

His Masked Hostess

By FRANK H. WILLIAMS

Ramsey Cummings was a bachelor, thirty-three years old, and was shy and rather self-centered.

So when Ramsey came to his office in the morning he generally went through the same routine day in and day out without much variation. There was a shy greeting to the office force, a quick dart into his large, comfortable office, a glance through the mail and then some dictation to pretty Mary Evans, while, shyly, he marveled at the luxuriance of her unbobbed brown hair, and marveled at the depth of her big blue eyes, and felt a little flutter around his heart at the mere thought that perhaps she might some day preside over his home instead of merely being an important cog in the office machinery.

But this morning there was a break in the routine. Ramsey, in fact, scarcely even looked up when Mary, radiant in her youthful beauty, entered on time to the dot and took her accustomed seat.

But this morning there had come a letter—an extraordinary, startling letter—and Ramsey was still reading it over and over and still trying to determine whether it was a hoax or the real thing.

This is what the letter, written in a flowing, feminine hand, had to say:

"Dear Ramsey (that's not very formal, is it?)—

"I know you're a lonely old bachelor and you ought to have a home of your own instead of merely inhabiting quarters. It looks to me as if you don't have much fun in life and it also looks to me as though a good home-cooked meal would do you a world of good. So I'm going to take pity on you and invite you to take dinner with my married sister and myself tomorrow evening at half past six o'clock at my sister's home, 918 Linden avenue. There will be only we three—my sister's husband will be out of the city, much to his disappointment, because we told him about our plans and he's much interested in them. And—I'm going to cook the dinner entirely by myself.

"Now here's the point: I'd just die if you should find out who I am, because this is a mighty bold thing to do. My sister and I will be masked while you are at the house and I'm going to trust to your honor not to try to find out who we are.

"If you can't come, please phone Main 2119 promptly at 12:30 o'clock tomorrow noon and simply say 'I can't come' and give your name. But if we don't hear from you at that time we'll expect you tomorrow night."

There was no name signed to the letter and nothing else.

Ramsey, quite absorbed at this rather pleasant break in the monotony of his life, read the letter again and again.

At last, however, he looked up to find Mary's big blue eyes fixed on him in puzzlement at this astounding arrangement of the morning's routine. And as Ramsey looked full into Mary's eyes the letter was momentarily forgotten and a stronger wave of sentiment for Mary swept over him than he had yet experienced.

On the instant Ramsey felt a wild outburst of hopes and affection on the tip of his tongue.

Then, on the instant a cloud of despair swept over him. For Mary dropped her eyes to her notebook and there he saw again the photograph of a man—the same photograph that had been in her notebook for the past week and which she so frequently regarded with rapt attention. Her fancy, probably, thought Ramsey ruefully.

Dictation went badly that morning. All during the time Mary was in the office with him there were two elements in Ramsey's mind which stopped his usually ready flow of business language and made him frequently stop and stare blankly into vacancy. One of these was his rapidly growing sentiment for Mary and fast augmenting rage against the unknown man whose picture she carried in her notebook, and the other was the lure of the unknown woman who had so suddenly and interestingly come into his life.

All the rest of the day Ramsey was restless. Should he accept the invitation or not?

On the following day he was not himself at all. He found it so impossible to conduct his routine as under normal conditions that he dispensed entirely with dictation and spent almost the entire morning in a flurry of indecision as to whether he should go to Linden avenue and meet the masked hostess or not.

But—half past twelve came and went, and Ramsey failed to call.

As the afternoon wore on Ramsey came to feel a certain sense of fatality in the coming event. If he went to the dinner, he felt, instinctively, that the masked hostess would ensnare him and that Mary, consequently, would pass out of his life forever.

With a sort of courage born of desperation Ramsey tried hard to see Mary and tell her something that afternoon of the tumult in his heart, but fortune wasn't with him. He found no opportunity for doing so.

At last, then, Ramsey, neatly garbed in a dinner jacket, drove to 918 Linden avenue. He looked with a quickening heart at a charming little bungalow,

whose windows were glowing with friendly light and whose whole appearance seemed to say "Here are life and joy and companionship. Come in. You're welcome."

But in spite of the cheering appearance of home Ramsey felt embarrassedly diffident as he finally advanced up the walk to the veranda and timidly rang the doorbell.

There was a moment's delay. Then suddenly the door swung open and Ramsey, blinking in the light, saw a masked woman standing in front of him and beckoning him to enter.

At least she wore no wedding ring, whether she patronizes a creamery, cheese factory, sells milk or keeps it for his own use; a cooling tank is necessary.

Why not capitalize the great storehouse of cold which lies in the ground? This can be done by simply passing the water designed for live stock first through a tank which will serve as a refrigerator for all products which need cooling. Well or spring water in most of the dairy states has a temperature varying from 55 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit, writes A. L. Haecker in the Illinois Farmer. This is about as cold as the average domestic refrigerator. By utilizing this cold water to chill down the milk, cream or other products we are getting refrigeration at the lowest possible cost.

Millions of dollars are lost annually to the cow-keepers of this country purely on account of the neglect of milk and cream while it is held at the farm. Butter and cheese would be greatly improved if every patron used a cooling tank. As a matter of convenience it is worth while for every farmer to be thus equipped, for it is necessary to have a place to keep the milk and cream, and where a refrigerator can be put into use the housewife will find it very efficient and convenient.

A cooling tank is needed in both winter and summer; in winter to prevent freezing and to retain the cream or milk at a uniform and favorable temperature, while certainly in summer it is needed to prevent extreme souring and the development of undesirable flavors. Cold is a wonderful preservative. We are told that the prehistoric mammoth has been preserved in the ice of the polar region for 50,000 years. When dairy products or perishable foods are kept at a low temperature decomposition is retarded, and with dairy products this means much in the way of better quality and price. A can of cream kept in a good cooling tank is worth a dollar more than the same can kept outside and exposed to the heat of average summer weather. The producer is more interested in this dollar than anyone else. He may not feel that he is losing the dollar simply because he gets the same price for his product, but this is only a temporary condition; the industry is losing the dollar, and he is the most important and biggest part of the industry. As a matter of satisfaction it should be worth while to turn out a good product when it is nearly as easy to do so.

The grading of cream and paying a differential for quality is rapidly coming into general use. In a little while the cream producers will either have to get cooling tanks or suffer a big loss due to producing second grade cream. The cooling tank is sound, sensible, economical, and demanded by decent and progressive farming methods, and we should all be for anything that has so much merit.

The man out looking for a bull is not much impressed when shown an undersized half-starved bull, no matter how well bred he is. Better prices always are secured for those that are in good thrifty condition and of good size for their age. We cannot afford to sacrifice size in developing the bulls.

Remember the bull that has not been well fed is generally disappointing to the buyer. A disappointed buyer is a poor advertisement. A stunted animal is not always satisfactory as a breeder.—W. L. Bizzard, Professor of Animal Husbandry, Oklahoma A. and M. College.

Iowa Demonstrates Value of Good Purebred Sires

The value of good purebred sires in grading up scrub or grade cows was shown at the Iowa state college in an experiment starting in 1907. Native scrub cattle from Arkansas were graded up through the continuous use of purebred sires. The granddaughters had an average increase of 4,471.7 pounds of milk and 186.00 pounds of butterfat over their scrub dams.

Feeds for newly-hatched geese and ducks should contain a large per cent of greens from the start.

Exercise is absolutely necessary for hens to be healthy and productive. It keeps them contented, for hen nature demands that they get their living by scratching.

Exercise is an important thing in keeping chicks healthy, and this can be encouraged by allowing the chicks to scratch around on the lawn as soon as the weather is warm enough.

Andrew's Hard Luck

Young Andrew had been absent from school all day and returned the following morning without any excuse, whereupon the teacher sent his mother the regulation excuse blank to be filled out. Shortly Andrew returned and handed the teacher his excuse with the consciousness of a deed well performed. It read:

"Dear teacher, Andrew got wet in the a. m. and sick in the p. m."

DADLY DAIRY

Cooling Tank Essential for Producers of Cream

Every farmer who milks a few cows should have a cooling tank of some kind. It makes little difference whether he patronizes a creamery, cheese factory, sells milk or keeps it for his own use; a cooling tank is necessary.

Why not capitalize the great storehouse of cold which lies in the ground? This can be done by simply passing the water designed for live stock first through a tank which will serve as a refrigerator for all products which need cooling. Well or spring water in most of the dairy states has a temperature varying from 55 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit, writes A. L. Haecker in the Illinois Farmer. This is about as cold as the average domestic refrigerator. By utilizing this cold water to chill down the milk, cream or other products we are getting refrigeration at the lowest possible cost.

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ROMANCE OF WORDS

"Sub Rosa."

MEANING, literally "under the rose," this synonym for secrecy or confidence dates back to 477 B. C., when Pausanias, commander of the Spartan and Athenian fleet, was engaged in conspiracy with Xerxes to betray Greece to the Persians. The meetings were conducted in a building connected with the Temple of Minerva and called the "Brazen House." Because the roof of this building was covered with roses, the intrigue was literally carried on "under the rose."

Pausanias, however, was betrayed by one of his men and, to escape arrest, he fled to the Temple of Minerva. The crowd, fearing to violate the sanctity of the temple, walled up the entrance and left Pausanias to die of starvation in the very place where he had been guilty of treachery. It later became a custom among the Athenians to wear a rose when they had a confidential communication to make, and the flower also appeared on the ceilings of banquet halls to remind the guests that what was spoken there was in confidence. The same practice was common among the ancient Germans and, in the sixteenth century, it was usual to see a rose placed over the confessionals in Roman Catholic churches.

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Mother's Cook Book

A peppercorn is very small, but seasons every dinner more than all other condiments, although "his sprinkled thinner. Just so a little woman is, if love will let you win her— There's not a joy in all the world you will not find within her.

—Juan De Hita.

FOODS WE LIKE

PEAS served in any manner are delicious, but the following is especially so:

Green Pea Bisque.

Cook one pint of peas, rub through a sieve and add one-half cupful of canned tomato soup, one pint of hot milk, one teaspoonful of sugar, a few grains of pepper. Thicken with two tablespoonfuls of butter and one of flour cooked together. Serve very hot with croutons.

Gooseberry Pie.

Line a pie plate with pastry and put into it ripe gooseberries to cover the bottom, sprinkle with a layer of flour and a cupful of sugar, add more berries to fill the shell, another dusting of flour, cover with a rich crust and bake slowly. Bind the edge of the pastry with a strip of wet cloth to hold in the juices; this may be easily removed as soon as the pie is baked. Bake 40 minutes in a moderate oven.

Gooseberry Tapioca.

Soak two-thirds of a cupful of tapioca over night in slightly salted water. Drain, put in a double boiler with one and one-quarter cupfuls of boiling water and one-fourth of a teaspoonful of salt, cook until the tapioca has absorbed all the water, then add two cupfuls of gooseberries, ripe, well stemmed and headed, with one cupful of sugar. Cook until the berries are tender and the tapioca transparent. Chill and serve with cream and sugar.

Date Salad.

Take one cupful of dates, three tablespoonfuls of seeded raisins, three tablespoonfuls of walnut meats, one-half cupful of boiled dressing, one cupful of diced celery and one-third of a cupful of grated American cheese. Mix the cheese, nut meats and raisins. Stuff the dates with this mixture and allow them to stand several hours. Slice the dates, add the celery and the salad dressing and serve in nests of lettuce. A little sweet or sour cream will improve the dressing.

Nellie Maxwell
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ONCE IS ENOUGH



On the Waiting List.

Perceval—Philippa, when I make my fortune I'm going to ask you to marry me. Will you mind waiting for me?
Philippa—Not at all, Percy; not at all. The longer I have to wait for you the better I'll like it.



BILLY 'POSSUM'S BATH

BILLY 'POSSUM made his home one year in a tree that grew near a stream in the woods. But Billy learned a lesson which he never forgot and after that he chose his home far from the water.

He did not select this tree to be near the water, because Billy 'Possum did not care for bathing or swimming. He just happened to make his home there without thinking of the stream at all.

It was nice and quiet. No one bothered him in the daytime and at night it was easy to run through the woods or jump from tree to tree and reach the road that led to the farm, where he could find plenty of food.

But one day Billy 'Possum awoke with a start—something was happening to his home. He could plainly hear something like sawing going on.



Billy poked out his head and looked, but there was no sign of Mr. Man or Mr. Dog, the enemies he most dreaded; but still he could hear the queer sound.

"Oh, I guess it is Mr. Woodpecker at work somewhere on the tree," he said at last. "I will go back to bed, for I have a long run to make tonight to Mr. Man's sweet potato patch and I need to rest."

Billy snuggled down into his bed and went to sleep, though he still heard the funny noise going on. How long he slept he did not know, but

he awoke again with a start that made him tremble, for the tree in which he was sleeping was certainly falling.

"It must have been Mr. Man after all," thought Billy 'Possum. "Old Mr. Dog must have tracked me here and they have cut down the tree."

He did not have time to think more, for while he was looking with both sharp eyes to see who was after him and clinging fast to the tallest limb of the tree, down it went right into the stream, which was pretty deep.

The branch where Billy was clinging went splash into the water, and of course Billy went, too. He knew this was no time to play dead 'possum. If it had been on land he might, but not in the water; and paddling quickly to the bank he scrambled up and away he ran.

He did not stop until he was safe in another tree and then he took a look around. There was no one in sight but Mr. Fox, who stood shaking himself with laughing.

"What are you laughing at?" asked Billy, feeling a little cross; for somehow he felt that Mr. Fox was laughing at him.

"Because you had to take a bath," answered Mr. Fox. "You have the Beaver brothers to thank for your dip into the stream. Didn't you hear them sawing down the tree?"

"Oh, was that what I heard?" replied Billy, looking very much surprised. "I didn't know what it was, but I knew it was not Mr. Man, so I went to sleep again and when I woke up the tree was falling."

Mr. Fox began to laugh again. "Things move fast with the Beaver boys," he said. "I advise you to make your new home away from a stream or pond, for if they want a tree they take it."

Mr. Fox trotted off and Billy 'Possum came down the tree and went through the woods to look for a new home far from the water side. He decided that an old hollow tree would be best for many reasons; and one was that he knew the Beaver brothers would not choose an old tree for building their dams.

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THE RIGHT THING at the RIGHT TIME

By MARY MARSHALL DUFFEE

WHEN YOU GOSSIP

And there's lust in us no charm can tame Of loudly publishing our neighbor's shame.

—Stephen Harvey.

EVERYBODY gossips—the man in business or his club just as much as the woman at home or in her sewing circle. In fact some gossip is really delightful. If we ceased to talk over our neighbors and friends with each other we should be deprived of a very large and important part of our subjects of conversation. Many of the cleverest plays interest us because we are interested in gossip, and the great novelists could never have become such students of human nature had they not listened with interest to a great deal of gossip.

So don't start out with the resolution that you will keep the conversation away from gossip. You can't talk forever about the weather, or the new plays or the books you read or the chances of a warm spring or the next candidate for governor. But when you do gossip you can remember that there is a courteous way of going about it, a well-bred way, and a way that is incontinent and ill-bred.

The truly well-bred person and the person who has learned wisdom gossips but little about himself or his family. This is something that it is difficult for some persons to realize.

And here is something else that is difficult to do. Don't gossip about your servants, especially when this gossip is of a derogatory nature.

In general, do not regard as yours to tell any information about any one that you have gained in an indirect, underhanded way. Don't, for instance, let it drop that you think Mr. Smith who rooms with you is engaged because you have seen a good many pictures of a certain young woman and because he gets letters addressed in the same feminine hand. That is almost as unpardonable as it is to make free with information you may have gleaned by an interesting telephone call. It is bad enough to allow yourself to listen, more than ill-bred to read a letter over another person's shoulder, but it is ten times worse to make free with such information after you have gleaned it.

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A LINE O' CHEER

By John Kendrick Bangs.

THE FLYING HOUR

SOME folks think of Tomorrow, And some of Yesterday, With all the joy and sorrow That linger on the way. But in this world of foment, My task is finding how To seize the passing moment, And make the best of NOW. (© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

Has Anyone Laughed At You Because —

By ETHEL R. PEYSER

You rush for the doctor for the least thing? You may save a lot of trouble by this modern habit. You may save other folk from catching your disease. You may save time and trouble in the end by getting a "mender" on the job before it's too late for that kind of mending. You may, however, be getting a bit too fussy and spending money and doctor's time extravagantly. The good doctor doesn't much care to be called out unnecessarily—the young doctor does, of course. If your doctor gives you a few hints as to what to do before calling him in, you will know he is a good and busy practitioner.

SO

Your getaway here is: The young doctors love you. (© by McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

YOUR HAND How to Read Your Characteristics and Tendencies—the Capabilities or Weaknesses That Make for Success or Failure as Shown in Your Palm

THE FINGER NAILS

WHEN the "moon" at the root of the finger nails shows a red color of mixed shading, it is an indication of a combative nature, which delights in contests of bodily strength or mental agility. Note whether the nail of the finger of Saturn, or second finger, bears a white mark. This is held by some authorities to indicate a voyage to be undertaken by the subject. If a nail shows black marks, it is an indication of sorrow and trouble. On the thumb nail the black mark shows a faulty, passionate nature. On the nail of the finger of Mercury, the little finger, a white spot means a successful business enterprise, and a black spot means the opposite—a reverse or disaster in business.

If there is a white, star-shaped mark on the nail, it is a sign of affection that is not reciprocated, except when the mark appears on the thumb nail, when it means the opposite, or required affection.

Nails of medium length and width, and of a bluish tint, show that the circulation of the blood is faulty, and there is a tendency toward extreme nervousness.

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If Cows Only Could.

"When they were laying the brick pavement in Greenfield," said Henry Frye, of that city, "some foreigners were working with the crew. We had some cows then, and these foreigners used to come to us for milk. One day two came over. They waited until we filled their order.

"Let me have some from the cow that gives buttermilk," said one."—Indianapolis News.