

# THE FAMILY STORY

## HEARTSIE'S 'TONEMENT'

"What? What? What, what, what, what? Through the country stillness of South Carolina afternoon as the man, leaning forward from where he stood on the rickety step of a corn-crate, hammered the big nails steady, sure and drove them home. Having fastened one end of a narrow board on the upper side of the wall he drew down diagonally across the dwarf and nailed it hard and fast, effectually preventing entrance. This done, he picked up a dozen fowls which he had together on the ground and set to the open door of the cabin, pushing rudely against the blooms of a red japonica bush in his haste. All was dark inside. The wood in the fireplace was only smoldering, not burning. The daylight of the gray morning that stole in through the shuttered window showed that a woman sat in one corner.

"Here, you there!" called the man; you understand that if you rip off that sack and use any corn out of that sack you go to jail—you and your old man both! You understand?"

"I know, but you ain't doing us no good," answered the woman. "We aint out for the things, not 'scusin' (excepting) the picture what you fetched out here. Here's the papers what the mens give us, every time they been here."

"I never authorized anybody to collect payment, and you owe me clear and back in a week for that corn and you've laid a finger on it you'll be sorry. Where's your husband?"

"I ain't out gittin' wood, I reckon. These yers took the feather bed and the pile of the quilts we'll have to keep as steady as we can."

"Well, you make 'Hah understand that I say, you hear?"

"Mr. Beckwith ain't goin' to touch you," said the woman in a depressed voice. "But you see mighty hard on us old people. You ain't leave us as a public to raise from, 'ezing us off the feathered bunch hanging and resigned by their yellow legs. You couldn't low me dat speckled hen? She's a sure layer and an awful good nature. I'd save you a couple of the best chickens she'd hatch if you'd give 'em to me."

The speaker came forward and regarded her creditor pleadingly, a repressed eagerness in her manner as though she half expected he would comply. She was tall, with a smooth, shining, bronze-brown skin and good nature, showing little trace of the thick lips, flat nose and receding forehead of the typical negro.

"Speckled hen, indeed!" said the man, waving her off. "I've got her now; the chickens she'd, hit raise I might never see 'em up to your tricks! Get some of your neighbors to raise on shares for you. Don't meddle with the corn-house, 'ezing me; he called as he drove off in his rattling road cart. "The law save their nates and it will be the case for you if you draw any of them out."

Heartsie Beckwith stepped outside after he was gone and looked at the cornhouse door with the tall board across its face, then she looked pathetically at the open trap door of the little farmhouse opposite.

"It won't be no use to shut it tonight," she muttered. "We're ruined, dumb ruined, and there ain't nobody and nothin' to turn to."

Half unconsciously she looked in the direction of the long avenue of oaks that stretched across the big flat field in front of the cabin. As she stood thus an elderly negro in a tattered coat, with his head tied up in a motley collection of scarfs and strings, came up behind her.

"Is dat debl gone?" he asked in a low, hoarse voice.

"Yes, Mr. Beckwith. He's gone, and everything gone with him, 'scusin' the corn and that little handful of peas in the corn house, what we ain't to lay hands on. Everybody goin' to 'scusin' now that we's been shut up and 'scusin'."

"Is you show him the papers what the mens give you in 'sideration of the nates and cotton and things what we got out on de clock debt?"

"Yes, but that make no differ. He aint as low we give the things to the wrong man, 'scusin' man—but he aint send to fetch 'em. He wouldn't save me so much as that speckled hen what's such a regular layer. It's wick' for anybody to eat a hen like that, but pays for herself over and over every year."

"Come in out of the damp, baby," was all that Mr. Beckwith said, and as they entered the cabin, where a light-wood table in the chimney place blazed up brightly in welcome, a brazen-tongued look on a shelf struck thirteen in hurried, uneven tones. Mr. Beckwith was long-legged. "It's got us in a lot of trouble, but it's mighty good company," he said, banking up at the tall clock in the study frame.

Beckwith pecked at a sharp bill striking the bare boards came from the inner room. Mr. Beckwith looked at his wife indignantly.

"The rumpus pullet!" she explained. "While the hen and the dog was in the yard and what other fowls it fly in here and what down under the bed. I just shut the door and ain't sayin' nothin'." Seemed like the Lord aimed to be wick' to us."

Her companion chuckled. "There's been four bushel of corn down here in the fence corner," he said, "but it's gone there itself. I took it, but while it was gone to the sto' for me. He ain't goin' to miss it out of the main basket."

"The rumpus pullet, released from confinement, stepped out near its mistress, pecking at the oven, against the side of which a few crumbs from the bread stuck fast.

"The pullet's red feathers stood up indignantly; it was not prepossessing in appearance, but Heartsie took it up and stroked it gently. "One of the four that was hand raised," she said.

close; I used to steal 'em back in place and scold and whip her, but, after she got wick' and was such a likely gal as could speak up so smart, I hated to own as she was a common nigger thief."

"How you am to give those things back, baby?" asked the old man. "The church is shut up these days. There never is anybody stirrin' 'bout there."

"I hear Em-line say yesterday that there's goin' to be preachin' there this Sunday. People is comin' over here from the city and they goin' to dredicate it over again. She say it's a 'versary and that it's the oldest church in the whole country. There's to be a 'excursion.'"

"But how we kin manage?"

"I plan it out like this," said Heartsie. "When they lifts the collection they calls it the lottery in the white folks' church; you could tote up the things and hand 'em in and explain where they come from and how it is a 'tonement we made wid 'em.'"

"Before all the people?"

"Yes. 'Course the book say about acknowledgein' before men. I would say it myself, but it ain't respectful for women to speak in church, and if I patch you up proper seemin' and do you up a shirt with rice starch you'd look better than me."

The rededication of St. Jude's took place the next Sunday. The excursionists were there in numbers. Many saw the old negro, with his gray wool combed into order and his shabby suit brushed slick and span, walking up the aisle at a respectful distance behind the acting vestrymen. Only those nearest could hear what he said, as, having deposited his burden, he bent low before the church officers and made hurried obeisance to the minister. Before they had recovered from the surprise sufficiently to question him he was already half way to the door, mopping his brow that was moist with the stress of exertion.

"Luek will turn now, see if it don't," said Heartsie, as she joined him.—New York Evening Post.

**May Be a Prebtoric Boat.**  
Maj. G. A. Vandegrift, of the Board of Administration, who was eighteen years in the lighthouse service on the Ohio River, tells of an interesting relic of prehistoric geology embedded in the river bankment a little below water mark. The spot is a short distance from Barto's Landing on the Illinois side of the river, nearly 500 miles below Cincinnati. There at the rare intervals in which the river stage is at a very low point is seen protruding from the bank and inclined at a slightly upward angle a portion of a slab of wood, the timbers, as far as can be seen, are rough and appear to have been hewn with an unevenly edged tool, probably of flint, and are held together with wooden pegs. The protruding portion is small, but there is enough to indicate considerable skill in the fashioning of the boat.

Maj. Vandegrift and several other officers have seen it only a few times in the many years they were employed on the river, and once they examined it closely. The wood is now as hard as iron, and in a splendid state of preservation, on account of having been under the water for such a lengthened period.

From the formations of the bank and the surroundings, which have not changed in the slightest within the memory of man, the Major thinks the subsidence that buried the boat under the embankment must have taken place ages ago. When telling of it he said he has often regretted that he did not make an effort to have it removed and placed in a museum. Such action may yet be taken when the fact of the boat's existence and location becomes more generally known.—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

**A Snake Bite Jag.**  
Scientists have found out that animals and men can acquire the power to resist the venom of poisonous serpents. By gradual inoculation with snake poison, certain sets of snake charmers become able to handle the most venomous reptiles with impunity. It has been ascertained that in North India people allow themselves to be bitten by snakes once a week or so, because the poison produces in them a form of intoxication which is as alluring as the effect produced by liquors from Indian hemp. Not only does a non-fatal bite by a poisonous serpent confer protection against subsequent bites, but the same rule seems to apply to other venomous animals. Where scorpions are numerous many people can be found who are quite indifferent to their stings; and coming nearer home, most keepers of bees will admit that after they have been stung a certain number of times the stings are no more painful than a slight pin-prick. Common experience is thus able to give strong support to the conclusions of men of science as to the protective results of inoculation.

**Thieves Who Stole Ten Millions.**  
The aggregate stealings of men who violate public and private trusts, by defalcation and embezzlement, are probably much greater every year than those of the burglars and highwaymen put together.

The record of such stealings during 1895, as compiled by the Insurance companies which guarantee employers against the dishonesty of their employees, and the public against the dishonesty of officials, shows that the sum of \$9,457,921 was obtained. The cases of embezzlement reported numbered 210. Of these fourteen stole more than \$50,000; twenty more than \$100,000; one more than \$500,000, and one more than \$1,000,000.

City and county officials stole \$1,233,975; banks lost \$3,166,970; agents embezzled \$1,045,875; forgers obtained \$241,500; building and loan associations \$479,578; postmasters stole \$32,815; and the miscellaneous defalcations amounted to \$2,175,782. New York led with defalcations amounting to \$2,388,816, while the stealings of that sort in Delaware were the smallest amounting only to \$1,100.—Cleveland Leader.

**Entomprising Birds.**  
At just about the time the Central Park ostrich laid its five-pound egg a Kentucky hen at Lewisburg laid a five-ounce egg shaped like a pipe bowl.

A dozen times a day something occurs to remind a man that he would be in a position to laugh more, if he had talked less.

**Anecdote AND Incident**

The author of "Degeneration," having shown that the great men of our time are merely so many manifestations of the human mind diseased, was bluntly asked by a critic to define the difference between genius and insanity. "Well," replied Nordan, "the lunatic is at least sure of his board and clothes."

George Garrick, brother of the celebrated David, was the latter's most devoted slave, and the latter's most devoted slave. On coming behind the scene, he usually inquired: "Has David wanted me?" It being asked once how George came to die so soon after the demise of his famous brother, a wag replied: "David wanted him."

Once the opposition leaders were very anxious to find out what course "Dizzy" intended to pursue in regard to a certain matter. They turned loose upon him a well-known political enemy. He talked and talked, he gazed and gazed. At length he asked him. He pressed her hand, looked unutterable admiration, and observed, "Pretty darling!"

Sir Albert Pell, a verbose and prolix but very successful English advocate, owed his forensic victories largely to his iteration. When a gentleman criticized a jury address of his in an important case, Pell "confessed and avoided" the justice of the criticism. "I certainly was confounded long," he replied; "but did not observe the foreman, a heavy-looking fellow in a yellow waistcoat? No more than one idea ever stay in his thick head at a time, and I resolved that mine should be that one; so I hammered till I saw by his eyes that he had got it."

Two of the best metaphors I ever heard (says Mr. Howard Paul) were uttered by an old lady of obscure origin, who lived in the West. She had two daughters being educated in Paris. She desired them to return, and they pleaded for a longer sojourn. "Them girls," she said, "has been so long in Paris, they begin to think themselves Paris-ites." These same girls were warmly devoted to private theatricals, and often took part in them. Somebody told the old lady that one of her daughters had engaged herself to a Frenchman, one of the actors, whereupon she exclaimed: "I always said no good would come of them amatory theatricals."

Maurice Barrymore and some person with whom he had business dealing were walking down Fifth avenue together. They passed a blind man, who stood with a tin cup in his hand and a sign to explain the situation on his breast. The man, whom Barrymore was trying to impress, stopped. With great deliberation he drew a handful of silver from his pocket. After shuffling and searching it over for some time, he at last found a nickel, which he dropped in the tin cup. Then he replaced the silver in his pocket and slowly buttoned his coat. Barrymore, who was irritated at the interruption, said: "Oh, come along!" The philanthropist looked at him full in the eyes. "Barrymore," he said, slowly and distinctly—rather loudly, too—"I always give to the blind." "You are quite right," said Barrymore, quickly; "they can't see what you are giving them."

Judge Roy Bean, of Langtry, Texas, declares that he is the "law west of the Pecos." Leslie's Weekly tells an anecdote told of him when he sat as a corner and held an inquest on the body of a man who had met a violent death by falling from the great railway bridge that spans the Pecos river. An examination showed that the man had a revolver and forty dollars in cash in his pocket when he was killed. After swearing in a jury and looking over the effects of the dead man, Judge Bean said: "Gentlemen of the jury, there ain't no doubt about how this man came to his death; that's all plain; but what I would like to know is why in the name of thunder he carried that gun. Now, gentlemen, it's ag'in the law to carry a concealed and loaded gun in the State of Texas, and jist because this gentleman took it into his head to get killed I don't mean to let him offend the peace and dignity of Texas. I fine him forty dollars."

Justice of the Peace Bonafel is known in Chicago as the "North Side Solomon." Two neighbors had quarreled over the ownership of a mongrel dog. There had been several continuances, witnesses had been sworn and counter-sworn, and lawyers had wrangled until the justice and the spectators as well were all mixed as to the nature of the original proposition. Toward the close of a stormy session, a butcher's boy, who had stolen into the court with a basket of fresh meat for his employer's customers, started to leave the room. The dog, which had been tied to a leg of the justice's desk, smelled the meat, gave a tug that broke the string, and bounded down the stairs after the butcher's boy. The crowd was on the point of rushing out to capture the fugitive dog, when Bonafel sang out: "Hold on there! If anybody leaves the room I'll fine him for contempt of court. Let the tam dog go." And the dog went, and went so well that the litigants failed to recover him, and the case was dropped.

**Drumming Up a Band.**  
The German ship Nobe, which arrived from Newcastle, England, early in November, boasts of the most unique band that has ever been seen here, says the San Francisco Chronicle. It consists of an accordion, bass and snare drums, a tambourine and a triangle. When the Nobe left Antwerp about seven months ago she shipped a new crew, the men of which were strangers to each other.

Peter Christensen brought an accordion out of his chest when the ship was two days out, and immediately he was the idol of the fore-cabin. Then God-fried Klenger produced a tambourine and shared the honors. But Peter was a leader and determined to have a band to lead. Hendrich Willig had an ear for music, and he said he could play a triangle if there was one to be had. Peter told a string to use his sheathknife to beat a tattoo. Julius Hallock cut the heads of a herring barrel and covered both ends with canvas, which he soaked with water, and lo! he had a snare-

**SUPPOSE WE SMILE.**

**HUMOROUS PARAGRAPHS FROM THE COMIC PAPERS.**

**Pleasant Incidents Occurring the World Over—Sayings that are Cheerful to Old or Young—Funny Selections that Everybody Will Enjoy.**

**More Fun.**  
Mother—Instead of beating the cat, Willie, I wish you would amuse yourself with your doll.  
Willie—Yes; but when I beat the cat he howls, and the doll doesn't.—Boston Globe.

**Her Weakness.**  
She—You took the words right out of my mouth.  
He—You mustn't talk while I'm kissing you.—New York Journal.

**Runs on the Lines.**  
"She says she's 25, but she's 35. I can read it between the lines."  
"What lines?"  
"Those on her face."—Harper's Bazar.

**On the Hip.**  
Tenant—Our house is in a frightful condition, Mr. Quarterday. One of the walls is bulged out three or four inches.  
Landlord—Ha! Then the house is larger and I shall have to raise your rent.—Philadelphia Press.

**His Little Weakness.**  
Inquiring Tourist (in Oklahoma)—What kind of a man is your pastor, the Rev. Jack Jones?  
Alkali Ike—Finest kind of a feller! Ain't got but one fault in the world—he's so daunted quarrelsome when he is drunk.—New York World.

**An Odd Antediluvian.**  
Teacher—Noah sailed forty days and forty nights.  
Dick Hicks—And did it all without a yachting cap.—Minneapolis Tribune.

**Job for Ex-Presidents.**  
What shall we do with our ex-Presidents? Why, set them to minding the baby.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

**How Could He?**  
She surveyed her lord and master as he lay snoring in the stupor of intoxication. She wrung her hands.  
"Oh, how can he drink so?" she wailed.  
"How can he?" she continued, "Especially when I don't allow him more than a dollar a week out of his salary for spending money."—Indianapolis Journal.

**Casus Belli.**  
"Why does Mrs. Van Meter hate Mrs. McMasters so cordially?"  
"Somebody told her they looked enough alike to be sisters."—Detroit News.

**A Definition.**  
Crowdie—What's a sickle, dad?  
Culwigger—It's to cut grass with, my boy. Sometimes you will see a tramp carrying one around with him in the winter when he is looking for work.—New York Journal.

**Very Quick.**  
Mrs. Farmer—You say you are a sufferer from quick consumption?  
Weary Willie—Yes, lady; dese five-minute hand-outs is suthin' fierce.—New York Truth.

**Thoughtful Husband.**  
Jagson Bowles (murmuring in his sleep)—I'll bid nine.  
Mrs. Brown (not yet asleep)—Poor dear! he's always trying to buy me something handsome at those lovely auction stores.—Omaha World-Herald.

**Flooring the Teacher.**  
Teacher—Johnnie, spell needle.  
Johnnie—N-e-d-l-e.  
"Why do you put the i there?"  
"Every needle has a eye, hasn't it?"—Philadelphia Call.

**A Disgusting Sight.**  
Mudge—I think a woman on a bicycle is one of the ugliest sights there is.  
Yabsby—She isn't half as disgusting a spectacle as a fellow on a tandem with your own best girl.—Indianapolis Journal.

**A Forced Smile.**  
Hearing the manager announce that a little girl who was to have played the piano was too ill to appear, the kindly Gottschalk went behind the scenes and offered to take her place. The child was delighted, and so must the musician have been by her simple remark. She looked at him doubtfully and said: "You had better look at the score. The piece is rather difficult."  
Gottschalk gravely remarked that he thought he could manage it, and was allowed to go on the stage. Then the audience went wild with delight, for the musician was instantly recognized. Before he left the stage the artist emptied his small change into his hat, and his listeners also contributed generously to the fund, and showed the grateful little girl that her kind substitute was no ordinary person.

**'Twas That Kind.**  
Miss Mobile—Well, Martha, how is your husband now?  
Martha—Polly, miss, Polly. He's got that exclamatory rheumatism.  
Miss Mobile—You mean inflammatory rheumatism, Martha. "Exclamatory" is to cry out.  
Martha (with solemn conviction)—That's it, mum, that's it! He don't do nothing but holler!—Northern Christian Advocate.

**Had a Shotgun.**  
Farmer—When old Asa Brownback on his spint-eyed son ken over here ter lick you, what did you do?  
Son—I held er hand that beat tew Asa's 'gosh!—New York Press.

**U-ful.**  
"Do you think, Professor, that the theory that Mars is inhabited has any practical value?"  
"Do I think so?" returned the Professor. "I know it. Some periodicals pay \$20 a page for articles on the subject."  
—Washington Star.

**Had It All to Himself.**  
"Had a whole seat in the car to myself coming up to-night."  
"How was that?"  
"Carried a cake of Limburger to my pocket and sat near the stove."—Plain Dealer.

**On the Vestibule Limited.**  
Mrs. Slowway—Say, Mister Conductor, don't this train stop at Plunktown?  
Conductor—No, ma'am. It doesn't even hesitate.

**A Contradiction in Terms.**  
Johnny—What is civilized warfare, papa?  
Papa—Well, Johnny, a great many people think there isn't any such thing.—Twinkles.

**Thoroughly Cured.**  
"George, I hope our boy will never smoke."  
"I don't think he ever will. I guess I've thoroughly cured him of all liking for cigars."  
"How did you do it?"  
"I kept him in the room while I smoked one of those cigars you gave me Christmas."—Plain Dealer.

**An Enjoyable Performance.**  
She—I understand that Mrs. Krochet played on the piano at the reception last night. Did they appear to enjoy her performance?  
He—Oh, immensely. It was the most enjoyable time of the whole evening. Everybody was talking away as if they would split their throats.—Boston Transcript.

**No Opportunity to Observe.**  
Mrs. Gasket—Is Mrs. Snooper much of a talker?  
Mrs. Ricketts—I don't know, I'm sure; I've never sat in the same box with her at the opera or been with her in a whist game.—New York World.

**Not Hard.**  
Sillicus—Is your pugilistic friend a hard hitter?  
Cynicus—I've never known him to strike anybody for more than fifty at a time.—Philadelphia Record.

**Painless Metho.**  
Mrs. Achem (reading)—The Chinese are a cheerful people. In China, while the dentist pulls the tooth an assistant stands by and drowns the lamentations of the victim in the noise of a large gong.  
Mr. Achem—So they have adopted the painless method of extracting teeth in China, too, eh?—Norristown Herald.

**A Lesson in Arithmetic.**  
Elphalet—Uncle Ephrim, if yo' kin neck fow shirts counten three yabds, how many shirts kin yo' git from one yabd?  
Uncle Ephrim—Well, honey hit depends on whose yabd yo's lu.

**A Mistake.**  
"Of course," said the jeweler, "you meant well, but don't do it again."  
"What do you mean?" inquired the man in charge of the repair department.  
"You charged that last man so much that instead of having his old watch fixed he bought a new one that I had marked down to cost as an advertisement."—Washington Star.

**When to Stop.**  
Tod—Do you think it right to teach a young fellow to play poker?  
Ned—Certainly I do. But be sure to stop playing with him as soon as he begins to understand it.—New York Journal.

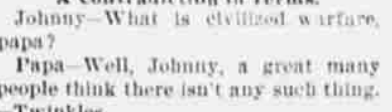
**A Queer Chicken.**  
Mr. More, a chicken fancier of Great Bend, Pa., has a queer chicken. It is a Plymouth Rock, two years old, that in addition to all the characteristics of a fine cock, possesses the natural instincts of a hen. He crows and fights and conducts himself as most chauticleers do; yet he has been known to adopt chickens, mother them, scratch and pick for them, raise a note of alarm when danger appeared and fold them under his wings at night. He raised two broods of chickens last year. As soon as the chicks hatch under a hen, Mr. More removes them to a small cop, in which the cock is placed. He immediately adopts them, and is a model mother until they are ready to shift for themselves.—New York Press.

**Horseflesh in London.**  
The most inspectors of London have discovered that not only is horseflesh served to unsuspecting customers in the metropolis as beef, but also that goatflesh masquerades as venison at many restaurants.

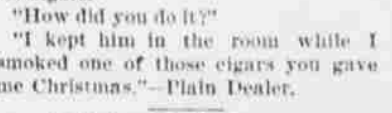
**Not Plagiarism.**  
Spats—Hackley is being accused of plagiarism in his last book.  
Socrates—I would not say that. He was merely collecting his thoughts.—Pittsburg News.



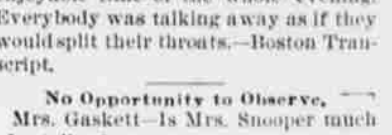
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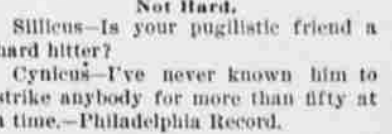
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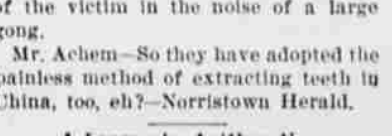
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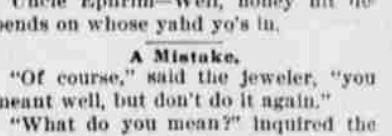
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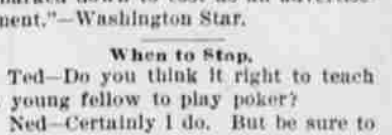
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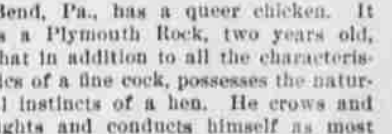
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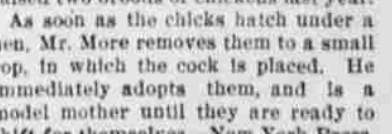
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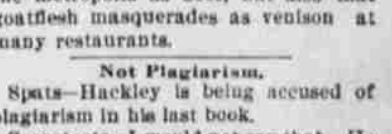
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