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ELIHU PEASLEY VISITS A WASHINGTON THEATER

Me and the Congressman went to one of them air show-houses where you go up three sets of stairs and then crawl down over rows and rows of people to a place to roost and watch the folks under you.

Quite a passel of fiddlers and one thing and another swarmed out of a small door in the platform and began scraping. A man in the middle was thrashing 'round with a stick but he couldn't seem to get 'em to pull together until near the wind up, when, I reckoned, they made about as much noise as the village band for a few minutes.

Everybody was busy seein' what the women folks had on, and they had to have powerful magnifying glasses so's to be able to see it.

Then all at once the lights went out and the band struck up with something mellow and sweet, and one side of the house slid up into the air, leavin' an old time kitchen and a likely young gal a-peelin' potatoes right in sight. I reckoned she'd be plum flustered before all us strangers; but we kept still, not breathing a word, and she never knewed we was there.

She was talkin' to herself about her gay and frisky uncle by adoption and her jealous old aunt who had sort a brought her up; when directly in comes the young farm hand with a pitchfork and a water-jug, and tells her how much he's gone on her. She 'pears to like that brand of chaff just rate, and, howsomever she throws the potato peelin' at him it's plain she's tickled to death. Bimeby he kinder slides up to her, and when he thinks her lips is puckered up about right he deals her a rousin' smack—never noticin' us or the old uncle a-dozin' on a bench in the doorway.

This here aged party puts his foot down on all the sparkin' in his house. He leads the hired hand off by the ear and throws the jug after him. He storms at the young gal and she peels all the potatoes over twice more and never says a word. Then the old snorer quiets down and reckons he might possibly overlook it this time if she'd permit him to plant another smack in the same locality. She refused and the old man cursed and raged.

I was just about to talk right out in meeting, when things got so warm they had to slide down the side of the house. Then they turned on the lights and me and the Congressman went out between the ax.

Arter a while they raised the partition again and I see a country hotel. The farm hand was there with the young gal in boy's clothes. They was runnin' away; but for some fool notion or other they didn't run worth a cent, but just hung round the tavern, and kept tellin' everybody the old uncle bein' after 'em. They let on like as if the gal was a boy that the old feller was mean to—but, seems to me, any one would have knowed better; 'cause a boy don't take short steps or talk like a canary bird.

All of a suddint some one looks out the door and says the uncle's a-comin' with shot guns and blood-hounds and wants to reason with the young couple.

Wall, the runaway gal gets ready to defend herself with a rollin' pin and a broom stick. The hired hand draws out a brace of nickel plated revolvers and gives one to his sweet-heart. I saw there was sure to be some shootin', and I made up my mind to get out of range.

Wall, I started to find the place I came in at in the dark, not aimin' to step on nobody's corns; but it wasn't long before I got into trouble. Somebody said, "Throw him out!" and ten times quicker than I can tell it, they hustled me over their heads to the stairway. They give me a first class start down these, and I went about four steps at a time. Arter about five minutes I found I was all there, though I felt terribly mixed up in some parts.

When the Congressman came out he said there wasn't no shootin' after all. I was mighty pleased to hear that, and I hope the farm hand, turns out to be a good husband what don't mind buildin' the fire in the mornin', occasionally, when there ain't any other way out of it.

Skulls as Hard as Stone.

It is commonly believed that the Southern negro has a thicker skull than any other race, but while the darkeys have a cranium almost bomb-proof, it is to be questioned whether they compare to certain of the Moorish tribes.

These tribes, in the vicinity of Morocco, are inordinately proud of their thick skulls, and from babyhood the heads of the boys are kept shaven, that the inherent tendency toward thickness of skull may be increased. They have developed their heads to such a degree that one of the div-ersions of tourists in Morocco is to pay one of these youngsters a sum equivalent to about half a cent for the privilege of breaking bricks on his head.

The skull forms a natural defence and when attacked the Moorish lad wards off his opponent's blows by lowering his head and receiving the thrusts upon his skull.

The thickness of the negro's skull is ascribed to the scanty covering of hair upon his pate, nature endeavoring to protect the brain from the rays of the sun by increasing the thickness of the skull.

A Beheaded Photo

Lady Elder was giving the finishing touches to her young guest's skirt and telling what a round of pleasure was in store for her during her stay and elaborating on the many qualifications of a certain young man.

"Yes, Edith, you really must meet Mr. Everleigh. My husband says he is staying with the Norths at the Symciores, and that is only three miles off, so he can easily come to dinner. We will have him on Thursday."

Near Rose Court there was a farmhouse, and an old Miss Milton took it one summer and came accompanied by her nephew, to enjoy the air.

Jack Milton was leaving for coffee plantations in Ceylon soon, but not before he and his pretty neighbor had become very great friends. Edith remembered how one afternoon a traveling photographer had come round and photographed them as they made a group outside Rose Court.

She went to her desk and unlocked it and took out the photograph. The peculiarity of her own figure in the picture was that the head had



"YOU MUST MEET MR. EVERLEIGH," been cut out. There was a little round hole left in the card. Jack had done it before he went away.

He had asked for the picture, and when Edith made excuse by saying she wanted a remembrance of Miss Milton he then begged to be allowed to have part of it, to which request she gave permission.

Where was the head now, she wondered, and where was Jack? He used to send her messages through Miss Milton, and then that old lady died, and the Vernons left Rose Court, so now she did not know where he was.

Nevertheless she was sure she had heard either Jack or his aunt some time or another mention Mr. Everleigh, and, if so, why, there was now a chance of hearing some interesting news.

The next day she proposed to walk to Lanton, three miles off, in the afternoon to do some shopping. It was growing dark when she returned. The butler told her, on her entrance, that tea was in the library and the gentlemen had all returned. She had just reached the door when she saw a tiny speck of white at her feet.

Knowing Lady Elder was scrupulously tidy, she stooped to pick it up—only a piece of white card. She turned it over in her hand—a face, and that face her own at seventeen years old! Her heart almost stopped beating. Then the door opened and Sir John came out.

"Come in, Edith," called Lady Elder from the midst of a group gathered round the fire.

As she entered the young man rose. She knew three of them and only needed Mr. Everleigh and the tutor to be introduced to her.

"Miss Vernon, who is staying with me," said Lady Elder.

The tutor bowed. Mr. Everleigh was putting down his teacup, but turned his head as Lady Elder rang for lights. In the meantime Edith took a seat offered to her by one of her military friends, who was trying to get up a conversation with her.

"Have some muffins, dear?" said Lady Elder as she stopped to get them from before the fire and gave them to Mr. Everleigh to hand to her.

He approached with the dish and stood before her. As he was so standing the lamps were brought in. She raised her eyes and saw a face looking down at her—a face she knew, only older than when they last met. A long gaze and then—

"Why, you're Jack!" she faltered.

"And you're Edith!" he said.

"And how are you Mr. Everleigh?" she asked.

He sat down beside her, still holding the muffin dish, looking at her all the while.

"Ah!" he and he laughed, "because my godfather, Mr. Everleigh, left me his possessions on condition I should take his name. He was a cousin of my old aunt's, you know, and had no near relatives. But I haven't forgotten you and Rose Court, though it's so long ago.

When Mr. Everleigh next went abroad, the other part of the photograph was in his pocketbook. Edith Vernon had become Edith Everleigh.

Lending a Hand.

Mrs. Muggins—That man who joined the church last Sunday used to be a bunco steerer.

Mrs. Buggins—Isn't it lovely! What a help he will be in getting up church fairs!—Philadelphia Record.

THE SECRET OF THE DESK

By ETHEL JAMIESON McCALLUM

The story ended, Mrs. Cameron laid aside her book and assumed a position of careless repose. A smile played about the corners of her mouth, and the whole expression of her face showed that she was a truly happy and contented wife. The merry crackle of the logs in the fireplace was a fitting accompaniment to her day-dreams. This harmony, however, was soon interrupted by a prolonged sound, as of loosening boards. Quickly turning on the light, and following with her eye the direction of the noise, she discovered that her husband's writing desk, which stood close to the fireplace, was becoming disjoined. Fully understanding in this incident the philosophy of heat, she was not frightened or surprised, when a moment later, the side of the desk nearest the fire fell to the floor.

One article only dropped from the desk—a photograph. Picking it up, much to her surprise she recognized the features of her old school chum, Nellie Vincent, an orphan, residing with her aunt in a distant State.

"How came Nellie's photograph in my husband's possession?" she thought. "Can there be a secret attachment between them?"

Just then well-known steps were heard in the hall, and the troubled woman had only time to put the photograph back into the desk and smooth her ruffled hair when her husband entered the room.

"I have an appointment down town this evening," he presently said. "I am very sorry, dear, but we shall have to-morrow evening together."

"Very well, Richard. I will tell Jennie to prepare supper immediately," said Mrs. Cameron as she left the room.

Mr. Cameron in the library, soon discovered his broken desk, and at once set about repairing the damage. His movements caused the photograph to drop from its insecure position, and, glancing at it, his face flushed with annoyance.

"Nellie's picture! What if Isabel has seen it?"

Just then his wife's footsteps were heard and he hastily slipped the photograph into his pocket.

A month later she had decided upon her course of action, and at the table, one evening, she disclosed her plans to her husband.

"You see, Richard, I have not seen my sister Kate since just before we were married. That was two years now, and I should like very much to visit her. Do you think I might go—well, say by the first of next week?"

"Certainly; go by all means, dear. It will do both you and Kate a world of good to see each other again.

"Now, Isabel, dear, of course I shall be a little lonely at first, but I shall soon become reconciled to my bachelor life; so make a long visit. Enjoy yourself to the fullest extent, and get a little color into that pale face of yours."

One day, after she had been away about five weeks, her husband's usual letter came. She eagerly read it, and finished with a sigh.

"Well, Isabel," said her sister, entering the room and noticing the open letter, "Richard hasn't collapsed under the maid's culinary efforts, I hope?"

"No—but, Kate dear, I must go home. Some of our well meaning but rather hasty club friends have planned for a celebration of our marriage anniversary one week from to-day, so of course I must return home not later than the day after to-morrow. That is quite a long time."

One evening a week later, the pretty parlor of the Camerons was thronged with guests. Among them moved the hostess, cordial, animated, beautiful, with a smile not less enchanting than that which had lighted her lovely face as a happy bride just two short years before. How could any one guess of the aching heart beneath the mask?

On a table in a corner of the library were arrayed a host of gifts of which Mrs. Cameron had seemed oblivious.

Her eye caught sight of a framed picture, which she curiously lifted to the light. She uttered a low exclamation, for again she was looking into the eyes of the girl who had ruined her home.

"Don't you like the crayon, Isabel? I thought it was a very good copy of Nellie's photograph taken for you especially. She will be disappointed if it fails to please you, for she sent it to me with the express wish that none but the best artist in the city should copy it."

The guests, the presents, even Nellie Vincent's picture, were forgotten for the moment. Two great tears shone in Isabel's eyes, and throwing her arms about her husband's neck she kissed him impulsively, much to his surprise and rather to his confusion, for his proud wife was not apt to be demonstrative before the public.

Asked and Answered.

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The Bachelor—Love is the prelude to matrimony.
The Maid—And what is matrimony?
The Bachelor—The prelude to matrimony.

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