

The Women's Candidate

BYRON WILLIAMS

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"Help me to stand," she directed, gripping his arm.

He raised her. She let her foot touch the ground, wined and toppled toward him.

"There's a wood chopper's cabin just ahead," she groaned. "Could—could you carry me there?" blushing.

For answer he picked her up in his arms. She threw her arms about his neck and clung to him, her hair brushing his cheek. In light of the hut she whispered:

"Wait! Let me down a minute."

She stood leaning against him, her full, ripe lips teasingly near. For a moment as he looked into her fatigued eyes, Bedight felt the weakness of man for woman coming over him. To combat it, he moved farther away, supporting her at arm's length.

"It would be well to leave me at the cottage and go back for help. Look inside, please, while I lean against this birch," she directed.

"There's probably a burglar in the woodbox or a man under the bed," he said laughingly, as he started toward the cottage.

The mayor stood for a moment upon the threshold and then entered. As his form disappeared within, there appeared around the corner of the cabin a man—the game warden of Lakeville. In a twinkling he had slammed shut the door and thrown a great bar across it from without.

"There, darn ye; I told ye I'd get ye!" he bellowed with radiant pomposity.

Bedight turned angrily as the door closed and realized too late that the warning given along the trail had not safeguarded him. He was a prisoner.

Peering through the dirty windowpane, an aperture not large enough to permit the passing of a man's body, he saw Miss Farnsworth leave the tree against which she had been leaning and walk leisurely toward the hotel.

With the realization that the girl had deliberately led him into the hands of the enemy, he gritted his teeth and then, at the thought that perhaps Jackie Vining had planned this coup d'etat, Bedight felt a queer sinking of certain hopes that heretofore had buoyed up a heart yearning to take high hurdles. No—a woman may keep a man in hot water on general principles of love, but to throw him in jail is treachery, and when a woman reaches that point she is like the woman scorned—a perfect fury.

The room in which Bedight found himself was big and rough like some of the words the mayor said before his sense of the ludicrous returned. Then, in full possession of the humor of the situation, he sat down on the side of the bunk and grinned. A man can grin when the joke is on him, but he seldom becomes boisterous under the circumstances unless he is in public, where it is always good taste to prove his good fellowship by blatant laughter.

That the game warden had gone for help there was no doubt. Remembering the slap which Bedight had administered on the day of their first meeting, that worthy did not desire to take further chances.

"But if Miss Vining planned the trap, why did not the warden bring enough help with him to arrest me?"

This was the question the mayor asked himself—and gave it up. He had no way of knowing that the warden had sent word to the sheriff to be on hand—but that functionary was at the moment marooned on an island five miles from the village with ample food sent by a kind providence in the light of the moon, but with no boat by which he might navigate the intervening waters.

An hour passed, during which time Bedight had satisfied himself that wood choppers' cabins in general and this one in particular were built with the express purpose of being better jails than those possessed by the ordinary hamlet in the north country. He was securely confined—and he was in to stay until some one chose to liberate him.

A voice from without suddenly gave him hope. It was a voice he knew well—the voice of Jackie Vining.

"Mr. Bedight," queried the voice, "are you there—inside the cabin?"

"No, Miss Conspirator," replied the mayor, indignantly. "I'm up on the roof playing solitaire."

"Will you tell me which of the girls was with you last night?" demanded Miss Vining. "If so, I will let you out."

"Oh, I like it in here," replied the mayor, enthusiastically. "It's a nice, quiet place, no books to bait, no mound builders to excavate, no runaway horses to catch, no balsam to pick, nothing to do but relax and think of the peridy of one's fellows—feminine gender."

"I'm glad you like it," responded the "Judge," with a wholesome flavor in her voice, "and I'm sorry to advise you that the warden and reinforcements are about due. Wouldn't it be wiser to help me protect a thoughtless girl and go free than to be contrary and go to jail?"

"I like the jail at Lakeville even better than this," responded the prisoner affably. "It is light and airy and has easy exits in case of fire or ennui."

"Very well," she replied, "repent at leisure."

The mayor listened. She was going away.

"Miss Vining," she cried.

"Yes, Mr. Bedight."

"You know very well you would despise me if I told you what you are asking. I am firm in my resolve not to appear in this light. You may as well go now, for I shall not answer your question."

He watched her lithe form as she walked rapidly away, her head erect, her shoulders back, every inch a splendid woman.

Scarcely had she disappeared when Bedight heard the bar thrown back, and a voice whispered cautiously:

"Walter! Wait! The door is unbarred. Wait until I get away!"

From his dingy window Bedight saw another feminine form saunter leisurely up the trail—and this one, too, was slim and fair to look upon, a woman that any good man might well desire to win.

CHAPTER X.

Instead of leaving the vicinity of the cabin after being liberated, Bedight closed the door and replaced the bar. Drifting back into the bushes, he waited. An hour passed and then came voices and rustling in the wood. Soon the game warden and two deputies love into view. The warden's face was flushed with excitement as he strode along in advance of his men.

Approaching the door, he called out:

"Will ye surrender peaceable and come out of there, or shall I come in an' git ye?"

From within there emanated no answering voice. Out in the bushes, twenty feet away, Bedight waited, tensely.

"Come on out; the door's unlocked," shouted the warden.

Still no answer.

"Got darn ye; I'll show ye. Come on in, fellers," bawled the officer, throwing open the door and dashing into the cabin, followed by his deputies.

With an agile spring, Bedight left the clump of bushes and dashed for the door. The warden saw him coming and sprang to meet him—but too late! Slamming the door shut, the mayor shot the bar home.

He could hear the strenuous objections of the prisoners as he hurried away, making a detour to a farmer's house, where he hoped to secure something to eat. A ruddy-cheeked farmer's wife fed him bountifully and protested at the unnecessary size of the coin he gave her for his dinner and a basket of provisions, with which he set out for the cabin.

Reaching the wood-chopper's hut, in which two hours previous he had been a prisoner, he rapped on the door.

"Whoever's there," cried an excited voice within, "let us out!"

"Break the glass in the window," directed the mayor, his face illumined with smiles, "and eat out of my hand!"

A groil of mingled disappointment and relief preceded the shattering of the glass. Bedight held his basket on his left arm and began passing provisions through the aperture.

"Good grub, this, boys," he chuckled. "I serve excellent meals at both my boarding houses. I'll bring you tobacco tomorrow night. Just you make yourselves comfortable. How would you like a deck of cards?"

It was dark when Bedight reached Squirrel Inn and slipped unobserved to his room.

When Jackie Vining came down at six next morning to take a constitutional before breakfast the mayor sat in an easy chair on the veranda, smoking his favorite pipe.

"Will you kindly tell Miss Mason that I am waiting her commands?" he asked easily, with no trace of resentment in his voice.

"I was going to liberate you this morning," she said, simply, trying to hide her surprise.

"Oh, I got out last night, thank you. I'm particular about my own bed. Never could sleep well in a strange bunk," laughing.

After breakfast Alice Mason, the girl appointed by the court to defend Bedight on the occasion of his trial, called him aside.

"As your attorney, I am led to offer you your freedom today. I want to go to Lakeville for some cold cream, and if you will ride to the Four Corners with me, I will let you escape to your own devices. It is not always that an attorney can vouch for his client, but I am willing to take a

chance on you," confidently. "And besides, these girls have been badgering the life out of you. It's time somebody took pity," laughing.

The mayor put his lips close to the girl's rosy ear.

"Honest," he said, "hope to die, I've never had so much fun in all my life—but that bill business is dangerous, and I'd like to get through with the ordeal honorably. I can use today, and as a small expression of my

"I'll Bring You Tobacco Tomorrow Night."

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"Honest," he said, "hope to die, I've never had so much fun in all my life—but that bill business is dangerous, and I'd like to get through with the ordeal honorably. I can use today, and as a small expression of my

gratitude, I'll send you the jolliest box of candy in Chicago as I pass through."

"Thank you," she said, her eyes dancing. "I'll leave the selection to you."

An hour later Bedight, astride a good horse, was galloping toward Bordeaux, a railroad crossing ten miles to the north. Arriving at the station he sent a telegram, ate a typical meal at a typical country hotel, and started back. He reached the cross roads at



Cleo Summers.

dusk and let his tired mount plod leisurely homeward.

Saturday morning broke clear and tense after a sweltering night. The sun was copper colored and the leaves upon the crest, where they were wont to bow and curtsy to the zephyr's breath, hung listless in the shimmering heat. At breakfast, none looked refreshed and Miss Host complained of drought. Pauline, the cook, whose eggs were always soft-boiled to a creamy elasticity and whose toast was over golden brown and delicious, fretted the former into blue-black globes surrounded by leathery gelatine, while the latter was burned and desiccated to a hard-tack condition decidedly disappointing to her usually delighted followers. The thermometer, to all intents and purposes, was so basely ambitious as to seemingly have no other desire than to climb higher and higher in its relentless rise.

"Come on, Mr. Bedight," exclaimed Molly McConnell, "row me over to Waxelbaum's Point. I want to sketch La Veck's cabin, the remaining relic of what was once the oldest trading post in the state. It is tumbledown and ramshackle and will make a fine study. I was by there a week ago on a calm day and the reflection in the placid water was almost as realistic as the old log-pile itself. A photograph taken when I saw the cabin would puzzle the beholder to tell which was the cabin and which the reflection. Today promises to be still and bids fair to afford me an opportunity to get just the right atmosphere. I'll be ready in ten minutes."

She came down to the dock, her black eyes dancing in anticipation. Bedight packed her outfit in the prow of the boat along with the lunch basket, held the boat firmly against the dock as she put her dainty foot upon the stern seat, and dipped gracefully into position, a magazine under her arm and a camera slung across her shoulder.

As the mayor took the oars he looked at her—barched, her lustrous black locks defying the sun, her full tempting lips shaping a perfect cupid's bow, a saucy little dimple on each side of a well-rounded cheek, and teeth as white as milk-coral through which the laughter thrilled and rippled like a singing spring across its minty way.

Surely a man might well be sentenced for life to such a woman's whim, while but a day's service were as an hour in Naples after a hard passage!

Molly McConnell had one of those daring, unconventional temperaments that bespeak a woman of full blood and spirit, a being of beauty and grace and voluptuous constancy. To the man she would be all in all, reigning queen of his heart, laughing at affanities, scorning jealousies, holding him secure with her mental and physical charms.

The lake was calm and through its mirrored depths long strands of weed and marsh grass could be seen streaming upward in the shallow places. Not even a ripple stirred the surface and the sun reflected from the sheening waters, glowed heatedly upon the faces of the two in the boat—the girl with hair like the night and eyes of liquid velvet, the man with a sentence to serve in the Garden of Eden with a pipkin as the forbidden fruit.

The mayor rested on his oars and mopped his sweating brow. The girl's eyes danced:

"And now," she bubbled, "you are in a position to appreciate the arduous life of the galley slave. Row on, my man!"

"O, that this were the river of Life!" countered Bedight, matching the woman's frippery.

"One of the obligations imposed upon you by the 'Judge,'" solemnly, "was not to propose marriage or play the role of Lothario. I trust your intentions toward me are like the Christ-mas snow—simply another layer of white purity!"

"Pray do not tempt me, Eve," he said; "a boat is fully as perilous for loving as a flat for matrimony."

Her merry laughter rippled out across the water from a throat as shapely as an artist's model. Her neck, browned from the life at Squirrel Inn, was full and moulded free of hollow dips.

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"O, you old Adam!" she giggled, "don't you know that the price of apples has gone up—away up—since our mothers quit sewing carpet-rags and spinning flax. It takes a man with a head these days to keep my lady gratified."

"Apples, say the physicians, are necessary to the human system. And I may point also to a higher authority who has said it is not good for man to dwell alone! As for the price, was there ever an Adam who thought of this?"

"Not until the baby needed shoes!" agreed the woman, letting her hand ripple the water over the rail. "Many an Adam has asked his Eve to fly with him and after the flight couldn't buy a curry of chicken wings in a Boston restaurant!"

The mayor smiled.

"Marriage as it is practiced," he commented, "is a bigger gamble than the board of trade—and twice as interesting."

The boat glided onward across the sleeping waters, leaving a V-shaped ripple in its wake. Traversing the lake, Bedight pulled through a narrow neck that connected Goose Lake with the main body of Sylvan. The view was enchanting—pine, cedar and hemlock, birch and maple varied the shores and green bushes trailed their drooping tendrils in the cool waters.

La Veck's cabin came into view, situated upon a knoll beside the lake, a picturesque pile of the lumber-jack days. About its tumbled sides the wild amplexus of scrub oaks and rag-weed flourished in the clearing. The mayor drew the skiff upon the shore, carried the girl's easel, box and camp chair to a spot designated and stood by for orders.

"Can you make coffee?" asked Miss McConnell, as she got out the canvas and prepared to begin the sketch.

"In these days of the new woman," he said, banteringly, "man has come to recognize in a kindlier light the ladylike art of cooking. Fair enchantress, I can make coffee fit for the gods, but woman's dainty hand must pour, else it loses its flavor."

"Very well," she said, "now run away and forget me until the coffee is boiling in the pot."

Bedight turned to the forest's fringe



"Your Diplomacy is Admirable."

and began gathering firewood. When he called, she came promptly.

"Man," she said, "has caused many a divorce by not coming to dinner when he is called. Nothing so nettles a woman as to wait meals. Knowing this, I make haste."

"Your diplomacy is admirable," he congratulated, passing her the coffee pot.

Lunch over, Bedight packed the cooking outfit and replaced it in the boat. The sky was smoky in the west, smoky with heat that generated a strange restlessness among the quivering trees, while the air was surcharged with a portentous quietude that presaged a clash of elemental fury. A black cloud stood upon the rim of the lake and caused a look of concern in Bedight's eyes. A glance in Miss McConnell's direction showed the girl absorbed in her work. The mayor picked up a magazine and stretched himself upon the sward beneath a huge yellow birch. He was attracted from his story a half hour later by a shadow across the sun, hurriedly springing to his feet, he scanned the sky. A mass of black with livid green patches and scurrying fore-runners of white froth lay like a monstrous curtain across the west, through which shot veins of gold like roots of mammoth trees. A deep rumble, bass in its intonation, rolled across the sky, warning the creatures of the earth that soon their master would be abroad in the land to wreck and destroy.

The woman, too, aware of the danger, sat gazing apprehensively at the disturbed sky.

"Oh, Mr. Bedight," she cried, with the veriest trifle of anxiety in her voice, "we must be going. The sky looks like a storm."

The mayor came over to Miss McConnell and, standing beside her, gazed analytically into the west.

"I think we will be safer here," he advised, quietly. "The storm will break before we can reach the Inn."

"But we cannot stay in this ruined hut. It leaks and the doors are gone," objected Miss McConnell. "Come on, let's be off."

The man hesitated.

"Don't you think it wiser to remain here until the storm is over? We are a long ways from Squirrel Inn," counseled the mayor.

(To be Continued.)

Mark Twain in Satirical Humor.

"Even the cleverest and most perfect circumstantial evidence is likely to be at fault, after all, and therefore ought to be received with great caution," said the late Mark Twain.

"Take the case of any pencil sharpened by any woman. If you have witnesses, you will find she did it with a knife; but if you simply take the aspect of the pencil, you will say she did it with her teeth."

Sympathetic Judge.

A middle aged woman, who was charged at Maryborough (Eng.) with being drunk, was said to have been found lying fast asleep in a garden on a quantity of cut flowers. "I must say I feel a little sorry for you," said Mr. Plowden. "Asleep on a bed of flowers—wakened up and brought back to this wicked world. It must have caused you a shock. You may go with a caution."

Charter of the Pointe a la Hache Oak River Canal and Development Company.

February, 13, 1913.

United States of America,

State of Louisiana,

Parish of St. Bernard.

Be it known, that on this thirteenth day of the month of February, in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and thirteen (1913)

Before me, William F. Roy, a Notary Public, duly commissioned and qualified in and for the Parish of St. Bernard, therein residing, and in the presence of the witnesses hereinafter named and undersigned, personally came and appeared the several parties whose names are hereunto subscribed who severally declared, that availing themselves of the provisions of the laws of the State of Louisiana, relative to corporations, they have covenanted and agreed by these presents, to covenant and agree and bind themselves, as well as all such other persons as may become associated with them, to form and constitute a corporation and body politic in law, for the objects and purposes and under the articles and stipulations hereinafter set forth, viz:

ARTICLE I.

The name and title of this corporation shall be the Pointe a la Hache Oak River Canal and Development Company and by that name it shall have and enjoy corporate existence and succession for a period of Twenty-five (25) years from date hereof, with full power in the prosecution of and for the purposes of its business as hereinafter set forth; to sue and be sued; to acquire property both real and personal by purchase, lease or otherwise and the same to alienate, mortgage, pledge, hypothecate or otherwise dispose of; to appoint or elect such directors, officers, managers or other agents or employees as its business may require; to make and use a corporate seal and the same to alter at pleasure; and in general to do all things necessary and proper, permitted by law to corporations of this character.

ARTICLE II.

The domicile of this corporation shall be at Pointe a la Hache, in the Parish of Plaquemines, State of Louisiana, and all citations and other legal processes shall be served upon the president, or in his absence upon the vice president, or in the absence of both upon the secretary-treasurer.

ARTICLE III.

The objects and purposes for which this corporation is organized, and the business carried on by it are declared to be: the digging of canals, drainage ditches and water courses for its own use and that of others, and for this purpose to purchase, lease and otherwise acquire real estate, dredges, boats, machinery and other apparatus for the building, operating and maintaining of the said canals, ditches and water courses; with full authority to charge tools and rent for the use of said canals, ditches, water courses and their banks, for drainage, navigation and other purposes. To acquire, erect and operate ice and canning factories. To construct and erect electrical plants for the manufacture and sale of electricity for lighting, power and other purposes.

ARTICLE IV.

The capital stock of this corporation is hereby fixed at Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) divided into and represented by Two Hundred and Fifty Shares of the par value of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) each, which shall be paid for in cash, or may be issued in payment of or for rights or property actually received by this corporation. This corporation shall be a going concern as soon as Seventy-five Hundred Dollars (\$7500.00) of the Capital Stock shall have been subscribed for.

ARTICLE V.

All the corporate powers of this corporation shall be vested in and exercised by a Board of five Directors, a majority of whom shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Said directors shall be elected at a general meeting of the stockholders to be held on the second Tuesday in January of each year.

Notice of such meetings and of all other meetings, not otherwise provided for by law, shall be given in writing to each stockholder by mailing same to such stockholder's last known address ten days before each meeting.

At the first meeting of the board of directors after its election it shall elect from its number a president, a vice-president and a secretary-treasurer; and all vacancies occurring shall be filled by the remaining directors, for the unexpired term.

Until the second Tuesday in January, 1914, the following shall constitute the first Board of Directors, namely:

Frank C. Meyers, Leon L. Villere, Bernard Favret, John H. Meyer and Oliver S. Livaudais, with the said Frank C. Meyers as President, the said Leon L. Villere as Vice-President, and the said Bernard Favret as Secretary-Treasurer, and they shall serve until their successors are elected.

At all of the meetings of the stockholders each stockholder shall be entitled to one vote for each share of stock owned by him and such shares may be voted in person or by proxy.

ARTICLE VI.

This act of incorporation may be amended or this corporation dissolved by and with the consent of two-thirds of the entire capital stock represented in person or by proxy at a general meeting called for the purpose after notice as provided for by law.

In case of the dissolution of this corporation, its affairs shall be liquidated by two commissioners, elected from among the stockholders at a meeting for that purpose or at the meeting at which the dissolution is voted, and they shall serve until the affairs of the corporation shall have been liquidated.

Witness my hand and Notary Seal this 13th day of February, 1913.

WILLIAM F. ROY,
Notary Public.

(Signed) A. Labarre,
Jean Sarragnacq.

Recorded Parish of Plaquemines on Feb. 19th, 1913, in M. O. B. 4 folio 708 of this Parish.

ERNEST ALBERTI,
Clerk of Court.

Notice.

Whereas, it has been reported to this Board that cattle and other live stock are permitted to roam at large on the public levees by a number of citizens in the district, that fences and wood piles are maintained thereon, and that certain parties make it a practice to ride or drive on the levees, and

Whereas, the doing of these things is contrary to the policy of this Board and detrimental to the maintenance of the levee system at the high standard of efficiency necessary to properly protect the great interests involved, therefore, Be it resolved, by the Board of Commissioners for the Lake Borgne Basin Levee District, that the Inspectors of this Board are hereby instructed and empowered to have removed, from the public levees in this District, all obstructions of whatever nature which in any manner whatsoever interfere with the proper inspection or maintenance of the levees.

Be it further resolved, that the Inspectors shall apprehend and impound all live stock found roaming at large on the levees, and that they shall not permit any one to ride or drive thereon, except for purposes of inspection or maintenance.

A true copy.

FERNANDO ESTOPINAL,
Secretary.

TEXAS INDUSTRIAL CONGRESS

DALLAS, TEXAS

Prize Crop Contest, 1912.

167½ BUSHELS PER ACRE

LARGEST PRIZE-WINNING YIELD

6256 BU. PER ACRE

LOWEST PRIZE-WINNING YIELD