

Billy's Ruse

By Edith M. Doane

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With a warning blast of the horn, a man, a girl and an automobile whirled around a sharp curve and went spinning along the country road. On and on they raced, shooting past rows of maple and chestnut trees flaunting their glory of new leaves in the soft spring sunshine, slowing down to cross a little brook that wandered noisily between clumps of alder bushes, then on again with the fresh spring wind rushing past their faces and the huge motor beneath them purring like a giant cat.

Coming suddenly upon a stretch of level pike, Billy Weston bent over the lever and let out the machine another notch. Even so able a driver as Billy could not speed a motor car and attend to anything else while he was doing it; so, realizing that he was intent on the long, straight road before him, Katherine Huston leaned back in her seat and studied the face beside her critically.

For the past two years—ever since he had formed the habit of flinging his



"TELL ME ABOUT HER," SHE DEMANDED, tempestuous heart at her feet in season and out of season—Billy's clean shaven, clear cut face had been to Miss Huston as the open page of a book. But this was not quite the same Billy from whom she had parted. The book had appeared, so to speak, in a different edition.

Her mind flew back to that parting scene—to Billy standing in the middle of the floor, big and awkward and altogether at her mercy.

"But I love you so!" he had pleaded humbly. "Can't you ever care just a little?"

"No; I never can," she had replied impatiently, "and I'm tired of being tagged around and gazed at and fussed over all the time; it's tiresome. I wish you would go away," she had ended suddenly.

Billy regarded her with miserable, unhappy eyes. "Of course, if you feel like that," he said huskily.

"I do," she went on cruelly. "I wish you would go away so that I needn't ever see you. Some day you will meet some nice girl who will like you, and you will thank me for being so frank with you," she had ended magnanimously.

That had been six months ago, and now she was speeding to Mrs. Monteth's May party in Billy's motor—a situation of Mrs. Monteth's own devising. "I have asked Billy to pick you up on his way, remembering what great friends you two are," the note had said.

They breasted a long slope winding upward between ranks of maples and

silver birches and slowed down to descend a bit of steep, twisting road. The "chug chug" of the motor grew fainter.

"Billy," said Miss Huston, "you have changed."

"Yes," said Billy.

"Have you found that nice girl I predicted for you?"

Billy flushed.

"Yes," he said.

A sudden sense of desolation enveloped Miss Huston. She drew her wraps more closely about her. It seemed as if without warning the clouds had swept across the smiling landscape and blotted out the warm spring sunshine. Billy! She had always felt sure of Billy. Then in a flash she understood.

"Tell me about her," she demanded, leaning back in her seat and regarding him with amused, tolerant eyes.

So Billy was trying to make her jealous.

She had read a story like it once—about a man who told the girl who had refused to marry him an imaginary tale of his engagement to another girl, whereupon girl No. 1 had burst into tears and promptly thrown herself into the man's arms. Well, Billy would find that she would not throw herself into his arms. She would play up to him. Afterward—well, she might relent afterward. She had come to regard Billy differently during the past six months.

"Billy"—her voice was reproachful—

"aren't you going to tell me about her?"

"I would if I knew how," said Billy.

"Is she pretty?"

"She's beautiful."

"Light or dark?"

Billy turned a radiant face to his companion. "Her hair is dark—as dark as yours."

Miss Huston smiled tolerantly. He was too honest, too transparent, to play so delicate a game.

She opened her eyes on him under her heavy motor veil. "Of course you love her very dearly," she said lightly.

To her chagrin a hot flush dyed her face from brow to chin.

Billy drew a tense breath.

"Love her! I cannot talk about it. It's like saying my prayers," he said reverently.

Miss Huston leaned back in her seat. Why had she never realized before how lovable Billy was?

They sat in silence, their thoughts keeping time to the monstrous beat of the motor as the car swung smoothly along the hard road. Billy spoke first.

"She will be at Mrs. Monteth's," he said half shyly.

Of course she would. If the motor continued to tear along at its present rate and they didn't land in a heap at the foot of one of the steep hills, she would be there in about half an hour.

Dear, clumsy Billy! She had half a mind to tell him that she understood.

His next move was more skillful.

"I'm mighty grateful to you for putting me on the right track," he went on reminiscently. "If it hadn't been for you—Great Scott," he broke off, "what a fool I used to make of myself! I don't wonder you had no use for me."

That he should refer to the past so lightly piqued her. He needed to be taken down a little.

"Why bother about the past when you are sure of the present?" she dashed back.

"Why, indeed?" Billy was his cheerful, smiling self again.

"Only I was no end of a fool and I've always felt that I wanted to apologize to you for ranting around as I did. Though it was real enough to me—at least I thought so then—and I was terribly cut up when you threw me over," he went on cheerfully, "and for a good while afterward, too."

"And then?"

"Oh, then I met—her." Billy's voice was very gentle. He turned impulsively toward his companion. "When you see her," he said radiantly, "you will understand."

A shadow crossed Miss Huston's face. Of course the whole thing was only a ruse of Billy's, but for a beginner his part was remarkably well played.

There was a little jolt as Billy lessened speed; then the car swung smoothly into a wide shaded driveway leading to a rambling old stone house. A laughing, chattering crowd filled the wide porch—tea tables were being set in the old fashioned garden, but as Mrs. Monteth gathered her in a vigorous embrace Katherine was conscious of but two things—that at sight of them a slender, dark eyed girl had left one of the groups and followed Mrs. Monteth to the wide stone steps, and that Billy had cleared those steps two at a time and was holding the girl's hands as if he never meant to let them go.

Mrs. Monteth smiled as her eyes followed Katherine's.

"Of course he has told you all about it," she laughed. "Come, Billy, don't monopolize Miss Deering; you engaged people are so selfish. Don't you see I am waiting to introduce Miss Huston to your fiancée?"

Enough on that.

Lord Freelmuch—An count, did I make a favorable impression on father of the heiress? Count Freelmuch—Favorable! Why, when I told you I was looking for his daughter? He said he thought I was making a handout.—Chicago News.

Perfectly Secure.

An old farmer once excused himself for sleeping under the rock's sermons by observing, "Lor, sir, when you are in the pulpit we know it is all right!"—London Standard.

Da Stylesha Wife.

GIUSEPPE da barber ees catches da wife.

Oh, my, you weel laugh w'en you see wat he gat!

She gatta da face ees so sharp like da knife—

He say, "Ees no styleesh for face to be fat."

Her fingers so skeeny, ees notheeng but bone;

You 'frald dey weel bust w'en you go for shak' han'.

He say, "Dat's a sign she ees vera high tone."

She no gatta han's like two bench da banana!"

Ita, w'at you theenk dat?

For talk een hees hat?

Wat good eesa wife eef she don'ta be fat?

Giuseppe he tal me I no ondrastan'!

Da 'Merican lady so gooda like heem;

He tal me hees wife ees da 'swell 'Merican'!

An' looka so styleesh baycause she ees 'sleem."

I tal heem da 'styleeshness' notta so good.

For keepa da house an' for helpin' her mooch.

To nurse da baby an' carry da wood.

He say, "I no care eef she neeva do sooch."

Ita, w'at you theenk dat?

For talk een hees hat?

Wat good eesa wife eef she don'ta be fat?

—T. A. Daly in Catholic Standard and Times.

His Fatal Error.

They were seated on a park bench in the gloaming.

"Miss Wiggins—Nellie, dear," he said, "will you marry me?"

"Really, Mr. Goodwin—er—George, this is so sudden. But—well—assure me that you have no bad habits—do not drink, gamble and the like, and I'll think about it."

"I never drank a drop of liquor in my life," answered the young man. "I never play cards and regard prize fighting and horse racing with disdain."

"George," she said, "I—er—think you may hope."

"And as for baseball," continued George, "I detest it, and"—

"What?" she exclaimed. "You detest our great and glorious national game? Then all bets are off, George; I can never be your wife."—Chicago News.

Valuation.



Artist—How much for the glass of milk?

Peasant—Oh, nothing much! You might just paint me a little picture for it!—Fillegende Blatter.

Outrage Indeed.

Colonel Bluegrass—Did you hear of that White Cap outrage last night, sub?

Judge Bludsoe—No, sub, I did not.

Colonel Bluegrass—A most dastardly affair, sub! The scoundrels overpowered Major Bowie on a lonely road, tied his hands and feet and with the aid of a funnel and by holding his nose poured a glass of water down his throat, sub!—American Spectator.

The Logic of Youth.

"You called grandpa a naughty name."

"I only said he was an old fuss."

"That was very naughty."

"But papa says you're a fuss too."

"That has nothing to do with grandpa."

"Why, yes, it has, mamma—if it runs in the family."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Consolation.

"Amid all de slings and arrows of injustice dat so inginerly conflicts de cullud man," said Brother Utterback,

"dar am one pompous consolation—no nigger ever comes home and gits a beatin' fum de wife of his buxom uh-kase of a long blond hair she happens to find on de lapel of his coat. Uck! Nassah!"—Puck.

And That's All.

"Yes," said the wise bachelor, "woman's just a creature of impulse. When she will she will, and that's all there is about it."

"That may be true," replied the young man who had hoped to be married, "but sometimes she merely says she will."—Philadelphia Press.

Education.

"Do you think the theater is a means of educating the public?"

"Certainly," answered Mr. Stormington Barnes.

"But all this dancing it presents?"

"My dear sir, the tendency of all education at present is largely athletic."—Washington Star.

Encouraged to Sing at Work.

At the works of a firm of soap makers in England the girl employees are encouraged to sing part songs while at work. The object is to relieve the monotony. In the departments that number more than thirty girls and have no noisy machinery they are encouraged to sing during the last hour of work in the morning and in the afternoon.

The End of the World

of troubles that robbed E. H. Wolfe, of Bear Grove, Ia., of all usefulness, came when he began taking Electric Bitters. He writes: "Two years ago kidney trouble caused me great suffering, which I never would have survived had I not taken Electric Bitters. They also cured me of general debility." Sure cure for all stomach, Liver and Kidney complaints, Blood diseases, Headache, Dizziness and weakness or bodily decline. Price 50c. Guaranteed by Charles Rogers drug store.

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	3.10	7.50			9.00	PORTLAND						8.10	5.30	4.00	11.00
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	4.27	8.25			9.21	RAINIER						10.50	8.55		
	4.34	9.00			10.10	CLATSkanie						9.45	7.40		
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