

my name mentioned on the other side of the hedge in tones which left no doubt in my mind as to the estimation in which I was held. Of course I listened involuntarily for a few moments before I recovered consciousness enough to go back and come up the other way, making a slight noise to announce my arrival.

What I heard I needn't tell you, but one thing I will say—I never realized before what an adjunct plenty of caudy and flowers are to a young man when he is courting a girl.

I cut the thing very short and got away as quickly as I could; but I couldn't go without seeing Kitty at all, because some one might have seen me going there and have told her, and that would have let the whole secret out.

Well, there was Rose left, and one month of the Summer. If I intended to get any literary inspiration during my vacation I had better be about it, and so I made her a call that evening. I had fully intended to be more circumspect in my second wooing, but that had turned out badly. I must certainly change my tactics.

Rose was a nice girl—I don't think I ever met a nicer one. To tell you the truth, after I got to know her better I was devoutly sorry for the two precious months I had wasted. Such a girl I don't suppose I shall ever meet again. She was my perfect complement, my affinity. Everything that a man could wish for in his wife I found in her. She was my inspiration. I felt that with her to encourage me, I could make for myself a name which should be blazoned large on the pages of history. When I think of how I lost her I believe I must be the acme of all idiots, the supreme blunderer of the world.

She was telling one night, with a few of our friends gathered around her, of a picnic of a year before, and how the wagons were so beautifully and tastefully draped, that an engineer on the Pennsylvania railroad had stopped his train to let the passengers admire the beautiful sight. Innocently, and merely by way of a joke, I remarked that I had heard of people who could stop clocks, but I had never seen anyone before whose face would stop a railroad train. Do you know, she sailed right out of the room and ever after that refused to receive my apologies.

That is how it happened that I never entered the domain of literature. I have always felt the lack of the inspiration which a true and noble woman by my side would have afforded me, and without it I do not feel able to do anything worthy of the talents which my friends so kindly assure me I possess.

ALBA.