The Free Press Short Story

DEBTS AND DEBTORS

By Ruth and Robert Osborne

blue, boarded the eastbound she said. train that drosty January morning when it drew up to the station of the little town in Western Ontario. Most of the occupants of the coach that she entered glanced at her with mild interest and then resumed their former attitudes, for there was nothing about her to arres attention-not the attention of a casua observer at any rate. But there was nothing whatever "casual" about little old lady across the aisle; her bright dark eyes gleamed with interest behind the big gold-rimmed spectacles as they rested on the straight, somewhat stiff figures of the girl, who was then nodding a restrained farewell to the group o friends on the platform,

its way-the new passenger took a deep breath, which did not escape the notice of her neighbor, and then relaxed. Removing her hat and veil, preparing to lean back in comfort, she glanced about gether. the car with eager interest; finally her eyes met those of the woman across the fret; "Agnes could not meet me."

not-hurt her feelings."

To forestall any further advances. June tween the book and the fascination of the flying landscape the morning passed rapidly. When the porter's call to luncheon in the dining car roused her she "Scuse me," said the high. rather shrill voice of the old lady across me? I despise those dining cars, 'spec-

Now June, who had never been in a circumstances have welcomed company but as she glanced at the absurd little figure in rusty black with a shabby in one cotton-gloved hand and a large square adle, evidently a bird cage, in , her heart sank, and she rebened. Why need she be nice to a prying old "frump" like that? She racked her brain swiftly for a plausible excuse. She couldn't declare she was not hungry; she was ravenously hungry! . Meekly she rose and followed her self-elected friend through the train.

Once seated, the little woman introduced herself as Mrs. Pomfret and said she was on her way from a small Ontario town to spend the winter with a niece Then with businesslike reserve the girl surrendered completely for withholding information that it would please her listener to hear and herself to

was "on the road," she would walk dir- here!" ectly into one of the large department yet uncertain; that did not matter.

rant."

family-simple, honest people who had Pomfret. She is a friend of mine." their own little house and garden.

"But that wouldn't do for me, you see," were ample reward. June concluded with a restless move- "My, my, but it's good luck for me!" I have known you for years. I have another. Six bullocks had been lost in ment of her vigorous young shoulders. "I Mrs. Pomfret declared repeatedly. "I known your family intimately for even that very spot during the year. don't want peace; I want-well, not war want to buy some things for my niece; longer. That is why I have not pressed All at once the Britisher sank above of course,"-she laughed,-"but, but just she's just about your build and style, charges some time ago. At first I hoped his waist, and was rapidly being sucked life." Her glance was direct and ap- You'll tell me what I ought to get, won't I was mistaken; then I hoped you might in farther. He called to the officer, but Bladder Weakness pealing, and Mrs. Pomfret nodded her you? I haven't-much time; I'm leaving some day come to me with a straight in the dark the latter could not see him. quick understanding.

doubt. May it be all you hope to find it." afternoon dress and a fur, all at prices drew cut a slip of paper. "Here, I think, bamboo six feet long. He placed it ath-To June's mixed relief and disappoint- that made June open her eyes. ment Mrs. Pomfret said when they re- "I don't want any cheap stuff," Mrs. er-borrowings. I will give you six months far extended as possible. By quickly turned to the coach that she was sleepy Pomfret said. "Don't want showy, vulgar to make them good-somewhere else." jerking his body he gradually lifted it and settled down for a nap. June found things either, just the nicest, the very Mr. Trompet motioned toward the door, and threw himself forward as far as he her book less absorbing than before and best." gave herself up to delicious dreams of the days to come.

Pomfret, who was still dezing. Would that!" it be rude for her to slip in to dinner by herself?' She could say she did no: let that worry you," she said calmly. "I henceforth. She is invaluable, but some- to dry, soil. wish to disturb her

June had almost decided to go into cpened her eyes, blinked several times that made June gasp. Mrs. Pomfret we need to balance her substantial know- be grateful. I am certainly very much and then said in her high voice: "Shail counted them carefully, three one-hun- ledge of the business and her other solid in your debt, Mr. Trompet." we go in /to dinner now, dear? I'm dred-dollar bills and a number of other qualities." hungrier than ever."

She was quiet through dinner, but Mrs. Pomfret talked enough for two, relating endless tales of doubtful interest.

Not long after dinner the train drew into the station at Montreal. June's heart was beating almost to suffocation as she involuntarily glanced across the aisle. In spite of her irritation she felt a pang of compassion for the little old ady nervously struggling to close bulging bag and to gather up the bird on it. cage and a big bundle in a shawl-strap. Mrs. Pomfret was plainly flustered.

"I'm so excited I can't seem to manage," she declared. June felt her heart relenting. After all the little woman was as kind as could be: she should hate As the train drew forward again on have her mother arrive alone in Mon-

As June surrendered the bird cage to the taxi-driver Mrs. Pomfret leaned from Surprised and not altogether pleased, her seat and kissed her. "You have been June Webster was inclined to retire into truly good to me, my dear. I hope I can a five." do something for you some day.

June found her position at Trompet & then?" Blair's, a humble one in the basement, and her lodgings an exceedingly small and dingy hall, bedroom on the fourth floor of an unattractive boarding house. some of the folks around home. I could The salesgirls who were her companions throughout the day regarding her with three one-hundred-dollar bills then?" indulgent condescension and were kind to her without making her one of them-

> cloak and suit department; he was the favorite topic of conversation. All the 'swell," but opinion differed whether he "just naturally elegant" or "too stuck up and conceited for any use."

> June threw herself into her work with ates, who declared that a nine-hour job in a draughty basement on small wages was not a thing to be enthusiastic about. But the store manager knew the value of enthusiasm. June gradually advanced the eye of the manager of the cloak and

ment!" he declared. "Good figure, good force?" manner and interested in the job."

Mr. Stanley Wilberforce. - Her dislike was course June did not show her feelings; end lay together. "You can see how as possible. The other girls in the de- to be two."

Toward Christmas the demand for left his fingers. Before the waiter had brought the ice pretty clothes increased till the sales- There was a moment of silence. water Mrs. Pomfret knew that June was women were as busy as they could well "But she couldn't have done that!" her way to Montreal. And by the be. June had just finished with a most exclaimed the girl suddenly. "Her fin- tion is in applying relief, always keep time the soup had arrived she knew that exacting customer one afternoon and was gers are stiff with rhebmatism, and she at hand a supply of Dr. Thomas' Eclectric it was the girl's first visit to a big city, busily hanging up the many garments fumbled the bills and counted them out Oil, because experience has taught them that she had looked forward to this viewed and rejected when she heard a slowly one by one." magic day for "years and years," and suppressed titter from one of the other | Suddenly realizing the import of her the treatment of this ailment. And they that through the agency of an uncle who girls and a low exclamation, "Look who's words, she turned a horrified gaze on are wise, for its various uses render it a

stores of Montreal and get a position, plain little figure in rusty black was ing at her. She followed their lead to though in just what capacity she was as standing not far away, glancing timidly the white face of Mr. Wilberforce. about her. After an instant's bewilder-"Good," Mrs. Pomfret said approving- ment June .recognized her as her ac- self, Stanley?" asked Mr, Trompet not forget the terrible drowning of Carer in ly as her bright glance rested on the quaintance of the train, Mrs. Pemfret. unkindly. fresh, eager face across the table. The girl's first inclination was to turn | Wilberforce tried to laugh, naturally, seen in the Exmoor country, and not so "Lodging's all arranged for too, I'll war- her head and pretend to be busy. But, but succeeded only in smiling in an ugly long ago a valuable hunting horse was "Oh, yes; mother never could have let manner of Laura Meeker, to whom the "you have known me for years. Surely barely escaped with his life. Another me go if they hadn't been. Even now I new customer timidly applied, she sud- you are not going to accuse me on the Briton, who had a narrow escape from a believe she thinks I might as well walk denly changed her mind. Coming quickly testimony of a new clerk. And her similar bog, tells of a thrilling experience into a den of lions!" And June gave a forward, she flashed a glance at the girl hands-", he turned to glance signifi- in this relation. vivid picture of the small-town home and and said quietly, "I will wait on Mrs. cantly at June's tensely clasped fingers

won a modest success at the crossroads . June could hear the whispers of the matism!" store and had then retired to enjoy the girls behind her. "Just her speed," they fruits of their labors in the peace of said, but she did not heed them; the perious voice checked the young man's and go into Redmire. It was winter, little old lady's delight and gratitude insinuations. "Don't make matters the bog was unusually wet, and they

on the evening train." "Yes, well, you'll get it, I haven't a Together they chose a street suit, an He turned to a drawer of his desk, and pits. Happily he had with him a stout

she glanced a bit apprehensively at Mrs. cut for her if she tries to charge all a young woman as you for assistant. For a quarter of an hour he lay

always pay cash.'

glad to turn it over at once to Mr. Wilberforce, as was customary in that department when anyone -paid a large amount of cash. The manager stepped to the cashier's desk, obtained the small change owing Mrs. -Pomiret and handed

With a little pang of homesickness she watched Mrs. Pomfret depart. Perhaps after all a little shabby somebody from home was "about her speed." She sighed a little; it was hard to have no real friend in all the great city. But she had been unable to overcome, a certain reserved shyness in her nature when she was in UST one passenger, a slight girl in | June bit her lips. "Yet, let's go in," the presence of the sophisticated young foods may be prepared. Naturally they women with whom she worked.

"Say!" Laura Meek's voice behind her made her swing round in astonishment, and her chin unconsciously rose an inch or two in self-defense.

in Laura's carefully powdered cheeks. 'Say, you know you're all right! I deserved that call-down you gave me and no mistake. Shake on it."

The following morning there was a transfer to another department.

swallowing her pride, the girl took the force was standing near him. "You sold centing and pointing up the flavor of time that was all they was to it. bird cage in her free hand, and the two quite a large cash order yesterday, I vegetables. made their way to the platform to- believe, Miss Webster?" said Mr. Trom- dishes may be bettered if a small amount skool tonite and when I come home ma

"Yes. I noticed them particularly, but

"Oh, yes! Yes to both questions. Mrs Pomfret is absolutely honest, and besides

I saw her count out the money."

"Oh, no!" June reiterated vehemently "There's a girl I need in my depart- man. "What do you think of it. Wilber-

So in November of June's-first year might be mistaken, as I evidently was she found herself selling expensive suits myself. Strange old party comes in, you and gowns instead of the dish pans and know, simple, guileless old soul apparentegg beaters that she had sold in Janu-ly,-no one suspects her,-buys a lot of ary. It was a big step upward, and June stuff and pays with a roll of bills-like was happy over it, but she did not like this." He picked up a roll from the desk and ran them through his supple white "there was something about him." Of middle so that the \$100 marks on each she simply kept out of his way as much easily this hundred dollar bill might seem

"Oh!" June's fascinated eyes never

Mr. Trompet. His own eyes, cool, cai- valuable medicine. June glanced over her shoulder. A culating, but a little sad, were not look-"Have you anything to say for your-

story. But I can let it go no farther." The water had reached the man's armis a complete and accurate list of your- wart the surface and held his arms as

As they were examining evening gowis pet turned to June with a look of relief self full lingth on the surface. The one of the saleswomen s'ipped up to and spoke in a lighter tone. "As for you, suction was so great that it tore the When the porter announced dinner whisper a warning in June's ear. "Look Miss Webster, I believe we need just such leather gaiters off his legs. manager of the cloak and suit depart- stretched out, gasping, before he could Mrs. Pomfret overheard her. "Oh, don't ment. Mrs. Burton will be the manager, get breath enough to worm himself along surely will be thankful and very well what elderly and perhaps a trifle set in And so she did, drawing from the her ways. Your fresh insight, good taste the dining car alone when Mrs. Pomfret depths of the shabby bag a roll of bills and tactful courtesy will be just what June said falteringly. "I shall always

bills. It was more money than June had "I hardly feel that I have earned this," I am the debtor."

RESTAURANT DISHES AT HOME By Betty Barclay

Have you ever gone into raptures over some dish served in your favorite restaurant or tea-room?. It may have been a salad, a dessert, a meat dish, or even a humble vegetable dish or soup. Some how, it had a flavor that won your heart. Later on in your home you wished you could prepare a similar dish for the

Those in charge of the meals at restaurants, clubs, hotels, and tea-rooms, are constantly seeking for new flavors. new foods, and new ways in which old discover_food secrets that the average housewife might never learn.

The most delicious restaurant dish may be served on the home table, however, provided the housewife can wheedle the secret from the chef, or discover it But there was a tinge of natural red by carefully studying the dish that has been placed before her.

Surprising as it may seem, many of the restaurant dishes which please the diners are dishes that are prepared in almost the of Town. Ma sed she bet-it was his falt Warmed to a friendly glow, June "shook same way as they are prepared in the average home. Frequently the sole difa ference is in some subtle touch, some summons for Miss Webster to appear at extra seasoning that transforms the I seen her comeing. the main office. June answered it with offering into a dish, temptingly differout trepdiation hoping it might mean ent. For instance, a touch of sugar is, swimming erly this summer becuz she It was Mr. Trompet himself that await- ence in flavor. Sugar is recognized as a and when she shone it to pay he sed ed her, a thin elderly man with keen gray quick-energy food, but comparatively few Well heres the belt and Galluses but eyes and an aquiline nose. Mr. Wilber- realize that it has the property of ac- where is the rest of it. -I new all the

with ease by any housewife. STEAK EN CASSESROLE

2 pounds round or rump steak 14 cup flour Salt and pepper 2 tablespoons fat

2 cups canned tomatoes

1- teaspoon sugar. 2 onions 1 green pepper

2 carrots

Season the flour with-salt and pepper wassent wirm Conshus yet. in a hot frying pan. Transfer to a cas- charged the showfeur becuz business was

PIMIENTO CABBAGE SALAD

Add one-fourth cup vinegar to or tablespoon flour, one-half teaspoon dry mustard, one-half teaspoon salt and one tablespoon sugar. Place in a small saucewithout letting it come to a boil. Then "You think then she could not have slowly add one cup diluted, evaporated milk, stirring constantly until the mixture-thickens. Boil for one minute and salad oil, a dash of onion juice, and one can of pimiento chopped fine. Mix thor-'Why, it seems to me Miss Webster oughly and serve with shaved cabbage.

CORN SOUFFLE

Mix in a saucepan two tablespoons flour with one tablespoon melted butter Pour in slowly one cup of milk. Bring to the boiling point. Add one can corn, one teaspoon of sugar, one teaspoon salt, pepper to taste, and the well-beaten volks-of two eggs. Fold in the whites of the eggs, beaten stiff. Then turn into a buttered baking dish, and bake for thirty minutes in a moderate oven. Serve im-

Mothers Value This Oil.-Mothers who know how suddenly croup may seize their that this is an excellent preparation for

BATTLE WITH A BOG

Readers of 'Lorna Doone" can never the bog. That death trap is still to be observing the indolent, almost insolent, way. "Why, Mr. Trompet," he exclaimed, engulfed in the mire and the rider

He was with an official of the ord--"are certainly not crippled with rheu- nance survey, who was correcting the map of the country. In the dusk he and "Stanley!" Mr. Trompet's shocked, im- the rest of the party lost their way worse by being a cad! You spoke truly, could scarcely trip from one stone to

When Wilberforce had gone, Mr. Trom- could. Finally he managed to cast him-

"On the contrary, my dear young lady,

SLATS' DIARY BY ROSS FARQUHAR

Friday-well Bunneace Flick is dummer than I xpeckted her to be when I



telling her how the old stage Coaches use to run threw. here and she looked at me kinda dum and finely I found out she had herd a lot about stage Coaches But she all ways thot they was liveling people witch direks a play when they are giveing Show in the op

house. Saterday - Pa had a reck with the car this afternoon a women run lato

him just out side seen her comeing and I shud bught

Sunday-I gess ma is figgering oc in many cases, responsible for the differ- brung home a new Bathing suit to-day

of sugar is used-not enough to sweeten, made me take a bath. thats just like a Smell like a Athalete why she makes Here are three typical restaurant and me go and warsh all over like a Molly

> Tuesday-Couzen Rosella brung her new husbend up to are house to let us se him this evning. 'He is a site. cross eyed and lispes and wears Spats and perfumery: he also stutters, but pa sed to me he can see why Rosella tuk him He at lease wears Pants.

Wensday-Jake and me went to the crick this evening and fisht for a wile but diddent get a bite. Ferdy Plaunt seen us comeing home without no fish and he sed it was too erly and that the

Thirsday - Clem Dugan went home yesterday and told his wife he had disso poor and Mrs. Dugan got mad and sed she Wood Not drive the car her sugar. Cover and allow to cook slowly own self so Clem went & sold the cold too. Pa says that whut he calls a Man.

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NO MARKS

A certain very wealthy man had a desire to be thought a descendant of one of "the old families," and his house contained a number of "heirlooms." One thing which he took particular pride in was a military outfit, complete in every detail, with flintlock and powder-horn He was showing this to a young lady.

"My great-grandfather wore this suit when he gave his life to his country during the brave days of old," he said The young lady inspected the uniform carefully, but could find neither bullethole nor sabre-cut. She turned to him with a charming smile. "Oh, was the gentleman drowned?" sh



Troublesome Nights Swiftly Relieved

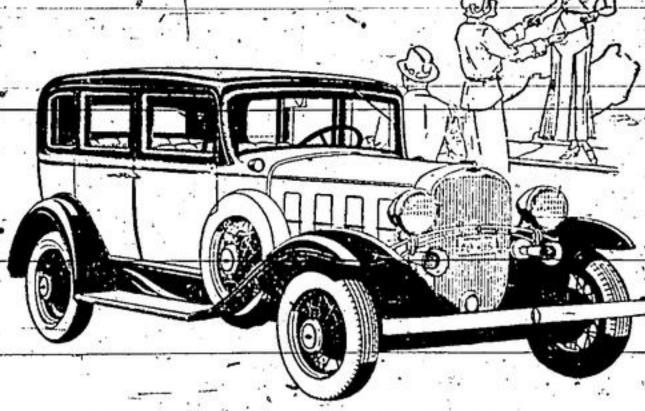
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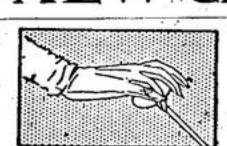


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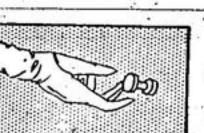
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