

McCaRE by Sewell Ford

PROFESSOR SHORTY MCCARE TELLS HOW THEY CHANGED THE ATMOSPHERE OF A COUNTRY HOUSE

"It's needin' ashes on 'em they are," says Pat.

"Ashes!" says Jack.

"Ashes!" says Jill.

Then together, "Oh, we know where there's ashes—lots!" says Jill, and with that she heaves a scampurin' up the steps. I was just gettin' up to chase after 'em, when I has another thought. "What's the use, anyway?" think I. "It's the last stunt." So I turns over and pretends to snooze.

When Pinckney shows up about 8 the twins has the pony carts out, and is doin' a chariot race around the drive, as happy and innocent as a couple of pink angels. They eat their supper and goes to bed, with nary a mention of the good night to the lady. Like they'd been in the habit of doin'. Next mornin' they gets up as frisky as coals and goes to play wild Indians in the bushes. They was at it all the forenoon, with nary a word about Grandfather and Aunt Sabina. Pinckney notices it, but he don't dare speak of it for fear he'll break the spell. About 2 he comes in with a telegram.

"Miss Gertrude's coming on the 4 o'clock train," says he, lookin' wild.

"You don't act like you was much tickled," says I.

"She's sure to find out what a mues I've made of things," says he. "The moment she gets here I expect the twins will start up and make a row about Grandfather and Aunt Sabina again. Oh, I can hear them doing it!"

I let it go at that. But while he's away from the station, the twins take a loose. The cook and two maids calls for Aunt Mary, tells her what they think of a place that has canned spoons in the parlor, and starts for the study. Aunt Mary gets her bonnet on and has her trunks lugged down on the front porch. That's the kind of a reception we has for Miss Gertrude and her mother when they show up.

"Anything particular the matter?" whispers Pinckney to me, as he hands the guests out of the carriage.

"Nothin' much," says I. "Me and Silvens and the twins is left. The others have gone or are goin'."

"What's the matter?" says Miss Gertrude. "Everything's all right. I expect you made a flat failure. Shorty, you bring in the twins and we'll end this thing right now."

Well, I rounds up Jack and Jill, and after they've had Miss Gertrude until her travelin' dress is fixed for a week at the cleaners, Pinckney leads us all into the front room. The urns were there on the mantel, but the kids don't even give 'em a look.

"Come on, you young rascals!" says he, as desperate as if he was pleadin' guilty to blowin' up a safe. "I expect Miss Gertrude about Grandfather and Aunt Sabina."

"Oh," says Jack, "they're out in the flower bed."

"We fed 'em to the rose bushes," says Jill.

"We didn't like to lose 'em," says Jack; "but Pat needed the ashes."

"It's straight goods," says I. "I was there."

And say, when Miss Gertrude hears the whole yarn about the urns, and the whole thing, she looks at me with a laughin' and holds out one hand to him over Jill's shoulder.

"You poor boy!" says she. "Didn't you ever read Omar's?"

I sometimes think there never blows so red the rose, as where some buried Caesar bled; I say, who was that duck Omar? and what that was the matter with the fertilizer beds with the pulverized relations of your landlady? I give it up. All I know is that Pinckney had them jars rolled up with wood saws, that Aunt Mary managed to phone up a new set of help before mornin', and that when I left, Pinckney and Miss Gertrude and the twins was standin' on the porch, and lookin' to be havin' the time of their lives.

Domestic? A clear Havana Funko, made in Connecticut, and with some Copyright, 1908, Asa'd Sunday Magazine.

"Then," says I, "you take them jars down cellar and hide 'em in the coal bin."

He holds up both hands at that. "It can't be done, sir," says he. "They've been introduced to Grandfather and Aunt Sabina, made to do a duck before both jars, and am planted on the haircloth sofa with a kid holdin' either arm, while they puts me through the third degree. They want information."

"Did you ever see folks burned and put in jars?" says Jack.

"No," says I; "but I've seen pickled."

Pinckney groans. "Go take a sleep." "G'wan!" says I. "Go take a sleep." With that I steps in and shows myself to the kids. They yell and makes a dash for me. Inside of two minutes I've been introduced to Grandfather and Aunt Sabina, made to do a duck before both jars, and am planted on the haircloth sofa with a kid holdin' either arm, while they puts me through the third degree. They want information.

"Did you ever see folks burned and put in jars?" says Jack.

"No," says I; "but I've seen pickled."

Pinckney groans. "Go take a sleep." "G'wan!" says I. "Go take a sleep." With that I steps in and shows myself to the kids. They yell and makes a dash for me. Inside of two minutes I've been introduced to Grandfather and Aunt Sabina, made to do a duck before both jars, and am planted on the haircloth sofa with a kid holdin' either arm, while they puts me through the third degree. They want information.

"Did you ever see folks burned and put in jars?" says Jack.

"No," says I; "but I've seen pickled."

Pinckney groans. "Go take a sleep." "G'wan!" says I. "Go take a sleep." With that I steps in and shows myself to the kids. They yell and makes a dash for me. Inside of two minutes I've been introduced to Grandfather and Aunt Sabina, made to do a duck before both jars, and am planted on the haircloth sofa with a kid holdin' either arm, while they puts me through the third degree. They want information.

"Did you ever see folks burned and put in jars?" says Jack.

"No," says I; "but I've seen pickled."

Pinckney groans. "Go take a sleep." "G'wan!" says I. "Go take a sleep." With that I steps in and shows myself to the kids. They yell and makes a dash for me. Inside of two minutes I've been introduced to Grandfather and Aunt Sabina, made to do a duck before both jars, and am planted on the haircloth sofa with a kid holdin' either arm, while they puts me through the third degree. They want information.

"Did you ever see folks burned and put in jars?" says Jack.

"No," says I; "but I've seen pickled."

Pinckney groans. "Go take a sleep." "G'wan!" says I. "Go take a sleep." With that I steps in and shows myself to the kids. They yell and makes a dash for me. Inside of two minutes I've been introduced to Grandfather and Aunt Sabina, made to do a duck before both jars, and am planted on the haircloth sofa with a kid holdin' either arm, while they puts me through the third degree. They want information.

"Did you ever see folks burned and put in jars?" says Jack.

"No," says I; "but I've seen pickled."

Pinckney groans. "Go take a sleep." "G'wan!" says I. "Go take a sleep." With that I steps in and shows myself to the kids. They yell and makes a dash for me. Inside of two minutes I've been introduced to Grandfather and Aunt Sabina, made to do a duck before both jars, and am planted on the haircloth sofa with a kid holdin' either arm, while they puts me through the third degree. They want information.

"Did you ever see folks burned and put in jars?" says Jack.

"No," says I; "but I've seen pickled."

Pinckney groans. "Go take a sleep." "G'wan!" says I. "Go take a sleep." With that I steps in and shows myself to the kids. They yell and makes a dash for me. Inside of two minutes I've been introduced to Grandfather and Aunt Sabina, made to do a duck before both jars, and am planted on the haircloth sofa with a kid holdin' either arm, while they puts me through the third degree. They want information.

"Did you ever see folks burned and put in jars?" says Jack.

"No," says I; "but I've seen pickled."

Pinckney groans. "Go take a sleep." "G'wan!" says I. "Go take a sleep." With that I steps in and shows myself to the kids. They yell and makes a dash for me. Inside of two minutes I've been introduced to Grandfather and Aunt Sabina, made to do a duck before both jars, and am planted on the haircloth sofa with a kid holdin' either arm, while they puts me through the third degree. They want information.

"Did you ever see folks burned and put in jars?" says Jack.

"No," says I; "but I've seen pickled."

Pinckney groans. "Go take a sleep." "G'wan!" says I. "Go take a sleep." With that I steps in and shows myself to the kids. They yell and makes a dash for me. Inside of two minutes I've been introduced to Grandfather and Aunt Sabina, made to do a duck before both jars, and am planted on the haircloth sofa with a kid holdin' either arm, while they puts me through the third degree. They want information.

AY, when it comes to gettin' himself tangled up in ways that nobody ever thought of before, you can play Pinckney clear across the board. But I never knew him to send out such a hard breathin' hurry call as the one I got the other day. It come first thing in the mornin' too, just about the time Pinckney used to be teasin' off in the study from the breakfast card. I hadn't morn' got inside the studio door before Swiftly Joe says:

"Pinckney's been tryin' to get you on the wire."

"Gee!" says I, "he's stayin' up late last night! Did he leave the number?"

He had, and it was a 68-cent long distance call; so the first play I makes when I rings up is to reverse the charge.

"That you, Shorty?" says he. "Then for goodness' sake come up here on the next train! Will you?"

"House afire, bone in your throat, or 'It's those twins," says he.

"Bad as that?" says I. "Then I'll come."

Wain't I tellin' you about the pair of mated nephews that was shipped over to him unexpected; and how Miss Gertrude, the Western bluish rose that was on the steamer with 'em, helps 'em out? Well, the last I heard, Pinckney is with Miss Gertrude and gettin' farther from eight every minute. He's planned it out to have the knot tied right away, live furnished cottage for the Summer, and put in the honeymoon gettin' acquainted with the ready-made family that they starts in with. Great scheme! Suits Pinckney right down to the ground, because it's different. He begins by accumulating a pair of twins, next he finds a girl, and then he thinks about gettin' married. By the way he liked, I thought it was all settled; but hearin' this whoop for help I suspecioned there must be some hitch.

There wa'n't any variation in his buttnole when he meets me at the station; he hasn't shaved since the day before; and there's travelin' tracks on his brow.

"Can't you stand married life better than this?" says I.

"Married?" says he. "No such luck. I never expect to be married, Shorty; I'm not fit."

"Is this a decision that was handed you?" says I.

"It's my own discovery," says he.

"Then there's hope," says I. "So the two has been gettin' you worried, eh? Where's Miss Gertrude?"

That gives Pinckney the hard luck, and while we logs along toward his new place in the town he tells me all about what's been happenin'. First off he owns up that he's queered his good start with Miss Gertrude by bein' in such a rush to flash the solitary spark on her. She ain't used to Pinckney's jumps, ways he hadn't been acquainted much more than a week, and he hadn't gone through any of the prelimin' when he ups and asks her what day it will be and whether she chooses church or paragon. Course she smiles at that, and the next thing Pinckney knows she's taken a train West, leavin' him with the twins on his hands, and a nice little note says that while she appreciates the honor, she's afraid he won't do.

"And you're left at the post?" says I.

"Yes," says he. "I couldn't take the twins and follow her, but I could telegraph. My first message read like this, 'Now, first and foremost, I am waiting for an answer to that.' And he digs up a yellow envelope from his inside pocket."

"Not domestic enough, G?" It was short and crisp. "Well, not so bad as you think. Course, he's stuck about two pieces for rent, and he signs a lease without readin' farther than the 'Whereas' part; but, harrin', a few things like haircloth furniture and rooms that have been shut up so long they smell like the subcellars in a brewery, he says the ranch wa'n't so bad. The outdoors was good, anyway. There was lots of it, acres and acres, with trees, and flower gardens, and walks, and fishponds, and everything you could want for a pair of youngsters that needed room. I could see that myself."

"Say, Pinckney," says I, "as we drives in through the grounds, 'If you can't get along with Jack and Jill in a place of this kind you'd better give up. Why, set of the solemnest-lookin' lamps you ever saw off of a stuffed owl."

"Gee, Pinckney!" says I, "who unloaded that on you?"

"Silvens came with the place," says he.

"He looks it," says I. "I should think that face would sour the milk. Don't he scare the wains?"

"Frighten Jack and Jill?" says Pinckney. "Not if he had horns and a tail! They seem to take him as a joke. But he does make all the rest of us feel creep."

"Why don't you write him his release?" says I.

"The urns?" says I.

"The urns?" says I, "sighin' deep."

"We are coming to them now. There they are."

With that we steps into one of the front rooms, and he lines me up before a white marble mantel that is just as cheerful and tasty as some of them pieces in Greenwood Cemetery. On either end was what looks to be a bronze flower pot.

Grandfather: to your left, Aunt Sabina."

"What's the joke?" says I.

"You're now in the presence of another sign," says he, "and when it comes to sacred dust. These urns contain the sad fragments of two great Van Rusters."

"Fragments is good, sir. Couldn't find many to keep, could they? Did they go up with a powder mill, or fall into a stone crusher?"

Then I get the whole story of the two old squids that Pinckney rented the place from. They were the last of the clan. In their day the Van Rusters had headed the Westchester battin' list, ownin' about half the county and gettin' their names in the paper reg'lar. But they'd been petrin' out for the last hundred years or so, and when it got down to the Misses Van Rusters, a pair of thin-edged, old battle axes that had never been anything but craps and jet ornaments, there wa'n't much left of the estate except the mortgages and the urns.

Reutilizing the place furnished was the best card in the box, and Pinckney turns up as the willin' victim. When he come to size up what he's drawn, and has read over the lease, he finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time.

"You ain't a tenant, Pinckney," says I; "you're a philanthropist."

"I feel that way," says he. "At first, I didn't know which was worse, Silvens or the urns. But now I know—it is the urns. They are driving me to distraction."

"What do a pair of 'em do?" says I.

"Oh, do a pair?" says I. "Course, I give in that there might be better parlor ornaments than potted ancestors, specially when they belong to some one else; but they don't come extra, do they? I thought it was the twins that was worryin' you?"

"That is where the urns come in," says he. "Here the youngsters are now. Step back to her side, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

"Hello, Grandfather! Hello, Aunt Sabina! Look what I brought this time!"

"Stop it! Stop it!" says the nurse, her eyes buggin' out.

"Boo! Fraid cat!" yells the twins, and nary signs. Then they begin to unload their gifts, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

"Hello, Grandfather! Hello, Aunt Sabina! Look what I brought this time!"

"Stop it! Stop it!" says the nurse, her eyes buggin' out.

"Boo! Fraid cat!" yells the twins, and nary signs. Then they begin to unload their gifts, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

"Hello, Grandfather! Hello, Aunt Sabina! Look what I brought this time!"

"Stop it! Stop it!" says the nurse, her eyes buggin' out.

"Boo! Fraid cat!" yells the twins, and nary signs. Then they begin to unload their gifts, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

"Hello, Grandfather! Hello, Aunt Sabina! Look what I brought this time!"

"Stop it! Stop it!" says the nurse, her eyes buggin' out.

"Boo! Fraid cat!" yells the twins, and nary signs. Then they begin to unload their gifts, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

"Hello, Grandfather! Hello, Aunt Sabina! Look what I brought this time!"

"Stop it! Stop it!" says the nurse, her eyes buggin' out.

"Boo! Fraid cat!" yells the twins, and nary signs. Then they begin to unload their gifts, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

"Hello, Grandfather! Hello, Aunt Sabina! Look what I brought this time!"

"Stop it! Stop it!" says the nurse, her eyes buggin' out.

"Boo! Fraid cat!" yells the twins, and nary signs. Then they begin to unload their gifts, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

AY, when it comes to gettin' himself tangled up in ways that nobody ever thought of before, you can play Pinckney clear across the board. But I never knew him to send out such a hard breathin' hurry call as the one I got the other day. It come first thing in the mornin' too, just about the time Pinckney used to be teasin' off in the study from the breakfast card. I hadn't morn' got inside the studio door before Swiftly Joe says:

"Pinckney's been tryin' to get you on the wire."

"Gee!" says I, "he's stayin' up late last night! Did he leave the number?"

He had, and it was a 68-cent long distance call; so the first play I makes when I rings up is to reverse the charge.

"That you, Shorty?" says he. "Then for goodness' sake come up here on the next train! Will you?"

"House afire, bone in your throat, or 'It's those twins," says he.

"Bad as that?" says I. "Then I'll come."

Wain't I tellin' you about the pair of mated nephews that was shipped over to him unexpected; and how Miss Gertrude, the Western bluish rose that was on the steamer with 'em, helps 'em out? Well, the last I heard, Pinckney is with Miss Gertrude and gettin' farther from eight every minute. He's planned it out to have the knot tied right away, live furnished cottage for the Summer, and put in the honeymoon gettin' acquainted with the ready-made family that they starts in with. Great scheme! Suits Pinckney right down to the ground, because it's different. He begins by accumulating a pair of twins, next he finds a girl, and then he thinks about gettin' married. By the way he liked, I thought it was all settled; but hearin' this whoop for help I suspecioned there must be some hitch.

There wa'n't any variation in his buttnole when he meets me at the station; he hasn't shaved since the day before; and there's travelin' tracks on his brow.

"Can't you stand married life better than this?" says I.

"Married?" says he. "No such luck. I never expect to be married, Shorty; I'm not fit."

"Is this a decision that was handed you?" says I.

"It's my own discovery," says he.

"Then there's hope," says I. "So the two has been gettin' you worried, eh? Where's Miss Gertrude?"

That gives Pinckney the hard luck, and while we logs along toward his new place in the town he tells me all about what's been happenin'. First off he owns up that he's queered his good start with Miss Gertrude by bein' in such a rush to flash the solitary spark on her. She ain't used to Pinckney's jumps, ways he hadn't been acquainted much more than a week, and he hadn't gone through any of the prelimin' when he ups and asks her what day it will be and whether she chooses church or paragon. Course she smiles at that, and the next thing Pinckney knows she's taken a train West, leavin' him with the twins on his hands, and a nice little note says that while she appreciates the honor, she's afraid he won't do.

"And you're left at the post?" says I.

"Yes," says he. "I couldn't take the twins and follow her, but I could telegraph. My first message read like this, 'Now, first and foremost, I am waiting for an answer to that.' And he digs up a yellow envelope from his inside pocket."

"Not domestic enough, G?" It was short and crisp. "Well, not so bad as you think. Course, he's stuck about two pieces for rent, and he signs a lease without readin' farther than the 'Whereas' part; but, harrin', a few things like haircloth furniture and rooms that have been shut up so long they smell like the subcellars in a brewery, he says the ranch wa'n't so bad. The outdoors was good, anyway. There was lots of it, acres and acres, with trees, and flower gardens, and walks, and fishponds, and everything you could want for a pair of youngsters that needed room. I could see that myself."

"Say, Pinckney," says I, "as we drives in through the grounds, 'If you can't get along with Jack and Jill in a place of this kind you'd better give up. Why, set of the solemnest-lookin' lamps you ever saw off of a stuffed owl."

"Gee, Pinckney!" says I, "who unloaded that on you?"

"Silvens came with the place," says he.

"He looks it," says I. "I should think that face would sour the milk. Don't he scare the wains?"

"Frighten Jack and Jill?" says Pinckney. "Not if he had horns and a tail! They seem to take him as a joke. But he does make all the rest of us feel creep."

"Why don't you write him his release?" says I.

"The urns?" says I.

"The urns?" says I, "sighin' deep."

"We are coming to them now. There they are."

With that we steps into one of the front rooms, and he lines me up before a white marble mantel that is just as cheerful and tasty as some of them pieces in Greenwood Cemetery. On either end was what looks to be a bronze flower pot.

Grandfather: to your left, Aunt Sabina."

"What's the joke?" says I.

"You're now in the presence of another sign," says he, "and when it comes to sacred dust. These urns contain the sad fragments of two great Van Rusters."

"Fragments is good, sir. Couldn't find many to keep, could they? Did they go up with a powder mill, or fall into a stone crusher?"

Then I get the whole story of the two old squids that Pinckney rented the place from. They were the last of the clan. In their day the Van Rusters had headed the Westchester battin' list, ownin' about half the county and gettin' their names in the paper reg'lar. But they'd been petrin' out for the last hundred years or so, and when it got down to the Misses Van Rusters, a pair of thin-edged, old battle axes that had never been anything but craps and jet ornaments, there wa'n't much left of the estate except the mortgages and the urns.

Reutilizing the place furnished was the best card in the box, and Pinckney turns up as the willin' victim. When he come to size up what he's drawn, and has read over the lease, he finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time.

"You ain't a tenant, Pinckney," says I; "you're a philanthropist."

"I feel that way," says he. "At first, I didn't know which was worse, Silvens or the urns. But now I know—it is the urns. They are driving me to distraction."

"What do a pair of 'em do?" says I.

"Oh, do a pair?" says I. "Course, I give in that there might be better parlor ornaments than potted ancestors, specially when they belong to some one else; but they don't come extra, do they? I thought it was the twins that was worryin' you?"

"That is where the urns come in," says he. "Here the youngsters are now. Step back to her side, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

"Hello, Grandfather! Hello, Aunt Sabina! Look what I brought this time!"

"Stop it! Stop it!" says the nurse, her eyes buggin' out.

"Boo! Fraid cat!" yells the twins, and nary signs. Then they begin to unload their gifts, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

"Hello, Grandfather! Hello, Aunt Sabina! Look what I brought this time!"

"Stop it! Stop it!" says the nurse, her eyes buggin' out.

"Boo! Fraid cat!" yells the twins, and nary signs. Then they begin to unload their gifts, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

"Hello, Grandfather! Hello, Aunt Sabina! Look what I brought this time!"

"Stop it! Stop it!" says the nurse, her eyes buggin' out.

"Boo! Fraid cat!" yells the twins, and nary signs. Then they begin to unload their gifts, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

"Hello, Grandfather! Hello, Aunt Sabina! Look what I brought this time!"

"Stop it! Stop it!" says the nurse, her eyes buggin' out.

"Boo! Fraid cat!" yells the twins, and nary signs. Then they begin to unload their gifts, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

"Hello, Grandfather! Hello, Aunt Sabina! Look what I brought this time!"

"Stop it! Stop it!" says the nurse, her eyes buggin' out.

"Boo! Fraid cat!" yells the twins, and nary signs. Then they begin to unload their gifts, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

"Hello, Grandfather! Hello, Aunt Sabina! Look what I brought this time!"

"Stop it! Stop it!" says the nurse, her eyes buggin' out.

"Boo! Fraid cat!" yells the twins, and nary signs. Then they begin to unload their gifts, and the regulation cocktail dress, she finds he's put his name to a lot he didn't dream about. Keepin' Silvens on the roll, prohibitin' us to disturb the urns, usin' the furniture careful, and havin' the grass cut in the private burrin' lot was only a few that he could think of at the time."

AY, when it comes to gettin' himself tangled up in ways that nobody ever thought of before, you can play Pinckney clear across the board. But I never knew him to send out such a hard breathin' hurry call as the one I got the other day. It come first thing in the mornin' too, just about the time Pinckney used to be teasin' off in the study from the breakfast card. I hadn't morn' got inside the studio door before Swiftly Joe says:

"Pinckney's been tryin' to get you on the wire."

"Gee!" says I, "he's stayin' up late last night! Did he leave the number?"

He had, and it was a 68-cent long distance call; so the first play I makes when I rings up is to reverse the charge.

"That you, Shorty?" says he. "Then for goodness' sake come up here on the next train! Will you?"

"House afire, bone in your throat, or 'It's those twins," says he.

"Bad as that?" says I. "Then I'll come."

Wain't I tellin' you about the pair of mated nephews that was shipped over to him unexpected; and how Miss Gertrude, the Western bluish rose that was on the steamer with 'em, helps 'em out? Well, the last I heard, Pinckney is with Miss Gertrude and gettin' farther from eight every minute. He's planned it out to have the knot tied right away, live furnished cottage for the Summer, and put in the honeymoon gettin' acquainted with the ready-made family that they starts in with. Great scheme! Suits Pinckney right down to the ground, because it's different. He begins by accumulating a pair of twins, next he finds a girl, and then he thinks about gettin' married. By the way he liked, I thought it was all settled; but hearin' this whoop for help I suspecioned there must be some hitch.

There wa'n't any variation in his buttnole when he meets me at the station; he hasn't shaved since the day before; and there's travelin' tracks on his brow.

"Can't you stand married life better than this?" says I.

"Married?" says he. "No such luck. I never expect to be married, Shorty; I'm not fit."

"Is this a decision that was handed you?" says I.

"It's my own discovery," says he.

"Then there's hope," says I. "So the two has been gettin' you worried, eh? Where's Miss Gertrude?"

That gives Pinckney the hard luck, and while we logs along toward his new place in the town he tells me all about what's been happenin'. First off he owns up that he's queered his good start with Miss Gertrude by bein' in such a rush to flash the solitary spark on her. She ain't used to Pinckney's jumps, ways he hadn't been acquainted much more than a week, and he hadn't gone through any of the prelimin' when he ups and asks her what day it will be and whether she chooses church or paragon. Course she smiles at that, and the next thing Pinckney knows she's taken a train West, leavin' him with the twins on his hands, and a nice little note says that while she appreciates the honor, she's afraid he won't do.

"And you're left at the post?" says I.

"Yes," says he. "I couldn't take the twins and follow her, but I could telegraph. My first message read like this, 'Now, first and foremost, I am waiting for an answer to that.' And he digs up a yellow envelope from his inside pocket."

"Not domestic enough, G?" It was short and crisp. "Well, not so bad as you think. Course, he's stuck about two pieces for rent, and he signs a lease without readin' farther than the 'Whereas' part; but, harrin', a few things like haircloth furniture and rooms that have been shut up so long they smell like the subcellars in a brewery, he says the ranch wa'n't so bad. The outdoors was good, anyway. There was lots of it, acres and acres, with trees, and flower gardens, and walks, and fishponds, and everything you could want for a pair of youngsters that needed room. I could see that myself."

"Say, Pinckney," says I, "as we drives in through the grounds, 'If you can't get along with Jack and Jill in a place of this kind you'd better give up. Why, set of the solemnest-lookin' lamps you ever saw off of a stuffed owl."

"Gee, Pinckney!" says I, "who unloaded that on you?"

"Silvens came with the place," says he.

"He looks it," says I. "I should think that face would sour the milk. Don't he scare the wains?"

"Frighten Jack and Jill?" says Pinckney. "Not if he had horns and a tail! They seem to take him as a joke. But he does make all the rest of us feel creep."

"Why don't you write him his release?" says I.

"The urns?" says I.

"The urns?" says I, "sighin' deep."

"We are coming to them now. There they are."

With that we steps into one of the front rooms, and he lines me up before a white marble mantel that is just as cheerful and tasty as some of them pieces in Greenwood Cemetery. On either end was what looks to be a bronze flower pot.



They Introduces Me to Grandfather and Aunt Sabina.

G'wan Ye Young Tarrier." says Pat.

idea of how he tackles a job like that? Most folks would take a week off and do a lot of travelin', staid up different joints. They'd want to know how many bathin' if there was malaria, and all about the plumbin', and what the neighbors was like. But livin' in the club don't put you wise to them tricks. Pinckney, he's a real estate agent, and he's got him to read off of list, says: "I'll take No. 2," and it's all over. Next day they move out.