

SILVER SPOONS IN THE FLOUR

By ANNA S. FIELDER

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M A WILSON regarded the sack of flour with silent contempt. Pa Wilson shuffled un- easily.

"Well, ma," he said, "I tried to git Kingsbury's Rocky Mountain Best, but Jed wuz clean out, and knowin' as how you hed to hev flour, Jed says as this is jest as good."

"Jest as good! Powerful lot Jed Sumners knows about flour! It's a purty howdy-do! Me with them cakes to bake fer the Ladies' Aid, an' not a tencupful of decent flour in the house! No, 'tain't no use fer you to try to change it now, them cukes oughter be in this minute! I'll hev ter use it. Like as not they'll fall an' I ain't had a failure with my bakin' in twenty year. Lucindy! Come here an' empty this sack of flour while I git the eggs an' milk."

Lucindy, a shambling country girl, appeared in the door as ma's ample proportions disappeared pantryward. "Oh, ma," came in excited accents a minute later, "look what's in the flour!"

"Lord!" ejaculated ma, dropping an egg on the spotless floor. "A silver spoon! Pa, look here!"

"Well, don't that beat all!" Pa took the shining object in his great hand almost reverently. "Jed said as now they wuz premiums in some of the sacks, but I low he didn't know it wuz anything like this er he'd never sold."

"Don't you tell him, Si!" gasped ma. "I'm goin' ter make a flat failure out'n these cakes so's they won't nobody else buy that flour. I'm goin' ter git all of these here spoons Jed's got. I wonder how often they come."

"Oh, once in so often, I reckon. Won't Billy's eyes stick out when he sees this? Well, I got ter go an' put up the hoss."

"Lucindy," said ma, confidentially, when pa was out of sight, "I'm goin' to git half a dozen of them spoons. I've always wanted some real silver an' this is my chance. I reckon I'll take a fall out'n them stuck-up Higginess with their silver butter dish that the platin' all wearin' off."

That night, instead of her customary knitting, Ma Wilson got out some scraps of flannel and made a long case containing six pockets.

"Now, what would you embroider on it?" she inquired of Lucindy. "Spoons?"

die. I'm goin' ter hitch up an' drive over to Grayson City an' buy one of them spoons at the jewelry store."

That night he drove back triumphant and handed a spoon to Lucindy, saying:

"Now, you sew that up in a sack of flour an' praise we'll be shed er this spoon business forever!"

"Why, pa!" Lucindy exclaimed "this ain't like the other!"

Pa's face fell. "Well, it looked like it in the jewelry store. Well—" he gazed around helplessly.

"Ours has got little curly-cues here," Lucindy explained, "an' this one ain't."

"D' you suppose she'll notice?" pa inquired, hopefully.

"Notice? Ain't she looked at them spoons enough to know 'em in the dark? No, it ain't no use. We got ter git it out'n the flour er not at all."

Meanwhile ma had spent the day making her will, one clause of which afforded her honest pride—

"And the family silver consisting of — spoons I bequeath to my daughter, Lucindy, for a wedding gift."

She had insisted on leaving the blank space. "For somehow," she said, "I feel 's if I couldn't die till I see them six spoons all together there in a row, an' the number can be written in at the last minute."

When pa read it he set his jaw firmly and strode out to the barn. "Bill," he ordered, "hitch up. I'm goin' down an' buy every sack of that blamed flour Jed Sumners' got!"

An hour later they drove into the yard with the wagon full of sacks. Feverishly they worked opening and pouring the contents unceremoniously on the barn floor, the dust from the same turning them gradually to a ghastly gray in the lantern light, until they seized the last sack, tore it open, dumped it on the heap, and then gazed at one another in blank despair.

At last Bill broke the silence. "My God!" he gasped, gazing wild-eyed at the snowy mountain. "Think of the flour we've got to eat!"

"I'm goin' back down to Jed's," Pa Wilson said, dully. "Maybe he's got a sack left som'ers."

Jed invited them to look for themselves and in desperation they looked. At last, under a heap of empty sacks in a dark corner they found a solitary sack left.

"Bill," the old man groaned. "You do it—I ain't got the grit."

Bill hesitated a moment, glanced at the old man's haggard face, drew a long breath, then plunged in his hand and brought out—a spoon!

It was a gasping breathless pair that dashed into the farmhouse kitchen a little later. Would they be in time? They tore through the dining-room and into the bedroom where Ma Wilson lay weak and white among the pillows, still counting her spoons.

Bill tossed the shining new spoon on the counterpane before her. She started up from the pillows her face radiant with awe and unbelief.

"It ain't—" she whispered. "Oh, pa, it ain't the other spoon!"

"Sure, Mike!" Bill ejaculated. "That's just what it is, the other spoon!"

Ma Wilson turned it over, lovingly examining every detail of the design, all the little "curly-cues" which proclaimed it unmistakably the spoon, then slipping it into the solitary empty pocket she fell back upon the pillows and contemplated the finished row with satisfaction too deep for words.

The assembled family gazed from ma's placid face to the spoons and from the spoons to one another, limp and silent with voiceless gratitude.

At last ma spoke. "You can tear up that will, Lucindy," she said, "I'm goin' to live to git a dozen of these here spoons!"

How Artificial Pearls Differ From Real Ones

Anyone can test a pearl for himself. Many artificial pearls are hollow glass beads, with a sort of fishscale lining, a product of a small Mediterranean fish. These can be detected by rubbing the pearl gently over the edge of your lower teeth.

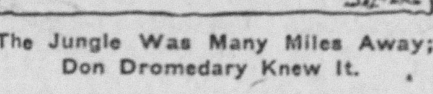
In the JUNGLE With Cheerups and the Quixies by Grace Bliss Stewart

DROMEDARY'S TEMPER

NOT in all the Great Desert is there a worse disposition than Don Dromedary's. He just can't help snarling and scolding.

He is the most valuable beast of burden in the world, because he can travel across the hot dry desert for days without anything to eat or drink.

There are no trains in the Desert and even horses can't go very far, because there is no water except at the small spots called Oases, and they are many miles apart. The Dromedary, who is a very fast traveler, and his slower



The Jungle Was Many Miles Away; Don Dromedary Knew It.

cousin, the Camel, are useful in other ways also to the Arab who lives in the Desert. He drinks their milk, makes tents and rugs of their skins and weaves clothes of their silky hair.

Oh, yes, Don Dromedary knew he was useful, but it didn't make him happy.

"I am going to break loose if I can," said he to himself one warm starry night, when the caravan had stopped to rest. "I'm going to find that wise Cheerups everyone is talking about, and ask him if he doesn't think mine is a very hard lot. I guess I can do it now without being noticed; Master's asleep."

The Jungle was many miles away, and Don Dromedary knew it. "But miles are nothing to the Ship of the Desert," muttered he to himself, as he ran with long swinging strides.

"Well, here's for it," said Don, as he plunged down the winding way. "I'm not so well acquainted here though, as out in the open. Maybe I'd better stop and get my bearings. Let me see, there's the tall palm tree and the Great Breadfruit tree, but what in the world is that?"

"That's what I say, too," cried a small jolly voice out of the darkness. "I was just having my first forty winks, and I'd like to know who comes calling on Cheerups at this time of night."

"Oh, Mr. Cheerups, is that really you?" cried Don Dromedary. "I have broken away from the caravan, asleep under the stars, and come many miles to see you. For once in my life I am lucky!"

"Once in your life, you say?" mumbled Cheerups sleepily. "Well, aren't you ashamed, Don Dromedary? You are one of the luckiest in all the Great Desert."

"But I am not satisfied," snarled Don, with a sneer on his surly curly lips. "I'm not satisfied."

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By MILDRED MARSHALL

Facts about your name; its history; meaning; whence it was derived; significance; your lucky day and lucky jewel

RUBY

THERE seems to be no reference of the first appearance of jewels as feminine names. Neither the Bible nor early history shows evidence of this tendency to name women after gems.

Ruby has many equivalents in Sanskrit and among the Hindus, who regarded the gem as the king of precious stones, but none of them are capable of usage as a proper name. Undoubt-



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"What is the trouble?" asked Cheerups kindly.

"Everything is the trouble, sir," grumbled Don. "Nothing is right. In the first place, when I am on a long journey across the Desert, I rarely get anything to eat. Sometimes my master gives me a few dates, but I'm lucky if I find a thorn bush to nibble on."

"But there's your splendid fat hump from which your body gets its food all through the trip," cried Cheerups. "A very handy way of carrying your lunch when you are traveling, I should say. To be sure, your hump is flat when you reach your destination because it has all been used, but a few weeks of hearty eating fills it up again."

"Of course, that is true," admitted Don, "but I seldom have a drink of water on the journey."

"Now, Don Dromedary, how can you complain, with all those deep cells full of water in your stomach. You can carry over a gallon, enough to quench your thirst for five or six days."

"You are right about the water, Mr. Cheerups," said Don; "but how would you like to tramp along, day in and day out, in soft heavy sand?"

"Just look at your feet," cried Cheerups, who was beginning to be a little impatient with this fussy complainer. "They are made with broad spreading cushions so you don't sink into the sand at all. A horse with his small hard hoofs would be tired in two hours' travel over the Desert. I should think Softfoot had been fitting the magic slippers on you, your feet are so beautifully padded."

"I don't care," grunted the fretful Don. "I have to stand while terrible standstills rage about me and my master lies face downward on the ground and avoids most of it."

"Yes, most of it, most of it, sir, but not all of it, as you do. If you weren't such a naughty, spoiled boy, Don Dromedary, I'd have to laugh," said Cheerups, smiling. "You are really too absurd! Why, you can close your nostrils to keep the sand out, and your long thick eyelashes protect your eyes. I'm ashamed of you!"

"Well, anyway, I'm cross and unhappy," snapped the great black Dromedary.

"That's the whole truth," cried Cheerups gleefully. "It's a new disposition you need! Your bad temper is

THE WHY of SUPERSTITIONS

By H. IRVING KING

MULLEN-STALKS

ANXIOUS lovers in the rural districts of this country twist a mullen-stalk nearly off after naming it for the loved one. If the mullen lives your affections are reciprocated, if it dies they are not. In some sections if the mullen lives after this rite the new shoots (if any) which spring up are counted to see how many children will result from the marriage.

From most ancient times mullen has been regarded as having a close affinity with the sun and being, therefore, a powerful plant to conjure with. The bright yellow flowers, clustering about the long, conical head of the mullen-stalk, gives it the fancied ap-

pearance of a candle glowing with yellow light caught from the sun; and the name itself comes, by a circuitous process, from a Latin word connecting it with a candle.

In England the mullen is still called "high taper" and in Germany "king's candle." Its relation to the sun is further shown by the custom of the Prussian peasants of bending down a mullen-stalk after dark toward the point where the sun will arise, praying at the same time for the recovery of a sick person or sick beast. Thuringian peasants dig up mullen-root at midsummer on midsummer eve—the sun's especial time of power—with a golden coin (a miniature sun) and wear it next their bodies to keep off disease. German peasant girls pick mullen-stalks at midsummer and hang them over their beds as a charm, and their fathers pass mullen-stalks over the midsummer fires and hang them over their cattle sheds to keep off disease and witches.

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ABBREVIATED STORY

QUININE SPONSON

"WHY so moody, Peroxide?" Quinine Sponson asked his wife as he looked up from the morning paper. "You haven't addressed so much as a comma to me all during breakfast. You're not mad, are you?"

"Yes," snapped Peroxide flippantly. "Is it because I put that block of ice cream between your sheets before you went to bed last night?"

"No. I didn't mind that so much." "Are you angry because I brought those six chorus girls home for dinner yesterday?"

"No. Men will be men." "Can it be that you resent my cutting your allowance in half because of the increase in the cost of cigars?"

"No. I regarded that as a mere whim." "Well, then, what can it be?" With one pull of the tablecloth, Mrs. Sponson sent all the breakfast things flying to the four walls.

"It's your miserable habit of sticking your wet spoon in the sugar bowl, that's what it is! You've done it five times in five minutes, and now I'm through with you!—through! through! through!"

Soon afterwards the divorce was granted and they lived happily ever after.

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Millie Impolito



T he number of exotic creatures, "vampish" and otherwise, who flit across the celluloid sheet, may be added the name of Millie Impolito, who recently sailed from Spain for this country to play "vamp" parts in the "movies." Miss Impolito is of the typical Spanish type, with petulant mouth, flashing black eyes and vivid personality.

all that makes you miserable. No one can make you kind, good-natured and contented but yourself, Don Dromedary. Now go back to the caravan and try to be cheerful and look on the best side of things. You will find that not only you yourself will be happier, but every one who knows you."

Poor Don was really ashamed by this time. He knew so well that all Cheerups had said was true that he couldn't look him in the eye. In a very small voice, with his head hanging almost to the ground, he said, "Really, I will try to be good, Mr. Cheerups. Thank you." Then he turned about and dashed back into the Desert.

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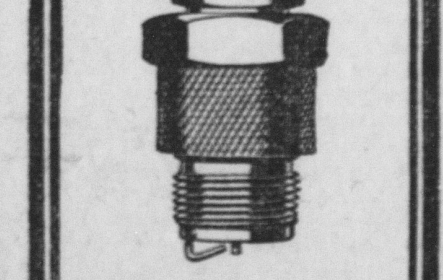
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