



SHORT STORIES

OF LOVE AND ADVENTURE



The Great Failure

By Parke Whitney

DADDY was a failure. Eighty years of successive defeats had proved it. At two a mule had kicked him across a woodpile. The scars still showed on his cheek.

This morning, on his eighty-second birthday anniversary, Daddy was sitting on a box gazing questionably at the rags. He had bought them as he could, from door to door, with small amounts gleaned by chopping wood and doing odd jobs.

corner and the wood saw on the wall, could not be used. "Hello, Bill," he called cheerfully, "Sit down on the box. Glad to have somebody to speak with—though I guess all your talk'll be 'bout Lisa Ruth. How soon you goin' to get married?"

"Seems like a big husky feller like me ought to get that. But 'twould hire a small shanty back in the woods, put in a few things an' a stove, an' pay the minister, an' leave a little to start on groceries. Mighty skimpy, I low, but 'twould be taken care of her so much better'n she'll be over there. I'm scared to think how she'll get through the Winter."

"Don't look like's ever," gloomily. "Factory's shut down, an' I'm out of work, an' nothin' likely to come till Spring opens, when there'll be plenty o' plowin' an' garden jobs around."

fingers are too big. I couldn't sew on a button. "Don't need to," coolly. "I can. Been sewin' an' mendin' myself up a good many years. Once when I was married an' tied up with rheumatism, my wife learned me to knit an' make lace an' do fine sewin'. I'll handle the needles an' you can wash out an' iron the rags an' sort of help."

through. Next day go to Hiram Potter's an' saw his two cords for money. He's give me the order, but tell him I'm laid out. Take his \$2 and buy nails an' hinges an' a cheap door an' a one-sash window.

MOTHER GREY watched the last flash of her daughter's smart little auto as it glided smoothly out of the driveway and down the road, with a feeling almost akin to relief. For the first time since she had journeyed from the old New Hampshire farmhouse a month ago to live in her daughter's luxurious home she was being left alone, and Mother Grey, though she chided herself guiltily for the thought, was undeniably happy at the prospect of three long days devoid of calls on and from Marion's aristocratic friends; of being freed from the necessity of making elaborate toilettes, and of doing the hundred other things with which Marion had contrived to keep her busy, with the well-intentioned purpose of "keeping the dear little mother from dwelling on things."

big Bible, the volumes of poetry, her precious albums, and, away down at the very bottom of the trunk, her cook book! She turned the yellowed pages reverently. There were copies of recipes in many handwritings, some of the writers long since dead.

wiping them on her apron, and blissfully unconscious of the powdery ridges across her nose and cheek, opened the door. And there on the veranda, daintily booted, gowned and gloved, every carefully marcelled gray hair in place beneath her exquisite hat, stood Mrs. J. Augustus Blynn, come to pay a call on the mother of her daughter's most intimate friend!

"Won't you step right into the drawing-room," she invited, "and excuse me for just a moment. I," her eyes traveled uncertainly from her floury apron to her visitor's face. "I was making a berry pie," she finished bravely.

old-fashioned deep pie-plate. That's as it should be. These modern shallow ones are painfully inadequate. May I just see your recipe?"

Mother's kind eyes were soft with sympathy, and a crazy little idea came into her head. "Dear Mrs. Blynn," she said, "how would you—"

And in due time the berry pie, all flakey, golden crust stained here and there with little purple pools to hint at the lusciousness beneath, and the sunshine cake, a thing of beauty and fragrance, were placed side by side to cool.

Benevolent Sister

By Joella Johnson

GENE girls make me tired. Let a young doctor come to town and every girl in the place makes it a point to—

down the walk. Now, one's lips may be engaged in whistling the gayest of gay airs and at the same time one's mind be occupied with the working out of a solution to some weighty problem. Bob was thinking, not a new occupation for him, although it would be hard to make anyone in Mansfield believe it.

For you! For you!" answered the same monitor. It was true. Unable to attend college herself, Phyllis was determined Bob should. In the fall he was to enter Harvard. He had been working all Summer, but it had been pleasant work, that of taking parties on the lake in an up-to-date motor boat belonging to the one hotel which the village boasted.

working for you! For you!" he slammed the front gate, and stepped from the curb directly in the path of a tearing, tooting, oncoming automobile. The next thing that Bob knew he heard a groan. Again he heard it, and yet again. The sound was close by, ah, very close. He opened his eyes. A face he had seen before somewhere bent over him.

"em, but let's be devoutly thankful it's no worse. I hope it's enough, however, to cure him from throwing himself in front of automobiles in general, and mine in particular. I'll run in again during the day."

"He is young," murmured Phyllis, laying her head on Bob's pillow. "And he said," continued Bob, "Ah, I've found you at last and I'm never going to let you go! Say, honest, sis, aren't you sorry you've got a brother?"

Dr. Boyd," he said suddenly. "What do you think of a fellow that allows his sister to work herself to shreds to put him through college?"

Partner of Cupid

By Jennie Slater

SONNY-BUNNY and Little Mother were looking in at the milliner's window. They were almost laughably alike, with their curly brown hair, blue eyes and trim slightness, and the expression on the two faces was much the same as Sonny-Bunny's in front of the candy shop display. Their eyes were riveted upon a dainty creation of white straw and pink roses. Even the little boy knew it just to be the thing for Little Mother.

little son for the homeward drive. The new Ford had been necessary but almost too expensive. This had something to do with the lack of money for a new hat for Little Mother.

referred to his memory. "How long has Silas Lovejoy been going with Abbie Dunn?" mother had asked.

concluded that it would be a good idea to mention the subject of weddings to Mr. Lovejoy. That afternoon Sonny-Bunny went fishing in the brook. There was a myth that a trout lived in this brook, and Sonny had spells of trying to catch him. On the other side of the brook was Mr. Lovejoy's potato patch, and in the patch the owner, being Sonny had thought he might be there. By and by, the trout declining to appear, the small boy went over to visit Mr. Lovejoy.

"anybody ever has to do anything. Yesterday's gone and tomorrow never gets here."

A week later the minister almost had heart failure when Silas and Abbie Dunn appeared at the parsonage to get married. Unfortunately Sonny-Bunny was in bed and knew nothing about it till next morning. He saw the bill which his father gave to his mother, however, the same that Mr. Lovejoy had handed him with the license. It was big enough to cover the new hat and the white pumps little mother wanted.

Sonny-Bunny feels sure that he engineered that wedding—and so he did—but somehow he has never felt just like telling even little mother anything about his connection with it!

Return of Big Bear

By Elsie Endicott

OLDEN-HAIRED Sonny, the pride of the Thurston household, had never before been punished. On this occasion, his parents had decided that to further "spare the rod" was to "spoil the child." As a result of this decision, Sonny was called into the living room and his chastisement delivered with great solemnity, then he was sent to bed.

ture book, Big Bear was enveloped in a blanket and fearfully went down the dark back stairs for a last skirmish before sleeping. After skulking around in all the dark corners of the garden without finding any enemy, the cautious Indian crept up behind the Summer house. On hearing voices within, he thought his chances had come to tomahawk someone. So he awaited the opportune time.

(Sonny recognized the voice as that of his Aunt Alice.) "This is final!" No response. "Then I understand that silence gives consent," with these words Jack strode away.

pled in a heap moaning. "Why did you leave me? Why did I let you go?" This made the child sorry for his misdeeds so he crept softly up to her saying: "Aunt Alice, I didn't runaway. I'm back again."

the weeping girl with this statement: "I guess you mean Mr. Norton. Dry your eyes on this so they won't be red when I bring him back."

Alice cry. You ought to be ashamed of yourself to make a girl cry. I wouldn't do that to anybody smaller'n me. I'm going right home and tell my daddy on you."

He would have turned to carry out his threat had not Norton stayed him and questioned: "How did you get here?"