

THE FICTION CORNER

OLD SHOE

By JOHN H. HOSE

Terry was just an old shoe, and when the new assistant pastor came to town Marg found herself dreaming of this utterly different person in serious terms—that is, until Terry proved that old shoes were the most comfortable after all.

THE screen door slammed behind Terry, disturbing the quiet of Sunday afternoon up and down Fourth street. It wasn't the gentle slap with which screen doors are apt to close when released casually. There was a revolver-like bang of one wooden frame forcibly meeting another.

In quick succession followed the whirl of a starter and the clash of rapidly meshing gears.

"Well! He certainly left in a hurry," said Mamie as she removed her apron. "What in heaven's name did you do to him, Marg?"

"Oh, he's just an old sorehead!" replied Marg to her mother's question. "We were talking about something to do for this afternoon, and when I said I wasn't interested in staking through the woods to observe the beauties of Nature, he got huffy and went tearing out the door. That's all there was to it! What's more, I don't care if he never returns," she added as an after thought.

"But it's so unusual for Terry to act like that," sighed Mamie, as she eased her rather ample self into an unoccupied chair in the Langley living room. "Maybe the dinner didn't agree with him?" Mamie was always concerned with the reaction of others to the perfection of her culinary art.

"He sure ate plenty, if that's what you mean," muttered John Langley from behind his newspaper.

Marg sat on the arm of the davenport, staring vacantly up the street in the wake of the departing automobile. She and Terry Ulrich had been going together for three years, had known each other since high school days. Everyone expected them to be married some day, and until last month, Marg had more or less planned on it herself. But that was before the advent of Tom Prentiss.

"I shouldn't have been so sarcastic with Terry," thought Marg to herself as the family continued to discuss the somewhat abrupt departure of her intended, "but I wish he'd have an original idea just once. I'm so sick of his small town ways and hick notions." Her reverie was interrupted by the syrupy voice of her sister-in-law, Blanche.

"I think I know where the trouble lies," drawled Blanche in her easy flowing, but somewhat aggravating tone. "She's like all the other girls at church ever since that new assistant pastor came. All you ever hear them talk about is Tom Prentiss. Don't tell me you've fallen for him too, Marg?"

"Blanche, dear, you can be so tiresome at times," retorted Marg. "Since you folks are all so concerned with Terry's rude departure, I'll leave the discussion with you. I'm going to take a nap."

This wasn't the first time that Blanche had casually read Marg's thoughts and feelings. Marg threw herself across the bed, after turning down the coverlet and kicking her shoes off onto the floor. How did Blanche know about Tom Prentiss, though? Was it so very obvious?

The soft breeze of the Indian summer Sunday stirred the ruffled dimity curtains which hung at her window, and Marg thought about Tom Prentiss.

Rev. Brown had introduced Tom to the choir members about five minutes before rehearsal time eight or nine weeks earlier. He was the new assistant pastor, and would have charge of all youth work, as well as the musical program of the church. During that first hour of rehearsal, the members of the choir had felt that Tom was a bit overbearing and arrogant. But the sureness with which he guided them through the difficult passages of the anthem for the following Sunday made them realize that this poised young man was really a topnotch musician.

After they had gone into the church sanctuary to practice with the organ, they were more convinced than ever that the new assistant was a youthful genius.

Enthusiasm for Tom Prentiss was contagious. The following Sunday the congregation buzzed after services with talk of the new pastor. Several said the choir had never sung so well, and the young ladies of the congregation were aware of his good looks, too.

John Langley was an elder of the church, so a few Sundays after Prentiss' arrival, John invited him to the humble abode on North Fourth Street to delve into the wonders of Mamie Langley's cookery. And Marg had a chance to observe Tom at close range.

Throughout the meal, he sparkled with brilliant bits of conversation, and fairly captured Mamie's heart by storing away huge quantities of food. After dinner, he had insisted upon coming into the kitchen to help with the dishes. He expressed admiration for Mamie's art, and went with John into the

rose garden to express his admiration for John's horticulture.

"What a marvelous personality he has," she thought to herself now, two weeks later. What other man ever came into this house for Sunday dinner and wound up in the kitchen afterward drying dishes? He was so common and nice. Quite a contrast to Terry who, like her father, retreated to the living room to sleep and read after gorging himself to the saturation point. And the wonderful walk they had taken after dinner out along the reservoir path! Tom had told Marg all about himself.

"Terry was nice, too," she thought, "but well . . . Terry didn't say clever things like Tom. And he wasn't gallant. Terry did the right things at the right time, to be sure, but he lacked the dash and charm which the young cleric lent to everything he did. Terry was



"Why, sure, I'd love to," replied Marg happily. "Just wait until I get my hat."

more handsome, but Terry was definitely old shoe. Comfortable, congenial, good quality, but not exciting.

She sat up abruptly on the bed, pulling her knees up to her chin, and cocking her head to one side at her image in the mirror. She said aloud to herself,

"Marg, you're being simple about this man. He doesn't even know you're alive."

From the distant confines of the house, the soft notes of the door chime interrupted her rumination. She listened to see if she could identify the voice of the visitor. Hearing muffled manly tones, she decided to investigate. Perhaps Terry had returned.

Patting her soft curls into place, she dabbed a bit of powder on her nose before going down to the living room. She was quite surprised to see that the caller was the much thought-about Mr. Prentiss.

"Why, hello, Marg," he greeted her as she entered the room. "I was just out extending invitations to the choir members for a big steak fry we're planning for Friday evening at the lake. You'll be there, of course?"

"You know you can count on me, Tom," replied Marg, brightening noticeably in the presence of the young minister. "And you'd better add an extra pound of steak, because my appetite's pretty keen in the open air," she added gayly.

"If you're not doing anything important, Marg," continued Tom, "I'd like to have you go along with me to notify the other members."

"Why, sure, I'd love to," replied Marg happily. "Just wait until I get my hat."

A few minutes later, they left the house in a whirl of excitement. Mamie watched them placidly, and then she remarked to Blanche, "You know, Blanche, I wouldn't be at all surprised if you were right about Marg and that young preacher."

Marg and Tom chatted noisily as they drove from place to place, but if Tom was aware of Marg's feelings for him, he didn't reveal it.

Marg found Terry quite recovered from his anger when she saw him the following Friday at the steak fry. In fact, he greeted her as though nothing had really happened the previous Sunday.

"Hi, Marg," he shouted to her when she arrived with a group of friends. "Come on over and help me build this fire!"

Marg returned his greeting and sauntered to where Terry and several other young men were building the big fire.

"Where is everyone?" she asked. "Most of them are meeting at the church," said Terry. "We came out ahead to get the fire ready. Who brought you?"

"Jane Perkins brought four of the girls out from work," replied Marg. "We didn't even bother to go home; just met Jane at the square."

"Oh," said Terry. "Well, make yourself useful. You can cut those buns in that big box over there on the table."

"O. K.," replied Marg good-naturedly. While she was cutting the buns, Terry came over to patch things up.

"I'm sorry about last Sunday, Marg," he said. "I guess I was a bit rude."

"Oh, forget it, Terry," she said. "I wasn't very nice either." Their conversation was interrupted by the arrival of the others. The noisy group came tumbling out of the cars. Marg didn't notice the lovely, blonde girl with Tom Prentiss in the bustle of the arrival. But a few minutes later, she was brought face to face with the stranger when Tom introduced them.

"Here's Marg Langley, honey," he said to the young woman at his side. "She's the best alto in the choir. Marg, I want you to meet Louise, my fiancée."

Marg tried to cover her surprised confusion, and she wondered if Louise Collins hadn't seen how surprised she had been when Tom introduced her as his fiancée.

After the group had satiated its appetite on the steaks and other refreshment, they gathered along the shore of the lake to sing the old songs. Marg felt Terry slide into the grass beside her, and wondered if he knew. When they were singing "Love's Old Sweet Song," he gently slid his hand into her own, and a little thrill tingled through her as he whispered:

"Marg, do you know you're really lovely with the moonlight in your hair? How would you like those two bright stars up there for earrings?"

"Why, Terry," Marg answered quietly, "what a beautiful speech. What's got into you?"

"Gee, Marg . . ." he stammered. "Ever since I can remember I've dreamed about you and me . . . how lovely you are, but I'm not very good at making speeches . . . or making love, for that matter . . . but here tonight by the lake, the moonlight, the fire and everything . . . I guess any guy'd want to say something nice to the most wonderful girl in the world, wouldn't he?"

Marg returned the pressure of his hand as she brushed aside the guilty thought that she had doubted her love for Terry. Terry wasn't such a bad stick after all, and maybe she'd ask the Rev. Tom Prentiss to officiate at their wedding in the spring. That would be a nice touch at that!

The voices floated out over the waters of the lake, and Marg turned to look into Terry's earnest eyes.

"Terry," she whispered, "you're so nice—so comfortable!"



Money for the President

It is proposed that the salary of the President of the United States be raised to \$100,000 a year with another \$100,000 for an expense account. He now gets \$75,000, with \$40,000 for overhead.

What's wrong with the idea? It's the toughest job in the country. The hours are terrible, in fact they never end. The President can't even get complete rest and quiet on his Saturdays and Sundays.

In other big jobs there is still a chance for advancement. But where can a President go after he is through. His is lucky to get on a talent scout radio program.

What is \$100,000 a year today? Second and third grade movie stars get more than that for one picture. And they can use a double in the tough spots. Harry Truman can't do that. If the situation calls for him going over the precipice on horseback he has to do it in person. (He can't even send in the vice-president.)

The worst that can happen to a movie actor in his fights is that he will get hit by a chair or a table. If a President knew nothing worse than that could happen to him in his struggles he would sign for it and give a rebate.

Radio performers get more than \$100,000 a year. And somebody else writes their jokes. A President has to be funny on his own.

And a radio star can always cover up by dragging on a ventriloquist, a wooden dummy, four pretty bad female singers or a couple of other quaint characters.

There may be some big business men who worry along on \$100,000 a year, but they don't have to kiss strange babies, grin from locomotive cabs, join Indian tribes, go fishing when they don't want to or pose in loud shirts on tropical beaches.

Even golfers get \$100,000 a year and no putt they sink is tougher than the ones a President is supposed to knock into the cup every time up.

Even horses get more than that kind of dough. Citation, Styrmie and Armed earn more per year. Is that fair to a President?

And why should \$100,000 a year for expenses seem high these days. A President of the United States is entitled to eat meat, buy an auto and get a haircut and shave now and then like anybody else.

TRAGIC FIGURE
He killed himself for lack of dough,
Denouncing fate so fickle—
In contest on the radio
He never won a nickel.
PIER

The United States supreme court by a six to three vote has upheld the right of a state to ban barmaids unless they are the wives or daughters of the proprietor. Three justices feel that no woman anywhere can possibly mix a drink any worse than the male barboys are doing it these days.

The contention of Secretary of Labor Tobin, Bill Green and others is that in an amended Taft-Hartley law the employer should take the same oath he is not a Communist party member that the workers take. We now await a rule compelling the fire engine to carry a banner denoting that it is against fires. And perhaps a sworn statement by both the swimmer and the shark that they are not going to interfere with each other.

We can't help wondering if the world would not have been in much better shape if the Wright brothers had stuck to the bicycle business.

Another Hollywood notable has been booked as drunk and disorderly. He is pretty much of a movie idol, but we look for no discipline. A movie star has to do this sort of thing these days in order to be eligible for immediate casting in a new picture, especially for the children's trade.

Mrs. A. G. Moeller of Cheyenne, Wyoming, had the Squawk of the Year. She had the right answer to a \$24,000 phantom voice on "Sing It Again," when her telephone rang, but, just as she was about to give it, central cut her off. Mrs. Moeller is now satisfied that she not only has the phantom voice, but the phantom telephone company cooperation.

We know a dice thrower who puts it: "Baby needs a pair of schmoos!"

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GRUMMAN Widgeon, G44 Airframe Zero time since license and overhaul total time airframe 500 hours, completely reupholstered, L. E. A. radio, \$11,000. A&E Service, San Carlos Airport, Calif.

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Figuring Cost of Clothes
The number of outfits a girl owns has little to do with the usefulness of her wardrobe. The suitability of her clothes is more important than the number. And the clothes which cost the most are not the clothes made of the finest materials. They are the clothes which hang in the closet, unworn. The actual cost of any outfit is the cost in dollars and cents, divided by the number of times you wear the outfit.

Starting Car on Ice
When starting the car on an icy pavement, do not use first gear at all—but start in second or high—engaging the clutch slowly. Go easy on the accelerator pedal to avoid racing the engine. This allows the tires to grip the ice better because the wheels have less tendency to spin.

Shopping Tip
When purchasing a winter coat it is wise to remember the fact that the best linings are usually slippery so that the coat will go on and off easily; firm so the lining won't pull at the seams; color-fast; pre-shrunk; and of a material that won't wrinkle or stain.

Blackcock
Blackcock is another name for the Black Grouse, Black Game or Heath Hen, the female of which is the Grey Hen. It is found in the highlands of Scotland, north of England, in Ireland, and certain sections of Europe and Asia.

Save Ironing
Save extra work in ironing by folding straight pieces of the family wash as they come from the line and placing them flat and smooth in the basket to keep them as un-wrinkled as possible.

Smooth Ice Cream
Ice crystals in ice cream can be reduced by fast freezing, stirring or agitation, adding air by beating or by adding whipped egg whites, whipped cream or gelatin.

Sierra Nevada
Sierra Nevada range of eastern California holds about a dozen peaks rising above 14,000 feet.

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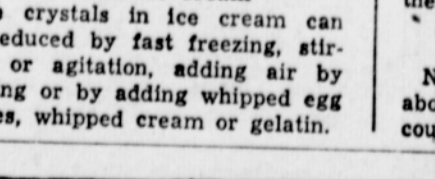
Over-a-Million Magazines
Number of magazines in the United States with a circulation over a million totals 48.

Hat Size
The size marked in a man's hat means that that is the diameter of the hat.

Canadian Pulpwood
Newsprint capacity of Canada is about four times that of any other country.

SQUIRE SQUARE

TELEVISION NOT ONLY BRINGS THE WORLD INTO YOUR FRONT ROOM, IT ALSO BRINGS IN ALL THE NEIGHBORS.

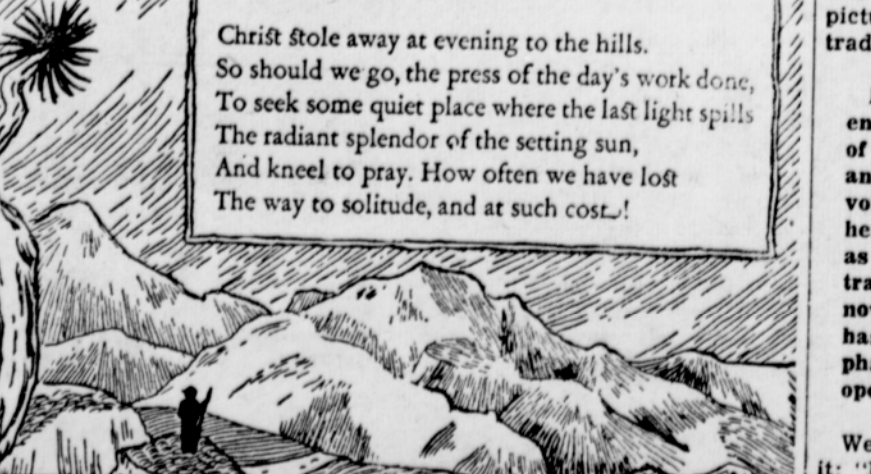


Into A Mountain Apart

Grace Noll Crowell

WHENEVER the Master could, He stole away
From the great throngs to seek some quiet place
Where He could be alone, where He could pray,
Where God could come to meet Him face to face.
Strange strength is ever born of solitude;
The heart today grows weary of its care
And over-burdened . . . God, it would be good
To seek a mountain side and find Thee there.

Christ stole away at evening to the hills,
So should we go, the press of the day's work done,
To seek some quiet place where the last light spills
The radiant splendor of the setting sun,
And kneel to pray. How often we have lost
The way to solitude, and at such cost!



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Softwoods are a botanical group of trees that have needle or scale-like leaves and are evergreen for the most part. The term has no reference to the actual hardness of the wood.

New Tomato Variety
Southland, a new tomato variety which is resistant to collar rot and nearly immune to fusarium wilt, has been developed by the U. S. department of agriculture.

Sierra Nevada
Sierra Nevada range of eastern California holds about a dozen peaks rising above 14,000 feet.

Best for Weeds
2-4-D is still the outstanding weed killer among a host of chemicals coming from the laboratories.

Over-a-Million Magazines
Number of magazines in the United States with a circulation over a million totals 48.

Hat Size
The size marked in a man's hat means that that is the diameter of the hat.

Canadian Pulpwood
Newsprint capacity of Canada is about four times that of any other country.