

A BRAVE FOOL

By ESTHER VANDEVEER

George Carroll was sauntering across a field as free from care as the day he was born. He was looking up at the sky, over which white clouds were sailing as lazily as he walked. He was a city chap, who had been ordered by his physician to go to the country, even though the January winds were blowing cold, and recuperate. He was thinking as he walked what a hum-drum thing life was, to be sure, how free from any kind of risk or excitement his own individual life was and how when he was "howled over," as he expressed it, it would probably be by an animalcule, so small that he could not see it, entering his system, increasing and multiplying vigorously, the colony at last eating him up.

Strange it is how often fate is doing with us what we least suspect. At the moment this last idea entered George Carroll's brain a death dealing force was driving at him from behind. A shadow, accompanied by the sound of horse's hoofs, shot transversely before him. Turning, he saw a girl on horseback in a red coat, moving between him and a bull that was snaking for him, the girl glancing backward as she rode to observe the bull. She was about to turn and ride back again when the bull caught sight of her, abandoned the straight line he was following in the direction of the man and turned his attention to the girl.

Now, George in regard to all matters pertaining to the country was very stupid. He did not realize that he was or had been in any danger. He did not gather from what he saw that this girl, seeing the bull going for him, had leaped a fence and ridden between him and his enemy for the purpose of turning the animal from him to herself. Instead of thus taking in the situation and getting out of the field as soon as possible, he stood looking at the bull chasing the girl.

The inclosure was about ten acres and George stood near the middle of it. The girl led the bull as far as possible from him, then turned and, eluding the animal as dexterously as a treader, galloped away in the opposite direction. By that time it began to dawn upon the city man that the horse and the girl were being pursued by the bull for the purpose of going. But not even yet did he realize that she had taken this danger upon herself for the purpose of saving his life; that had it not been for her a pair of horns would have taken him in the back, broken it and the earthly spark of his existence would have gone out forever.

What occupied George Carroll's mind to the exclusion of all else was the danger that threatened the girl and what he could do to relieve her from her perilous position. The only thing he could do was to run for the fence as fast as his legs could carry him and climb over it. If he had done this the girl would have made her exit as she had made her entrance—by urging her horse over that same fence. She was waiting for him to get out of the field before securing her own safety.

It is singular how a brave man may be a fool, or, rather, is not a good deal of what we call bravely folly? George by his stupidity was leaving both himself and the girl in danger. She could see him standing there gazing at her, but was so close pressed that she was unable to make a sign to him to fly for his life. Nearing the opposite end of the field, she turned her head to see George running toward her! She could have jumped the fence, but when she saw the man she was trying to save hurrying again into danger, instead of saving herself she turned about and started again across the field. If she went near the man the bull might leave her and turn upon him. So she galloped diagonally across the field, making an effort at a sign for him to leave it. But he did not understand and, turning, continued his pursuit of her.

Then followed events in such quick succession—so quick that George could scarcely separate them. He saw the horse stumble and fall; he saw the bull's horns go into the horse's belly; he heard a report, and the bull, too, fell to the ground. A man dropped a gun, dashed to the fence and, jumping it, ran to where the girl was trying to get up from the ground. George and the man reached her at the same time. The man lifted her up, and she stood on her feet.

"Are you killed?" asked the man.

"No; not even hurt."

Then the man turned to George.

"For heaven's sake," he cried, "how in the world have you escaped the fool killer all these years?"

"He's not a fool at all," said the girl; "he's a brave man. He didn't realize his own danger, he was so intent upon mine."

When George Carroll realized what the girl had done for him and how he had stupidly come very near being the cause of her death he was paralyzed. As it was, he had been the cause of the loss of her horse and a bull worth \$100 had been shot. Fortunately George had a fortune and could repair the monetary damage. The rest of it could not be paid for in that way. But fate, when George was walking across the field regretting the uneventful tenor of his life, had another purpose. All this chain of events was but one of fate's tricks to make a match. The girl repaid her reward by helping George spend this income.



THE TOP COAT AN EXTREMELY POPULAR MODE

Fur coats seem to be taking a back seat, as it were, this season in favor of the light weight model in one of the soft new wool fabrics. It is a practical idea and a becoming one. These coats may be carried over the arm and slipped on over a tailored suit if occasion requires it.

They are fashioned mostly in rather vivid colors. An unusually attractive coat, designed by Bernard, is made of duvety in marigold yellow. Another imported coat is of dark red velours de laine trimmed with white.

No. 7829 features a smart collar, a low belt and a set-in sleeve. Striped velours de laine is used in a dark terra cotta. The buttons, belt and revers are of white duvety. Buttons are very much in demand for decorative purposes and come in every imaginable shape and color. Some are carved; some are painted; many of them show the cubist idea.

This top-coat may be made in size 36 with 4 yards of 42 inch material. Most of the new suits show the short coat of coat blouse, and the better influence is strongly marked. A soft tan fall de laine, a silk which closely resembles silk poplin, is used in this costume with a vest of striped velvet in black and gold. The skirt is a pop-top, and, aside from the vest, the only trimming is the large, round, bronze buttons.

For size 36 this design requires (for the blouse) 2 yards of 36 inch material with 1/2 yard of silk or satin for the vest and 3 1/2 yards of 36 inch material for the skirt.

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