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# TALE OF RED ROSES A Smashing Story of Love and Politics : By George Randolph Chester Author of "Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford" Copyright, 1914, the Bobbe-Merril Co.

## The Dawning of a Tender Passion

CHAPTER L A coal wagon, naturally choosing the rush hour for the performance, broke down in front of an extra-crowded car, and traffic was promptly knotted for three blocks, A shining big automobile, following up the hill, came so close behind that the glare of the street car shone with unpleasant brightness on the occupants, a smiling, red-cheeked girl at the wheel; by her side, a gray-Vandyked man, with siniator lines running sharply downward from his downpointed nose; in the tonneau, a plainly dressed and modestly pretty blackhaired girl, with large and rather timld eyes, and a slender, golden-haired girl, whose chief mission in life, from her expression, would have been taken to be mischievous fun.

"Hello, Bert!" called the girl at the wheel. "Can you uncrush yourself?"

The rather large young man in the

The rather large young man in the neatly fitting blue suit, who had been jammed against the rail of the rear plat-form, had already begun to worm his way out of the ill-humored throng on the street car. "Til try it," he laughed, "although I den't expect to have a button left." The crowd, its clothing still clammy from the recent rain, made way for him reluctantly, even though it needed the space he occupied; for the pompous-looking Vandyked man in the car was Frank Marley, by all odds the most un-popular man in the city. He was the popular man in the city. He was the president of the street car company. The young man in the neat blue suit, whose cheeks were flawlessly pink, and whose luxuriant black mustache was curied in two amazingly perfect ringlets, picked his way through the slush, gain-

ed the running board of the touring car and doffed his hat to the occupants. "Bert, this is the treat I promised you," said the girl at the wheel, glanc-ing back with a flash of her sparkling brown eyes and her sparkling white treath

"Miss Fern Burbank," he guessed, clasping the blond visitor's hand, and at the same time he gave his left hand condesca" dingly to little Jessio Peters. "Welcome to our muddy city."

"Thank you," smiled the golden-haired young lady. "Of course, this is Hand-some Bert Glider." "Molly's been telling on me," he lightly

answered, as he took the folding seat just behind Mr. Marley, sitting sidewise so that he could address the two girls in the tonneau and still enjoy the clean-cut pro-file of Ethelyn Marley, known to her in-timates as Molly, for no better reason

than that it was a handler name. The lights in the car ahead suddenly went out and a groan arose from the miswent out and a groan arose from the min-erable passengers on that suffocating ve-hidle. A roughly breathed man, who had been resting his elbow in the wishbond of gray-whiskered little Henry Peters, reached the point of heroic defiance. He cursed the street car company and demanded, "Why don't they put on more energy".

cars?

Little Henry Peters, who was so short that his hat was always pushed over his eyes in a crowd, straightened his derby

d replied as follows: "If they did everybody'd want to take a first one. There are probably empty the first one. with secret pride at where his daughter Jessie rode as a guest in the Marley car. "You talk like a stockholder, he charged, with a deliberate intention of insult.

"I am," admitted little Henry, with a bright expression. "It pays me 7 per

"It's Sledge," said the man with the frayed cigar. "He gets his little old rake-oft, too, from jamming 60 people into a 40-passenger car. While he's running the town this rotten old line won't have any semestition." competition."

#### "Mr. Sledge is a good customer of mine." observed the fat butcher.

"There's one thing about Ben Sledge: he always keeps some big city improve-ment going on," announced the Irishman who had extinguished little Henry Peters Little Henry pulled his derby widibly of his head and rubbed the red circle it had

lert. "Mr. Sledge is the workingman's friend,"

he declared. "Aw, shut up!" ordered the gaunt Celtic laborer, and kloked his ankle, by way of accidental emphasis. It was strange that, while everybody

on the car kept the name of Frank Marley sacred to their hatred, the name of Sledge, who was notorious throughout the United States for his utterly con-scienceless methods of public theft, was received with equanimity.

Meanwhile, Sledge, turning to see why his neighbors might be, met the eye of Frank Marley, and nodded perfunctorily, and then bent his entire attention on Molly, gazing at her in stolid concentration, with no more change of expression on his heavy features than if he had been reading a timetable. Bert Glider noticed his rudeness, and tried, in a mood of intense aggravation, to catch Sledge's eye, and reprove him with a savage frown, but he might as well have tried to catch the eye of an oyster Sledge, perfectly contented with the pleas ing picture which sat before him, con tinued to stare calmly until Molly, dis-cerning from Bert's countenance that something was wrong, turned to meet the small gray eyes of Sledge fixed thought-fully upon her. She wheeled abruptly to her father.

"Isn't that the scandalous Sledge?" she asked, annoyed and still amused. Her father nodded his head, and smiled, his nose becoming still more pointed in

"Well, introduce him. I can make him stop staring then," she ordered. "He can't drive on." "I say, Sledge," called Marley, leaning forward. "This is my daughter, Molly." Sledge turgeed at his hat and smilled his

Sledge tugged at his hat, and smiled his

Siedge tugged at his hat, and smiled his acknowledgment of the introduction, "Giad to meet you," he told Molly. "I didn't know you had such a fine-looking girl, Marley. She's a corker." and once more he viewed Miss Molly with quiet approbation, in which there was a dawn-ing glimmer of quite un-Siedge-like en-thusiam place on Tuesdays. Sledge turned ponderously from his in-spection of the dingy little areaway as thusiasm.

"I think so myself," laughed Marley, "First thing I know she'll be getting married."

"Sure!" agreed Sledge, contemplating her earnestly in this new light. "I'd marry her myself." The street car ahead gave a forward lurch, and the flamingly indignant Molly darted into the opening. "The welv heute?" she gauged "Molly?" smiled Marley's nose, "She is stein,

"The conductor crowded back through "The ugly brute!" she gasped. Sledge.



ENTER MR. SLEDGE

Molly Invites an Additional Guest

ning black mustache, came to the door and called Bendix. Schooner Kelly was outside, and the only way to comfort him, unless he saw Bendix, was to kill him, and Phil did not care to muss up the

"Thanks." said Sledge, and resumed his "Thanks." said Sledge, and resumed his terested inspection of the hand-hole the gate. Glider was gone when Bendix returned, id Sledge, with a half-smile at the increase of his big lips, sat in the same left Sledge, backed out of the window for in the gate. Glider was gone when Bendix returned, and Sledge, with a half-smile at the corners of his big lips, sat in the same immovable pose, except that his huge left hand now rested on the handle of a big

"Molly?" smiled Marley's nose, "She is a beauty, isn't she? The boys are crazy about her. It looks like a college conven-tion out at my house all the time." "You don't have to prove it," allowed Siedge. "The beat she's busy. When you

of manner. Both the smile and the indecision faded from his face, and lines of business care came on his forchead. "Tell Bendix I'll be right over," he directed, and Hunt, bowing again in Miss Molly's direction with that exasperating deference, promptly withdrew.

"Call him back." insisted Molly hastily. "You forgot that you were going with me. I guess."

he was not. However, she was not one he was not. However, she was not one to turn back from an enterprise once be gun. "My dog. Emanh, is in the pound," she hurriedly explained. "I want to go after him myself, but I don't like to go there alone. I thought maybe..." "Where are you?" interruped Biedge. "In my father's office," she told him. "If you're too busy, Mr. Stedge..." I got a machine outside," he hastily informed her. informed her.

informed her. He hurrled back to the little room. "Tell Marley and Glider that I'll be back in an hour or so," he directed Hen-dix, and then, in the lapel of the coat which had never known a decoration, he placed a large red rose!

# Smash Approves

### CHAPTER VI.

Molly was a storm centre of self-re-proach for a number of reasons, not the least of which was her misicading en-couragement of Sledge, and mingted with this was a nervous dread of what crude advances he might feel himself entitled to make. to make,

He handed her into the machine with much the same care he would have used in protecting a pocketful of eggs, and seating himself beside her at the wheel, calmly pulled out from the curb in front

calmiy pulled out from the curb in front of an approaching street car, and let it wait which he maneuvered the turn. Arrived at the dog pound, he gave a demonstration of how little red tape there really is in a municipal institution. "Let's see your dogs," he observed. The chief dog catcher himself rushed from behind the desk, leaving the beseft citizen in the very midst of a heartfelt description. description.

citizen in the very midst of a heartfelt description. "There's only one in, and you can have that." returned the official, with a wince. "He chawed a leg off of Joe, and chased Jerry into the big kennel before we clubbed him into his case. He's just laying right there with his eyes open, walting. If he belongs to the young lady I guess well lock ourselves in the next cell and let her open his door. Is this the dog?" There was no need to ask that, for the sleek white animal, which had been ly-ing motionlessly on the straw, with its muzzle on its paws, waiting unblinking-ly for the time when he could get out and find the man who put him there, at the sight of Molly forgot that there was a screen in front of him, and tried to come straight through. Sledge, knowing dogs better than the

Vas a screen in front of him, and tried to come straight through. Sledge, knowing dogs better than the chief dog catcher, whose job had been secured through political fitness alone, stooped down and turned the tatch and opened the door, and, in a second more, 10 pounds of muscie had knocked Molly Marley off her fast and Sheets locate Marley off her feet, and knocked Molly Marley off her feet, and Siedge knew better than to help her up. He walked stolidly back to the office, and when Molly and the overjoyed Smash rejoined him, he was giving orders. Siedge's right to enter his own automo-

Siedge's right to enter inclined to dispute Siedge's right to enter his own automo-bile, but Siedge rudely thrust a huge hand within accurate biting distance, and held it there steadily; and Smash, after deciding twice to snap at it, changed his mind and sniffed it carefully to remem-ber the man and contentation ber the man, and curled up contentedly at Molly's feet. In spite of the fact that Sledge was Sledge, she could not represe a trace of admiration for at least this

quality in him. "That was a daring thing to do," she acknowledged, as Sledge once more took the wheel and spun away. "Suppose Smash had bitten you?"

Smash had bitten you?" He turned to her impassive eyes. "Then I lose," he simply explained, and leaning down, he carelessly pulled one of the ears of Smash, who mersily blinked. "Any place else?" "But you're very busy." she objected, suppressing a giggle as she thought of her father and Bert. They would pre-fer an engagement with Sledge to her, eh? "Besides," she insisted, seriously this time, "Smash hasn't had his beetch? "Besides." she insisted, seriously this time, "Smash hasn't had his beef-

steak yet." "How much do you let him have?" asked Siedge, as he turned sharply over a cross street. "Only a pound and a half," she replied. "He's in great condition," he admired.

Her father turned to her in wonder.

"Molly, this is business," he sternly in-formed her. "You are detaining me. You might have Bert go with you," and he hurried out, leaving her to stand there alone, perplexed, bewildered, angry. She sat at her father's desk, and took lita telephone, called Bert's number, I waited in disturbed thought. She

interested inspection of the hand-hole

"I'll bet she's busy. When you o see her yourself you have to

to Molly," he stated, with a trace of stiff-

Sledge, and looked out of the window

knew that his call was over, and yet he

"By the way, Sledge," he observed, try-ing to speak as if the matter had just occurred to him. "That note of mine

I am afraid I shall have to have

"Tell Davis I said it was all right," he

Bendix returned, and with him was

Bert Glider, redolent of the odor of bar-ber shop, and with his curly black mustache waxed and brilliantined until it

was filled with almost painful reflection. He greeted Mr. Marley with much more

effusiveness than that gentleman did him. "Hello, Marley," he said, grasping the street-car magnate's hand with tremen-

dous man-to-man neartness. Fourte just the one I want to see. I've been trying to get Molly on the phone, and they tell me she'll be in at your office some time this afternoon. Will you carry her the happy news that Dicky Reynolds is in town, and that I invited him to her taffy pulling tomorrow night? Tell

her taffy pulling tomorrow night? Tell

Sledge turned slow questioning eyes on

"You going to be home tonight?" he

"Well, yes. I rather think so," faltered

"I'm coming out to see you," decided

her to invite Jessie Peters."

man-to-man heartiness.

"All right. Put it up to Molly."

again. Marley hesitated and half arose.

at the First National-it falls due

an extension." Sledge nodded imperceptibly.

"Your girl's a peach," he delicately

Bendlx left the room.

hinted.

ey's brow.

#### CHAPTER II. "I want to talk electrical transportation

CHAPTER III.

nuw Bendla.

There arrived on the morning train, escorted to the platform by a distinctly worshipful porter, a tall big-boned gentleman in a light gray suit of fine texture a plump careless man, to whom one would instinctively turn for a tediously funny story, and a hard-jawed man, of a most forbidding expression, who looked about as communicative as a cabbage This gentleman loafed about the hotel with his mouth shut, while the other two Promptly at 11 o'clock they scouted returned from their various directions. and gathered in the room of the smiling tall one in the gray suit.

"Well, Timbers, is it as cheerful as we hought?" asked the host, settling himself in the most comfortable chair.

"Looks gay and merry to me, Bozzam replied Mr Timbers, folding his hands on his fat knee, and frowning intently at a little slip of paper he held between his thumb and foreinger. "Sledge is, of course, the whole works."

"What's the approach to Sledge?" "Tom Bendix," returned Timbers promptly, consulting his slip of paper "He slfts everything before it gets to the Big Boy, and you don't need any introductions. The best plan is to go right to his office and give him the straight story.

"How about Marley ?"

"A fluff," returned Timbers, contemptu ously. "Because he's the president of the street car company he thinks he invented electricity, and his model is swelled so that is such as the strength of th

that it cracks his scalp." "Tou'd better lead me to this Bendix "Fou'd better lead me to this Bendix Bernon," suggested Bozzam, rising. "Come en, Moodson."

Very automatically the silent man arose and accompanied Bozzam from the room, with the air of being just as willing to do that as anything else. Just as automatically he followed into the office of Tom Bendix five minutes later, and stood silently by, so oppressive in his inertia that he at he removed to himself all specula-of about any one who was in his com-

When Tom Bendix walked into the Oc-illent Saloon he paused a moment at the bar, but even though his wishes were

A total stranger by the name of Tim-prior Phil, vigorously mopping a almost imaginary splash. "He's so

of new once that every time he opens mouth he spills a good laugh." What's his business?" demanded henwho was an earnest collector of def-

arrying hot ones, as far as I can get

answered Phil, laughing reminiscent-der, this guy tells 'em ao fasi you remember 'em. Blondy just asked to stop so he could write 'em dewn

supplied in a futury knock or two about strate car service here." "I supplies prot-res," mutant Bandis. "I supplies prot-ent him knock the usr conserve"

Informatio

's the entertainment committee?" med Bandix a trifle sharply, when Phil maily came over to him, still grinning to be utmost extent of his countenance.

with you." began Mr. Bozzam cheerily, as he laid the cards of Mr. Moodson and himself on the desk. "I am Charles W. Bozzam, of New York, and this is Mr. Alvin Moodson, of Philadelphia." Bendix shook hands non-committally with the two gentlemen, and invited them to have seats. "I don't know that I care to talk elec-

trical transportation, but I'm willing to listen," he smilled. Bendix was like any other prosperous

middle-aged man-well fed, well clothed, well shod, round faced, short-propped mustache turning slightly gray, and Mr. Bozzam studied him with great interest. "There isn't much to say," he stated "We think your city needs new and bet

ter street car facilities, and we are here to give them to you, if you will let us. The company I propose to form will be bona fide, and will be incorporated for a million dollars in cegular money. Mr. Moodson will take a quarter of a mil-lion of the stock himself. It might be some satisfaction to you to secure a report on Mr. Moodson from Dun or Brad-

streat Mr. Bendix grinned.

"It sounds like a high-grade proposi-tion." he acknowledged. "T'll speek to some friends of mine about it this noon."

"Thank you," observed Mr. Bozzam, sing. "You might state to your friends, rising. if you find it convenient, that we represent the most competent organization possible for the handling of a bonc-fide street car proposition. Mr. Moodson is capitalist of top-notch rating. Mr. Tim-ers can hand you enough references to stuff a mattress, from people who still

have the same addresses. He knows the street car business from trouble shooting to clubbing a witness.' 'And how about you?" asked Bendiz,

"Just tell him you've seen me," sug-

"No!" denied Phil, indignantly. "He

tried it twice, but there was no come

gested Bozzam softly. "I will," agreed Bendix, and shook hands most cordially.

"Til be glad to have you." admitted Marley. "I suppose I may see Davis to-morrow?" Sledge nodded assent, looking stonily out, meanwhile, at the hand-hole in the high board gate at the end of the area-The Boss Issues an Important Order

Marley

nouired

Marley.

"Well, Glider, tell us about it," invited

Well, Gilder, tell us about R. Invited Bendix, as Mariey went out. "I want you to tell me." laughed Glider, in happy unconsciousness that he was a deadly offense to Sledge, who called him "pretty"; "Is the Ridgewood avenue ex-tension a sure go?" "Why do you want to know?" inouired back and he guit." "He belongs to a wise family," ap-proved Bendix, with a smile. "Let him have anything he pays for. By the way, Phil. if Schooner Kelly shuffles in here, ally him a five-spot, but tell him to drop dead outside. Don't let him buy a drink, and don't let him back to see the other."

Why do you want to know?" Inquired Bendix.

Bendix. "I have a little speculation in mind which depends on it," confessed Gilder. "Subdivision at the end of the line. I suppose." guessed Bendix. "Well, yes," acknowledged Gilder. "Foxy of you to think of it," applauded Bendix. "Your only fault is that you den't guess those things first. Who do you suppose would acquire a deed to that land hefore the extension was publicly announced?" The state of the part of think of the applauded for the state of t

slip him a five-spot, but teil him to drop dead outside. Don't let him buy a drink, and don't let him back to see the chief." Hendix walked thoughtfully into the little back room, the barenass of which, kept to its former crudeness by the wish of the boss, was in strange contrast to the elaborately mirrored and mahogany-carved Occident. Here, at an extremely plain round table, he found the huge and impassive Sledge gauing modily out the dusty window, while Frank Marley, with a half-emptied whisky glass in his hand, ast regarding him with a pussied expres-sion. Marley turned with relief when he gaw Bendix.

saw Bendia. "I've just been suggesting that we build the proposed Ridgewood avenue extension out of the company funds, rather than make a new issue of stock," he explained. "By adding stightly to our bonded in-destedness we can do this, and keep the

make a date." "It's almost like that," agreed Marley, stroking the beard which it had taken him many years to perfect. "I want to get acquainted with her." ordered Blacks much as if he had here ordered Sledge, much as if he had been sending the happy word to some rising new politician. A shade of annoyance passed over Mar-

next

"You're

"Where are the red roses. Molly?" asked Bert Glider, as he walked into the reception parlor of Maricy's pretentious big house that night. "That is a matter which is entirely up

"I don't know." replied Molly, much concerned. "Did you send some?" "No, but I thought some were to be sent to you." laughed Bert. "It's too good to keep, Fern. By the way, that 'Fern' just slipped, and you'll have to pardon me for it it's Molly's fault. She never

me for it. It's Molly's fault. She never called you anything else." "Who is it?" demanded Molly, more eager to hear the news than he liked to see. "The information is highly impor-tant, if true, and 1 must not be kept in

sumpense. "Hold on to something, then." he

big fellow whose car stopped just abreast us last night." Mr. Glider, who, as a boy, had been an

expert in pulling the wings from flies, went straight on with the slaughter, selzing immediately the glorious opportunity which presented itself when Mr. Marley, brave in smoking jacket and pumps,

brave in smoking jacket and pumps, sauntered into the parlor. "Great news, Marley!" halled Bert, beaming with delight upon the joyous laughter of Fern. "Molly has captured a new honor for the far.ly. Whose do your suppose in the latest each out has you suppose is the latest scalp at her belt?

"It might be almost anybody." returned "It might be almost anybody," returned Marley, who felt that his motheriess daughter's popularity reflected somehow on himself. "Who is the particular vic-tim you have in mind?" and he laughed in sources. "Sledge!" exploded Bert. "By the way,

Marley, he gave you a hint of it, too. Didn't he ask you today, while I was there, for an invitation to Molly's party tomorrow night, or something like that?" "Well, not exactly; but he did throw out some pretty strong hints." acknowl-

edged Marley with a grin, entering into the joyous spirit of the occasion. "He asked permission to call on Molly. I told him that was up to her."

"How unusually considerate." observed Molly, biting her lips to suppress the rus-ing fury which had driven the blushes from her cheeks, and left them almost Waxe

Molly Rearranges a Morning Program

CHAPTER V.

CHAPTERIV

"Mr. Sledge, sir; to see Mr. Marley, "Show him into the library," has'ily directed Marley, suddenly contrite, and Shall 1

feeling a sinking horror, as did all the others in the room, of having this man face to face with Molly, especially after the crimes against her of which they had

themselves been guilty. The instructions were too late, however, "Good evening," rumbled the deep volce of Sledge, who just then appeared directly in the centre of the opening in the portleres. He wore an Inverness top-coat, the open front of which disclosed "Hold on to something, then, he warned her. "One, two, three-Sledge!" "Sledge!" she repeated. 'What? That great big—" She paused for lack of words, and her face flamed suddenly, scarlet with indignation. "Sledge," he joyously insisted; and then, to the puzzled Fern: "You remember the big fellow whose car stormed just a parawi the enormous solitaire which illuminated by the Young Men's Marching Club of Ward G. His hair was pressed as smoothly to his skull as an earnest Italian barber could plaster it, and various angry specks on his checks told how micro-scopically he had been shaved. The crowning triumphs of his tollet, however, he carried. In his right hand he bore, held by a wide velvet ribbon, in the same huge fingers which clutched the gold. headed cane presented by the Capital City Sledge Club, a thirty-dollar box of candy, two feet across, wrapped with six berib boned layers of fancy paper, and provided with an absolute maze of drawers and partitions. In his left hand he carried a speckless allk hat of the latest French shape, and that arm encircled a conical parcel, so big that it would have stag-gered a small man, while from the upper and of the cone protruded a square yard of screaming red roses. "Good evening, Miss Molly," he added,

becoming more specific. "I brought these for you myself." and he beamed his cordial good will upon the entire asseminge.

It was in this breathless crisis that

Molly Mariey, aggravated beyond en-durance, took her merciless revenge. "How perfectly delightfull" she cried, and she swept toward him with more eager cordiality than she had ever be-stowed upon Bert Gilder himself. "We've hust been falking about you" and then just been talking about you," and then to the intense constantation of her father and her foremost suitor, she added; "I The Marley butler, a thin-faced and Won't you come, please?"

still felt the necessity of rescuing her dog from his uncomfortable surroundings, but she had lost the joy of imperious in-

"Helio, Molly," he returned. "What did you forget for the party"

in you forget for the party "The party s all right, but Smash is in the dog pound," she briskly informed him, judging, even from his modified

tone, that he was very busy. "I forgive him that plece he took out of my leg, and I'll send right up for him. "I'm

"No, I think not," she hesitated, going myself, and I wanted you to go with me; but you're dreadfully busy, aren't you?" "I wasn't too busy five minutes ago.

but I ust got word from Sledge and was leaving the office when you called. I'm dreadfully sorry, Molly," and his voice told the sincerity of his regret. "If you can wait I'll call for you as soon as 1 leave Sledge."

"Thank you, but I can't wait," she sweelly informed him. Sledge! What was there about this man

which made other men hurry when he ent for them like a maid answering a

Suddenly her white teeth flashe laugh, and, with wickedly spackling eyes, she grasped the telephone, leafing rapidly through the book with her disengaged hand for the Occident Saloon. She called for that number and walted with a trace of trepidation. It was a shocking place, no doubt, infested by gruff people. To her agreeable surprise a well-modulated answered.

this the Occident?" she asked.

"Yes, madam," replied the voice, thor-oughly respectful, which was shock num-

'May I speak to Mr. Sledge, please?"

"Thi see. Who is it?" "Must I give my name?" she worried. "No.1 guess not." replied Phil, after a moment of hesitation. "Thi try him out.

anyhew Phil hurried back to the little office where Sledge sat in earnest conference with Bendix and gave the third astounded giance of the morning at the amazing spectacle of a beer pitcher filled with red roses which stood on the bare table.

"Telephone for you," he curtly informed Siedge, his method of showing deference to that great man consisting in extra gruffness "Who is it?" demanded Sledge, without

turning. "Lady."

"Not here." "I know," agreed Phil. "But this one's different. Just from her voice alone I'd go to jail, especially if she said 'Pleuse."

There was something in Phil's initiative enunciation of that last word which brought the ponderous Sledge to his feet at once, as if he had been raised by an invisible derrick, and he went to the tele-phone beaming in a manner to render speeches ihe nabitues of the Occident. "Hellot" his base fone attempted to com

Invisible derrick, and he went to the telephone beaming in a manner to render speeches ihe nabitues of the Occident.
''Hello!'' his base cone ritempied to coo into the telephone. ''Is this Molty'' of the telephone. 'Is this telephone. 'Is this molecular telephone. 'Is this telephone.'' of the telephone. 'Is this telephone. 'Is this telephone. 'Is this telephone.'' telephone. 'Is this telephone.'' telephone. 'Is this telephone.'' telephone. 'Is this telephone.'' telephone.'' telephone.'' telephone.'' telephone.''

"Who's Phil?" "You don't know him," he alsoured nar. "He's a bartender here." "Oh." elaculated Molty faintly, and then starp resolve cause to her rescue. "Are you vary busy. Mr. Biologe?" "Naw? he containly reassured her. "I was attaid that maybe you work-he busy." also fairena, regrettui oney that

booking down at the dog's sleek coat and the beautiful muscles under it. "You ought to see my Bob." "I'd love to." she graciously returned. "I'll bring him out. I'd like to match

Molly almost jumped out of the car, "Never!" she gasped, and under her breath, added: "You big brute!" She

positively loathed him. They atopped, with a decisive jerk, in front of a clean looking butcher shop, and Sledge got out.

"I'd like to feed him a cow," he ob-served, patting Smash roughly on the head as he alighted; "but if you sav a pound and a half, that goes." and he left Molly laughing with another unaccount-able reversal of feeling as he stalked into the shop.

He came out presently with a pink sirloin, which it was a sin not to held it up temptingly to Smash.

"It's yours, Smash!" There was a flash of while though the air, and Sledge found his solid big arm sustaining a dog at the end of the stask. He lowered them both to the ground, and looked down with profound satisfaction

at the ensuing proceedings. "Now where?" he asked when Smush had cleaned the bone and had crunched it for exercise

for exercise. "I had thought of going to the floriat's to pick out my flowers for this evening." "What kind?" he anxiously inquired. In spite of herself, Molly gizgled. "Red roses." she confessed, and haughed her laugh out. "Beally, you shouldn't have done that.

"Really, you shouldn't have done that, "Really, you shouldn't have done that, Mr. Sledze," she chided, trying to be vary serious about it, and to insist on the for-

Sledge looked at her with much concern. "I don't want to queer inyself," he war-ied. "It's too late to call it off. The warons must be out to your house by ried. this time."

"The wagons." she half shrieked.

"Yes," he nervously confessed. "Dil-lerey's only had eight dozen. I ordered the rest from Beck's." "How many is the rest?" she faintly inquired

"How many is the react and many inquired. "I don't know till Beck gives me the count. I told him to clean up the place. I hope there'll be enough." "I'm sure there will be," and replied, with the girgle all gone out of her. Some-how, she had not the heart to make plate how, she had not the heart to make plain to him just why he must not he milaviah. "That was tremendously kind d' you, Mr. Sledge, and I thank you very

much. There was a floriat's wagon at the rear porch, and red mass were being unlanded in bales when ane arrived there; also the driver, a bent and shriveled man, with whiskers on his face in the most uncer-