The JOURNAL of A NEGLECTED WIFE

by Mabel Herbert Urner

CHAPTER VII.

2 A. M., September 26.

I cannot sleep. It is torture to lie there thinking—thinking. Perhaps it will help me to write. It is horrible to have to "fight" for sleep as I do now, night after night. One after another I try all the means, the tricks I have ever heard of that are said to induce sleep. I count thousands, repeat the alphabet backward, picture innumerable sheep jumping over a fence, repeat all the poems I have ever memorized—until my brain reels from exhaustion, and at last I sink into a sort of stupor.

One method is to think of objects disconnectedly—to name things rapidly, things that are entirely foreign to each other, as desk, wine, mountain, cathedral, sign, pear, clock, etc. It is the confusion and weariness that this causes that finally bring sleep.

But there are night when, try as I will, I cannot keep my mind on any of these methods. After a few moments' effort I find myself back thinking of her—always of her.

The sounds of the nights! They may not be said in themselves, but for me, as I lie listening through the long, sleepless hours, they have come to have an inexpressible mournfulness. The hoarse shriek of distant ferryboats, long-drawn-out like the cry of some haunted wild thing, the sound of dragging hoofs of weary cab horses, the faint rumble of the elevated, and always in the background, if one listens intently, comes that subdued night whisper of the city—the great, seething city—which even in its sleep is restless and murmurous.

September 27th.

How strange a thing is love! There has never been a moment in all these 15 years of our married life that I have not loved Horace deeply, completely. And yet for the last 10 years up to a year ago, my love had become a quiet, contented affection. In these years I did not pick up his clothes, his brushes, his gloves, and kiss them as I did in the first few years, and as I do now. I did not wait for his coming with throbbing pulse and flushed cheeks, and thrill at his slightest touch, as I did in the first few years, and as I do now. The constant companionship of so many years had taken away that feverish intensity and brought in its place a deep, quiet contentment. But now—now that I feel I am losing him—all the intensity, all the feverishness of our early love has returned. I love him now as I loved him in the first year of our marriage.

Oh, how strange it all is—and how pitiful! Why should life ordain things so?

September 28th.

The horror of these long evenings alone is eating into my very soul. Alone—alone—always alone! It has come to be more than a sense of desolation; there are times when I am filled with a haunting dread, a fear, a nameless terror of I know not what. Oh, Horace! if you knew what I suffered you would not leave me so much alone—you could not, even though you no longer love me; your very humanity would make you want to help me.

September 30th.

Last night I walked the streets until after midnight! I had reached the stage where I could be alone not one moment longer. I left the house as though I was fleeing from something. I do not know where I went—blindly I walked on and on, with an endurance I have never known before. I had no thought of danger, or of the strangeness of the thing I was doing. I only felt impelled to go on—on! Just the streets, the passing people, seemed to help me. Sometimes I found myself in a neighborhood of small shops with cheerful lighted windows; again I would pass through blocks of grave, silent houses, dark but for an occasional light in an upper room; then again by some small square, with dim lights shining through the dark trees, lighting up some bench on which huddled a sleeping tramp.

On and on I walked, until both mind and body seemed numbed into a sort of unfeeling weariness. Suddenly, high up in the darkness, before me shone an illuminated clock-tower—it was midnight! I took the first carline I came to—an old, jangling horsecar—and found I was far on the East Side, and that I must change twice before I could get back home.

How strange and unfamilar our house seemed when at last I stood before it! I had a sense of having been away for a great length of time. When I unlocked the door and entered the dim hall, Horace's hat and coat were there. In a dazed way I stared at them: that he might come home first had not occurred to me. And then slowly came the thought—he knew I was not at home—I, who had never before been outside of the house alone at night—and he had not cared! He was not even worried—he had gone calmly to bed!

I think my first impulse was to go out again into the night—to wander on and on, never to come back—in some way to go out of his life forever. But the physical weariness that claimed me was too strong. I was faint and dizzy—I could go no farther now. Perhaps tomorrow . . . Tomorrow I would go away. . . .

Through blinding tears I groped for the banisters and dragged myself up the stairs. Half way up I stumbled and fell. I made no effort to rise. A wave of such weakness, such hopelessness, such utter misery, swept over me that I wanted to lie there—just to lie there, never to move again. After a while I was conscious of a dusty odor from the thick carpet beneath my cheek, and found myself thinking dully that Ellen must sweep the stairs better, and then I could have laughed aloud at the irony of the thought.

Suddenly a door opened from above, and a flood of light came out. I knew it was Horace, but I did not move—I did not seem to care. Whether he saw me or not made no difference to me then.

"Mary! Mary!" He was beside me, trying to raise me up. "What has happened—why are you here?"

I did not answer. It was not resentment or bitterness that kept me silent; it was only a great indifference. I think my ability to suffer or feel anything more just then was deadened. I was curiously calm and quiet.

"I thought you were in bed. What does this mean?" He had half carried me into my room. "What is it, Mary—are you ill?"

Are you ill? That is what he always says: never—are you unhappy, are you lonely, heartsick, miserable; but always—are you ill?

"Mary, you must answer me—are you ill?"

"No; I am only drunk!"

What made me say that I shall never know. I did not even know I was saying it until I heard the words. I suppose it was a form of hysteria, and yet at that moment I felt so curiously quiet. I did not look up at Horace. I do not know what horror or incredulity his face expressed, but his hands trembled as he held mine. With a strange, impersonal interest I wondered what he would say. It seemed a long while before he spoke.

"Mary, of course I know what you said is not true. I don't know why you said it, or what this all means. But I believe you are ill, and you must let me send for Dr. Martin."

"I am not ill," I answered very quietly, "and I shall not see Dr. Martin. But I am very tired; if you will leave me now, I should like to go to bed."

I let my clothes drop from me and slipped into bed. Rest—sleep—the need was imperative; I had no other thought. That strange thing I said was in a way true; there are so many things beside wine that can make one drunk. Joy can, if it is great enough, and so can misery.

Again Horace came in and stood beside the bed. "Mary, I want you to promise that if you are wakeful or nervous during the night you will call me. I will leave the door open."

"Very well," I murmured.

Still he hesitated. "I want you to promise, Mary. I want to be sure that if you need me you will call."

"I promise," I answered wearily. And I remember nothing more. I must have fallen asleep while he stood there.

It was very late when I awoke. Ellen brought up a breakfast-tray, which I sent back untouched. She said Mrs. Kennedy had left word that I was not to be awakened, and that he would call up during the day to know how I was.

October 6.

Horace has been at home every evening this week. A few months ago this would have made me very happy, would have filled me with hope, with the belief that he was coming back to me, that the cloud that had so long darkened my life was to be lifted. But I cannot believe that now. I feel that it is only a temporary thing, that he is staying with me now because that night he had a glimpse into the depths of my despondency. But when the memory of that is less vivid, when he thinks I am better and that he can safely leave me to myself again, I feel that it will be just as it was before.

October 10.

I have been afraid to open this journal in these last few days, afraid to record the hope that is quivering within me, afraid that it will only deepen my suffering when the change comes. * * * And yet for 12 days, now, he has been with me every evening—12 days!

October 13.

And I had let myself hope. * * *

October 14.

Sometimes I try to comfort myself with the thought that in a few years it will not matter whether I have been happy or unhappy—whether I have been loved or neglected. After all, life is so short—any condition is only temporary. Why, then, should we fight and struggle so? I have often heard people who have taken uncomfortable rooms or been forced into an uncongenial neighborhood say: "It is only for a short time; we can put up with anything for a little while; next year we are going abroad." The thought that it is only for a "short while" makes almost anything endurable. And yet life itself is only a "short while." If I would always think of it like this I would be more reconciled.

But how rarely one considers life in that way; we are constantly striving for some "permanent happiness," for conditions that we think of as enduring.

Now and then, by the death of a friend or relative, we are brought suddenly to realize how "short a time" it is. But in a few days we are again planning, striving, straining for some condition, some goal, with an eagerness and anxiety as though it were for all eternity, and not merely for a "short while," a few years at most, and perhaps only a few months.

I am marking this page by folding down the corner. I want to turn to this again and again. I feel if I can keep this thought before me—that it is only for a "short while," that in a few years it will make no difference—I will not suffer so.

October 15.

When I went down to the kitchen this morning to give some orders to Ellen I noticed on the pantry door a large lithograph calendar she had hung there. It was an advertisement of a well-known soap, and represented a young woman with a face flawlessly pink and white, and underneath: "Creates and preserves a perfect complexion."

Instinctively I glanced in a small glass Ellen keeps over the icebox. Oh, the contrast—the ghastly contrast!

"Ellen, where did that calendar come from?" I asked sharply.

"The grocer's clerk gave it to me, ma'am. It's a real pretty one, isn't it?"

"No; I think it hideous. I don't see why you want to disfigure your pantry with such cheap, gaudy advertisements. If you want a calendar I will get you one, but do take that thing down."

Poor Ellen, how bewildered and distressed she looked. She has been with us five years, and her devotion to me is unswerving. But I know she often wonders what has so changed her once cheerful, practical and wholly reasonable mistress to a sad and distraught woman, absentminded and forgetful, and who is at times even strangely irritable and unjust.

Afterwards I felt very much ashamed of my sharpness about the calendar. Have I really become so bitter and so warped that I cannot bear to sit beside a young and beautiful woman on the car, or even see one pictured on a lithograph? Has my brooding over my age, my growing unloveliness, brought me to this?

October 16.

From a car window today I saw a wretched gray horse in an old wagon driven by a couple of boys. It seemed almost too weak to stand, and yet it was being mercilessly whipped into a lame gallop. For just a second I caught sight of a great, raw sore from beneath its collar, and on the leather where it rubbed against the sore was a dark, sickening stain. Frantically I rang the bell, but it was another block before the car stopped, and then it was too late. In the mass of traffic the horse was nowhere to be seen. It may have been driven down either of the side streets. I questioned a policeman on the corner, but he had not noticed it—they never do. All day I have been haunted by the thought of that wretched animal. If only I could have overtaken it, had the driver arrested and the poor thing shot or cared for.

But why must I always see such things? Why can I never go on the street without seeing and suffering with every wretched, starved, over-burdened horse. If it has a sore back or a lame leg, or is being driven until its head hangs in abject misery, I must always see it. Other people do not—they pass by unnoticing, indifferent. How can they be so blind, so callous, to the suffering of horses—poor dumb, patient, helpless beasts? Oh, how cruelly so many of them are treated! Not the valuable, spirited horse, but the worn-out wretches that have worked so long and so hard, until they can be bought for a mere pittance, and their owners think it cheaper to starve and overload them to a slow, torturous death, and then to buy another equally cheap and doom it to the same fate, than to feed and care for them humanely.

How my heart aches for those pitiable animals so often seen in peddlers' and cheap express wagons! Sometimes when one is standing by the curb, if I stop to stroke its thin, scarred neck, it will turn to look at me with meek, appealing eyes, as though begging me to release it from its misery.

SUDDENLY A DOOR OPENED FROM ABOVE AND A FLOOD F LIGHT CAME OUT. I KNEW IT WAS HORACE, BUT I DID NOT MOVE.

Oh, if I could only gather them all in my arms—all those poor old horses, with their bent knees, their sore backs, their whip-streaked sides—and carry them away to some green pasture, where they would not be goaded and lashed to further torture, but could end their days in the peace and rest they have more than earned by years of hard and faithful work.

October 17.

Lillian Russell is playing here now. Today I went to the matinee. I went for one reason only—to see if she had retained her youth and beauty to the marvelous degree the papers claimed. I secured a seat as near the stage as possible—the fifth row of the orchestra. When she came on I was astonished—no, it needs a stronger word than that—astounded is better. It was a young woman—a young woman—that graciously greeted the applause. And yet I knew her to be as old, if not older, than I. I knew that she has a married daughter and is a grandmother. Of course, she was made up, but I allowed for that; without it she would still have been young. And that was Lillian Russell whom I had seen 20 years before, whose picture has been on cigarboxes for as many years or more! I watched her jealously as she moved gracefully around the stage, smiling, winning, confident of her charm. Her role was that of a young girl, and she gave it all the exuberance and lightness of youth, executing in one act something verging on a skirt dance. And it was all done with ease and grace, never for a moment seeming ridiculous or even inappropriate.

I thought of myself or any of the other middle-aged women sifting around me going through the same antics—how hideously absurd we would seem! I don't know why I torture myself with such thoughts, but I do. All the way home I was picturing myself in that part, lashing myself with the thought of how ridiculous I would have looked.

What was her secret? Why had I faded, while the years left her almost untouched? The life of an actress must be hard—harder than that of a shielded, sheltered woman. And yet invariably they retain their youth longer. Massage and constant care may do a great deal, but I believe it is, after all, the nervous tension itself, the continual change and excitement, the very intensity of living, that keeps them young.

October 19.

I read this sentence in a book today: "There is nothing more pitiful in life than the sight of a woman on her knees trying to fan into life a love that has grown cold." * * * A woman on her knees trying to fan into life a love that has grown cold! And that is what I have been doing for months. . . .

October 20.

There are moments in every woman's life that are unforgetable, that even in years long after are lived over and over again.

What a wonderful document it would be if a few women would write honestly of what was the most supreme moment of their lives, of the moment that stood out above all others in haunting vividness!

In my own life there have been two moments so great that sometimes I feel if there had been nothing else, life would still have been worth living for—just for those.

One was after the birth of our child, when Horace was first allowed to see me. The nurse opened the door for him and then went out, closing it after her—leaving us alone. Oh, the look in his eyes as he came toward the bed and knelt beside me! I think he whispered my name, "Mary!" but that was all. And even had I not been too weak to talk I know he would not have spoken. It was a moment for which there were no words. I can still feel the dear pressure of his face against my hand, still thrill at something warm and moist that fell there, and at the slight roughness of his lips and cheek, which I knew meant two days' neglected shaving. For the nurse had told me that in the 48 hours I had been unconscious he had hardly left the hall, where tirelessly he walked back and forth before my door.

The other moment was in the old Fifth Avenue Hotel a few weeks before our marriage. I was standing on an upper flight of the wide, rep-carpeted stairs, and Horace was coming slowly, reluctantly up toward me, with a pale, stern face and defiant, blazing eyes. Every detail of that picture is burned forever in my memory. A large, old-fashioned gas chandelier with cut-glass pendants hung in the hall above; it shone direct on Horace as he came toward me, throwing a circle of light over the high, white wall and part of the dark mahogany banisters, leaving the rest in gloom.

That was the moment—but the hour before had made it what it was.

Father had come to New York on some political business, and had brought me with him to buy my trousseau. We were at the Fifth Avenue, where he had stopped for years. That night he was out at some meeting. Tired from a day's shopping, I had slipped into negligee and was sitting by one of the long, low windows, looking out at the lights in Madison Square, thinking dreamily of Horace, and of our new life, now so near, when there came a sharp knock at the door. It was a bellboy with a card—Horace's card!

The blood flew to my face. He was there—downstairs! I told the boy to say I would be down in a few moments. And then with a rush came the thought, why need I dress and go down? He was my fiance—why could I not receive him as I was, up here? Father had taken a two-room suite, and one of the rooms was a private parlor, except for a large folding-bed. I caught a glimpse of myself in the long mirror between the windows; the pale pink negligee I was wearing was far more becoming than any dress. Quickly I rang for another boy and told him to ask Mr. Kennedy to come up.

I waited in nervous uncertainty and doubt. Had I done right? I, who had always been so shy and conventional—was this conventional? What would he think?

Then came his knock. Tremulously I opened the door, my face suffused with color. In a moment he had me in his arms.

"My darling! this is so dear of you! I never dreamed of having you like this." He was kissing my hair, my lips, my throat.

With an effort I drew away. "But is it right? Should I have done this? You won't misunderstand—"

Instantly he released me and stepped back. "Misunderstand?"

"No—no—I don't mean that. Of course, I know you won't. I am oversensitive, dear, because—just because it is all so near."

"Dearest!" he whispered tenderly. Then he led me over to a large red-plush sofa. He did not sit down beside me as I expected, but drew up a chair. He told me of how he had invented a business trip to New York just to see me; that he was going to stay over tomorrow, and he wanted me to give up shopping for the morning and let him take me for a drive. He had never been more reverential, more reserved. He did not again take me in his arms, nor even kiss me. Instinctively I knew the cause. It was because of what I had implied when he entered—the fear that he might misunderstand. And he was answering me by being far more constrained and reserved than he would have been had I been conventionally gowned in the drawing-room at home.

This very delicacy and restraint made me want his love and caresses more than I had ever wanted them. I slipped my hand timidly through his arm.

"You needn't be so cold and distant just because I was—very—foolish when you came in."

"Dear, I'm not cold."

"Well, I want to be noticed," with a little laugh.

"And am I not noticing you? What do you think I've been doing since I came in—admiring the chandelier?"

"Oh, I hate you when you're—facetious!"

"I'm not facetious, dear. I'm only trying to be as I thought you would rather have me. I thought you were a little self-conscious, and I wanted to put you at ease."

Suddenly, impulsively, I turned and buried my face against his arm.

"Oh, I've missed you so—I've wanted your kisses so!"

"Have you, dear—have you really wanted them?" He had drawn me close to his side now. I could feel his heart beating hard and fast. And yet he did not kiss me. It was as though he was holding me to him, and yet away from him.

Something seemed forcing me on—forcing me to break down his reserve. As I raised my arm to his shoulder, the lace sleeves fell back and my bare arm brushed his face and neck. I felt him quiver at the touch, and then he drew back, pushing me almost roughly from him.

"But you haven't kissed me! I want you to kiss me."

"Mary—don't, dear! Let me go—Mary!"

I heard him walk over to the window. The silence of the room was horrible. When I dropped my hands and looked toward him, he was standing motionless before the window. At length he turned and came toward me.

"I will say good noght, Mary. I know of nothing else to say. I shall not come again until you send for me."

I saw him walk across the room, take up his hat and turn to the door. Then it closed after him. In the next few moments there swept over me such a wave of understanding, of knowledge, of realization that the fault had been mine—mine—that I alone had been to blame, and that he had been too generous to tell me so! That he had accepted in silence my scathing rebuke, and left me without a word of defense.

Snatching from the wardrobe a long opera cloak, I threw it around me and rushed down the hall, the wide winding stairs, one flight, then another—and then I saw him still a flight below.

"Horace!" He turned. He made no move toward me. I went down a few more steps, holding fast to the banisters.

And then he came toward me—slowly, reluctantly—his face white, his eyes like burnished steel. And that was the moment! The moment in which I first realized the greatness of my love for him—of all that it meant—of how completely my happiness, my life, lay in his keeping. Until then I had given him only a young girl's love; and with it came a deep sense of awe and of exaltation.

"Horace," I whispered, "forgive me—"

"There is nothing to forgive," he answered quietly, coldly.

He walked up the stairs beside me to my door, and held it open for me. He made no movement to enter; with another cold "good night" he would have closed it, had I not touched his arm.

"Horace, I cannot let you go like this. I love you! I never knew how much before, Horace!"

He gazed at me steadily, Slowly the cold steel-hardness died out of his eyes. He took both my hands in his; then I felt his lips against my forehead.

"Mary, dear little girl, good night."

Most of that night I sat by the window, filled with many emotions that I had never known before, and with a love that had grown stronger, deeper and more tender than it had ever been.

October 21st.

Sometimes I feel that if through this past year Horace had lied to me in both acts and words, if he had dissembled more, pretended that his love for me was unchanged, if he had taken me in his arms and caressed me as he used to do, I might never have known, I might still be happy in ignorance of any one else in his life.

To constantly live such a lie would be abhorrent to him. But I do not believe that was his only reason. I believe he has too much reverence for the memories of our past love to desecrate them now by giving me a mere pretense, an empty sham, the reality of which he gives to another woman. Nor will he degrade me by offering any form of love that with him would no longer be love.

In my heart I respect him for this. But, Oh! I have suffered so much! Sometimes I feel that if by not knowing I could have escaped this suffering . . . . . If it were given me to go back over this year and have him feign for me a love he does not feel—and I live on unknowing—would I have it so? If I did not know and did not suffer! If I could be made to believe that he loved me—and would be happy in that belief, even though it were not true . . . Would I want happiness on such terms? Oh, I don't know—I have suffered so much . . . Heart-hunger and desolation and anguished loneliness have made of me such a coward. If it lay in my power there is no condition I might not welcome if it would only mean cessation from suffering.

October 23d.

Tonight I took out my marriage certificate and read it over and over. His name and mine—"Horace E. Kennedy and Mary R. Craige are this day united in holy matrimony . . ." How little that means now! And yet it is all I have left—that bit of paper is all that now makes me his wife.

No! No! I do not mean that—I do not believe that! It is not merely that paper—it is these fifteen years of our life together that holds us now. For I know if there had been no ceremony—had I lived with him all these years without this certificate—he would still feel the same sense of duty, of obligation, to me that he feels now. He can never forget that I have given him the fifteen best years of my life. A year ago I would have loathed myself for always thinking of that claim, but now I cannot help it. I hug the thought to my heart. I have given him my youth, I have given the best of my life. No other woman's claim can be as strong as that.

October 24th.

In a magazine today, I came across a page of well-knows people—picturing them as they looked now, and as they will look when they are eighty! In each face the artist has cleverly kept the likeness of features and expression, but distorted it with the wrinkled, shriveled aspect of gaunt old age. It was a ghastly idea, but the magazines now exploit any idea if it be only striking.

Always any thought of age I apply to myself. Somehow I have never thought of Horace as growing old—in some vague way I have felt that he would always remain the same. But now for the first time I picture him as old—old! How would he look at eighty? What would he be like? At forty-six he is a strikingly handsome, vigorous, virile man. But what cruel changes will thirty-four years make?

I remember once sitting in the Senate gallery at Washington, and looking down at a very old member, a man who had long been before the public, but who was now in his cotage. He sat there, a pathetic, decrepit figure, leaning tremblingly on his cane, his mouth half open. I was told that age had weakened the muscles of his mouth, and that he habitually held it that way. I remember my feeling of repulsion and pity for the idiotic expression it gave his face. And when later he arose to speak, his voice was painfully shrill and wheezy.

Will Horace ever be like that—Horace, with his virile strength and rich, full voice? Oh, no—no—I cannot bear that thought! If only I could throw my arms around him and shield him with my love from a change so merciless.

(To Be Continued.)

CHICAGO SEAMSTRESSES TO RUN IDAHO FRUIT RANCH

Send Girl of 20 to Take Possession and Prepare 160 Acres Bought With Savings, to Support All.

MISS GLENNA LYNCH, WHO WILL TAKE POSSESSION OF IDAHO FRUIT RANCH FOR CHICAGO SEAMSTRESSES.

CHICAGO, Aug. 14.—(Special.)—Miss Glenna Lynch, 20 years old, has been chosen by a group of Chicago seamstresses to proceed to Wendell, Idaho, and take possession of a 160-acre fruit farm, which they have bought with their earnings. The young women call themselves the "Idaho Guild." They banded together several years ago with the agricultural project in view. By pooling their resources, they secured 160 acres of Government irrigated land and have been putting their spare earnings into improvements since. Eight members constituted the original "guild," but there have been some additions as the prospects of the scheme grew. Miss Lynch will make an especial study of the farm, pick up all the working data she can and act as the agent on the ground for her companions. Meanwhile, until the farm is able to support all of them, the ones remaining at home will forward such funds as Miss Lynch may call for to put the property in the best condition.

On the eve of her departure, Miss Lynch was given a farewell reception by the Dressmakers' Art Club and Idaho Guild at the rooms of the Art Crafts Institute. She was presented with a silver toilet set, although she told the donors that she believed a pair of hip boots and a brace of magazine revolvers would be more useful on the Idaho farm. Miss Lynch confesses to about 20 years—she is not more than that—and she has brains, ability, lots of courage and is not afraid of hard work.

Curious Strike of Queens.

Paris Figaro.

In the little French town Magny-en-Vexin, which is picturesquely situated on the banks of the Aubette, there is a feeling of unusual unrest because of a peculiar strike. For many years it has been one of the customs in connection with the celebration of the Feast of Roses to crown one of the girls as queen—Rosiere—and the one to whom the choice fell always received at the hand of the Mayor a gift of 300 francs and the homage of the participants in the feast. For the first time there has been no aspirant for the distinction this year. Up to the last moment it was hoped that a candidate would step forth, but no one came, and the crowning feature had to be abandoned. One of the conditions under which the gift was made was that the queen must marry within the year, and the inference is that the strike was caused by the inactivity of Cupid, that none of the maidens of the place saw any matrimonial prospects ahead and therefore could not accept the crown.

The Makin's.

He used to bust for the Lazy Y—
The coolest cowboy, and the best
That ever throwed a steer's heels high
Or made a wild horse lose his zest;
But allus, when most men 'd cuss
Or rip or ra'ar or tear or pray,
Ol' Jim 'd simply say to us:
"Jest pass the makin's, please, this way."

A new top hand was braggin' once—
A loud-mouthed puncher known as Slim—
How he could do great ridin' stunts.
The rest of us all knowed that Jim
Could ride him seasick any day.
And every puncher turned his head
To see what he would have to say.
But, "Makin's, please," was all Jim said.

The other day a chap blowed in
Who knowed Jim in the Cubyan fuss—
Had seen death's pallor on his skin
And give him water when the cuss
Was dyin' fast. This feller said—
And when he told of it he cried—
That ol' Jim simply raised his head
And said, "The makin's, please," and died.

—Denver Republican.