

HIS LETTERS.

We had been three months married, and lived in the blessed expectancy of a secretaryship which I had been promised on a commission appointed to inquire into some abuses the government did not want to find out but the preliminaries dragged, and I found myself doomed to a period of enforced idleness which did not improve my temper, and I fear tried my wife's sorely, for, though happy, we were human. Our first, and thank heaven, our only tiff, took place one memorable day when we were both gardening on a plot of soot blackened ground attached to our modest dwelling. In making a border I had planted a number of carnations and picotees together, contrary to my wife's directions, and on discovering the mistake she said what I suppose nine out of ten women would have said. I answered tartly, being preoccupied with bitter thoughts, and so acrimonious did our discussion become that Edith went into the house.

After some minutes reflection I felt the childishness of my conduct and followed to make it up. She was not in the attic-like boudoir at the top of our mansion, so I descended to search for her in the drawing room, which had doors opening on the conservatory and hall. By chance I chose the first and had almost entered the room when I heard the sound of a well remembered voice, and, drawing the portiere aside cautiously saw my wife face to face with Arbuscula.

"I daresay you know who I am?" the latter was saying.

Edith denied the implied honor.

"Then is your state the more gracious," retorted Arbuscula. "But your husband does, and that is the chief point. The servant told me he was at home." She looked just as splendid as ever and swept our modest little apartment with a scornful glance.

"My husband is engaged," said Edith. Anything you have to say may be said to me."

"Indeed?" replied Arbuscula. "Well, I have got a good many things to say."

My wife folded her hands and, finding one of her gardening gloves on, pulled it off and threw it on the table. "Guard!" thought I.

"And first," continued Arbuscula, "I want to say that your husband is the writer of those letters." And she deposited a formidable bundle on the table beside the glove. "They were written to me. You may read them if you choose."

"I have no desire to do so," replied my wife valiantly.

"They would interest you," the other went on. "You could compare them with these he has, I daresay, written to yourself."

"I fear you misunderstand, though the error is a natural one—for you," replied my wife considerately.

A spot of light shone in Arbuscula's eye. "They would be useful," she continued, "if you wanted to make things hot for him—as you undoubtedly will."

My wife was silent; she played with her wedding ring.

"Or perhaps you won't care to see them in the public press," the other added viciously. "I know a literary chap who would dress 'em up well; they'd want a little draping for a paper I know of."

"I conclude then, that the lawyers have marked 'no case?'" observed Edith, and Arbuscula glanced curiously at her.

"I do not take any—wrongs to a law court!" she said magnifi-

cently.

"In that you show your wisdom," replied my wife. Arbuscula looked at her again, with something approaching respect, but there was a sparkle beneath the eyelids.

"Come, what will you give to prevent it?" she asked.

"Nothing," responded Edith quietly.

"He would be of a different opinion!" observed Arbuscula.

"Hardly," said my wife. He is not a fool."

"You are the first woman who ever said that of him," retorted Arbuscula.

"I do not doubt," replied my wife, with much significance, and the other redened slightly. "Under the guard," thought I.

"All women are the same to him," continued Arbuscula, recovering herself. "What is the difference between you and me? A wedding ring."

"And all it symbolizes," rejoined my wife softly.

"That's a house on a fifth rate terrace, with only one stopcock for eight of ye, and the lady next door cuts off the water when she has had a few words with you over the hedge—I know it!" sneered the other.

"Oh, it symbolizes more," said Edith, but her tone was weaker. The thrust has gone home, for the study of hydrostatics had been forced upon us of late.

"And what is that, pray?" demanded Arbuscula insolently.

"To explain would be to insult your intelligence—and yourself," replied Edith. "Beat in carte, lunge in tierce!" thought I.

"Oh, I am not thin skinned!" laughed Arbuscula.

"I made allowance," rejoined my wife.

Arbuscula's lips became a thin line of scarlet. They parted, and she smiled. I knew that she had always possessed a most unfeminine sense of humor, but I was not prepared for its assertion at this supreme moment. The two women stood looking at each other across the table. Arbuscula's dazzling smile lighting her face, my wife's pale, yet never so beautiful, I thought, though now, enlightened by the contrast, I noted the lines of anxiety which had been creeping there during the past months, and violet shadows under the sweet eyes. The other gathered up the letters and began to shuffle them as one would a pack of cards.

"You are dying to read them!" she said.

My wife's voice said, "No." Her face was not so explicit.

"Here's one—it's poetry," continued Arbuscula. "It was written for a stays I invented, the Arbuscula busk—you might have heard of it?"

"No, it must have been before my time," said Edith innocently.

"Possibly you came rather late in the day," retorted the other.

"But come to stay," answered my wife.

Arbuscula laughed. Edith put her hand upon the bell.

"You surely will not compel me!" she said, "I have been very patient."

"You'll want all the patience you have in the good time coming," rejoined the other.

"And you, what will your future be without patience?" asked Edith.

"My future can take care of itself," cried Arbuscula, laughing a laugh short as the snap of a breaking sword blade. "I'm a woman with a past, the sort morality hmbugs chatter about, but if I had a future like you, by—, I'd try to get something better

than the butt end of a rove."

"Using the Hilt," thought I.

My wife laughed gayly now. "You know the old adage," she said, "the best husband is a reformed rake. Men's follies often serve as beacons to guide them past the other shoals and shallows of life. Experience enables them to appreciate things—it is a good light for a man."

"And a useless one for a woman," answered Arbuscula, with a sudden change of tone, "It's like the poop light which shows the foam upon the reef that has just torn the poor ship's side out—much good, when the masts are going by the board."

She gathered the letters together. Whatever had been her purpose in coming, I could see her grasp upon it was gone. Catching at that moment the reflection of my own face in a mirror opposite, I was so ill pleased by the sight that I stole down stairs, hearing another hacking laugh and the tinkle of a bell as I went.

I returned to the garden and commenced to patiently dig up the border. Presently Edith came out also with an armful of plants she began to sort, singing a cradle song I much admired the while.

I went over to her. "I got those carnations up," I said, "but for the life of me I can't say which is which!"

She ran to the border. "Ah, you took far too much trouble, dear," she said softly. "And after all your labor, too. I'm so sorry!" she pressed my arm, and the touch covered more than the words.

"But the line was not straight," I answered averting my eyes.

I passed my arm around her waist and kissed her. She put both her own around my neck.

"My wife!" said I.

"You old goose," she whispered, biting my ear. "I saw you all the time!"—Black and White.

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Notice is hereby given that the following-named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim, and that said proof will be made before Joel Ware U. S. Commissioner at Eugene, Oregon, on June 29, 1899, viz: Theophile F. Rosse on H. E. No. 7359 for the E 1/2 NW 1/4, NE 1/4 SW 1/4, Lot 2, Sec. 26, T. 19 S., R. 5 W.

He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz: Isaac N. Doak, Henry Coleman, John L. Bailey, Ivan McQueen, of Siuslaw, Oregon.

J. T. BRIDGES, Register.

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION.

Land Office at Roseburg, Oregon, May 22, 1899.

Notice is hereby given that the following-named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim, and that said proof will be made before Joel Ware, U. S. Commissioner at Eugene, Oregon, on July 10, 1899, viz: George Layng on H. E. No. 7409 for the S 1/2 N W 1/4, Lots 3 & 4, sec. 36, T. 21 S., R. 1 W.

He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz: John Q. Doud, Joseph S. Burnett, James T. Hunt, of Willwood, Oregon, George Downes, of Cottage Grove, Oregon.

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Land office at Roseburg, Oregon, June 27, 1899.

Notice is hereby given that the following-named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim, and that said proof will be made before Joel Ware, U. S. Commissioner at Eugene, Oregon, on August 14, 1899, viz: John Gray on H. E. No. 4003 for the Lots 12, 13, 14 and 15, sec. 32, T. 21 S., R. 2 W.

He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz: Joseph Perkins, John B. Moseby, William Champion, John Hubbard, of Cottage Grove, Oregon.

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Notice is hereby given that R. L. Williams has been appointed administrator of the estate of Hannah Williams, deceased. All persons having claims against the said estate are requested to present the same within six months of the date hereof to said administrator, at the office of John M. Williams, Eugene, Oregon. Dated this 10th day of May, 1899.  
JOHN M. WILLIAMS, Administrator.  
R. L. WILLIAMS, Attorney for Estate.