

His Lesson In Love

How He Found Out That
He Had Learned It.

By LULU JOHNSON

Had they only known it the two of them were ripe to fall into love's basket. For months Billy Gillen had watched the shapely brown head bent over the typewriter desk without realizing that his appreciation of brown hair with glints of gold was merely an indication of a deeper feeling.

For as many moons Ida Pawling had assured herself that without the kindly aid of "that nice Mr. Gillen" office life would be impossible, and she had not recognized in this feeling anything but an appreciation of his courtesy.

Even the fact that Billy took to going to church—her church—regularly, sitting where he could catch the same glimpse of brown hair that was his to enjoy in the office, did not open his eyes, and this story might have ended as it had begun—in polite nothings—had it not been for those letters.

There were two of them, and the office boy, with an appreciation of the fitness of things, propped them up on the desks of their recipients. Here they were being admired by the early birds of the office staff when Billy came in with his brisk "Good morning."

His smile only broadened when he saw upon his desk the red envelope with the huge black legend:

Are you going to be married?
Own your own home.

"Too bad that some one wasted a two-cent stamp to give me that advice," he cried. "I wonder what put them up to it."

"Knowledge of coming events," suggested the head bookkeeper, and the rest laughed, for they were not blind, if Billy was. "There is method in what he is doing," he added as he nodded in the direction of Miss Pawling's desk.

Billy caught a glimpse of a red envelope on the girl's blotter and sprang for it, but the bookkeeper intercepted him.

"It's against the law to interfere with the United States mail," he reminded. "You can't have a letter addressed to Miss Pawling."

"It's not a letter! It's an outrage," shouted Billy as he struggled to reach the desk. Before he could free himself Ida entered, and, with a curious glance at the little knot of struggling men, she moved quietly to her desk.

She had seen the gaudy envelope in Billy's hand, and when she found one like it on her desk she guessed the cause of the confusion. The men had stopped wrestling with Billy, and now the glances of the entire office were upon her.

With a woman's sixth sense she could feel their interest, and with slow movement she reached for the glaring envelope, glanced at the bold, black type, tore it across without opening it and raised the lid of her desk.

As the flaming fragments fell into the basket the spell was broken. The clerks moved to their desks and resumed their work.

The incident was forgotten by all save Billy, who determined to locate the man who had sent the letters or planned the rude jest and to give him the thrashing of his life. For himself he did not mind, but it was both unmanly and unjust to subject the girl to such an indignity.

All day long he brooded over the matter, and when the office was as far from a solution of the problem as ever, so he determined to ask Ida's assistance.

He lingered for a moment after she left, that the others might not suspect his plan; then he slipped out, and, by taking a short cut through the alley, he managed to emerge on the next street, breathless, but successful, for Ida had just turned the corner half a block beyond.

She was startled to find him waiting for her.

"Why, you were in the office when I left!" she cried wonderingly. "Have you some magic carpet that

transports you?"

Billy glanced down at his rather neat patent leathers.

"I guess you could not exactly call these a carpet," he suggested, with a laugh. "I cut through the alley and got here first. I purposely let you get out ahead of me, so that the others would not talk. I want to know if you have any idea as to who sent those letters to us?"

"I did not notice the name of the company," she said, with a steady voice. "But you know that the

elevator men and the janitor are paid for the names of tenants in all buildings."

"That isn't it," he said determinedly. "We were the only two in the entire office building to receive them. I asked the postman when I went to lunch. Some one sent them to us to start trouble. It must have been some one in the office, because they are the only ones who know that—that—I like you very much."

"Don't you like the other girls too?" Ida's tones were cool and level, though her heart beat uncomfortably fast. "I think that Miss Bender is a dear, and one can't help liking Mrs. Crouch."

"It's not just that sort of like," explained Billy. "I think that it must have been Travers who sent them. From where he sits he can see me looking at you, and I guess he suspects."

"Suspects?" echoed Ida.

"Well, I can't keep the love out of my eyes when I sit there," went on Billy lamely. "I didn't know it was love—I didn't until this morning, that is. I guess it must have been love all along, though, for ever since you came into the office I've had trouble with my books, and now I know it was because I could not look at you. Then I'd put down a wrong figure and have to stay after hours to strike a balance."

"I'm sorry that I have such an effect," began Ida, but Billy signaled for silence.

"Now that I know where I stand I want to tell you," he went on impetuously. "I do want to own a home, and I want you to be its mistress. Won't you, Ida?" he asked softly as he took her hand in his.

"I think it is—yes, Billy," she whispered as she turned a happy face to his eager eyes. "I guess that circular opened my eyes too."

"And to think that we tore up the advertisement. We ought to let that chap sell us a home. He deserves it for bringing us together. When I earn a home we'll be married, dear."

"Doesn't it take an awfully long time to earn a home?" she asked in sweet confusion, and Billy was enraptured.

Billy sought the minister a couple of weeks later to arrange for the quiet wedding, and when the details had been settled the kindly old man laid a detaining hand on Billy's shoulder.

"It is well to be provident, my lad," he said impressively. "You should save your money and with it buy a home. There is a company which gives the church a commission on all sales through us. You must have had their letter. I gave them your address. In case you have lost it—"

He crossed to his desk and drew from it a red envelope. Even across the room Billy recognized it.

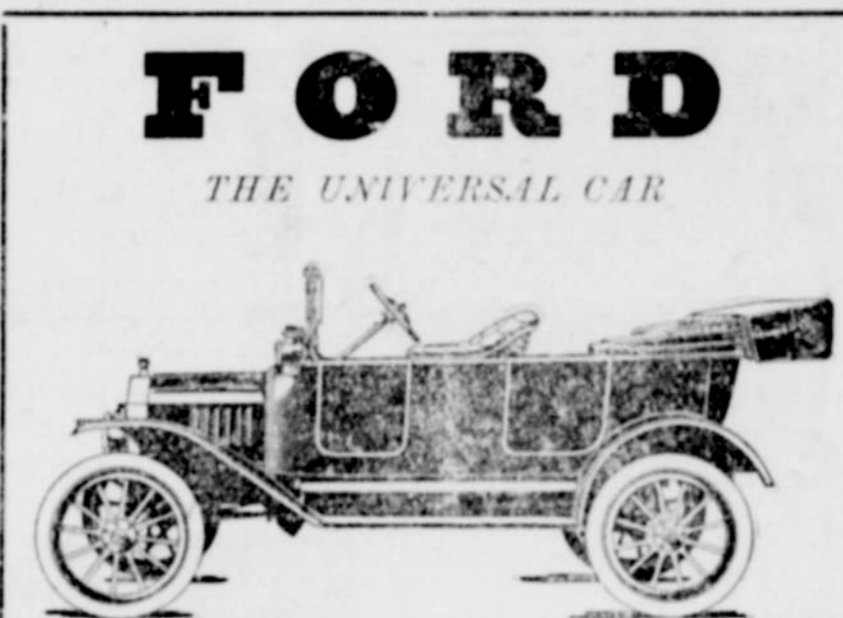
"It'll be hanged," he said in mild surprise. "I didn't dream that even the minister got wise before I did. I was the last one to get next to my own heart." And he made a mental note to give a double fee to this man who had read him aright.

When Death Comes to Venice. When any one dies in Venice there is posted up on his house and upon the neighboring houses, by way of information, a printed placard, giving the name, the age, the birthplace, the cause of death and a certificate that the dead received the sacraments, that he died like a good Christian, and asking the faithful to pray for him.—Theophile Gautier, "Travels In Italy."

Spiteful. "Yes," said the engaged girl. "Dick is very methodical. He gives me one kiss when he comes and two when he goes away."

"That's always been his way," returned her dearest friend. "I've heard lots of girls comment on it."

Thus it happens that they cease to speak to each other.



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MacMahon's Epigram.

When Marshal MacMahon in the Crimean campaign took the Malakoff by storm and wrote his celebrated dispatch, "J'y suis; j'y reste" ("Here I am; here I stay"), these words made him famous all over the world. Yet his friends said that the worthy soldier had written them in the most matter of fact manner, with no thought of phrase making. The most surprised person over the success of this epigram was MacMahon himself.

"Flowers of Yeddo."

Japan has, owing to its wooden houses, many fires, but it is odd that it should be proud of them.

But, according to Mr. Inouye, "in old Yeddo fires were known as the 'flowers of Yeddo,' being as much among the great sights of the city as the cherry blossoms on the southeast bank of the river Sumida, the morning glories of Iriya or the chrysanthemums of Dangozaka."

Removing Match Scratches.

Marks made by scratching matches can be removed by rubbing with lemon, then washing with a clean rag dipped in water. This, of course, applies only to surfaces that will stand washing—painted woodwork, for example—and not to wall paper.

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