

# IT WAS A DEAD HEAT

By ALFRED L. HUTCHINSON

(© by Short Story Pub. Co.)

MISS LILLIAN TOMPKINS was in a most embarrassing position. Many a fair lassie has two strings to her bow, but it is rarely that a maiden has two beaux of equal importance to her heart strings. That was what troubled Miss Tompkins.

Tom and Jerry, as her rival lovers were known, were equally acceptable to her, but reason as she would, she found herself unable to make a choice.

Stranger still, the rivals remained the best of friends.

I was left to Miss Lillian herself to suggest a way out of the three-cornered dilemma. It proved a most perplexing problem for her to solve, but she gave each an equal chance.

"On the first day of June I shall be at my uncle's farm in Idyl Wyld, which, as you both know, is about one hundred and twenty miles distant. You shall each start from my home here at precisely ten o'clock on the morning of that day. The one who reaches me first prepared to have the marriage ceremony performed shall be my choice."

Such was the decree of Miss Lillian, and the two lovers agreed to respect it.

A few minutes before ten o'clock on the eventful day the rivals met in front of the home of Miss Tompkins. Like two gladiators entering the arena they shook hands and then, at the stroke of the town clock, each mounted his bicycle and cut loose for the courthouse. It had been stipulated in Lillian's decree that a marriage license should not be applied for until after the race had begun, and as each arrived at the courthouse the same moment they drew cuts to see which should be served first. Luck was with Jerry, who lost no time in making known his mission.

"I want a marriage license, Mr. Clerk, please."

The blank which the official handed him was hurriedly filled out, signed, and returned with the proper fee.

"You need a witness to this application, some one who knows you," directed the clerk.

"Here, Tom, just witness this," demanded Jerry of his friend, who stood near waiting his turn.

Tom complied with the request, the license was issued and Jerry made way instantly.

"I want a license, too," demanded Tom, who duly made out his application and returned it to the clerk.

"You also need a witness," said the latter, without examining the document.

Tom looked about for Jerry, but he was already out of sight. In the meantime the clerk had read the application and, noting that the bride was the same in each, continued, "Never mind; a witness won't do you any good. I can't issue a license."

"Why not?" questioned Tom in astonishment.

"You have applied for a license to wed Miss Lillian Tompkins, and I have just issued a license for the marriage of the same lady to another man."

"What difference does that make?" queried Tom, impatiently.

"It makes this difference. The laws of this country do not permit a woman to have two husbands at the same time."

"True," exclaimed Tom, "but the laws of this country do not prohibit you from issuing a license to one hundred men to marry the same woman at the same time."

"Here," eagerly seizing the arm of a legal friend who had just entered, "is my witness and I want it quick. You are wasting my very valuable time."

"How is it, Mr. Lawyer?" asked the clerk.

"Tom is right. It is your duty to issue a license properly applied for."

Upon this advice the application was witnessed, the license issued and delivered, but the parley of the clerk had given Jerry a full ten minutes' start. Nevertheless, Tom laughed in his sleeve as he placed the document in his pocket.

There had come to the city a short time previously a professional aviator, who gave public exhibitions in his up-to-date flying machine.

"Will the birdman agree to make a flight to Idyl Wyld with me as a passenger?"

This was the happy question that had suggested itself to Jerry during his anxious planning how he might outwit his rival.

"For five hundred dollars cash," said the professor, without a moment's hesitation, "I will land you at Idyl Wyld, alive or dead, between sunrise and sunset on the first day of June."

Equally quick came Jerry's response. The figure who name proves that you are a high flyer, but the prize I am after is worth it."

An agreement was accordingly drawn up, duly signed by both parties, and after Jerry had cautioned the aviator that "mum" was the word, he proceeded to purchase a wedding ring, and calmly await the day.

Minds of lovers, like those of great men, frequently run in the same groove.

On the afternoon of the very day that Jerry had arranged for his jour-

ney by air line, the aviator was visited by Tom.

"How much to land me at Idyl Wyld on June first and keep the agreement strictly secret?"

"Five hundred dollars cash, and I'll keep mum as an oyster."

With the agreement duly signed in his pocket, he felt so sure of success that he, too, proceeded to a jeweler's where he made a "confidential" purchase. As a matter of fact he also felt just a little pity for Jerry.

All this happened in the last week of May, which gave the professor ample time for a trial flying trip to Idyl Wyld to select a suitable place for landing his valuable cargo as per contract.

When Jerry arrived at the professor's headquarters with his marriage license in his pocket, he was laughing in his sleeve at the march he had won on his rival. He had already won first chance for a license, and now he felt so sure of winning Lillian that he almost pitied Tom.

The aviator greeted him cordially, but wasn't quite ready to start. Something about one of the wings wasn't just right, he explained, and he was giving it the necessary attention.

Five long minutes passed, and his passenger was growing impatient.

"It is better to start right than to have a breakdown and perhaps a broken neck," said the aviator.

Three minutes more, and still the professor wasn't ready.

Suddenly a streak of dust was seen to rise far down the street, and the next moment Tom came into view. With his head bowed low, pedaling for dear life, he didn't notice that another passenger was waiting.

Tongued-tied, the astonished rivals stood gazing at each other for a full minute. "What a fool I was not to make it a condition that there should be no other passenger," was the unspoken thought that flashed through the mind of each.

It was Tom who first found voice: "No use, old boy, you can't lose me."

Jerry's reply was cut off by the "all aboard," from the professor. Motioning Tom to a seat at his right and Jerry to one at his left, he took his own place while his assistants gave the machine a start. They were quickly in the air, and soon headed toward Idyl Wyld, speeding at the rate of a mile a minute over villages, fields, and forest. The day was perfect, the air still, the flight most successful, but not a word was spoken.

Shortly after noon, while Miss Lillian was engaged in gathering a bouquet in her uncle's garden, she was startled by a strange, loud whirling noise overhead. Looking upward she almost doubted her eyes as she beheld a descending airplane carrying three men, rapidly passing over the house. Hastening to the piazza to get a better view, she saw the machine coming lower and lower and alight in a pasture about a quarter of a mile distant.

The next instant all was clear to her, as she recognized her lovers, as they came sprinting "cross lots" towards her. Ignoring the public road, on which the pasture and house fronted, the rivals chose a short cut in their efforts to be first at the goal. As Lillian, with throbbing heart, stood watching the mad race over a newly plowed field through barbed wire fences, and over a rocky stream, her astonishment gave way to a loud burst of laughter, and when, a few moments later, the breathless lovers appeared, neck and neck, before her, each tendering his license, they resembled a pair of football stars, emerging from a scrimmage, rather than natty attired would-be groomsmen. Quickly gaining her composure, she announced her decision:

"It is a dead heat."

"But," she continued, "you are in time for dinner, which will be served at two o'clock. This will give you time to brush up a bit, and my uncle, here, to whom I take pleasure in introducing you, will be glad to look after your immediate wants."

Miss Lillian returned to the piazza, where presently she was confronted by the professor, who had wisely chosen the road.

"I called to inquire," said he, "if either or both of your visitors desire to make the return trip with me. They engaged me merely to bring them here and left me so hurriedly that I had no opportunity of asking them if they wished me to carry them back."

Miss Lillian was impressed with the young man's fine face and courteous bearing, and when, after a brief chat, he laughingly asked her if she would like to take a little spin in the air just as an appetizer for dinner, she accepted without a moment's hesitation. Proceeding to the pasture lot the pair were soon soaring cloudward, a number of ruralists, whose curiosity had attracted them to the strange machine, having given them the necessary send-off.

Overcome by the fascination of the novel experience, it was some time before Miss Lillian found words to express her delight. The conditions were ideal for an exhibition flight, and the professor quickly proved himself an adept in aerial gymnastics as well as a most agreeable fellow traveler. It took but a few questions to develop the fact that both had mutual friends at the colleges which they had attended. And they had not been amid the clouds half an hour when Miss Lillian found to her joy—that the girl who cannot decide between two suitors loves—become of them well enough to neither his wife.

She married the birdman.

The rival lovers?

Very generously the professor consented to carry them back to the city that afternoon, without money and without price, as he put it.

# DAIRY FACTS

## NEED BETTER COWS FOR MILK SUPPLY

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

The number of dairy cows in the United States is increasing, as well as the number of people, but not at the same rate. In only two years out of the last six has the dairy-cow population increased in proportion to the increase in human population.

The United States Department of Agriculture has just completed a study of the utilization of milk, in which it is shown that slightly more than 1,000 pounds of milk per capita is used annually in one form or another. In other words, a grand total of 114,660,201,000 pounds of whole milk is utilized in this country by manufacturing it into various products, by feeding it to calves, or for household purposes. This amount was produced by 23,252,000 cows, an average production of 4,938 pounds of milk per cow.

During the last few years the increase in population has been around 1,500,000 people annually. This would mean that with cows no better than those we have at present the milk-cow population should increase at the rate of 875,000 a year to supply the necessary 1,000 pounds for each person—or one cow for every four people. It is also interesting to note that the per capita consumption of milk in 1924 was 14 pounds more than in the preceding year.

Since our average production is much too low, it is not wise to consider meeting the demand for increased supply by having more cows of the kind we now have, but it would be much better to meet the situation by breeding better cows. Not more cows but higher-producing cows are what is needed to keep pace with the increase in population.

## Dairy Exposition Is of Importance to Dairymen

An annual event of nation-wide and vital interest to people in all walks of life is the National Dairy exposition. Dairy agriculture last year represented a farm value of two and one-half billion dollars and a manufactured and farm value of close to five billion dollars, according to the official government census report. This great dairy branch of agriculture is brought together every year in an industry exposition and in conventions for the purpose of review to mark progress and chart out work for further progress and development. The still greater value of this industry to commerce, industry and business is that the products of the cow provide essential food for the life and health of mankind.

This year the exposition will be held at Indianapolis, October 10th to 17th. This year's event promises to be one of the greatest and most representative gatherings in the history of the exposition, says W. E. Skinner, secretary and general manager. The United States government, state agricultural college, national and state farmers' and breeders' organizations and dairy products manufacturers cooperate with and participate in the conduct of this exposition with comprehensive exhibits and demonstrations. The prize-winning dairy cattle of leading breeds at leading state and regional fairs and live stock shows will be sent to compete for national honors.

## Nearly 16,000 Enrolled for Better Live Stock

A total of 15,815 live stock owners throughout the country are enrolled in the "Better sires—better stock" campaign for the improvement of domestic animals, according to a summary of progress just issued by the bureau of animal industry, United States Department of Agriculture. The report, which is dated July 1, shows that 549,455 animals and 1,185,099 head of poultry are undergoing improvement by the systematic use of pure-bred sires.

During the period April 1 to June 30 outstanding progress in this work occurred in the following counties: Grayson, Va.; New Haven, Conn., and Shelby and Union counties, Ky. A total of 41 counties throughout the country have 100 or more live stock owners who are using pure-bred sires exclusively for all classes of live stock kept.

The campaign is progressing principally through the activity of county extension agents and progressive live stock owners. The United States Department of Agriculture keeps records of the work and also is prepared to furnish interested breeders with information on animal products and the value of improved live stock.

## Roughage for Holstein

Generally it is figured a cow can eat three pounds of silage and one of hay for each hundred pounds live weight. This is a safe rule to follow if the silage is of good quality and if the hay is a legume. But do not feed excessive amounts of silage as it is quite bulky. With silage and clover a Holstein will undoubtedly do quite well with a pound of grain for each three and a half to four pounds of milk. The composition of the grain ration will depend on feeds available.

# FARM POULTRY

## ERADICATE MITES TO SAVE POULTRY

There are few poultry producers who do not know of the ravages caused by the common chicken mite. It is very common in all parts of the country and while it is more prevalent in mid-summer it is well to eradicate it from the chicken houses before the young chickens arrive in the spring.

The removal of all interior fixtures and a thorough disinfection with a strong dip applied with a force pump is recommended by the Kansas experiment station. They state:

All rubbish should be removed and burned. Care must be taken to get the spray into all crevices. Kerosene emulsion, crude petroleum, and wood preservatives may be used for spraying, followed by whitewash. White-wash aids mechanically by helping to fill up many crevices. Spraying should be repeated after a week in order to get any mites that may escape. Roosts should be painted frequently with wood preservative or crude petroleum. A treatment of the roosts, nests, boxes, etc., each spring with undiluted crude carbolic acid or sheep dip is usually sufficient to reduce the action of the mites to a minimum. The fact should be kept in mind that mites are blood-sucking parasites and do not remain on the birds as do lice. Mites are more harmful to poultry than lice and in treatment it is necessary to treat the house and not the bird, as is the case of lice.

The construction of roosts and nesting places so as to reduce hiding places to a minimum is an excellent control measure.

If new birds are brought to the farm, or birds to new quarters, they should be isolated for a few days in a pen separate from the permanent quarters so that all of the mites will leave them, thus preventing the infestation of new quarters. If birds are moved in the daytime mites will not be carried on them.

England's First Laureate.

Although many poets from Chaucer's time are regarded as poets-laureate of England, nevertheless the office of laureate was not legally established until 1619, when the honor was conferred on the great Ben Jonson.

Anticipation Hurts.

Sorrow itself is not so hard to bear as the thoughts of sorrow coming. Airy ghosts that work no harm do terrify us more than men in steel with bloody purpose—Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

Need Not Fear Black Snake.

The bite of the black snake is regarded as poisonous. Actually, the bite of a black snake is not as harmful as a cat scratch, because the black snake has no poison sacks and keeps its teeth a great deal cleaner than a cat keeps its claws.

Explanation.

"Police Raid a House Suspected for Two Years"—Well, if it takes them that long to make up their minds it's no wonder burglars and high-waysmen make their getaway with ease.—Buffalo Commercial.

Winners in Life's Battles.

The nerve that never relaxes, the eye that never flinches, the thought that never wanders—these are the masters of victory.—Burke.

The Department of Agriculture says that honey is a vegetable product. The fluid is taken directly from the flowers. The bee adds enzymes which have an effect upon the sugar content of the honey, but the final result is still a vegetable.

After EVERY MEAL WRIGLEY'S makes your food do you more good.

Note how it relieves that stuffy feeling after hearty eating. Sweetens the breath, removes food particles from the teeth, gives new vigor to tired nerves. Comes to you fresh, clean and full-flavored.

A full feed early in the day tends to make the hens listless, while a small feed encourages them to take the exercise which they need in order to keep in the best of health.

A hoe with 15 or 18-inch blade is very satisfactory for scraping the dropping boards, and if used regularly once a week or oftener, will assist materially in maintaining the health of the flock.

A good scratch grain ration consists of equal parts of cracked corn and whole wheat. Feed a little of the grain in the morning to make the flock exercise and give all they will clean up at night in fifteen or twenty minutes.

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Pendleton Dahlias Win Prizes.  
Pendleton, Or. — Two first prizes were won by dahlias entered by Dan P. Smythe of Pendleton at the Spokane fair, according to information the local sheep man has received. The growing of dahlias is a hobby with him. One of his flowers, a Jersey Mammoth, won first prize for the largest and best individual dahlia. A group of dahlias won first prize for the best floral display made by a grower outside of Spokane.

Vanity Characteristic.  
Statues made in Crete some 5,000 years ago show such slender waists that ladies at that time very likely wore some sort of corsets. The lure of the slender waist haunted the ancient woman from the Far East to the western shores of Europe. References to corseting are found in the writings of the classic Greeks and Romans.

Combinations of Cards.  
The accepted formula used to determine in how many ways a number of playing cards may be arranged is as follows: Multiply together all the numbers used in counting the things; thus, the number of ways that ten cards can be arranged is 1x2x3x4x5x6x7x8x9x10 or 3,628,800.

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Capital's First Newspaper.  
The first newspaper published in what is now the city of Washington was the Times and Potomack Pocket. It started in February, 1759, the exact date being uncertain. The paper was delivered to subscribers in town by "carriers" at their houses, weekly, on Wednesday, and to those at a distance by the quickest conveyance.

Form of Baptism.  
Baptism in the Catholic church was originally by immersion. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, immersion as a regular method of baptism prevailed until about the Twelfth century. In some places individual Catholic churches baptized by immersion until several hundred years later.

Three Ways.  
There are three ways to learn the value of a dollar. The first is to spend it and see what you'll get for it. The second is to earn it and see what you give for it. The third is to save it and yearn for the things it might buy if you were weak enough to spend it.—Boston Transcript.

Useless Logic.  
A ruse is a blind, a blind is a shade, a shade is a shadow, a shadow's a ghost, a ghost is a shade, a shade is a color, a color is paint and paint is rouge. Therefore, by Euclid, axiom one, rouge must be a ruse. And, curiously enough, it is true. — Yale Record.

Variouly Spelled.  
Mac is an element, usually a conjoined prefix in many Scotch and Irish names of Celtic origin. The prefix is either written in full, Mac, or abbreviated to Mc or M'. Thus a name may be spelled variously, as MacDonald, McDonald or M'Donald.

America's Oldest Hospital.  
The Pennsylvania hospital, in Philadelphia, the oldest in America, dating back to 1751, operates under a charter originally granted to it by George II of England.

Close-Fisted Grandpa.  
Five-Year-Old Freddie — "Another penny on my birthday. Oh, grandpa, I'm going to try to live a hundred years, so's I'll have a dollar."—Boston Transcript.

Unequally Divided.  
Not enough room for either professional men or farmers, is the problem in Holland today, where there are 202 persons to each square mile. United States has 74 to a square mile, France 11, Argentina only 3 and Australia, not quite 1 to a square mile.

Led in Tunnel Idea.  
The first man to propose a scheme for building a tunnel under the English channel was a French mining engineer named Mathieu, who impressed Napoleon with the idea at the beginning of the last century.

Know How to Do It.  
In Northern New England beans have been baked from time immemorial in a hole in the ground, the hole having first been lined with stones and the stones made very hot with a fire built in the hole.

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