

Interesting Stories With a Thrill

Her Delicious Compliment

L many more things happen I won't try to get dinner!" Judith Parker announced, her eyes full of mischief. "I'll be ready in five minutes. It was 4 o'clock on the day she was to entertain the vestrymen and their wives at 6 o'clock dinner, and from early morning she had met with nothing but exasperating interruptions.

First of all, Jack, or, present him in more dignified form, the Rev. John Parker, of St. Jude's, had been called to a neighboring parish on a very important and tedious errand, just as he was starting out to attend to the marketing for her, so that every bit of her time might be spent in a final straightening up before receiving the dinner that would be her first attempt at entertaining since she had become his wife.

Frankly, she began operations in the parlor. But just as she was dusting the "prominent" things in the room, Mrs. Perkins "stepped in for a minute" on her way uptown, and Judith had to sit down and entertain her for an hour. She was on the verge of tears when her caller finally departed. Nor did her woes end there. The gate had barely closed behind Mrs. Perkins when Tilly Mason sent word (Judith was depending on Tilly to prepare vegetables, wait on table, and wash the dishes after) that her mother had had "a spell" and she could not come.

Judith sat down just where she stood and her wall went up: "If many more things happen I won't try to get dinner!" But a glance at the clock brought her to her feet and sent her flying kitchenward. She had just two hours in which to prepare a four-course dinner, set the table with some degree of elaborateness, dress, do the dear knows what not for Jack when he came in, and—the Churchstones were sure to arrive

at exactly 5:45!

Judith groaned as she thought of the Churchstones. Mrs. Churchstone was the leading member of Jack's Rock and Judith's most dreaded critic. Nothing she did pleased Mrs. Churchstone, who constantly held up as a model minister's wife Judith's predecessor, Mrs. Standish. And it was Mrs. Churchstone's thrust at Jack about the "many, many, many" times Mrs. Standish had entertained the vestry that had brought forth the belated invitation to dinner.

"We've got to have them, Judy," Jack had said firmly.

"Oh, certainly!" Judith had returned. "I've been putting it off, Jack, until I was quite sure of my cooking." She had spoken gently enough, but her eyes had flashed at mention of Mrs. Standish.

But she tried to put all thought of Mrs. Standish's triumphant regime out of her mind. She wanted to do her level best, and she did not believe unhappy thoughts would be of material assistance.

Very wisely she had decided to serve dishes with which she was familiar and proficient, and if everything hadn't gone so completely against her all day she felt sure, no matter what Mrs. Churchstone might think about it, that the dinner would have been one no housewife need be ashamed of.

It was 5 o'clock before she found time to touch the dining table, and she had expected to put all of an hour on its setting early in the afternoon. She wished wildly, as she made more than one dash back to the kitchen at sound of something boiling over, that Jack would come to watch things, if only long enough to permit her to rush upstairs and don a presentable dress.

Just then he came. After one look at his tired, irritated face she did not ask him to do anything. She left the half set table instead, followed him upstairs and got out his clean white shirt. Then she turned to her own dressing, though a glance in the mirror at her crimson face made her feel more like sitting

down and crying her eyes out. But she slipped into a simple white dress bravely, helped Jack find his cuff links, which had disappeared mysteriously, and with the earnest admonition to "hurry, for goodness' sake," was making frantically for the kitchen, when, horrors, the bell rang!

Of course it was the Churchstones! Judith deserved a Carnegie medal for the smile with which she welcomed them. And she maintained a perfectly splendid poised white Mrs. Churchstone divested herself of her wraps in the spare bedroom, though all the time she was in absolute agony to get back to the unfortunate dinner. By the time Jack joined them in the parlor, leaving her free, in her nervousness, she was positive she could smell every blessed thing burning.

The next half hour was a breathless rush. When everything was finally ready—three-quarters of an hour after the time set—she thought with a groan, thinking of punctual Mrs. Churchstone—she was almost at the breaking point. As she started for the parlor to invite her guests to the dining room she had to pause for just one small moment. Oh, she was so tired and nervous and frightened! She knew things weren't right! She had never entertained all alone in all her life—there had always been mother. Suddenly she seemed to stand right there close to her, "Judy," whispered the dear voice, silent for more than a year, "don't you know that

you've done your level best and that when one does that one needn't be afraid?"

Judith's eyes brightened and she entered the parlor without appearing unduly flustered. At dinner she was a bright and charming hostess, though she very quickly discovered that she had forgotten to put many necessary things on the table. She tried to laugh off every unexpected "hitch," but out in the kitchen her fingers, convulsively pressed lips that trembled. All the while she felt that Mrs. Churchstone was making a silent, scathing comparison between those famous "many, many, many" dinners and the one before her.

When they finally left the table a rapturous glow surged through her. It was over, thank goodness! There was only an hour or so before her in the parlor, then she could relax. It wouldn't have been so had in there if Jack hadn't wanted to show pictures and books that she hadn't had time to dust. She surreptitiously rubbed some of them on her skirt before he got hold of them, but, of course, Mrs. Churchstone saw her hand, of course, Mrs. Churchstone would express proper horror afterward.

Mrs. Churchstone, Judith thought, wasn't enjoying herself a bit, because just as the clock struck 9 she rose to leave. Naturally, every one followed her lead, and in a few moments Judith was alone, Mrs. Churchstone having invited Jack to walk home with them.

Tears were beginning to come when

she heard Jack returning. Then he hadn't really gone, after all? She made no move to rise, she was so tired. Jack crossed the room swiftly raised her head and then—"It wasn't Jack at all; it was Mrs. Churchstone!"

Judith tried to rise, but she was pushed back gently, while Mrs. Churchstone exclaimed, a tremble in her voice, "Sit right where you are and rest, for the dear only knows you must need it. You see, I know, because I know about the dreadful interruptions you've had today. All about old Mrs. Cousen, Mrs. Perkins, Tilly Mason's mother, and—Mersey, how did you manage to do anything at all? I've sent your husband home with mine so I could tell you what a brick I think you are and you what a plucky girl. Why, Mrs. Parker, you're the pluckiest, finest minister's wife I ever met in my life!" Judith looked her disbelief. "But, Mrs. Standish, you know," she began.

"Mrs. Standish? Poof!"

Judith was really beginning to enjoy herself. "But her 'many, many, many,' wonderful dinners, Mrs. Churchstone!"

"I'll eat dinner! Her cook's you mean. Why, I don't know that Mrs. Standish can even boil potatoes properly. But your dinner tonight! Mrs. Parker, I never ate more deliciously cooked things in my life!"

Judith thought she never had had a more delicious compliment in her life, and said so.

A Little Decision Is Made

THERE was silence in the room. Mrs. Golden crocheted with little jerks of the needle. Her lips pressed tightly together, and there was too much color on her soft, faded cheeks. Her husband, in the leather chair beside the library table, held his newspaper with a hand that trembled. His glasses were on crooked and one foot moved nervously in the air.

Somewhere in the house the telephone bell rang, and there were soft steps and a voice attending it. Then the door opened and a girl appeared. She was tall, slim and pretty. Her great, dark, still eyes moved in a slow stare from her father to her mother and back again. When she had taken strict account mentally of the little scene she spoke:

"Ralph Curtis wants us to go for a little spin in his car," she remarked carelessly.

Her father hung down his paper with a snap. Her mother crocheted faster.

"I shall not go," she said, crisply.

"Too bad," said Marjory. "Nice ride, free!"

"Free?" cried Mrs. Golden. "When he expects to sell us a car. It's just one of his agent schemes. I saw through him the other night when we were out with him. His one idea was to demonstrate that car so your father would fall in love with it."

"Well, I did," Mr. Golden stood up and plunged his hands in his pockets, and looked at her with a stern expression. "Now, look here, Lib. There's no reason why we shouldn't have a car. I've got the brains to run it."

"Elihu, if you're going all over that ground again I shall leave the room. I've had just about all the discussion I

can stand for one day. My head is beginning to ache now," Mrs. Golden put her hand tenderly to her forehead.

Mr. Golden groaned. That headache of his wife had tied his tongue for 25 years. It was her one weapon, and she used it skillfully.

Marjory leaned against the door casing. She had shifted her large stare to the window. She appeared to wait calmly and impartially.

"I shall not go," said Mrs. Golden, with emphasis. "I'm sorry I went the other night. But I did it because I did not think at first that Ralph had any designs on us. But I soon saw what he was up to. I have no fourteen hundred dollars to put in a car. And you have no time to take from your business in this, Elihu. That's settled. And I tell you here and now you're not going out in that car today—without me. I can't trust you."

"That's a pretty way for a woman to

talk to her husband," began Mr. Golden.

Mrs. Golden's forehead took on an expression of intense pain. She rose and laid aside her crocheted work.

"Abuse me if you like, Elihu," she said. "I've begun by being firm and I shall stay firm." She moved toward the door.

In the street outside sounded the whir of wheels and a piercing sweet strain. "Mamma!" said Marjory, suddenly.

Mrs. Golden stopped.

"You don't mind my going for a little while with Ralph, do you? I'm not supposed to be a prospective customer. It seems a pity for him to come way up here for nothing. I can tell him just how things are," she added, thoughtfully. "You don't want a car, so there's no need of his keeping at dad all the time to buy one."

"I'll attend to that part myself, miss," said the father, sharply.

Marjory turned her beautiful eyes up

on him calmly.

"May I mamma?" she pleaded.

"Why, I see no objection to your going, Marjory. Ralph's a nice boy, but too keen a salesman, that's all. You may tell him, and save me, that so far as I am concerned a car is out of the question."

Mrs. Golden emphasized the personal pronoun, and glanced meaningfully at her husband. Then she went on upstairs to her room.

Mr. Golden stood beside the table his hand resting heavily upon it, studying the pattern of the rug. He looked miserable.

"Dad!" whispered Marjory. She put her young, strong arm round his wretched shoulders. "Dad, if ever I marry a poor man I'll never let him feel the way you do this minute. Married folks should be partners, no matter which has the money. I know you want a car—"

He kissed her. The siren tooted again. And Marjory fled.

When an hour and a half later, the girl returned, she found her mother getting supper. Mrs. Golden always did this on Saturday afternoons, which was the maid's time out. She looked cheerful and composed and very neat in her embroidered white apron.

"Hello, mamma," said Marjory.

"How do you feel?"

"Quite all right, dear. Have a nice ride?"

"Beautiful. And I told Ralph decidedly that we shouldn't want a car—because you said so."

"I say so," replied Mrs. Golden. "I never saw your father so possessed over any foolishness, Marjory. Fourteen hundred dollars is a lot of money. I suppose he might feel different if it was his money. But I know that my father worked hard for what he left me and I don't propose to see it foisted away on what is unnecessary. A car would only give your father an excuse for neglecting the business, and the business would suffer. And I have your future to think about, my dear."

"Never mind my future," Marjory said. "My future will take care of itself. Maybe I'll marry a man who can support me without aid."

"I should be sorry for you if you couldn't," said Mrs. Golden. "I always thought I might better have waited—"

Marjory interrupted her.

"Where's dad?"

"In the garden, weeding."

"Good exercise," commented Marjory. "The best. So I tell him," said Mrs. Golden.

Marjory ran out into the backyard. Her father was squatting beside the onion bed, busy at work. For an instant, the girl's eyes dimmed. Her crocheting figure looked so tired, so pathetic, so humble. Her mother kept a maid, but her father was expected to do

all the outdoor work on the place and run the store besides. Her young heart felt the unfairness of it all.

"Dad!" she said softly.

He rose, brushing all the soil from his thin hands.

"Back, dear!"

"Just back, Dad—" Marjory put her arm through his and leaned close.

"Dad, I've something wonderful to tell you. I'm going to tell you first, because—you're first with me and always have been. I don't think mother will care, but I want you to be pleased. Dad!"—she looked up at the blue sky, then into his eyes—"I'm going to marry Ralph."

Her father gave a little start.

"Are you?" he said only.

"Yes, I am. I told him and he's a very understanding person. Moreover," she smiled, "he says he loves me. And, dad—"

"Yes, darling."

"He says he's going to teach you to run a car and you can take one whenever you wish. It's all in the family now, you see. Ralph says that what's his is mine, and, of course, what is mine is yours. Now I am going to tell mamma—"

"Aren't you afraid?" asked her father.

She flashed a backward look at him. "Not now!" she said laughing.

When Deane Understood All

WELL, I'm going to let you good-by," announced Deane, as he trudged beside me the day before he moved.

"Well, you're not," I replied somewhat hotly; for Deane's treckled face looked determined.

"You'll see," he said, grabbing me round the neck very much as if I were a pillow, and we were indulging in a surreptitious fight in mother's guest chamber.

"Leave me alone!" I yelled, striking out wildly.

The next thing I knew, we were sitting in the middle of the dusty road.

"I did," said Deane.

"You didn't, you hateful thing," I shrieked. Then I jumped up, gave him a slap in the face and ran down the street.

For years after that I did not hear a word from Deane. I flitted through school and ended with a course in domestic science at Simmons College. The last was to please Dad who said that he wanted me to be able to treat Monty as well as mother treated him in the cooking line. Just as if I'd marry that boy! Dad wouldn't let me either. He says she won't have a son-in-law for whom he will have to furnish the feather pillow to propose on. Then mother decided that I must be introduced to society, even if she was afraid that I never should be dignified enough to suit her. Thus my life went on until this summer when mother and I came here for what she calls "a rest!"

When I arrived, I heard the girls talking about the wealthy Dr. Thorndyke who, in their opinion, was about as nearly perfect as a man could be. Now I did not connect this paragon of virtue with Deane until I saw his blue eyes and sandy hair on the Dr. Thorndyke whom one of the men introduced at a dance. I could tell at once that Deane knew me, so before he could speak, I blurted out:

"Oh! Dr. Thorndyke and I are old friends."

At this the men jolted him a little about asking for an introduction. So I

tried to help him out by saying, "Perhaps he thought I had forgotten, but I haven't; for the last time we met, we knocked each other down."

Deane grew red and muttered that it was "some time ago." Everybody laughed and encircled us, demanding to be told the offence. Feeling as if I were a child again, I threw my head back saying, "He wanted to kiss me."

"Did he?" shouted the men.

Before I could answer, Deane assumed control of the situation by saying, as he turned away, "No, I had not that pleasure."

After that, it seemed as if Deane went everywhere I did. He belonged to the same golf club, and won the tournament. Then Monty's mother four-

ly invited him to go motoring. I suppose she wanted him for Dorothy, just as she snatched Montgomery would marry me. Matter went on this way all summer. Deane was distantly polite, just as if he had not "made up" after a quarrel. I tried to be as frigid as possible; but I did want to talk over old times. You may be sure, however, that I wouldn't give in first. Besides I did feel pretty cheap about that "break" at the dance.

Today Mrs. Sylvester asked us to go riding. When we were nearly back at the hotel, we rounded a curve and went plump against a little boy. The chauffeur did not even turn his head. Nor did Monty move. I saw Deane's north grow stern as he waited for someone to stop the machine. Suddenly he jumped up, grabbed the driver's arm saying, "Stop this car!"

"Goodness! It was no wonder that tone had some effect. Deane jumped out, leaving the rest of us to go on to the hotel. Monte's mother's only reference to the affair was, "I'll have John send a check tomorrow."

At the hotel I rushed to find mother. As luck would have it, she was out. Left to make my own decision, I stopped a minute, irresolutely. Then I

ran to Deane's room, where I snatched up his medicine bag, and hurried for our runabout which soon took me back to that hazy patch.

There stretched out under a big pine, lay the little red-haired boy, with his patched blue shirt open at the throat. Just as I had laid his head on my lap, Deane came up with his cap full of water. He must have been very glad to see that medicine chest; for his eyes lighted up strangely. "Betty," he said, "you're all right. Now do you think you can help?"

Although his calling me "Betty" for the first time since our quarrel, gave me a queer little thrill. I did the best I could. I tried not to squirm, and looked away as much as possible, so I really did not deserve to have Deane say:

"New, little nurse, we'll take him home."

Wasn't it strange that, during the 15-minute drive I couldn't think of a single thing to say. Deane was not very talkative, either. Once I caught his eye, but he looked so strangely that I turned away quickly.

There was great excitement when the mother saw her boy, but Deane had a way of taking charge of affairs that

soon calmed her weeping.

Before I realized it, he had Tim in bed, had given the little girl a green-back "for mother when I'm gone," and was leading me to the machine.

Then we started back over the narrow country road. It came to me suddenly that I was alone with Deane for the first time that summer. My awkwardness at the dance and Deane's aloofness, all flitted through my mind. Then I seemed to hear his deep voice as he inquired the boy's mother. I felt an aching sensation in my throat.

I looked directly ahead. I couldn't say a word. Deane must have understood what was in my mind; for I felt him look at me once or twice. Then he drew me to him, saying:

"Little girl, I'm going to kiss you now."

Revenge Is Sweet

The grand acquisition of nature fakers were observed to be lurking around with clubs.

"What's going on?" asked the trauquillative stranger.

"Oh, nothing much," responded the president. "We are just waiting for Teddy Roosevelt to send in his story about big game in Africa."

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Woman and Veil.

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A Bit of Popular Science

Wartime Plants.

NE of the projects outlined by the committee on botany of the National Research Council is the search for wild plants which may be used as wartime substitutes for the more costly crop plants. During the Civil War, Dr. John Forstner, a Southern farmer, published a book giving a list of wild plants of the South which could be substituted for much needed food and drug plants. The American Botanist Joliet, Ill., proposes, with the aid of his readers, to compile a similar list. Information is sought as to any plants not ordinarily cultivated which have edible fruits, seeds, roots, etc. It is suggested that valuable knowledge on this subject might be obtained from hunters, trappers, woodsmen, farmers, Indians and the foreigners who pick up considerable food from the countryside. Similar information is desired concerning plants that can be used in medicine.

of the vessel which brings it to us, or in the heated ripening rooms which are maintained in the various ports where the fruit is received. A Western banana handler has devised a new method of ripening bananas in water. The bunched fruit is hung from an overhead hook by the stem and as the fruit ripens it takes up a quantity of water, which is responsible for a change in the fruit which makes them much superior to those ripened simply in the heat.

Roads and Bridges.

Cash expenditures on the rural roads and bridges in the United States in 1916 amounted to \$272,634,424, according to figures just published by the division of economics, United States Office of Public Roads and Rural Engineering. To this should be added the value of the statute and convict labor, which probably amounted to \$15,000,000, thus making the grand total expenditure for the year \$288,000,000.

Japan's Knitting Industry?

The knitted goods industry of Japan has jumped with rapid strides, so that there are now 1,300 of these establishments in the country, whereas only a few years ago there were none.

Canadian Power.

It is quite likely that the electric power now being delivered in this country from the power plants on the Canadian side of the Niagara Falls will be withdrawn in order that the industries on the Canadian side may be supplied. Not long ago Sir Adam Beck, chairman of the Provincial Hydro-Electric Commission, stated at a convention of the Union of Canadian Municipalities that the demand for hydro-electric power was increasing so rapidly in the Niagara zone that more than 85,000 additional horsepower would be required in a very short

time. The commission, he said, was prepared to take proceedings to expropriate power from the Canadian Niagara Power Company and the Electric Development Company, developing power at the falls, of which 140,000 horsepower is now exported to the American side which should be conserved for use in Canada. The commission has been granted the power to expropriate the electricity generated by these companies by an order in council recently passed by the Ontario government.

Commutator Saws.

To obtain commutator saws the Washington Water Power Company, Spokane, Wash., buys soft steel washers about one inch in diameter. A hundred of these at a time are placed on a spindle and milled with cutting teeth. They are then case hardened. The cost of the little saws complete is about a half-cent apiece, and very good service is obtained from them.

Soap Berry Tree.

The jaborcello, or soap berry tree, grows in the humid parts of western Ecuador. It attains a height of about 30 feet, and has wide-spreading branches and immense quantities of fruit of the size and shape of cherries. The nearly transparent yellowish skin and pulp surrounding the round black seeds are so saponaceous as to be used instead of soap by many people of Ecuador, being equivalent to more than 50 times their weight of that material.

Tires Made New Way.

Automobile castings are made in one continuous mechanical process by a method of recent invention, which includes the weaving of the fabric that forms the base of the tire, impregnating it with rubber in a special friction calendar, forming it to the required

shape and vulcanizing. This method, employed in a Rhode Island factory, is said to be the only one that makes the loom and the calendar parts of a continuous process. The successive steps of the operation are described in Popular Mechanics Magazine. The time required for the whole process is about 30 minutes.

Largest Flower.

The largest flower in the world grows on the island of Mindanao. Its habitation is far up the Parag Mountain, 2,300 feet above the level of the sea. The natives give it the name of Bolo. Its full-blown blossom is considerably over three feet in diameter and weighs 22 pounds. The flower was first found in Sumatra, and was called Rafflesia Schadenburgia, in honor of its discoverer.

Rare Animals.

The president of the American Museum of Natural History of New York, Dr. Henry E. Osborn, is expecting to make valuable additions to the collection of specimens of gorillas, serows and samburus. He has received word from Roy C. Andrews, in charge of the museum's expedition of Yunnan, China, that he has succeeded in getting some splendid specimens on the frontier of Tibet and Burma. These animals, which are of the stag tribe, are exceedingly rare.

Substitutes for Fodder.

In the search for substitutes for live stock food a German scientist made analytical tests of materials suggested for the purpose. He found dried thistle leaves better than hay as a fodder for hogs; kelp may be fed to cattle and pigs, but it has little nutritive value; ground straw, which is selling at from 28 to 30 marks the quintal, is not good for any animals, nor are ground pea

pods. He advises against cornstalks and cobs. The seeds of beets are nutritive, those of parsley too exciting; those of raisins, if ground before the oil is extracted, are as good as hay. Oil cakes made from beech or other nuts are excellent for cattle.

Drilled Twenty Months.

A diamond drill hole in Sussex county, New Jersey, 4920 feet deep, has recently been completed by the contract drilling forces of the Sullivan Machinery Company. A two-inch diameter hole was removed to a depth of 1,600 feet, beyond which tools removing a one and three-eighths inch core were used to the completion of the hole. When the depth of 4,900 feet was reached, the long line of rods required for drilling weighed 13 tons, and it took eight hours, steady work for hoisting them out, replacing them and resuming drilling. It is said that the hole showed no deviation from the perpendicular. It required 20 months to complete the hole, which is 1,700 feet deeper than the deepest previous hole of which there is any record in North America. Only three or four diamond drill holes have been put down in this country; it is said, exceeding 3,000 feet in depth.

Canada Horses.

Sixty thousand horses have been purchased in Canada by the allied governments since the outbreak of the war. Probably another 20,000 will be purchased in the Dominion before the close of the year.

Rats in Trenches.

In combating the rat visitation in the French trenches, which had become a great nuisance, the greatest success has been obtained by means of an electrical device which shocks the animal to death as it passes over a little trough, when the circuit is completed through the animal's body.

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shoehorn, but much more effective. Two curved plates of the typical shoehorn shape overlap each other, but are held slightly apart by a loop of metal, which allows the two parts to be pressed together when desired.

In adjusting a tight-fitting slipper, shoe or overshoe, the new implement is used in the same manner as the old shoehorn, but with the double gripping plates of the new one it is possible to get a firm grasp in the center of the shoe and pull it on over the heel, as it is not possible to do with the single plate.

Small Percentage.

It has been estimated that one in every 2,400 of the population in the United States is a deaf mute. This would indicate that there are about 37,500 deaf mutes in the United States.

Roman Candles.

The candles of the Romans were composed of string surrounded either by wax or pitch. Splinters of wood, covered with fat, were used by the English poorer classes in 1300.

Training Cap for Golf Players.

There is a good deal more art in the slamming of a golf ball than most persons have any idea of. The ball must be approached in just the correct manner or it will not respond as the player desires, and as he strikes the little sphere there are a number of things which the player must do, and these things all constitute the difference between right and wrong. A device has been perfected to teach the amateur player how to deliver the blow to the ball without departing from the approved position. With it he must hold his head, and, indeed, his entire body, in just the right attitude necessary to success in playing.

Walrus Skins.

The average-sized Alaska walrus is as big as an ox and often weighs more than a ton. A walrus was recently killed by some whalers near Point Barrow whose head weighed 80 pounds, and skin, including flippers, 500 pounds. The animal had a girth of 14 feet, the skin was from half an inch to three inches in thickness, and the blubber weighed 500 pounds.