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"You didn't take a very long vacation," remarked the pretty cook as the groceryman showed his beaming face at the kitchen door.

"I couldn't stay long away from you, Evelina," said the groceryman, gallantly, as he swung his laden basket from his shoulder. "I'd think of you stayin' here in this hot kitchen an' how lonely you must be an' I didn't have the heart to go on enjoyin' myself. When I thought of you settin' an' weepin' an' lettin' the pies burn an' never carin' a cent whether they got burned or not an' how you'd jump up with a low, glad cry when I come in it was me for the store ag'in."

"You didn't notice me weepin' much, did you?" asked the cook.

"Let me see if there ain't tears in your eyes," said the groceryman, advancing. "Well, if you want to hide 'em that's all right. How did you know I was on a vacation—ask the boss? You oughtn't to have worried."

"I didn't much," replied the cook. "You said you were goin' out into the country for a month an' I worried for fear you wouldn't, that's all; but I enjoyed the three days."

"The country's great stuff, Evelina," said the groceryman. "Say, you don't know what pretty things there is in the country. Now, these here ears o' corn, they grow in the country—right out in the fields with nothin' but a fence around 'em. They grow on long stems with a tassel atop o' them."

"The eggs grow on eggplants, too, don't they?" inquired the cook, with fine sarcasm.

"Not them eggs," corrected the groceryman. "They come from cold-storage plants; but out in the country the hens raise 'em. They ain't a bit ashamed of it, either. When a hen lays an egg she ain't satisfied until she tells everybody for miles around. Did you ever see 'taters grow?'"

"I've seen what you've been bringin' around here," said the cook. "They seem to grow smaller all the time, if you've ever noticed."

"They grow on vines," explained the groceryman. "Not vines the same as grapes, though. You have to excavate for 'taters. Cabbages you can pick right out o' the rows next to the ground. There ain't more'n one fruit on each tree. They ain't like cherries."

"I always thought they grew in a slaw barrel," said the cook. "I s'posed you put 'em up in bottles with sirup. Say, wasn't you never out in the country before, honest now?"

"Never," replied the groceryman. "I've read about it in the papers, but I never seen it. The boss told me that cabbages an' onions an' them sort o' side dishes come out o' the country, but I thought he was lyin'. I thought it all come from South Water street. I tell you, Evelina, there's really nothin' like seein' things for yourself."

"Couldn't they spare you more'n three days from the store?" asked the cook, with a disappointed air.

"They didn't want to spare me at all," answered the groceryman. "They were so mad when I said I had to go I thought they was goin' to let me go for good. If it hadn't been for the union I guess they would. Evelina, if you was to belong to a union you could get a month off now an' then an' you wouldn't have to be downtrodden an' abused an' have to take any old wages that they have a mind to give you."

"Any old time," said the cook. "Any old time I need a union to take care o' me I'll let you know. I'm a pretty good union all by myself. But what gets me is why you came back so soon. Where did you go?"

"Hunniker's grove," replied the groceryman.

"Huh!" ejaculated the cook, contemptuously. "That ain't more'n fifteen miles out, is it? I thought they just had picnics there."

"They do."

"Why didn't you go out somewhere farther?"

"That was where the picnic was. It was the Amalgamated Deliverymen had their picnic there. Greatest time ever. You missed it by not going."

"They didn't have a picnic for three days, did they?"

"One day for the picnic an' two to get over it," said the groceryman. "It might have been thirty if the police force that chased me had been a better runner. But the country is great, all right."—Chicago Daily News.



"It's fierce the way people is," remarked the man with the safety-pin coat connection to the lunch-counter proprietor.

"You're on," agreed the caterer, with a meaning glance at his customer.

"Tried to git a job yest'dy—all day. Dat's all de good it done me. On'y struck de town yest'day. Say, it's fierce. I'm goin' to git out of here soon's I kin rustle enough for a little chuck. I'd sooner be in Pittsburg than here."

"There's trains leavin' for Pittsburg every day," suggested the lunch-counter proprietor.

"I struck a woman on de Sout' Side dis mornin'," said the wayfarer. "I give her a straight talk. I says to her, 'Lady, I ain't got no dyin' mother what has wrote to her errin' boy to come home and be forgiven; I ain't jest out o' the hospital; I ain't had a sick day in ten years. I ain't out o' work on account o' being black'sted since the strike, because I never struck.' I put it to her like dat. 'I ain't got no wife an' three children waitin' fer me ter bring dem somethin' to eat—'"

"That's old," interrupted the lunch-counter man.

"Dat's all right. Wait till youse hear de finish. I says, 'I'm fellin' youse de true', lady. I'm travelin' an' I'd jest as soon get erlong wit'out work if I could, but I kin work. I ain't goin' ter ast if I can't saw some wood fer youse. I know youse ain't got no woodpile, an' I ain't runnin' no bluff. I seen your lawn was mowed an' your winders was washed, so I don't ast you ter do dat fer youse."

"What do you want to do, then?" she says.

"I'll tell youse what I kin do," I says. "I kin scrub floors an' cane chairs, if youse have got de cane, which you prob'ly haven't. I kin beat carpets or spade up your garden. I kin do a job o' paintin' if you want any 'ing painted."

"I've got a carpet I want beaten," she says. "Go around de alley to de back yard."

"I thanked her kindly an' went around to de back yard. De carpet was hangin' on de line. Say, dat carpet was about fifteen foot square. It was a fright. Well, de woman comes out. 'I'll cook you up a good meal if you want ter beat dat,' she says. 'Youse kin start on it right now while I get de chuck on fer youse.'

"How much do I get fer de job?" I ast her.

"You get your meal," she says. "Didn't I tell you?"

"Lady, I says, 'I'm starvin' fer de lack o' food, but dat carpet is goin' to take an hour to be beat de way it order be. Come again,' I says. 'Make it 50 cents an' I take de contract, but I ain't workin' fer me healt'. I git all de exercise I need.'

"You march off," she says. "I tink of de gall! Honest, cull, I couldn't have beat dat carpet under—well, I couldn't have done it under fifteen minutes anyway. It's fierce de way people is!"

"It sure is," agreed the lunch man again. "Sposen you put that salt shaker back on de counter."—Chicago Daily News.

RIDE ON A TURTLE.

Scientist Shows a London Audience How Easy It Is.

Six years ago M. de Rougemont appeared before the geographical section of the British association at Clifton and described with much wealth of detail his remarkable adventures in the heart of the Australian continent. He included among them some striking reminiscences of the pearling industry in Australasia, and added that, having been wrecked, he occupied some part of his leisure by riding turtles in the lagoon of his desert island. Yesterday, after the lapse of many days, he appeared—in a striped bathing blanket and a bathing suit—before a British audience at the Hippodrome to demonstrate the truth of this part of his narrative, says the London Graphic.

There is no ground for supposing that it is the same turtle which shared M. de Rougemont's solitude in Australasia, or that it is a confederate in any way. Yesterday it lay placidly by the Hippodrome lagoon while M. de Rougemont lectured once again on his entertaining experiences, and it gave no sign of intelligence while he described the whole art of turtle riding. Suddenly the explorer flung off his blanket, and seizing the turtle unceremoniously by the scruff of its neck and the back of its shell hoisted it into the water. The turtle sank, but rose again. M. de Rougemont went in after it and in a moment was on its back. Down it went again and then once more rose. This time the rider grasped it firmly, crying, "Ta 'Ra 'Ra!" and slapped it with some severity. It was an exciting and amusing entertainment from the spectators' point of view and M. de Rougemont also appeared to enjoy it very much. Of the turtle's enjoyment we have some doubt, but its general attitude was that of a passive resister. At any rate, M. de Rougemont did ride it.

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