

Bowser Tries Roller Skates

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WHEN Mr. Bowser came home the other evening he brought a parcel under his arm, and to Mrs. Bowser's queries he answered:

"Never you mind just now what it is. After dinner I will tell you all about it."

There was a certain air about him that made Mrs. Bowser realize that something was up, but it was no use to worry over it, as there was no telling what new idea he had got into his head. She expressed no curiosity, rather to his disappointment, and when the meal had been finished he said:

"Well, first and foremost, I have joined the E. R. S. C."

"And what on earth is that?"

"The Elite Roller Skating Club."

"Well, I thought it was about time you did some other foolish thing. You don't mean to tell me that you are going to try roller skates?"

"And why not? I know it was a bad once and played out, but the doctors



"DON'T BLAME ME IF I KICK THE FRONT DOOR OPEN."

say that there is nothing better for physical exercise. A few men like myself have banded together, formed a small and exclusive club, hired a small hall and are going to skate for exercise. I was speaking to a doctor the other day about that pain at the base of my neck, and he said my spine wanted more exercise."

"And your spine will get it! Mr. Bowser, let me say something to you without hurting your feelings."

"You are going to say I am too fat."

"As a matter of fact, you are. You are too fat and too clumsy for any kind of skating. In addition, nothing whatever will do the base of your neck. If you want exercise why don't you run the lawn mower?"

"You know who you are talking to, do you?" demanded Mr. Bowser when she had finished.

"Of course, and I hope you won't be mad. You are not to blame for being fat and clumsy, but you should remember—"

"Yes, I will remember! Woman, how dare you talk to me in this manner? Your impudence surpasses all bounds. By the seven fowling cats, but if a man had said what you have I would have torn him limb from limb!"

"How foolish to get into a temper over my words."

"You insult and abuse me and then wonder that I get mad! Mrs. Bowser, be careful—be very careful. You are driving very close to the dead line—very close!"

"Then you will go to the club?" she asked after awhile.

"I will go to the club. I would go if the house was on fire!"

"And you will try roller skates?"

"I will put on roller skates and float around the hall, and if I get word while I am floating that you have dropped dead of heart disease I shall continue to float."

"Very well, I hope you will have a good time. I hope that when you return home the base of your neck will be much better. When you get home you will tell me all about it."

"Don't attempt to soften up things, Mrs. Bowser," he growled. "You referred to me as too fat and too logy. You also spoke slightly of the base of my neck. You may come crawling on your knees and I won't forgive you. By John, but how any wife dares to talk to her husband as you do to me is more than I can understand! Too fat! Too logy!"

It was a pair of skates he had brought home, and when he had the package under his arm and was ready to go she asked:

"What time will you be home, dear?"

"I may never be home. Why should a too fat and too logy man return to this house?"

"I shall probably be sitting up for you. You may want a bit of luncheon before you go to bed."

"If I do I'll stop at some saloon. Don't blame me, Mrs. Bowser, if one glass leads to two—three—five—ten."

Don't blame me if I come home and kick the front door open and clean out this shanty. I may not stop even at that, and if I don't it will have been your fault. What in the name of blue blazes is that old cat glaring at me for?"

"I think your voice jars on her."

"Oh, it does, eh? Besides being too fat and too logy I've got a voice that jars on a yellier eyed old cat! By thunder, Mrs. Bowser—by thunder!"

With the best "by thunder" I ever heard, the house, not daring to remain and face further exigencies. He had six blocks to walk to the hall and he had almost worked up a smile when he reached it. He was warmly received by the dozen members who had gathered and in a little while he had almost forgotten Mrs. Bowser and the cat. He noticed half a hundred people who were not members and it was explained to him that this was a public night, when any one could come in and see the skating.

"I see we have got to look out for our laurels now," observed one of the club members as he ran his eyes over Mr. Bowser. "You were built for a roller skater. You have the legs, back and shoulders for cutting fancy dashes. I predict that you will lead us all within a month. How long since you did any skating?"

Mr. Bowser should have told the truth and narrated his adventure on rollers in his own garret a year ago, but the man's words had flattered him and he let it be understood that he was in practice and intended to astonish the natives. By the time he had his skates on the hall was well filled and there were a dozen skaters on the floor. He had gone ahead thus far with the greatest confidence, but all of a sudden an icicle hit him in the stomach. Down in his heart he knew that he was fat and logy. He also knew that the first and only time he had taken the floor was when he took it on his head. He would be an ass to get out there, with all the people looking on, and the exhibition would probably result in his being expelled from the club. He had just decided in his own mind that he would give \$5,000 in cash if he was home, and that if he ever got there alive he would forgive Mrs. Bowser and the cat, when some of the spectators began to call:

"Bowser! Bowser! Get out, Bowser, and give us some fancy figures!"

Mr. Bowser tried to shrink his bulk into the compass of a peanut and his face flushed red and white. He decided that he would give \$10,000 to be home, and that Mrs. Bowser was the best wife and his cat the best cat on the face of this earth.

"Come, Bowser," said one of the skaters, in answer to the calls. "This modesty on your part won't do. You are asked to go out and show what can be done on rollers."

"I—I don't feel well," was the reply. "Nonsense! You are playing off."

"I think—think—"

"Out with him!" shouted half a dozen voices, and Mr. Bowser was taken by the arm and assisted to his feet. In the next few seconds he lived a hundred years. Then he made a move with his right foot, and the next thing he knew he didn't know anything. Both feet went out from under him, the floor seemed to rise up, he heard wild yells, and the whole of his body struck something at once. When he recovered consciousness they were loading him into an ambulance. He kicked at the doctor, swore at the driver and called his club friends rascals and assassins. Only one man had anything to say in reply. That was the doctor. He laid a fatherly hand on Mr. Bowser and said:

"Go home, old man, go home. What you want for the next ten years is a wet nurse!"

Mr. Bowser went home. He found Mrs. Bowser up and waiting. She had arnica, witch hazel and camphor at hand, with a liberal supply of bandages, and she had the ingredients for a milk punch. Not a word was said. She simply pointed to the lounge, and with a groan he fell upon it and was soothed and nursed until he fell asleep, with a big tear quivering on his cheek.

M. QUAD.

Alas! Like the Average Parent.

Little Johnny—What do you think of grownups?

Little Jenny—I don't know. What do you think?

Little Johnny—They are such story tellers. My ma told me more'n twenty times yesterday if I didn't stop teasing Fido she'd whip me. I didn't stop, and she didn't whip.—Boston Transcript.

Possible Explanation.



She—Why are you so strongly opposed to all games of chance?

He—I don't know unless it's because I am married.

Practical.

"I despise a practical joker," said the woman in a pink bonnet.

"That is the only kind of joking that pays," responded the woman in a sailor hat.

She was the wife of a professional humorist and was therefore qualified to speak with authority on the subject.—Brooklyn Life.

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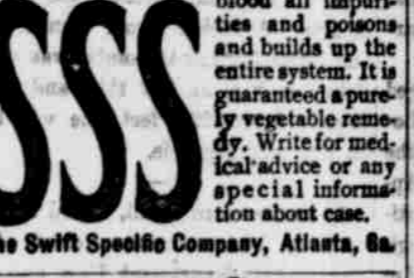
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TOO DIFFICULT
In a Pennsylvania town where the friends of a young man who had in the course of his twenty-one years received much good discipline at his hands.

The old lady was at her best on this festive occasion, and it was in the wedding breakfast her young relative looked over at her with a smiling face.
"I'll be why that ever married, Aunt Phyllis?" he said, broadly.
"That is none of your business," said the old lady, sternly. "It was because I was not as well pleased as they were."

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