

Marcia's Ride

By ANNE HEILMAN.

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The sun was setting, as for weeks past, in a hot, merciless glare, which made its disappearance a distinct relief. It cast no long afternoon shadows, for between Marcia's eyes and the far horizon stretched only a rolling sea of prairie grass browned almost to a stubble.

"See anything of pap?" asked a querulous voice from the squeaky wooden rocker near the back door.

"He's coming," the girl answered listlessly. Then in a brisker, brighter tone: "How easily Bonnie Belle makes it! You'd think she was on her first mile, and I'll wager my new hat pa's kept that pace for the whole trip. Bless the pretty creature!"

"She's a fine mare, Marthy. There ain't many in Nebraska sicker, less it's Charlie Keith's roan," with a covert glance. "Well, if you'll dish the supper I'll get the butter an' preserves, hey?"

"All right! Hello, father! Back again? How's Bonnie Belle?"

"Chipper's ever, Marthy. See her reach for ye, darter. I vow she's got more sense than some humans. Supper ready? How's ma?"

"Better, and supper's on the table. I'll unsaddle Belle. Any mail, father?"

"Waal, now, they want'n any letters, darter, but here's the paper. I swan but it's lively times down to Prairie City. Boomers till ye can't rest, an' ye hear nothin' but braggin' about the Kiowa reservation an' the ride for it next Saturday. There's theirs plin' in by every train, an' cowboys an' blacklegs galore. Won't be nary chance for an old feller like me. Yes, ma, I'm comin'!"

He entered to the impatient invalid, and Marcia led her blooded mare to the shed stable. After removing the saddle and bridle the girl suddenly strode into a dry box and leaned her head against the pretty creature's sleek neck.

"Oh, why don't I hear? Where is he? It can't be that little quarel at the Kiowa reservation—passionately—I only went with him because I didn't care to show I preferred Charlie when he came up the same minute. It would have been so marked! Why couldn't he understand? Men are idiots!"

Half laughing, half sobbing, she gave a pet a gentle rub down, adding food, ink and a last caress. Then she turned toward the cabin.

"We need rain awfully," she sighed, "as much as we need money. Oh, what a life! Work, work, work, and for what? If it isn't grasshoppers, it's fires, and if it isn't these it's sandstorms and cyclones. There's no use trying to get ahead in this wretched country!"

"What ye natterin' over, Marthy?" called her father's big voice from the supper table. "Come in an' read the news to your ma. The paper's full of it."

"Of what?" said Marcia obstinately.

"Why, wasn't I tellin' ye? Of the opening of the reservation an' the gov'ment givin' out the Injun lands. I swan, if I was younger I'd make a race for it myself. I know Bonnie Belle could do it. She came from the city tonight in forty minutes and never turned a hair."

Marcia began to read of that vast eruption of the stranger and the "tenderfoot" which was transforming the small, sleepy town into a noisy, bustling, open all night, fabled ridden city nearing its hundred thousand inhabitants, the better portion intent upon claiming a home at the opening, while the remainder were as intent upon plunder, lawlessness and devilry.

Marcia read listlessly for a time, then with growing excitement.

"It'll be a wonderful sight; pa, that ride. How I wish that you could get a town lot at Kiowa and make a home there! I could teach them, and you could perhaps start a mill again, father, and we'd give up fighting the storms and bugs on this old ranch. If you only could!"

"Yes, darter, but I couldn't. How's a man to make such a run when he can't move his bridle arm 'bout a pain ketchin' him? Pap's too old an' too clumsy, my girl."

Marcia lay awake far into the night, thinking, planning, revolving.

It was nothing unusual for Marcia to ride over to Prairie City for a visit. She had schoolmates there who were always glad to see her, and possibly other interests drew her in that direction.

It was the town Charlie Keith called home and in which he spent his brief vacations. How Marcia had met him often in the past two years of her happy school life, and here she had, seemingly, irrevocably offended him by one of those sudden, girlish freaks, so inexplicable to a lover.

She had never seen nor heard from him since. Her father noted the cessation of certain frequent letters and the sadness on his darling's beautiful face and longed to comfort her. When she asked the next morning if she might spend the next week with Edie Darrow, in Prairie City, he gladly gave consent.

The next two days would have tested the resolution of most men and did sap the strength of many, as they stood in line under the blazing Nebraska sun, blistered with heat, parched with thirst, gritty and blind with the powdered dust, waiting their slow turn at the registration booth. But Marcia was a determined girl and was accustomed to hardships. She had galloped miles over the sun swept prairies, she had slept more than once with no roof above her head and no couch beneath her, and she knew what endurance meant. She had started on this mad scheme in a mood of strained silence, her hateful, monotonously barren existence had wrought her feelings to a pitch where almost any act was possible; nor did the strain loosen until her registration was accomplished at sunset of the second day.

It was five minutes to 12 on that brassy, sandy swept Saturday, and Marcia Brooks, mounted on her brave

JOYS OF LIFE IN HAWAII.

Mosquitoes the Only Flaw—Not Ever a Servant Problem.

Birds are everywhere in Hawaii. Their music fills the quivering air. One wonders why we do not all live in this paradise, where life seems to stretch out before one in a long, languid dream of delight.

Suddenly through your dreaming comes a rude awakening. The Hawaiian mosquito, the one flaw in the gem, the only thorn in the garden, has called to make your acquaintance and bid you welcome to his domain.

The houses, with their broad verandas filled with palms and flowers and furnished with tables, chairs, hammocks and grass rugs, are a paradise to the weary traveler. It is here that the Honolulu people enjoy their glorious climate.

The lawns, thick and velvety as a carpet, were kept in perfect order by the boys, for experienced servants—Chinese, Japanese and Portuguese—can always be had. In fact, the servant problem causes no worry to the housewife, who has but little anxiety in this land of plenty.

Everybody seems to take life easily. The offices close very early, and no one seems to know what care is. The sugar barons, their capital once rightly invested, draw their dividends, and the rest of life is required to spend them.

We stop at the home of our friend, a bungalow that is the picture of comfort. One end of the veranda is used as a sun parlor, sheltered by windows and screens, for what they call cold days—60 degrees above zero.

Numerous rooms connect with this, the dining room being a veranda at the other end of the house and the kitchen a separate building, though connected by a roofed veranda. The great chambers are cottages by themselves.

The bath is hewn out of solid stone, with a shower above. Servants are provided for in quarters apart from the house. The whole, in fact, greatly reminds one of an old southern plantation home with modern improvements.

Just in front of the house, spreading its great limbs at least sixty feet in diameter, is a great monkey pod tree, and under its protecting branches the children, and older ones, too, enjoy the swings and hammocks in an atmosphere which lulls to sleep. As we sit here at midnight, dressed in the thinnest of summer clothing, with never a wrap, watching the moon rise out of the sea, we understand why the Hawaiian so loves his islands.—World's Work.

HURRY FUNERALS.

Odd Orders That Are Sometimes Given to Undertakers.

"Life and death both are strenuous in New York," said an undertaker. "We get orders sometimes that shock us."

"Not long ago we had a call from a family who asked us to make a hurry up job for the reason that they had arranged to sail for Europe two days later, and they didn't want to postpone the voyage."

"What would you think of a woman who asked to have her husband buried as quickly as possible on the ground that a few days before his death they had agreed like to put away the deceased before the newspapers heard of their marital trouble? That is exactly what happened."

"Then there was this case: An elderly aunt, who had been an invalid more than a year, passed away. We were asked to arrange for the funeral on the day of her death, and when we demurred unless there was some important reason we were informed by a nephew that they were anxious to know what was in her will, as the matrimonial chances of a niece depended upon what she was to get."

"Some time ago a man came into our office and said that his mother-in-law had just died and that he would like to send her body as soon as possible because she wanted to attend some sort of function three days later."

"In the good old days in some parts of the country it used to be the custom for friends of the family in which a death occurred to sit up with the corpse. In a case given to us a few months ago we were asked to send a couple of genteel appearing employees to the house to keep the vigil. We did it, but I confess to you it seemed to me rather heartless."—Exchange.

Chaucer's Face in a Stone.

In a geological branch of the British museum the visitor is shown a wonderful specimen of natural imitation in a small "ribbon jasper." This stone, the material of which is not unlike that of other banded agates, has upon its surface a perfect miniature portrait of the poet Chaucer. Every detail is startlingly correct. There are the white face, the pointing lips, the broad, low forehead and even the whites of the slightly upturned eyes. The attendants say that it is utterly impossible to convince even some of the educated visitors that it is not an artificial production.

Waste Not—Want Not.

Doctor—I must know what you have eaten today in order to understand your stomachic disorder.

Patient—Oh, doctor, only a little pork. It was left over from last week and was perhaps not quite fresh.

Doctor—Would it not have been more sensible to let the pork spoil entirely rather than to upset your stomach?

Patient—But, doctor, you can cure a diseased stomach, but what can you do with spoiled pork?—Flegende Blatter.

Got the Habit Later.

In a sermon preached in a small church in Glasgow the pastor, after inveighing against slothfulness, said by way of climax: "Do you think Adam and Eve had their hands in their pockets?"—Harper's Weekly.

Why Doesn't the Boiler Burst?

What a tremendous force is struggling to tear a boiler to atoms! Take, for example, a horizontal tubular boiler of ordinary proportions, sixty inches in diameter by sixteen feet long, containing eighty-three one inch tubes. Such a boiler has a surface area of 40,716 square inches. Suppose this boiler is operated with a working pressure of 100 pounds per square inch, which is not at all uncommon. The boiler therefore sustains a total pressure of 4,071,600 pounds, or more than 2,035 tons. Do we realize what this means? The boiler has resting upon it the equivalent of a column of granite 10 feet square and 254.5 feet high, or, to put it another way, the boiler is holding up the equivalent weight of 22,571 persons, each weighing 182 pounds. The best authorities agree that the ordinary draft horse working eight hours a day exerts an average force during that time of 120 pounds. Now, this force acting to disrupt the boiler longitudinally is 226,200 pounds, so that to produce an equivalent stress it would be necessary to hitch up to the ends of the boiler two teams of 1,885 horses altogether.—Strand Magazine.

His Was Harder.

It was in a country tavern, where a newly arrived commercial traveler was holding forth.

"I'll bet my case of samples," he said, "that I've got the hardest name of anybody in this room."

An old farmer, in the background shifted his feet. "Ye will, will ye?" he drawled. "Waal, I'll have to take ye up. I'll bet \$10 against your samples that my name'll beat yours."

"Done," cried the salesman. "I've got the hardest name. It is Stone."

The old man was game.

"Mine," he said, "is Harder."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Starting It Early.

Starting with his bride on their honeymoon, a man entered a railway office and, as always in the past, bought only one ticket.

The bride noticed the oversight at once.

"Why, you bought only one ticket, dear," she said.

"That's so, dear," he answered. "I forgot all about myself."—Tit-Bits.

Two Runaways.

"Dis paper," said Languid Lewis, "tells about a boss runnin' away with a woman, an' she was laid up for six weeks."

"Dat ain't so worse," rejoined Boastful Benjamin. "A friend uv mine wurst ran away with a boss, an' he was laid up for six years."—Chicago News.

Cause or Effect.

Assistant Editor—Here's a poem from a fellow who is serving a five years' term in the Eastern penitentiary. Managing Editor—Well, print it with a footnote explaining the circumstance. It may serve as a warning to other poets.—Philadelphia Record.

ANIMAL ODDITIES.

The Australian water lizard walks erect.

The tree frogs of South America sing as musically as birds.

Sheep in time of famine eat the wool from one another's backs.

Gamecocks sometimes take to catching mice, which they devour greedily.

An eagle can live twenty-eight days without food, while a condor is said to be easily able to fast for forty days.

A decapitated snail kept in a moist place will, it is claimed, in a few weeks grow a new head quite as serviceable and good looking as that which was taken away.

The chameleon's eyes are situated in bony sockets projecting from the head. By this curious contrivance the peculiar little animal can see in any direction without the slightest motion save of the eye.

Ivory as a Tonic.

"Some physicians," said a druggist, "give an infusion of ground ivory and milk in the spring to stimulate and strengthen listless patients. It is a good remedy, for all I know to the contrary. Certainly it is an ancient one."

He opened a medical magazine and pointed to this quotation from Schroeder's Zoology, a work published in 1637:

"Elephas (elephant)—His teeth are only used in medicine and vulgarly called ivory. The virtues: It cools and dries, moderately binds cuts, strengthens the inward parts. It is good for the jaundice, it takes away pains and weakness of the stomach, it heats the spleen, resists poisons, drives off spring melancholie. The dose is half a dram."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

"The Scarlet Letter."

The old saying, "Every cloud has its silver lining," should often bring us comfort when the world appears to be frowning upon us. A rare example of this was shown by Hawthorne's wife, who proved herself to him a true "friend in need." One wintry day he had received notice that his services would no longer be required at his office. Weary and downcast, he returned to his humble home. His young wife stood waiting for him and noticed at once that something was wrong. He told her his troubles. Straightway the brave little woman with her own hands kindled a bright fire; fetched pen, ink and paper, which she set beside him; then, with a beaming face, she touched the sad man on the shoulder and said, "Now you can write your book." Immediately the cloud cleared, and things presented themselves to Hawthorne under a changed aspect. He felt a freed man; the office appeared as a cage from which he had escaped. "The Scarlet Letter" was written and proved a marvellous success, and fame rewarded Hawthorne and the brave little wife who had faced the cloud and found its silver lining.—"The Value of a Life."

At the Hotel.

Mr. Verdant—Let's try this here demitassay at the end of the programme. Say, waiter, bring us some demitassay. Mrs. Verdant—Now, par, you promised me you wouldn't take nothin' stronger'n tea or coffee.—Baltimore American.

Unappreciated Liberality.

"You are going to be tried before a very liberal judge," said a lawyer to his client.

"I am glad of that."

"You needn't be. If you are found guilty he'll give you all the penalty the law allows."

THE TEMPERANCE OF MISS WILLARD.

I met Walt Whitman once in Germantown at a home famous for its hospitality and the notables who loved to go there and know he was urged to leave out of the next edition certain poems. But "No" was the only answer. It was art and must never be disturbed. Miss Willard was also a guest, and Walt was rude to her; said he hated a crusading temperance fanatic, especially a woman. She was perfectly unruffled, and he left the room, but before long he returned and apologized in the sweetest way. Upstairs Frances said to me, "What a grand old man to be willing to own he was sorry for his remarks!"—Kate Sanborn in New England Magazine.

A Floating Furnace.

Many a mysterious disappearance at sea is believed to have been caused by fire in the coal bunkers, the discovery coming too late to admit of the fire being mastered. For instance, fire broke out on the Ada Iredale, a vessel engaged in the China trade, which many years ago set sail from a Scottish port for San Francisco, carrying a cargo of coal. When the vessel was some 2,000 miles from the Marquesas Islands, in the Pacific ocean, the cargo was found to be on fire. All efforts to extinguish the conflagration were fruitless, and the crew was driven to the boats. The ship, by this time a floating furnace, was left to its fate and drifted, still burning, a distance of 2,420 miles, to Tahiti. Finally taken in tow, she was conveyed safely into port, where for more than a year her cargo still smoldered.

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A CLEVER BURGLAR.

How He Fooled a Man Who Thought He Couldn't Be Robbed.

"B. P. Hutchinson used to say no burglar ever could get into his house without waking him," said a central station detective the other day, according to the Chicago Record-Herald, "but it remained for Chief Simon O'Donnell to put one over the famous trader."

"You know, Mr. Hutchinson was famous in Chicago's commercial life years ago and was known popularly as 'Old Hutch.' He prided himself on the fact that burglars never had got into his house and often boasted of the fact to his intimates. One day while he was at lunch with Chief O'Donnell and a number of other friends the company fell to discussing a crime that had been committed the night before."

"I'd like to see anybody get into my house," Mr. Hutchinson said. "Why, I hear every tick of the clock all night."

"I'll bet you a dinner for this crowd," said the chief, "that I can produce a man who will enter your house and you will not know of his visit till morning."

"Mr. Hutchinson accepted the wager, and it was agreed that he was to let the chief have a latchkey, so that the burglar could get in without being disturbed by some patrolman. Mr. Hutchinson also agreed to leave some article of value in the parlor where it could be found readily. The chief said the robbery would be committed within the following week.

"Three days later Mr. Hutchinson awoke in the morning and discovered that both sheets of his bed, which had been in place when he retired, were gone. So was a little antique clock he had left on the mantel. He hurriedly dressed and hastened after breakfast to the chief's office. O'Donnell saw him coming and, as he entered the office, greeted him with:

"Mr. Hutchinson, I have two sheets and a clock that belong to you. We will have the dinner today."

"The burglary was done by a former criminal who at the time had reformed. He did the job at the request of the chief. How did he get the under sheet? He rolled Mr. Hutchinson over, rolled the sheet after him and then rolled him back."

A Terrifying Wig.

One day many years ago while Captain Arthur Cunningham of the British army was stationed in Nankin, China, a friend of his stepped into a barber's shop, and by way of employing his time he desired the barber to shave his head. This gentleman wore a wig, but which, for the sake of coolness, he had placed in his pocket. This operation of shaving, so common in China, was speedily and quickly executed, the barber seeming to be delighted with the honor of shaving one of the illustrious strangers. Previous to his leaving the shop and while the man's attention was called in some other direction my friend replaced his wig upon his head, little thinking of the result of this simple process. No sooner, however, had the barber turned around and observed him when he had so lately cleared of every vestige of hair suddenly covered with a most luxuriant growth, than, taking one steady gaze at him to make sure he was not deceived, he let fall the razor, cleared his counter at a bound and, running nimbly through the crowd, which was speedily collected, cried out that he was visited by the devil.—London Standard.

A Cheerful Face.

To wear a cheerful face when the heart is aching is not deceit. When a good housekeeper cleans the front steps and porch before she sets the house to rights, she does not mean to deceive passersby. She merely shows some pride in her home and some consideration for her neighbors. We compare our heartsches more quickly when we begin by considering the friends who are near us.

In Trouble.

"Did you go to the doctor's to be examined this morning?"

"Yes. And I was terribly disappointed."

"What was the trouble, dear?"

"I found him in"—Milwaukee Sentinel.

He Could Run.

He could run, all right, all right. He had to. Talk about your amateurs that spring for sport—this party had learned to run or starve, as a boy, and had never forgot how. Why, say, when he tore himself loose from a vicinity it seemed like the whole landscape was crumpled. I used to try him out by giving him a start and shooting at him. If he beat the bullet, we figured he was up to form, but if the lead overtook him we'd call it an off day and unload the cartridges. I've seen him across a jack rabbit up till it was workin' under forced drafts, then limp up to it from behind an' kind of yawn an' stretch, an' then go it to wake up or else get off the trail an' let somebody run that knowed how.—McClure's Magazine.

A Bad Recovery.

Scene: Registry office.