

The Merry Widow

By Albert Payson Terhune

Continued from Last Week

"Then," implored De Joldon, "if it is really to be our farewell interview, why must we talk here in the garden, where at any moment others may come to claim your attention? Grant me a final half hour of your society and to myself. Let the talk be uninterrupted. Let us sit in the little summer house over there. See—it is empty."

They entered the little inclosed arbor. It was lighted by a string of Japanese lanterns, and two rustic chairs were at opposite sides of its round center table. There was a door at each end of the tiny room—an ideal spot for a tête-à-tête chat now that the moonlight had wooed most of the guests out of doors.

The light wicker door swung shut behind the couple. Natalie quite enjoyed the prospect of listening to the adorer's melodramatic words of fare well and of posing heroically as a self-sacrificing, dutiful wife. In half an hour at most she would rejoin her husband with the righteous consciousness in her heart of having disposed forever the one man besides Popoff who had ever made love to her.

So interested was Natalie in De Joldon's parting speech that she did not hear the ambassador, just outside, declare excitedly:

"Nish, I'm sure I saw that summer-house door close behind a lady's skirt. Let's see who is in there."



CHAPTER V.

To the Rescue.

NISH, who had obediently followed De Joldon and Natalie at Popoff's orders until they had entered the summer house, now wriggled forward in confusion on hearing the ambassador's voice.

"Did you call me, sir?" he asked.

"I most surely did call you, Mr. Nish," cried Popoff, "and I told you I was certain I saw a lady's skirt and a lady's skirt disappearing into that summer house. Who was she?"

"I I don't know your excellency," trembling Ned Nish.

"You ought to know," declared Popoff. "You were standing nearer the summer house than I was. Didn't you see her of all?"

"Yes, sir—yes, I saw her, if I may say so, but I don't know who she was. I really don't."

"Was she alone?"

"No, your excellency, not quite alone. There was, if I may say so, there was a gentleman with her. At least he looked like a gentleman, but I didn't recognize him either."

"Well, well, well," chuckled the ambassador, seating himself in a garden chair and sipping the summer punch with delightful interest. "A little narration, eh? Come in there to see how sweet nothing is here, in our garden is a terrace, and I wonder who they are."

"Nish, I really wonder," Mr. Nish, I would not for the world have you if I can the most beautiful surprise. But I'll just sit here awhile, for a while, and watch them come out in the moonlight. Mr. Nish, you might like to accompany me to the room of the summer house and see if there is another door there. If there is, you might see it. Understand?"

"Yes, your excellency," murmured pale-stricken Nish, turning away.

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To The Public

We have bought a new press. We keep on hand a supply of bale wire and are prepared to do tailing for public on short notice.

We have baled hay for sale.

J. T. MAY,

Two Miles North of Lubbock.

among the bushes. The little clock never pointed until he had found Sonia. To her he poured forth the whole story, gazing with wild horror as she broke into a paroxysm of uncontrollable laughter.

Suddenly she grew sober.

"Her husband will never forgive her," she murmured, half to herself. "He will never understand that it's just a silly, harmless, sentimental talk they're having."

Memories of the ways of jealous Marsorlan husbands flashed into her mind. In that primitive fatherland wives had been beaten, yes, and murdered—for less. Something must be done, and done quickly.

"Don't worry," she consoled the terrified Nish. "Say nothing to any one else. I'll get Miss Popoff out of the scrape if I can."

Before Nish could reply she had disappeared down a path leading to the rear door of the summer house.

Meanwhile Popoff, his curiosity maddened, had left his seat. Stealing forward on tiptoe, he put his eye to the keyhole of the wicker door.

He had scarcely bent over this when Danilo, happening to pass by on his way to the gate, paused in amazement at sight of the Marsorlan ambassador thus assuming the role of Peep Fry.

"Who, hello, old chap?" cried the peeper. "What are you up to?"

"Hush!" warned Popoff in an excited whisper. "A lady went into the summer house a few minutes ago with a gentleman. I can't see them very clearly. There's too much fluff in the keyhole. But they're sitting opposite each other with only a little table between them. The lady's back is to me, but it somehow looks familiar. The gentleman is talking as earnestly as if he were trying to borrow money. Now he's leaning across and kissing her hand, and she doesn't seem to mind it. Why, bless my soul, it's that fellow De Joldon! Well, well! Of all things! Now if only the lady would turn her face so I could see her!"

"Come away, sir," begged Danilo, the whole situation harrowing him. "I could have sworn I saw you sitting in that arbor with M. de Joldon."

"My dear!"

Natalie's exclamation was a triumph of shocked propriety.

"He was kissing your hand, I thought," went on the dazed ambassador.

This time Natalie moved away from him in offended dignity. But Popoff hastened to throw his arm about her and draw her back.

"I was wrong," he assured her—"a blunder of oversight! I apologize! I'm sorry!"

"I begin to understand," put in Sonia, stepping forward in fear lest Natalie overdo her posse of virtuous indignation. "It seems that the Marsorlan ambassador has done me the honor to listen at a keyhole in hopes of overhearing my conversation. Sooner than disappoint him, M. de Joldon, will you please repeat to him just what you said to me in there?"

De Joldon understood. If Natalie was to be saved, if Sonia was not to be talked about, heroic measures were necessary.

"I asked Miss Sonia Sadowna," said he, "to do me the honor to become my wife."

Danilo stood motionless, his lips set in a white line amid the buzz of congratulatory and laughter that followed De Joldon's announcement. Sonia noted his agony and said perfunctorily to herself:

"My prince, I think I've won! You'll have to speak soon of this, now, and when you do."

And Marsorlan knew the twenty million Popoff possessed, recovering his self-possession and somewhat belatedly remembering the country's needs.

"Truce!" called Sonia mischievously. "I haven't heard your congratulatory yet. You don't look as happy as you might at the news."

"Happy?" echoed Danilo, with a scornful, satirical laugh. "Why shouldn't I be? Accept my congratulations in perfunctory blessing and any thing else you choose to lay on me for. My wife's motto is: Love when you may, propose reason and marry not at all!"

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

J. P. Elliott has the contract to build Charlie Vaughn, four 14x16 foot room addition to his present residence on the ranch northeast of town, work to begin right soon.

Republican Primary.

All Republicans are hereby notified that county and precinct conventions are called for Lubbock and attached counties to meet at the Court House in Lubbock at 2 o'clock Saturday July 25, 1907, for the purpose of electing nominees for county officers, and county Chairman.

C. E. Parks, Acting County Chairman.

The rain last Saturday seemed to have been general. We have not heard of a place that has not had some rain, true the fall was heavier in some places than others, but all received a refreshing shower.

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Lubbock,

Texas.

Base Ball Betting

It is against the law to bet on baseball games.

Information has been requested on the above subject. Let the Statute itself answer, (see laws of 1907, page 222, chapter CXXI.)

"An act prohibiting betting or gambling on baseball or football games, and providing penalties for violations." Be it enacted by the legislature of the state of Texas; Section 1, that hereafter it shall be unlawful for any person in this state to enter into any agreement with another, either orally, written or implied, whereby either one or both shall bet or wager money or anything of value or otherwise become a party to any gambling scheme based upon any play or portion thereof of a game of baseball or football; provided that nothing herein shall prohibit contesting baseball or football teams, or their duly authorized agents or managers from entering into an agreement as to the manner of disposition of gate receipts derived from such games. Sec. 2. That any person found guilty of violating this law shall be subject to a fine of not less than five dollars nor more than one hundred dollars.

Floydada has jumped into the ring this week with three railroad propositions starting her in the face, a dispatch from that place says: This town just now seems to be on the eve of several good things. Three distinct railroad propositions are being placed before the people. An Iowa party has put forth a plan to build an interurban railroad out of Amarillo via Plainview, Floydada, Emma, Lubbock and back to Plainview, this forming a belt of about 200 miles. The citizens are also expecting a proposition from a railroad party that is projecting a line from Quanah to Roswell via Floydada. The party is now viewing the route. Besides, Colonel W. M. Massie, a local capitalist, is making arrangements to build a railroad from some point on a railroad northwest from here to Floydada. This last proposition was up and well under way last fall when the panic came and is now being revived. Colonel Massie says there is no doubt but that the proposition will be put through.

J. B. Martin, and family returned Monday from a week's visit to relatives in Crosby county.