ALMOST AS GOOD AS LIFE INSURANCE.

—Rogers in New York Herald.

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The Spider And the Fly

By HELEN BELL

"Mildred, are you going to keep me dangling for ever? Why not put me out of my misery by telling me you won't marry me and have done with it?"

"I have no such idea," she replied.

"Why not?"

"Oh, it's very nice to have some one to be devoted to me, to bring me candy and violets and all that."

This was not the reason, at least the sole reason, why she kept him dangling. The main one was—to put it figuratively—he was a ripe pear hanging from a tree and there was another girl under the tree waiting for him to drop. He didn't know that she knew about this other girl, but he did know he wished to drop into the other girl's mouth. He was committed to the one he was talking to and trying to have her shake the tree while the other girl stood ready to catch him when he fell.

"I tell you what we'll do," he said. "I'm tired of this business. I can't sleep nights. Sometimes I think you are going to make me happy, and sometimes I think you aren't. If I knew you wouldn't have me I'd try to forget you. Let's stop this indecision and decide the matter by chance."

"How by chance?"

"Well, we might play a game of cards for it. Make it euchre. If I beat you the best three games in five you give me 'Yes' for an answer; if you beat me three out of five you say 'No.'"

"I don't care; get out the cards."

He was not only an expert at the game of euchre, but an expert at dealing the cards. He could stack them, too, without half trying. He threw the cards for the deal and won it. Dealing, he turned up a nine spot. She passed, and he turned it down. She made it spades and won two points. He heaved a sigh from down in his stomach. She dealt and turned a knave. He passed. She took it up and won another two points. He groaned. The deal being his, he turned a ten spot, took it up and lost the game.

"What did you take it up on that hand for?" she asked. "You had only two trumps, an ace and a queen, with nothing back."

He looked a trifle confused. "You were so near out," he explained, "that I thought I'd better plunge."

She said nothing, but knit her brows, then drew down the corners of her mouth.

The second game he won. He didn't intend to win it, but she sent him for the last box of candy he had sent her, and while he was out she stacked the cards, dealing him a hand with five trumps in it, including two bowers and an ace.

He feigned merriment, but she was not deceived.

Then he won a game, and she won a game, and it stood two games for each. Beginning the deciding game, he dealt and turned a queen.

"I don't see any use of your turning a queen from the bottom of the pack," she said, "when there was a jack on top."

To prove her words she turned the first card he had dealt her. It was the knave of clubs.

"How stupid of me," he said. "I thought to get an advantage and I got a backset. It's no use for me to cheat."

"It's no use unless you have a softy for an opponent. Deal the hand again."

He knew that she was watching him with the eye of a cat. There was no use trying to deal himself good hands or her poor ones. The luck was in his favor, or, rather, considering what he was trying to do, against him. It was impossible to lose. He was obliged to win.

"Oh, my darling!" he exclaimed. "How happy I am!" But there was no great warmth in his tone.

"Do you mean to hold me after cheating?"

"I cheat! I made a mess of that and lost by it, though I gained in the main. Still, if you feel that I have taken an unfair advantage of you"'—

"Oh, no. Everything is fair in war and in love." There was a deep meaning in her tone when she said this. He winced. He had started with that idea, but had come out at the little end of the horn.

"Suppose," he said musingly, "we play a single game double or quits?"

"What do you mean by that?"

"Either you marry me tonight or not at all."

She thought awhile, turning the proposition over in her mind, then said she believed she'd do it.

They played the game, but she caught him trying to get rid of a couple of bowers and insisted on his playing his original hand. By this time she had learned to turn a low card in dealing from the bottom of the pack. These two matters, taken together, gave him the game.

She considered not that she had beaten him, but her rival. She led him to the slaughter at once.

They lived a cat and dog life for a couple of years, when they secured a divorce, he paying her a fine alimony. Then he married the girl who had waited for him to drop. It was rather a roundabout way of securing happiness, but in the end all were benefited. Had the fly extricated itself from the spider's web one of the three would have been at a disadvantage. As it was it was an equitable transaction.

For Sale—Team of work horses, weight about 3,000, ages 6 and 7. An inside price on this team if taken at once. Also one mare, weight 1,300; one yearling Bruce-Wilkes colt. For further particulars call at Lyons' garage, or phone Farmers 263. J. C. WALLING

How about unpaid subscriptions.

Making Her Trunk Safe.

"No safety deposit vault red tape for me!" declared the woman who cannot help being the wife of a very rich man. "I keep my jewels in a shabby old trunk in my own room. There isn't even a lock on it. I had to force it off one time when I'd mislaid the key."

"Evidently you don't encourage enterprise in burglars," observed one of her hearers. "All a man would have to do would be to raise the lid. You might at least make him a little trouble."

"He'd have trouble enough," said the woman, mysteriously. "Our coachman's brother is an old sailor—a perfect artist in knots—and he showed me how to bind up the trunk in the most complicated way, and no burglar could possibly untie it. He wouldn't know the combination."

The only man in the group grinned.

"Of course," he murmured reflectively, "no mere second story man would ever dream of cutting those knots."—Youth's Companion.

Saved.

A lazy negro who let his wife take in washing without demur had a dream one night and a policy dream at that. He borrowed money from her to play the combination, and before he left home he stated his conviction.

"Mandy," he said, "Ah's goin' uptown to play dis combine, what am sho' to come out. When you see me comin' home in a hack you break up yo' wash tubs."

The "combine" didn't come out, and Sam, in great dejection, acquired a lot of gin. Then he was messed up a bit by a dray, and some other negroes hired a hack to take him home. Sam was nearly out and was breathing heavily when the hack turned a familiar corner, and his wife was standing in the door. With his last ounce of energy he stuck his head out of the window and yelled:

"Mandy, spare dem tubs!"—Chicago Post.

Looming Mirages.

In what are called "looming mirages" distant objects show an apparent extravagant increase in height without alteration of breadth. Distant pinnacles of ice are thus magnified into immense towers or tall, jagged mountains, and a ship thus reflected from far out at sea may appear to be twelve or fifteen times as tall as it is long. Rocks and trees are also shown in abnormal shapes and positions, while houses, animal and human beings appear in like exaggerated shapes. Before the sandy plains of our southwestern states and territories were converted into verdant fields by the ingenuity and tireless energy of man mirages were very common in those regions, the Indians regarding the phenomenon as being the work of evil spirits.

The Horse's Pedometers.

The whorls of hair on the coats of horses and other animals are natural pedometers, inasmuch as they register the locomotive activities of the animals on whose bodies they are found. The best examples and the greatest number of these hairy whorls and crests are found on the domestic horse. A notable instance is the graceful feathering that extends along the hollow of the flank, dividing the trunk of the animal from the hind quarters. There are also crests and whorls on the horse's chest and other parts of its body. A study of the action of the underlying muscles explains the origin of these peculiarities in the lay of the hair and furnishes the justification for calling them pedometers, although the analogy is, of course, merely superficial.—St. Louis Republic.

Pittsburgh in 1784.

When General Forbes captured Fort Duquesne in 1758 he renamed it Pittsburgh in honor of the great English inspirer of victory. Later it dropped the "h" and became Pittsburg, only finally to tack the "h" on officially and revert to the original spelling. In 1784 Arthur Lee described the place in language which seems strange to those who know "the Smoky City" of today: "Pittsburgh is inhabited almost entirely by Scots and Irish, who live in paltry log houses. There are in the town four attorneys, two doctors and not a priest of any persuasion, nor church or chapel, so that they are likely to be damned without the benefit of clergy. The place, I believe, will never be very considerable."

Cheaping.

In parts of Switzerland the baker's wife carries round the bread in a sort of hamper, and she has not a fixed, immutable charge, but chaffers for a price with the customers. The old English word for this process was "cheaping," which in many places in England has been corrupted into chipping. Chipping Norton, for instance, is really Cheaping Norton, or the place where goods were cheapened—that is, sold by chaffer.

Wise Exceptions.

"You really believe that a man should always be truthful to his wife?"

"Certainly I do, always."

"And do you always tell your wife the truth about her cooking?"

"Oh, well—er—there are exceptions, you know."—Houston Post.

A Fluent Talker.

Whangs—Is your wife a good conversationalist? Bangs—She would be but for one thing—she talks so fluently that she interrupts herself.

Cruel.

"Doesn't it annoy you to hear a woman talking slang?"

"Why mention slang especially?"—Exchange.