

A MOUNTAIN COURTSHIP

By M. QUAD

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The mountaineer and his wife had to go down the valley about a mile to see a sick neighbor, and I was left at the cabin with their daughter, a girl of eighteen. As soon as she had cleared off the supper table and while I sat on the doorstep smoking she put on a clean apron, arranged hair a bit and blushed very red as she said to me:

"Him's comin' to see me tonight—and him's very skeery and—and—"

"Do you mean that your young man is coming?" I asked.

"Reckon him is."

"And he's bashful?"

"Him can't skeerely abide dad and mam."

"I see. He'd be scared off if he found me sitting here. Well, I'll take a walk and be out of the way."

"No, no, no! You's perfectly proper. I'll go out and sit down on the log, and you stay right yere."

"Oh, that's it? Well, don't you mind me in the least."

The log was only thirty feet away, and she hadn't been sitting there over five minutes when "him" appeared. He had probably been in hiding somewhere near. All I could see was that he was a young man, very bashful and awkward. He sat down about ten feet away from her, and it was about five minutes before either spoke.

"Who's him?" queried Jim as he nodded his head in my direction.

"Stranger, gwine further up," she answered. "You hain't no call to be skeered of him nor nobody."

"Who's skeered?"

"Reckon you is."

"Shoo! Never was skeered in all my life. Linda, does your old dad like me?"

"Reckon he do."

"And your mam?"

"Reckon she do."

"And, Linda—"

He stopped there for a long, long time, and Linda coughed and giggled over his embarrassment. By and by she said:

"Dad says you come powerful nigh killin' a b'ar last week."

No reply.

"Mam says you took up them ten acres of land above Parker's."

No reply.

"Has you lost your tongue, Jim?" she asked after a long silence.

"Co'se not; I was thinkin'," he replied as he heaved a deep sigh.

"Reckon I know what 'twas. Te-he-he!"

"Reckon you don't."

"Co'se I do. Dad likes you, mam likes you, and I"—

That log suddenly contracted again and brought them close together, and Jim's arm stole around Linda's waist as he finished the sentence for her with:

"And we's gwine to be jined in the fall and live on them acres! Linda, if him wasn't back thar in that doah I'd shorely hug you, I would."

I got out of "that doah" and took a long walk, and if Jim didn't take advantage of the occasion Linda's looks belied her when I returned.

The girl gave me good night and passed to her room, and a little later the old folks arrived back.

"Stranger, was thar a feller yere a-sparkin' Linda?" whispered the father as they sat down beside me.

"Of co'se there was—of co'se," said the wife.

"There was a young man here," I replied.

"Did Linda call him Jim?"

"She did."

"Of co'se she did—of co'se," added the wife.

"Did they sot together?"

"Yes, on the log."

"Would you say, stranger—would you say that thar was luv thar?" asked the husband.

"Why, I sat there smoking and looking into the laurels, and I neither heard nor saw much. By and by I got up and walked away."

"Of co'se he did—of co'se," said the wife.

"Yes, he un would git up and walk away," sighed the husband.

"Would you like Jim for a son-in-law?" I asked after a bit.

"Stranger," replied the man as he laid aside his pipe so as to have both hands free to gesture with, "that yere young man has killed a b'ar with a knife."

"And a whoppin' big b'ar at that," added the wife.

"He has shot three wildcats, suh."

"Shot three and skeered off a fourth."

"And he has swum the Cumberland river, suh."

"And it was in flood too."

"And he has killed mo' coons and foxes and possums in the last two y'ars, suh, than any two men in the state."

"Of co'se he has—of co'se."

"And he made the elephant run when the last circus cum along, suh."

"And it was a whopper of an elephant, too—for suah it was."

"And, suh," continued the husband as he stood on his feet, "that yere Jim can outoller, outrun, outwaddle, outfight and outlift any critter of his age fur fifty miles around."

"Of co'se he kin—of co'se," added the wife as she also stood up.

"And, suh, in a y'ar or two mo' we ar' gwine to send him to the legislature, and he's gwine to swell around these mountains with a plug hat and a cane. All this, suh, and you axes me if I'd take him for a son-in-law!"

"Of co'se we would—of co'se," said the wife.

Tainted Money.

Eugene was not accustomed to receiving sums of money coins of a larger denomination than the nickel, and pennies were more familiar. A wealthy relative who was visiting the family and wished to talk over subjects that were not for young ears gave him a quarter and bade him go downtown and spend it. His eyes shone. In the three and a half years of his life he had never had so much money. Then craft entered into his soul. "If I take the money do I have to stay out a long time?" he inquired. On being told that this was expected of him he sadly but firmly returned the money and kept his freedom of action.—New York Herald.

Bright Youngster.

"I've been a good boy today, haven't I, mamma?" asked the pride of the household.

"Yes, Richard. You've been a very good boy indeed."

"Aren't you going to call papa up on the phone and tell him about it?"

"Why, no; I haven't thought of it," replied his mother. "Don't you think it will be time enough to tell him when he comes home?"

"Well," said the youngster, "he might want to buy me some candy or something for being good, and I thought we might save him the trouble of going out for it after he gets in the house."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

A Difference.

Linton—Didn't Glocker's marriage come off? Clinton—No; it was declared off.—Chicago News.

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