

Bits of Byplay

By Luke McLuke

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Be Keerful!
The heat may rile,
The sun may scorch,
But wait a while,
Don't take 'em off.

The Wise Fool.
"Fortune is fickle," sighed the sage.
"But you can always depend on misfortune being on the job," added the fool.

Goof!
There was an old fellow named Hughes,
Who used to drink plenty of bugles.
Said he, "I like drink,
It helps me to think,
But some men are just common stuggles."

The Byplay Minstrels.
"Mister Interlocutor, can you tell me the difference between a watchmaker and a jailer?"
"No, Mr. Bones; I cannot. Will you explain the difference?"
"One sells watches and the other watches cells."

As soon as those who were rendered unconscious have responded to pulmonary treatment Mr. Ghrony Ghunt will render that beautiful ballad "I Didn't Raise My Girl to Be a Chicken."

You Know Them.
The world contains a lot of men
Who like to gab and spout;
They fall in with men and then
They have a falling out.

The Stork Rubs It In.
Born Monday night to Steve Manley and wife near Reynoldsville a pair of red headed girls. A similar thing happened in Mr. Manley's family once before, and while Mr. Manley is not on the best of terms with the stork, when we saw him he seemed to be standing the ordeal like a hero.—Exchange.

Bethel!
"With education that is free
We're best," said Mr. Gores,
"For we'd fight mighty tough if we
Could not read baseball scores."

The Delicious Society Editor.
With the Open sisters Monday evening was a gathering in of friends and around the bridge tables a gleaming of pleasure for the none and days to be. Half or more of this evanescent element is in the retrospection.—From an Exchange.

Another Wallop From Foster's Crossing.

Dear Luke:
We used to think that you had something new on tap.
Until we read where you had said we were not on the map;
We want to tell you that's stale stuff.
We heard all that before.
But it was at Foster's Crossing that Noah first saw shore.
—B. M. Foster's Crossing, O.

Names Is Names.
B. Z. Bee lives at Goose Creek, W. Va.

Things to Worry About.
The naval observatory officials have just discovered a sun spot that is 100,000 miles long.

Our Daily Special.
Always try to look as if you were having your photograph taken.

Luke McLuke Says:
When a pretty girl is talking about a homely girl she is always generous enough to admit that the homely girl has a beautiful disposition.

If girls used as much care in choosing husbands as they do in choosing hats there would be about one marriage a month.

A lot of men who last fall made up their minds to buy a new automobile this spring have already compromised on a new lawn mower.

The man who looks as though he needed one of the pompadour combs that the little girls used to wear has no business grinning when she sees a girl who looks as though she needed a safety razor.

There are lots of men in this country who do not know how to spell but who have to use up \$10 worth of stamps a day on business correspondence.

After a girl gets on the shady side of twenty-five she would appreciate a birthday absent more than a birthday present.

The fellow who is buying all the drinks in an office. He can announce that black is white and everybody will agree with him. But if he comes in broke later on and tries to cadge a drink and states that black is black every man in the place will call him a liar.

There are all sorts of people in the world, including the man who can spout the best story on earth when he tries to tell it.

People are a lot like birds. The robin, who is a help and who is very popular, always leaves us and goes south very early in the fall. And the sparrow, who is very unpopular, and who is a no account nuisance, is afraid we would miss him, so he sticks around all winter.

When a second installment of twins arrives at a man's home you will have a hard time telling him that two pair isn't a full house.

A man will let his wife carry the suit key and hand him out a dime for coffee every morning. But he will want to fight if you say that he is hen-pecked.

What Belfry Means.
The term "belfry" has no etymological connection with "bell," as one would naturally suppose. It is the old French "berfray" from the middle high German "berfric" and means a place of safety, "bergen," to conceal, and "frid," peace, protection. The word signified originally a kind of tower, and the association with bells, so convenient in English, came later.

TOO GOOD TO KEEP

A Story of Intentions Turned Awry.

By EUNICE BLAKE

Edgar Beverly, from the time he was born, was all boy. There was absolutely nothing feminine about him. When he was three years old a doting aunt presented him with a doll. His father was not in sympathy with this gift, averring that dolls were exclusively for girls. But the aunt insisted that boys, as well as girls, in their infancy played with dolls. So a doll was provided, with a china head, waxen locks and a pair of beautiful blue eyes. Edgar accepted it, but showed a lack of intelligence as to what it was for. Ten minutes after it had been given him he took it by the ankles and brought the head down on a stone step, scattering fragments of the china head over the garden walk.

When Edgar was ten years old he lost his mother and was turned over to a bachelor uncle of thirty. Robert Cooleidge, the uncle, had been a wild fellow and was just beginning to realize the chances he had taken and the time he had wasted in sowing his wild oats. He had barely escaped losing at the gaming table a fortune he had inherited and had just left time put a check on himself in too close association with the bottle. He had madly loved three different women, any one of whom, if he had married her, would have wrecked his life.

When Robert Cooleidge assumed the care of his little nephew he had become fully aware of his own imperfections and realized by what a narrow margin on many occasions he had escaped calamity. His experiences with the women he had loved, or thought he loved, had caused him to believe that he was a very poor judge between good and bad women. Nevertheless he considered matrimony, the wife being a good woman, as a sheet anchor for men. Having convinced himself of his own inability to discover the good or the bad in a woman, and being horrified at the mistakes he had made, he eschewed matrimony for himself, while he advocated it for others.

For these reasons he determined that Edgar Beverly should be brought up very carefully, that some woman, who knew her own sex perfectly, should select a wife for the boy and that he should marry the girl selected, whether he loved her or not, when he came to manhood. He would bring the boy up to consider him more as a companion than an uncle, and in this way would be the better able to shield him from the dangers through which he himself had passed.

When Edgar came to be eighteen years old he displayed the same proclivities his uncle had displayed in his youth. He was not bad, but reckless. He was very generous, and when his own interests came in collision with those of any one weaker than himself he would invariably give way. He did not conceal what he was doing from his uncle, and Cooleidge had every advantage in guiding him, having from the first invited his confidence.

But it is one thing to have an advantage and another to attain success. Edgar benefited by the advice of his uncle so far as to escape certain pitfalls, but the trend of his disposition could not be turned. He had inherited the same wild oats fever as his uncle and it must run its course.

For several years the uncle was in a constant state of anxiety with regard to his nephew, for such was the relationship between them that Cooleidge knew exactly what Beverly was doing. Finally he determined to make an effort to put in practice the expedient he had intended from the time when Edgar had come to him as a little boy. He would try to marry him to some good girl.

But, since he had failed to manage his own affairs in this respect, he did not see how he would have better success in managing those of his nephew. He determined to consult the wife of a friend of his, a Mrs. Jernegan. The lady heard his story and promised to think the matter over. Matchmaking, she said, was a risky and thankless task. In the case of a young man inclined to be wild it was very difficult. However, she would try to think of some young woman of good sense, good character and amiable disposition for the purpose.

Mrs. Jernegan was herself a woman possessing what is commonly called horse sense. She did not especially relish advising any girl to marry a man for the purpose of reforming him. He might make an excellent husband after being reformed, but suppose the reformation never took place? Mr. Cooleidge had passed safely through the danger period of a man's life and had arrived at an age wherein he saw those dangers in their true light. The fascination of danger inherent in a manly man had passed and left him a splendid fellow. But that was no reason why his nephew could run the same course and escape ruin.

These were some of the thoughts that passed through Mrs. Jernegan's mind before she acted upon Mr. Cooleidge's request. Then when she had the matter all thought out she sent for a young lady friend of hers, Miss Laura Dudley, and the two had a long conversation on the subject of snatching young Edgar Beverly as a brand from the burning.

The next day Mr. Cooleidge received an invitation to call on Mrs. Jernegan and upon doing so was informed that she had fixed upon a young lady who would be a fit person to reform his nephew. The only question was, would she consent to make the effort? She was three or four years older than Edgar, but Mrs. Jernegan recognized the fact that very young men are more easily won by women older than themselves than by immature girls. She proposed that the young woman upon whom she had decided meet the uncle

and the nephew, and after the meeting, if she consented to make the desired attempt, that Mr. Cooleidge be informed of the fact and give her every opportunity to accomplish her mission.

The result of these interviews was that Mr. Cooleidge, Mr. Beverly and Miss Dudley met at Mrs. Jernegan's at dinner. Cooleidge kept a close eye on Miss Dudley to observe whether or not she seemed pleased with his nephew. He saw no evidence that she was pleased or displeased with him. As for Edgar, there was evidence that he was not averse to Miss Dudley. The dinner passed very pleasantly, and since Miss Dudley was to go home alone in Mrs. Jernegan's runabout, Edgar Beverly accompanied her.

A few days later Mr. Cooleidge was informed that Miss Dudley had acceded to his request, and Mrs. Jernegan suggested that he call upon the young lady for the purpose of talking the matter over. He lost no time in making the call and found Miss Dudley in a very complaisant frame of mind. "I was much pleased with your nephew, Mr. Cooleidge," she said, "and since our mutual friend, Mrs. Jernegan, has apprised me of your intentions, we may as well begin where she left off. If I am to win your nephew I can only do it by being thrown a good deal in his company. This, of course, cannot be without management. Now, I propose that we make up a little party for the balance of the summer to go to the mountains. That there may be two men and two women I propose to invite a lady friend of mine—for chaperon if you like—and I feel great confidence that your plan of marrying your nephew will succeed before the end of the summer."

Mr. Cooleidge fell in with the plan, and in due time a party of four was domiciled in a mountain hotel. Mr. Cooleidge was somewhat surprised to find the lady who was added to the party to be several years younger than Miss Dudley, but the latter explained that she was the only one of her friends whom she could get to make up the party. She was scarcely out of her teens and a very attractive young woman. She was introduced as Kate Millard, and the name Kate is often synonymous with the word fascinating.

The quartet passed a very enjoyable month together. But from the first the plan to marry Beverly to Miss Dudley went awry, because he preferred Kate Millard. Cooleidge was much put out at the turn the affair had taken, for he approved very highly of Miss Dudley, but considered her friend of very light caliber. Instead of his nephew being attentive to Miss Dudley he was devoted to her friend. This left Cooleidge and Miss Dudley in constant companionship. Cooleidge after awhile instead of being troubled at this turn of his intentions was so delighted with Miss Dudley's companionship that when one day his nephew swung to her from his friend he showed his spleen perceptibly.

Not only did Beverly notice his uncle's being ruffled by his attentions to Miss Dudley, but Kate was immensely delighted with it. "The two younger persons were evidently out for a frolic, and if they could get any fun at the older man's expense they were quite inclined to do so. Beverly would for a time leave Miss Dudley quite free to receive the attentions of Mr. Cooleidge, then he would veer about and appropriate her to himself. To make matters worse, Miss Dudley made no objection to being monopolized by the young scapgrace, and when he was devoted to her his uncle was left out in the cold.

And so the game went on. Mr. Cooleidge when his nephew was devoting himself to Miss Dudley declared that the plan was working out admirably, but he felt like throwing the young rascal over a precipice. Then when Beverly swung back to Kate Millard and left the field to him he voted the boy a fool, but in his heart was delighted. When the autumn came round and the party returned to the city Mr. Cooleidge one day received a message from Mrs. Jernegan asking why he had not called upon her. He at once put in an appearance, and the following dialogue ensued:

"How did the plan for marrying your nephew work?" asked the lady.
"It didn't work at all. Miss Dudley kept a friend of hers, a chit, to be of our party in the mountains, and the chit got away with Edgar."
"Indeed! said the lady. "That was very hard on Laura, wasn't it? Who was the friend that Laura invited to complete your party?"
"A Miss Kate Millard."
"You mean Mrs. Kate Millard?"
"What?"
"Kate Millard is a widow."
Mr. Cooleidge was thunderstruck.
"You wished to marry off your nephew, and I wished to give you a wife. I got up this party for a summer outing myself. It was all arranged beforehand that Kate Millard should win your nephew and Laura Dudley should win you. The plan has been successful in both its parts. Edgar Beverly is engaged to Kate Millard, and you are engaged to Laura Dudley."

"Well, I'll be jingled!" exclaimed Mr. Cooleidge. "How did you learn that?"
"From both Laura and Kate. It was too good to keep."

The Hint Gentle.
She—I wonder what makes the baby so wakeful? He—Hereditry. That's what comes of you sitting up at night waiting for me to get home.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Kindness has converted more sinners than zeal, eloquence or learning.—F. W. Faber.

The People of China.
There are about thirty different peoples, or tribes, which go to make up the population of China. Practically nine-tenths of the population is to be found in China proper, the great majority being of the Chinese race. With the exception of a few Tartars and a few people of the hill tribes, all of the Chinese population belongs, physically, to various branches of the great Mongol-Tartar family. The government of the republic recognized five principal races when designing the new flag, which replaces the yellow dragon of the old national emblem with five stripes—crimson, yellow, white, blue and black—symbolical of the five races comprised in the Chinese people: Mongol, Chinese, Manchu, Mohammedan and Tibetan.

MILLY'S PRIZE

Despite the Trick of a Rival, She Proved a Winner

By CLARISSA MACKIE

Milly Fenwick danced triumphantly around the kitchen table, whereon reposed the four loaves of bread which she had baked for the Little River fair. Big loaves they were, browned delicately without, snowy white and sweet within—perfect loaves of perfect bread.

"You silly child," smiled Mrs. Fenwick as she bustled into the room and caught Milly in the midst of her gay dances.
"Mother, did you ever see such beautiful bread?" challenged Milly, stopping breathlessly to implant a kiss on her mother's soft cheek.

"Never but once before," said Mrs. Fenwick, with a twinkle in her eyes.
"When was that?"
"Years ago when I baked my first loaves for the fair."

"Mother! And of course you took first prize?"
"Yes, I did—and I bought my wedding gown with the money."

Milly blushed furiously.
"Well, of course you were engaged to father, but I'm not engaged to any one, but I know what I shall buy with the first prize money if I get it."

"What shall you buy?" asked Mrs. Fenwick indulgently.

"Chickens. Yes, I truly am going to raise chickens and see if I can't make money enough to pay off that little scrap of a mortgage on the place."

"Dear child," sighed Mrs. Fenwick, "it would be the biggest blessing in the world if you could. It would be such a relief to your father. That little balance of \$200 has worried him for six years, and he cannot seem to get ahead so he can pay it off. It has been such a bad year, and he has had to hire so much help because of his illness."

"You can't say anything that I have not already thought of," protested Milly as she buttered the crusty loaves and tossed a white napkin over them. "I'm only afraid that Sadie Lowmes will carry off the prize. She certainly is a good cook."

"She can't make handsomer loaves than those," asserted Mrs. Fenwick proudly.

"Well, we will see. I'm going upstairs to get ready, mother, and then I'm going to take the bread over to the tent," said Milly. And she flew out of the room with a whisk of her pink and white skirts.

"It's too bad for Sadie to carry off first prize in everything," mused Mrs. Fenwick as she stepped briskly about her tasks. "Every year she's carried off prizes for baking and fancy-work, and I declare if she hasn't carried off the biggest matrimonial prize as well, for folks say she is engaged to Frank Barlow. I never could understand why it was that he stopped coming to see Milly all of a sudden. He seemed to think a lot of my girl, and I'm afraid she liked him too well."

When Milly Fenwick reached the big tent where the annual county fair was

perfect lot of bread. There's no calling, I must go," she ended hastily as Sadie's eyes shot sparks of fire.

Milly's pretty countenance went with the sickening wave of disgust that swept over her.

"I've a good mind not to exhibit my bread," exclaimed Sadie vindictively. She had another reason for being nettled—her own bread had come from the pans heavy and unwholesome looking, and her glance at Milly's loaves had revealed the unquestioned superiority of the latter's bread.

"I shall exhibit mine," she said evenly. "It is quite well known that I am not a contestant for anything save the Little River prize."

That was the meanest thing Milly Fenwick had ever said, and she regretted it instantly. Not only did the scowl of anger spread over Sadie's narrow face, but there was another listener. Frank Barlow was passing at the moment, and his gray eyes met Milly's with a puzzled expression in their cool depths.

Sadie called him to assist her at another table, and so Milly was quite alone when she arranged her beautiful loaves of bread on the table which had been arranged in the form of a snowy pyramid on which were placed canned fruits, jellies, jams, pickles, cakes and needlework of every description, for every woman and girl in Little River made it a point to enter something in the competition for domestic prizes.

Milly placed the card bearing her name in the proper place among her four handsome loaves and then went away to join her friends at the other end of the tent. It was a busy afternoon and evening, and it was not until closing time that Milly found time to go and take another look at her precious loaves.

To her delight the judges were grouped around her exhibit, and she overheard several flattering remarks.

"It's my bread, mother," she whispered, punching her mother's arm.

"I want to see it, dear," said Mrs. Fenwick as the judges moved away.

For a long time Milly Fenwick and her mother stood there and stared at the four big loaves of bread that bore the card of Sadie Lowmes. Milly Fenwick's name was on the three little soggy loaves piled near by.

"Milly, that's not Sadie's bread!" cried Mrs. Fenwick indignantly.

"I know it, mother. Please don't say anything now. Come away," whispered Milly nervously, and she drew her mother aside as Sadie Lowmes came to the table with her hand in Frank Barlow's arm.

"There, Mr. Barlow! What do you think of that for prize bread?" asked Sadie daintily. Her eyes shot an impatient glance at Milly's scornful face.

"I declare, Frank," she added in a low tone, "Milly Fenwick acts so mean and jealous about this bread of mine! Honestly it makes me feel quite uncomfortable."

Frank Barlow said nothing, but his eyes followed Milly's graceful form as she accompanied her mother from the tent. When he turned toward Miss Lowmes' animated face there was a stern look about his mouth that made the frivolous Sadie quite uneasy.

Frank Barlow was the most well-to-do young farmer in Little River, and married with him meant a life of comparative ease for his wife. The Barlows were the moneyed people of Little River, and Sadie Lowmes was ambitious.

"You haven't said that you admire my bread," chided Sadie.

"This is the finest bread I have ever seen," said Frank gravely.

"There! I am complimented!" cried Sadie. "Come! Take me home, Frank. I'm tired to death! There goes Milly Roberts. I suppose he's going home with Milly."

Frank winced, and he did not notice that Milly Roberts was accompanying Miss Susan Brown to her home and that Milly Fenwick drove soberly home with her parents.

The Fenwicks decided to say nothing about the change Sadie Lowmes had made in the cards, and Milly winced more than once at the sly laughter of her acquaintances when they examined the hard little loaves that bore her name.

But she did not speak to Sadie Lowmes. She passed that brazen young woman with contemptuous eyes, in which shimmered a resentment that would not be banished. The winning of the prize meant so much to Milly Fenwick, while to Sadie Lowmes it meant nothing save the good opinion of Frank Barlow, for she had carried off first prize in jellies and cake as well as bread this year.

On the last day of the fair the prizes were awarded. Everybody had made the rounds of the tents, and they knew that Sadie Lowmes had carried off first prize for the finest loaves.

Milly Fenwick was there, pale and silent. Her mother, indignant at the duplicity of Sadie Lowmes and, recognizing the futility of trying to prove that the cards had been changed, had stayed at home, but Milly, aware that her absence would be attributed to jealousy because she had not won a prize, was there.

"Milly Roberts said your loaves would make good anchors for his boat," gleamed Susan Brown in Milly's ear.

Milly smiled. A lump came into her throat as Frank Barlow, accompanied by Sadie Lowmes, came around and paused by the domestic table. Several of the judges were there, and one of them had just congratulated Sadie on taking the first prize for bread when a little old colored woman pushed her way through the crowd.

It was Aunt Hepsey Spencer, who worked for the Lowmeses.

"I jes' had ter come an' see whut our chile tooken de fust prize for dem little momeley nibbles of bread!" she cried excitedly. "I wanter know dese yere Little Ribber housekeepers kaint make bread dat'll beat dem pesky little nibbles!" Aunt Hepsey struck a defiant hand in the direction of the little loaves that bore Milly's card.

"You can't read, Aunt Hepsey," volunteered a bystander. "That card says 'Miss Milly Fenwick.' There's Sadie's bread."

"O'way, chile! Don't yo think I know Sadie Lowmes' bread when I taken it out de oven myself? I says to her she'd neber take no prize wid it—Lordy, but it am cheeky to show off such pore stuff!"

"Aunt Hepsey, go home at once!" cried Sadie angrily.

"Blubbish!" snorted Aunt Hepsey sharply.

The judges looked uneasily from one to another. "If there has been any mistake," hesitated Dr. Lamson.

Frank Barlow spoke in a low tone to the judges.

Those close by could hear and the words ran like fire through the tent.

"I happened to witness the changing of the cards," said Frank. "I was quite unseen at the time and I supposed it was a jest, but I find it was not. I believe these little loaves were baked by Mrs. Fenwick. Milly, are these not really your loaves?" he asked.

Milly nodded her head. Tears were very close to her eyes. Sadie Lowmes carried off the affair with a high hand and her friends said it was a good joke on Milly Fenwick, but Milly's friends were indignant, although the girl had not a word to say against the daring Sadie.

Frank Barlow went home with Milly that evening and he learned that Milly Roberts had been engaged to Susan Brown for a year and that Milly—well, Milly Fenwick carried off the first prize for bread and the first matrimonial prize.

As for Sadie Lowmes, she simply would not be consoling.

She always pointed to Frank Barlow and his wife and said: "There, girls, I made that match!"

What's the Use?
A hideous green caterpillar was crawling slowly and loathsome along a spitelwood twig. Writes the novelist of the Detroit Free Press.

Its eyes were pink and without lashes. It had a horrid fuzzy spine running from its yellow ears all the way to its termination.

Unhappily purple whiskers almost hid its face.

"Never mind," thought the caterpillar. "I know I am ugly and disagreeable now, but wait. Just wait. Soon I shall weave a cocoon about myself and take a nice long nap; and when I wake the cocoon will open and I shall emerge a dazzling, beautiful butterfly! I know the other insects look down on me now, but let them wait, that's all; let them wait!"

And in time, sure enough, the unhappily and unhappy caterpillar disappeared inside a smooth cocoon.

And then a bewhiskered bugologist grabbed the cocoon with a bowl of delight and plunged it in preserving alcohol.

CAPTURING A MODEL.
A Complexion That Delacroix Could Not Escape.

Delacroix, the painter, was walking one day in Paris with a friend of his when he fell into a brown study.

"What is up with you now?" said the friend.

"I can't get a certain shade of yellow," replied the artist.

"What sort of yellow?"
Just then a cab drove past.

"The very thing!" the painter gasped out. "Stop, stop!"

"I am engaged," the cabbie replied without stopping.

Delacroix started in pursuit and at a steep place in the Rue des Martyrs overtook the cab. Opening the door, he said in tones of entreaty to the passenger inside:

"Do please tell your driver to stop. I want your complexion for a painting on which I am at work. There is a color merchant close at hand. I shall not detain you above five minutes, and in acknowledgment of the service you render me I will present you with a sketch of my picture."

The bargain was struck. Delacroix gazed at his yellow, and a few months later the "fame" received a sketch of his "Assassination of the Archbishop of Liege."

Chinese-Beggar Chiefs.
At a Chinese wedding the "beggar chief" is always invited and brings a plate. He begs from all the guests, but in return keeps all other men-donors from the marriage feast. The beggar chief of a big Chinese city makes as much as \$15,000 a year, and out of this he pays the common or street beggars to keep away from social gatherings.

Wrongly Placed.
"See here," said the excited citizen to the editor of the local newspaper, "what did you mean by printing as you did this announcement of my candidacy for the office of dogcatcher?"

"What's the matter with the announcement?" rejoined the editor.

"You made it, didn't you?"
"Certainly I did, but you should have remembered that in private life I am a butcher and sausage maker and not run the notice under the head of 'Business Extensions.'"—Richmond Times-Dispatch.

The Result of a Caprice

By LOUISE B. CUMMINGS

"Auntie, why were you never married? I have heard that in your youth you were a great belle."

"My dear," replied the old lady, "why I was not married is a painful story to me. It has been constantly with me ever since I was nineteen years old, but I have never talked about it. There is a lesson in it for young girls like you, and on that account I will tell it to you."

Then the old lady told me the following story:

You know that I was born and raised in the south on one of those plantations that represented typical high life there before the war destroyed the institution which was its foundation. I came of age shortly before the struggle opened. I suppose it is true that I was a belle. Would that I had not been such, for the attention I received turned my head and caused what embittered my life.

Among my suitors were Alfred Beale and Edgar Turnley. Turnley was my favorite—indeed, I was very much in love with him—but I wished to be driven for and alternately encouraged him and his rival, Alfred Beale. One day I was sitting in the drawing room of the plantation house with Edgar. My back was well as his toward the door opening into the great hall, while my face was toward a large mirror resting on the mantel over the fireplace. I caught a glimpse of the reflection of Alfred Beale in the hall.

He saw both Edgar and me sitting together. He paused and looked at us, making no sound to indicate to us that he was there. Indeed, he was eavesdropping, but I thought little of that. I was wrapt in the idea of being an object of strife between two young men and was tempted to see what would happen between them should I purposely increase their antagonism.

I had been expecting a proposal from Edgar and now gave him every encouragement. He was placing an arm around my waist and his face was near mine when I gave a little shriek and drew away from him, assuming to be indignant. Beale stepped into the room and, glaring at Edgar, upbraided him. Edgar looked an appeal to me to exonerate him.

It is impossible to give reasons for the freaks that enter the heads of young persons, especially young girls, in the matter of coquetry. Instead of taking the blame of Edgar's act upon myself, I walked out of the room, leaving my admirers to settle the controversy in their own way. I had no sooner left them than it occurred to me that I had acted absurdly. If I had gone directly back and confessed the situation might have been saved. I was about to do so when I remembered that such an acknowledgment would bring down upon me the contempt of both men—that is, if it were believed, which I doubted.

While I was deliberating I heard both men go out of the house. I started to call them back, but hesitated, and before I had made up my mind what to do they were out of hearing.

I wondered what would come to pass between them. It did not occur to me that they would fight a duel. Dueling by this time had largely died out in the south, and I was too young to have heard much of an obsolete custom. What chiefly concerned me was that I had so deeply wronged the man I loved. I was not only suffering from consciousness of having done him an injustice, but was panic-stricken lest he should never forgive me.

The affair began in the afternoon, and from then until bedtime I was in a state of dread, not that anything serious might occur between the rivals, but that I had lost my lover. In the middle of the night my father came into my room and asked me for an explanation of what had happened, for he had heard of it. Instead of telling him the truth, I left him with the impression that Edgar had transcended his rights and Alfred had resented his act. I asked father what had come of it, and he replied that I would learn the result in the morning; then he left me.

This was the first intimation I had of anything serious between the two men. Suddenly it flashed upon me that they would fight. I trembled, I lay turning the matter over in my brain, which was like a boiling caldron. With the first light of dawn I arose, dressed myself, stole down the great staircase and out on to the veranda. Looking out from behind a vine, I saw Edgar and two other young men riding by the plantation. Going to the barn, I saddled my horse, mounted and followed them.

I cannot dwell on the rest. It is too painful. I was some time in finding where they had gone. When I reached there they had fought a duel with pistols, and Alfred Beale was lying on the ground, while a surgeon was bending over him. I hurried to him to see if he were dead and was assured that his wound would not be fatal. I turned to Edgar. He gave me a look that has haunted me ever since. I saw in it that I had lost him forever.