand, and this mixture is sprinkled over the floor so that all parts are covered.

The surface is dampened with a watering can and left to lie over a week-end, or even over night. The sand is then swept up, and the rust coating formed by the treatment is found to last for several weeks, after which the process is repeated.