

MISS MADAM.

By OPIE READ.

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CHAPTER I.

An old man and an old woman, a pale young fellow and a girl, sat at a table placed upon a long veranda.

"Now I wonder who that can be?" said the old man, craning his neck and looking down the road. "The girl and the young fellow got up that they might obtain a better view, and the woman, with an air of keen curiosity, leaned over the table, gazed down the road, and, with a woman's quickness to discover intention, declared: 'He's goin to stop. See, pap?' clutching the old man's arm. 'He's goin to come in at the big gate.'"

"He's not goin to do no sich of a thing," the man replied. "He's—hang ed if he ain't. Wonder who he can be. Ridin putty good stock, anyhow."

The horseman who had thus turned a quiet noon hour into a speculation of deep concern rode up to the yard fence and, following a time set fashion of that part of the country, cried, "Hello!" "Git down and come in," the old man answered. "He had arisen from the table and was advancing to meet the stranger. 'Come right in, suh, and make yo'self at home.'"

The girl vanished. The young fellow hung about and stole an occasional peep at the visitor. It was evident that strangers were rare in that neighborhood.

"We have jest been eatin a snack," said the old man, when he had shown the stranger into the house. "Won't you eat a mouthful or so? Don't reckon, however, that you will find much to yo' taste."

"Pap," the woman suddenly interposed, appearing in the door and wringing her apron in embarrassed consciousness of the temerity of thus presenting herself, "if he'll wait a minit, I'll kill a chicken and bake some biscnit, for, goodness knows, we ain't got nuthin that is fitten for a body to eat."

"Oh, don't let me put you to any trouble!" the visitor protested. "I'm sure that anything you've got is good enough for me."

He was so easy in manner and so cordial of voice that the woman, yielding, though reluctantly, it could be seen, said: "Waal, if you think you can put up with it, you are perfectly welcome. Pap, fetch a cheer for the gentleman."

They seated themselves at the table, but the girl and the young fellow did not reappear. The girl, peeping from behind the ash hopper and speaking to the young fellow, who had taken refuge behind a corner of the smokehouse, said: "He looks mighty fine, Little Dave."

"A fiddle ain't no whar to him," the boy answered.

"Little Dave," the old man called. "Why don't you and Miss Madam come along here now and finish eatin yo' dinner?"

"Don't want no mo'."

The visitor looked up, and the girl and young fellow dodged out of sight.

In some parts of the country this would have been regarded as an odd family, but in a certain wild region of Kentucky old man Bradshaw's "folks" were quite conventional. The head of the household was somewhat of a neighborhood character. He was tall and gaunt, with a large, pioneer sort of nose, and with an uneven, grayish beard. He had a backwoodsman's ideas of the ludicrous, that broad estimate of fun which, when refined, but not too much toned down, approaches the establishment of a distinctive class of American humor, and emphasizing his conception of the ridiculous, as though an atonement must be offered, there was a pathetic note somewhere in the gamut of his voice. When a young man, he had built a house on a hill, near a spring that gushed from a rugged bluff, green the year round—eternity's moss covering the rock of ages. Here he and his wife had spent many a year of toil, and it was here, in an old orchard, that they expected to be buried.

The woman, too, was, in her way, a type. She had two great fears—one that she might not possibly have received enough of the Spirit when, years ago, she had sprung up from the mourners' bench and shouted in the almost frenzied ecstasy of her soul's deliverance from torment. She was supremely, she thought divinely, happy for months afterward, but gradually she began to fear that her conversion had been too violent, and that satan must either have had a hand in the work or had at least thrown in a suggestion or two. Sometimes her faith would be perfect, and not a cloud could she see in her serene sky of hope. Then she would go about the yard, singing. Everything seemed to inspire her, and new songs came to her as she stood, with her arms resting on the fence, gazing down the lonely road. The breeze that stirred her hair was a whisper of love, and the sunlight that fell in the lane was a smile of encouragement. Suddenly, and without a warning gradation from this mount of assured paradise, she would sink into the valley of doubt. The breeze that stirred her hair was harsh with reproach, and the sunlight that fell in the lane was a threatening flame. Then she would hasten to the field where her husband was at work.

"Pap, I jest know I ain't elected."

"How do you know? You ain't seen all the votes yet, have you?"

"For mussy sake, don't talk that way when a body is in sich distress. Oh, I have done the best I can, the Lord knows!"

"Waal, if you have, you are all right, I reckon. You trust in the Saviour, don't you?"

"Oh, yes, with all my soul."

"Waal, then, nothin can't hurt yo' soul. Go on back to the house now and rest easy."

If one of these supplicating visits should happen to be near the noon hour, the old fellow would slyly hint that he

didn't feel very well either, and that a bite to eat would help him mightily.

Mrs. Bradshaw's other fear was that people who visited her house might go away and "norate it around" that they didn't get enough to eat while there, and she had been known to slip out at night and kill a chicken to keep down the possibility of slander. The old man often said that nothing on the place was safe, not even a sitting goose, whenever anybody chanced to "drap in." Once, when she was delirious with fever, her husband awoke at night and found that she was gone. He heard a chicken squawl, and then he found her in the henhouse, reaching up and tugging at the feet of an old Shanghai rooster.

With regard to the comer who had so cheerfully agreed to take pot luck, even though he was courteous and cordial, there arose grave suspicions, and these fatal words, "norate it around," seemed to whisper themselves into the woman's mind during the meal, but after dinner, when they sat in the "big room," talking with pleasant freedom, she wondered how so good natured a man could possibly "slander a body."

"I have had yo' hoss put up and fed," the old man remarked when the visitor, slightly leaning back, looked toward the fence. "I didn't reckon you wanted to go any farther this evenin'."

"No; if you don't mind my staying all night, I have ridden pretty hard to day and am somewhat tired."

"You are mo' than welcome, suh. Let's see, what is yo' name?"

"Andrews."

"Any kin to Pete Andrews, over in Hackitt county?"

"I think not."

"Waal, you needn't be ashamed to claim kin with him, for he's much of a man. I seen him to a feller bigger'n him one day at Boyd's mill. Jest snatched a hold of him, suh, and nach- yo' taste."

"Pap, I tell you it was Liza Perdue," ally tied him. And eat! Let me tell you. One time a passel of us at a log rollin' gunter talk about eatin, and John Sanderson, the one that married Sis Perdue—

"He married Liza Perdue," Mrs. Bradshaw mildly suggested.

"The one that married Sis Perdue," the old man repeated.

"Pap, I tell you it was Liza Perdue, for I recollect mighty well the day they was married. I was standin at the big gate, and here come Sam Hargiss on the old mar' that he afterward swapped to Sol Faldin and 'lowed, he did, that Jeff Hawkins had split his foot open with an ax and that John Sanderson had jest married Liza Perdue. I recollect it jest like it was yistidy."

"All right," said the old man. "Have it yo' own way, for it don't make no difference nohow. What I was goin to say is this: A passel of us 'gunter talk about eatin, and John Sanderson—"

"The one that married Liza Perdue," Mrs. Bradshaw observed, slightly inclining her head toward the visitor.

"Waal, ding it all, the one that married Liza Ann Perdue—"

"Her name wan't Liza Ann, pap. It wan't nothin but Liza. You are thinkin bout Lizzie Ann, the one next to the youngest."

The old man was silent for a few moments, and then, stroking his beard, said: "I wish I may die if I ever seen the like. Cnfound the Perdue family anyhow! The old man borrowed a bull tongue plow from me once, and I wish I may never stir agin if he didn't swap it for a shuck collar and a pair of hames. But," he added, nodding at the visitor, "what I wanted to git at is this: A passel of us was at a log rollin, and the question of who could eat the most come up, and John Sanderson 'lowed in a sort of offhand way that he did reckon he could eat mo' roasted goose eggs when he was right at himself than any man he ever seen. Now this was a leetle grain mo' than Pete Andrews could stand, bein a high strung sort of feller, and he spit his tobacco out of his mouth, he did, and says, 'Are you right at yo'self today?' And then John Sanderson sort of felt of himself and studied awhile and 'lowed that he reckoned he was. 'Well, then,' said Pete, 'about how many do you think you can chamber?' John studied awhile and 'lowed that he didn't know exactly how many he could chamber, but that he would eat agin Pete and have an understandin that the one that eat the least had to pay for all. Waal, they pitched in, and Sanderson swallowed 11, but Andrews he raised a great shout of victory by swallowin 13. I tell you he wan't no common man even in them days, when great men was a heap no' plentiful than they are now. So you wan't no kin to him?"

"No; I have no relatives in this state."

"You live away off yander somewhere, I reckon?"

"Yes; a long ways."

"Don't look like you been uster doin much work?"

"Pap," the woman interposed, "don't talk that way. Everybody don't have to water themselves to death like us."

"Waal, Lizabeth, I sholy didn't mean no harm, for I had an old uncle in No'th Klina that never done no work, and he was a putty good sort of a fellow, too, I'll tell you."

The visitor laughed in so good natured a way that the man laughed, and

then from the outside there came a tittering that caused the old woman to hasten to the door. "Miss Madam, what's the matter with you and Little Dave out thar?" she asked. "Can't you behave yo'selfs and not dodge about a-gigglin like a lot of geese?"

"Geese don't giggle. They squawks," came from the outside.

"Let 'em alone, Lizabeth," said the old man, smiling. "Let 'em enjoy themselves while they can."

"They are your children, I suppose," the visitor remarked.

"Waal—that is to say—partly," the old man answered. "Miss Madam is our daughter—the only child we ever had except Jedge, that the guerrillas killed durin the war—but Little Dave ain't no kin to us. We took him to raise befo' Miss Madam was born, cause he was a little bit of a crippled thing that nobody didn't want, but he always was a mighty peart child, and, bless you, he can do a power of good with a hoe now. He's crowdin 20 patty close, and Miss Madam is goin on 17."

"Why do you call her Miss Madam?"

"I reckon that name do sound strange to folks that don't understand it, and I'll tell you exactly how it come about: A long time ago, when me and wife was movin out here, our hoss—the one we had—drapped down in the road and died. Laws amussy, how we was troubled, for we didn't know what to do, not havin but a few dimes, and we know'd that thar wan't no use in tryin to go on without a hoss, as we couldn't do nothin arter we got thar toward raisin a crap. While we was standin thar, mournin, along come a carriage, and right close to it come a man on a hoss. The carriage was as bright as a new dollar, and the man looked like a governor. Waal, when they got up to whar we was, they stopped, and the man asked, 'What's the matter with yo' hoss?'"

"Nothin's the matter with him now, suh," I said. "He might have been powerful sick a few minits ago, but he's dead now." "Is that the only hoss you've got?" he asked. "Yes," said I, "and I ain't got him now, and the Lord only knows how I'm goin to make a crap." Jest then the sweetest face I ever seen—the face of a woman—showed at the window of the carriage. The dog-wag blossoms and the redbud bloom had give her their color, and the dew-drops from the grapevines had fell in her eyes. When she seen my wife a-standin thar a-cryin, she asked, 'And is that really the only hoss you had?'"

"Yes, mam," my wife answered, wringin her hands.

"And you say you can't make a crap?"

"We can't do nothin now that the hoss is dead, and we moust as well die too."

"Then the woman sorter leaned out of the carriage, and, with a smile that put me in mind of a mornin in spring after a rain had fell the night befo', said, 'Jedge, get down and give them yo' hoss!'"

"Madam," said he, 'it shall be jest as you say, and befo' I knowed what was bein done, I was so astonished, the bridle rein was in my hand, my wife was on her knees, and the carriage was gone. We never could find out thar names. All we knowed was Jedge and Madam. So when our boy was borned—the one that was killed—we called him Jedge, and when the little girl come we called her Madam, but bein such a little bit of a thing, and Madam soundin most too big for her, we added the Miss. Lizabeth, step thar to the do' and-tell the children we won't go out to the field agin this evenin'."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Dogs at Knights' Feet.

I noticed in one of the newspapers that the king of Siam during his "jubilee" visit to this country went to Westminster abbey and that, seeing there the figure of some knight with his dog at his feet, informed his suit that in England "favorite dogs were buried with their masters." It was a pity no one corrected his majesty, for we may depend upon it that our adherence to the abominable custom—so common in less civilized countries, perhaps in Siam itself—of putting to death the favorites of the dead will pass into Siamese history as a fact. The dog in question was doubtless a greyhound.

As being pre-eminently the knightly dog, it was privileged in life to a special place behind its master's left hand at table and after death in effigy to a place at its master's feet upon the tomb. Says Colonel Hamilton Smith: "Hounds shaped like the present cannot be traced in the old Frankish and Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. They are all coursing greyhounds, and this character is continued, with but few exceptions, as the emblem of fidelity or gentility, usually couched on monuments at the feet of knights, to the last period of the recumbent figure." But the symbol is more far-reaching than this, for the dog on the monuments of women was the emblem of affectionate fidelity to their husbands, on the monuments of men of unquestioning faith in Providence.—Good Words.

Pagan.

The Latin word from which pagan is derived originally meant a fountain or spring; then the village which sprang up around it, and finally the residents in the village. As Christianity took strong root at first in the large centers of population and the worship of the pagan deities lingered longest in the country and among the country villages it came to be understood that a pagan, or villager, was, in virtue of his residence, a worshiper of the old gods, and thus the term acquired its present significance.

TRICKS OF MANNER.

Showing How Use Deth Breed a Habit in a Man.

Mannerisms, personal peculiarities and facial tricks in those with whom we are thrown into close relations affect our nerves after a time. They are like jarring notes which destroy a melody and wear on the listener until he can think of nothing else.

There is my friend Annabel, for instance. Annabel is one of the wittiest, the most generous women I know. But when Annabel is angry or hurt and does not want to say so, but does want to say something disagreeable about somebody, she has a trick of running her tongue with the rapidity of lightning back and forth across her lips after every statement which she is not sure of your accepting. I can hardly stay in the room with her after a few moments, and were I to see her do this thing without being near enough to hear a word I should know exactly the frame of mind she was in. I have tried to tell her how unpleasant it is, but it means telling her as well something about her mental traits, and I hardly dare to do that.

Then there is Adolphus. Poor Adolphus! He lectures just at present, and everybody flatters him, and he has never guessed that he is not everything that is perfect or that half his audience turn away and say: "Will nobody tell him! We forgive him because he has some good things to say, but we shut our eyes while he listen!"

And that which Adolphus does to begin by making an exclamatory remark, like "Art is long!" perhaps. Then he pauses, scrapes his throat and standing for at least 50 seconds with indrawn lips he rolls his eyes about over his audience to see how his statement has been accepted.

I knew a clergyman long ago who never gave out his text without pausing directly after to use his handkerchief in that good old fashioned way which meant a long resounding blast throughout the church.

Mrs. Dayton never says anything about domestic, political or religious affairs without lifting her hands and wriggling her fingers before you. Mr. Garrison never addresses a pretty woman without cocking his elbows or getting a little strut in his walk. Mr. Edmunds fills out his chest and straightens his shoulders when he sees one coming to whom he must take off his hat. Old General Randolph never to the day of his death gave up the habit of folding his napkin, putting it into a silver ring, taking a last drink of water, and then wiping his lips with the napkin he had just folded.

Habits are the result of mental conditions, and our responsibility for our children is very great along these lines. Lack of training always tells, and the duty of the parent becomes a serious one when the first symptoms of peculiar personal habits appear.

It is easy to correct the child when young, not by severity or by making it self conscious, but by making it repeat an action quietly before you without the trick of manner or of voice which had marred it.—Lillie Hamilton French in Harper's Bazar.

Easy Cure For Dyspepsia.

"As painful and annoying as dyspepsia is, it may be easily and quickly cured if the sufferer will only be careful in his daily diet," writes Mrs. S. T. Rorer in The Ladies' Home Journal. "Abstain for a given time from all solid foods. Live for at least one week on milk, one-quarter barley water or koumiss. Then, as the stomach grows stronger, take pure milk, sipping it and swallowing it, slowly. You may take also the raw white of an egg shaken with a cup of milk, Barthelow's food, plum porridge, a little scraped beef broiled and finally broiled beef, boiled rice and pulled bread. A glass of cool, not iced, water should be taken the first thing in the morning. A cup of warm, not hot, water half an hour before breakfast. For breakfast three ounces of milk mixed with one ounce of barley water. This schedule should be followed every three hours throughout the entire day for one week, taking the last glass of milk half an hour before bedtime. Koumiss may be substituted for the milk or used alternately."

Plain Lying.

I heard Mr. Moody say the other day that a lady had come to him asking how she might be delivered from the habit of exaggeration to which she was prone. "Call it lying, madam," was the uncompromising answer, "and deal with it as you would with any other temptation of the devil."—Rev. F. B. Meyer.

No Terrors For George.

Next Door Neighbor—You are welcome to all the turkey dressing you want, George, but aren't you afraid you'll eat too much and be sick?

Visiting Boy—No'm. We're faith cure people over at our house. I'd like some more dressing.—Chicago Tribune.

Paris and Marseilles are connected by telegraph lines entirely underground. They are placed in iron pipes and buried 4 feet beneath the surface, with manholes 3,000 feet apart. It cost \$7,000,000 to bury the wires.

Pages in congress must be over the age of 12 years and under 21. In the senate they receive \$1,440 a year and in the house \$1,200.

The first cannon balls were made of stone.



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PIGEONS AS MESSENGERS.

Advantages of Their Use For the Rapid Concentration of Naval Forces.

The twenty-third volume of proceedings of the United States Naval institute has among its contents several ably written papers on subjects interesting to the navy. Lieutenant E. W. Eberle contributes a paper on "Homing Pigeons as Messengers of the Fleet," in which he refers to the advantages and practical workings of a messenger pigeon service and points out conditions under which it may be used with advantage to the fleet. In his paper Lieutenant Eberle says:

"From its geographical surroundings Key West will become our most important pigeon station on the Atlantic, and Port Townsend, which controls the strait of Fuca and entrance to Puget sound, will be the most important on the Pacific. Port Townsend station can control the entire entrance to the western possessions of Great Britain, and this would prove of great value in the event of hostilities with that country."

"The rapid concentration of naval forces at the point of attack or the movement of forces to intercept the enemy is only made possible when we have a system by which we can communicate rapidly with the shore station from long distances at sea, and the messenger pigeon service is the only system by which we can obtain such communication. This service might be called, very appropriately, a 'sea telegraph' system, and although its messages cannot be dispatched with the speed and absolute certainty of the telegraph yet the system has the advantage of forwarding its messages from any position within definite limits, and therefore it is not necessary to seek the telegraph station in order to send a message."

"In the event of hostilities many more messages than those given in the above illustrations would be sent in order to insure the receipt of important information, and if only one of the many little messengers should arrive in time to enable our fleet to maneuver so as to engage the enemy before he could inflict appalling destruction of life and property upon some one of our seaports, then this service would prove itself most valuable to the government and well worth the small annual sum required to maintain its efficiency."

"It requires but one practical illustration to strike home and to open our eyes to the merits of this service. Let a single human life be saved from shipwreck in a time of peace or let one maneuver of the enemy's fleet be frustrated in the midst of war by the timely arrival of one of these swift winged, trusty little carriers with its urgent message, and all the country will applaud the result and will realize the value of a messenger pigeon service upon the seas."—Baltimore Sun.

"Bummer."

When people are trying to be very polite in their language, they avoid the use of the word "bummer," yet it is a most respectable word and is not slang by any means. It is not even an "Americanism," but has come to us from our English relatives and is found in the English market by laws of two centuries ago. In the form "bummaree" it appears in advertisements in The Public Intelligencer of 1660.

Originally it meant a fish peddler. You are likely to get your head broken, however, if you mention it to an honest American citizen of that occupation now.

The United States did not acquire the word until the early fifties, when it appeared in California.—New York World.

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Four Footed.

A family that had not been boarding for so very long in a certain Madison avenue house left rather suddenly the other day. It was all on account of a bull pup that just previous to the departure was purchased by the son and heir, but without consulting the elders of the family. He bore it home in triumph. Whom should he meet upon the threshold but the landlady. "Is that your pup?" she asked menacingly. The son and heir said that it was. "You expect to keep it here?" The son and heir said that he did. The landlady planted herself before the door. "No four footed beast enters this house," said she. "Madam, you're a four footed beast yourself," cried the son and heir. The departure took place that same evening.—New York Sun.

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