

Mr. Bowser on Good Behavior

Comes Home From the Office Ahead of Time With Words of Praise For Mrs. B.

SPEAKS OF HER LOOKS

Says She Grows Handsomer Every Day--She Returns His Affection--Mother-in-law Astounded.

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MR. BOWSER had come home from the office half an hour ahead of time, and as Mrs. Bowser greeted him there was a dread at her heart. For a moment she felt sure that something untoward had happened, but the feeling was quickly dispelled.

"Hello, puss, but are you surprised to see me home so soon?" he saluted as he put his arm around her and gave her a kiss.

"Has--has anything happened?" she asked.

"Not a thing. There was nothing doing at the office, and so I stole half an hour. I've been lonesome for you all the afternoon."

"But dinner isn't quite ready," she said as she looked at him in wonder.

"Never mind that. We'll sit and talk until it is ready. How would you like to go out this evening for a ride on the open car?"

"Would you go?"

"I'd be glad to. Yes, we'll go and take a ten mile ride and get the air.



ON THE STEPS SAT A HUMAN FORM.

It will do us both good. We haven't done anything but sit on the front steps for thirty evenings past. Of course I'd like to go."

"The cars are sure to be crowded."

"I know, but what of it? We can take our chances with the rest."

"And there may be some toughs on our car."

"Never mind the toughs. Don't try to discourage me, Mrs. Bowser, for I've made up my mind to go. Is that a new way you've got of doing up your hair?"

"Oh, no. It's the way I've had for the last two years."

"Well, it looks mighty nice. By George, Mrs. Bowser, but you are a good looking woman! I don't want to flatter you, but you seem to grow younger every day. Here--give me another kiss."

Mrs. Bowser blushed like a school-girl, and it might have ended with tears if the dinner bell had not summoned them to the basement. Mr. Bowser's good nature grew. The cook noticed it at once and gave Mrs. Bowser a warning look, and the family cat came sauntering in from the back yard and noticed it and said to herself as she hustled out again:

"There's going to be the awfulest kind of a family row around here before bedtime or I ain't the Bowser cat you read of in the papers."

As a usual thing at dinner Mr. Bowser complains of the meat as soon as he is seated. Then he takes up the rest of the dishes in rotation, and when he finally gets to the coffee he pronounces it the worst stop ever set before a white man. It's simply his way, as it is many another husband's way, and he can't help it. On this occasion, however, everything was done to a turn, and he had nothing but praise. During the midst of Mrs. Bowser's bewilderment he laid down his knife and fork to say:

"Little woman, I want you to know that I appreciate all you do to make our home happy. I don't believe there's a better managed house in America, and I always come home to find you smiling and ready to welcome me. You deserve a better husband than I am."

"I think you are one of the best of husbands," she answered.

"That's good of you, but I know I'm not. I'm an old villain of a husband, and there are times when I ought to be kicked for the way I talk to you."

The cook put her head into the room and made danger signals to Mrs. Bowser, and the conversation was switched off to a safer subject. Half an hour after the meal had been finished they were ready for the car ride. Mrs. Bowser shook in her shoes, but she saw no way to get out of it. They caught a car, and away they went. The conductor gave Mr. Bowser a lead nickel among his change, and when it was discovered a content held its breath

for a moment. Then Mr. Bowser

laughed and said: "We'll give it to the first German band that comes along. We won't let such a little thing as this put us out."

Five minutes later some one on the car threw a peanut and hit Mr. Bowser in the nose. Mrs. Bowser got ready to jump off, but he only laughed at it. Then a fat woman with two bundles jammed past him and muttered that his big feet took up too much room, but he raised his hat and smiled at her. It seemed to Mrs. Bowser that something happened every five minutes for the next two hours--something that under ordinary circumstances would have instantly aroused Mr. Bowser's ire and brought on a row--but everything rolled off his shoulders like water from a duck's back, and when they finally reached home again he had not lost his temper once. Indeed, he had laughed at things that had provoked other passengers.

It was in the dusk of evening that they reached their own gate. A surprise awaited them. On the steps sat a human form. It had a bonnet on. It sat bolt upright. A satchel rested near its feet. It held a folded umbrella in one hand.

"It's mother! It's mother!" exclaimed Mrs. Bowser as she hastened forward.

Mr. Bowser followed at a slower pace, and he did not reach the top step until mother and daughter had embraced. Then he took the mother-in-law in his arms and gave her a hug. She was paralyzed for a moment. Then she struggled away and indignantly exclaimed:

"Lemuel Bowser, do you want me to break this umbrella over your head?"

"Why, mother, I was just greeting you," he explained.

"He is so pleased to see you!" added Mrs. Bowser.

"Eh? Eh? I don't understand this at all. After I have had something to eat I'll look into matters."

When mother and daughter were alone the mother said:

"Now, Sarah, tell me all about it and keep nothing back."

"All about what, mother?"

"Where you were when I got here."

"We'd been to take a ride on the open car."

"I see. He meant to get you out into the country and murder you. I thought something of the kind would be going on, and that's the reason I came. How did you escape?"

"Why, mother, you shouldn't talk that way. Mr. Bowser is one of the best husbands in the world."

"Sarah Bowser, don't you let him fool you. He's laying low. He's got a trick up his sleeve. I know Lemuel from head to heel, and I warn you not to be deceived. Where is he now?"

"In the library, I guess."

"Well, I want about fifteen minutes' talk with him. You keep away. If he's up to tricks I'll pull the mask off his face perty sudden."

"Well, mother, did you have a pleasant journey?" asked Mr. Bowser as she came downstairs.

"Humph!" she replied as she sat down and folded her hands and stared at him.

"Your visit is unexpected, but welcome nevertheless. I hope you will stay a month this time."

"Lemuel Bowser," she said in solemn tones, "don't try to deceive me, for you can't do it!"

"Mother, I'm not trying to deceive you."

"Do you pretend that you love Sarah?"

"I don't have to pretend."

"And that you are glad to see me?"

"Of course I'm glad."

"And that you've got over buying hair dye, baldheaded cures, spring tonics, fire escapes, new milk cows, bicycles, burglar alarms, Leghorn chickens and all that?"

"I shall buy nothing more of the kind."

The mother-in-law slowly rose up and left the room, and when again alone with the daughter she said:

"Sarah, I can't make him out. I can't say whether he means to reform or murder us both in our beds. I'll see him again in about an hour."

An hour later she descended to the library to see if Mr. Bowser was in the same mind still. She found him asleep in his chair with a smile on his face and the family cat lying on his knees.

"Well, I'll be snuffed!" she whispered to herself as she continued to regard him. "Lemuel Bowser has either become a pirate or an angel, and I don't know which it is!"

M. QUAD.

Her Handicap.



"I suppose your wife will give you something handsome for your birthday?"

"I don't think she can afford it, old man. You see, I haven't been giving her much money lately."--New York World.

The mosquito has gone into winter quarters but the peekaboo waist continues to remind us of summer.

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E. MARTINSON.

NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given that the registration books of the city of Astoria, for the primary nominating election to be held in this city on Monday the 13th day of November, 1905, will be opened at the Auditor's office in the city hall, on Monday the 23rd day of October, 1905, and will close for said primary election on the 7th day of November, 1905, at the hour of 4 o'clock p. m., said registration books will be again opened on Thursday the 16th day of November, 1905, for the general election to be held in this city on Wednesday the 13th day of December, 1905, and will close on Saturday, the 9th day of December, 1905, at 4 o'clock p. m. All persons must register in order to be entitled to vote.

Dated, Astoria, Oregon, October, 21st, 1905.

OLOF ANDERSON, Auditor and Police Judge of the city of Astoria.

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