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# Getting Billy's Goat

## A Football Story

By JACK BRANT

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Football at Buckeye college was no afternoon pink tea. If you apologized for putting a hobnailed shoe in the face of your best friend the coach was likely to light on your neck the next minute because of your ladylike manners. Temper played a big part in picking the team, and those of us who didn't have any originally had had it developed. The one exception was Billy Gordon, the big guard.

Billy was so good natured that it oozed out all over him. No one, not even the coaches, could ever ruffle him. Even if one did pick a scrap he was so big that it didn't do any good. He would put out his right hand, which was about as heavy as a full sized ham and greatly resembled one, and if any one got in front of it he would be brushed away like a fly, leaving Billy as serene and good natured as ever.

A man like that can get a place in the line on any football team in the country. But Tom Burns, head coach of Buckeye, wanted more than an automaton of defense; he wanted a whirlwind of attack and destruction. He used to sit up whole nights trying to think of schemes to make Billy mad.

His theory was that every man had a temper stored away somewhere and it needed only a touch on the hidden spring to start it off.

But Tom was pretty well stumped trying to discover the combination that fitted Billy.

Two weeks before the big final game with Kenyon college, our main rival, the situation began to get desperate. Tom Burns called a meeting of the whole team minus Billy and explained that, no matter how furious the rest of us got, if we didn't get a good mad out of Billy we stood as much chance of winning that game as of growing wings on earth.

What he wanted was to get Billy angry just before the game and have the cause of his anger so far out of his reach that he couldn't get at it and would take his wrath out on the Kenyon team.

This set us all thinking, and that night as I jumped into bed I found the solution. That solution was Miss Pink.

Miss Pink was the queen of the coeds and the prettiest girl in two states. It was secretly surmised among a choice few who were in on the game that she was as good as engaged to head coach Tom Burns. Billy, who didn't dance, was not one of the few who were in on the game.

My plan was to get her to cast a few of those smiles on Billy. It's a well known axiom that a fellow in love is particularly susceptible to the grouch germ, and it's just a step from a good blue grouch to a tearing rage.

I predicted that in two weeks we could get the thing so well under way that on the day of the final game all we would have to do would be to light the fuse and then run like the mischief to get far enough away before the explosion.

The end that I outlined to Tom was to have Miss Pink come up to Billy just as he was leaving the locker building in his football clothes and reach out and slap him on the face.

She could throw in some words at the same time, like "liar" and "cheat" or whatever the ladylike phrases were that would convey the same meaning. This, I reasoned, would rouse the temper of a mummy. And, of course, as Billy couldn't hit a girl, he would go into the game and begin tearing the clothes off the Kenyon team.

Tom agreed that the basis of the plot wasn't bad, but he didn't think that quite so much action in the final part would suit Miss Pink. He said I had the right idea, but that if I'd ever been in love I would realize that it wouldn't take as much as that to make a man eat granite.

According to his views, the best way to get Billy's goat would be to have the lady of his choice suddenly announce on the day of the game that she was engaged to another man.

"I guess you're right," I said. "It sure would give Billy a jolt if Miss Pink should tell him that she was engaged to you when he was thinking that he was the king pin. Do you think you stand in strong enough to pull the trick off at the proper moment?"

It was a fool question for me to ask. If there was one line where Tom considered that he was strong it was with the ladies. He wasn't far wrong, either, for he was no end of a hero, and girls like that kind. But I had an idea that he was having harder work bringing Miss Pink to terms than he liked to admit.

This seemed tough on Tom, for it was plain as day that she was the one girl he had ever met whom he was head over heels in love with.

"Well," said Tom, looking a little fussed, "you certainly have got a lot of nerve. But if you can keep a secret I'll tell you something. I'm not engaged to Miss Pink yet, but I hope to be. And I think that for the good of the college I can get her to play her part, and we'll let Billy know of our engagement at the right moment to win that game."

The next day Tom was beaming. So after practice I asked him how things were progressing. And because he wanted to talk to somebody and because he had started in to make a confidant of me he told me all about it.

It seems that when he had first suggested the plan she had refused absolutely to have anything to do with it. But after he had made a strong appeal to her college spirit and explained how necessary temper was to football and that unless she helped we would lose the big game she came around conditionally.

The conditions were that she reserved the right to drop out at any moment and that if any engagement was announced she was to be the one to do the announcing. And Tom assured me that she wasn't the kind of girl that would back out and that she would do her best for Buckeye. He was going to take Billy to walk that night and meet her accidentally and had an excuse all fixed up to leave them together.

Now that everything was arranged I began to feel a little uneasy in my conscience. I liked Billy, as did everybody else, and it seemed to me that we were playing him a pretty low down trick.

Things began to turn out beautifully, just as we had planned. I guess a mere man doesn't stand much chance when a girl really sets her cap for him. Billy fell like a lamb and even took to writing poetry. His whole manner changed, and he carried around his 250 pounds as if they were barely enough ballast to keep him connected with the earth.

Tom gave him a clear field, for the good of the team, and when he wasn't at practice or attending lectures you could be pretty sure he was with Miss Pink or waiting for her somewhere.

This went on for two weeks, right up to the afternoon of the final game. Then came the explosion. It was bigger than we had expected—so big that Tom got caught in it.

A few of us were walking down to the field with Tom. He was very nervous, not listening to anything we said, and I knew it wasn't all caused by the game. Right in front of us were Miss Pink and Billy, waiting on the corner. As we passed Billy called to Tom, and he joined them. We went on.

I heard later that Tom tried to get away, but she wouldn't let him.

"Please stay, Mr. Burns," she said. "You have both been such good friends to me that I want you to be the first to hear a secret. I'm engaged, but don't tell, because it isn't out yet. Richard Randolph is a distant cousin, and I am so anxious to have you meet him."

She smiled up at them with those big, round, trusting eyes of hers. She was so confident they would be delighted and so absolutely unconscious that she was causing the slightest uneasiness to either of them.

They tried to say the right thing and left her to wait for her girl friends who were going with her to the game, and when they joined us at the locker room they were like two full sized hurricanes done up in quart bottles.

Nobody but I knew what the trouble was, and I didn't guess but half of it. Tom sailed into us in true football style, and the talk he gave us was a lyric. I've never heard nor read of a speech before a battle that could touch it. It put fire into us as if he were pouring it in with a dipper, and we ran out on that field ready to consume all that we touched.

That game will live forever in the history of Buckeye college. Kenyon came on the field with a heavier team and the idea that they were going to have a cinch. They found ten furies and one demon, and there was as much chance of stopping Buckeye as stopping the north wind.

Billy was the demon. From a quiet, peace loving Hercules of an hour before he had changed into an avenging torrent of wrath. Four men couldn't hold him, and his path when he ran down the field was lined with cripples, with one or two of the gravest, who courted death, clinging to him.

The odds turned right around in the first ten minutes, and the college in the bleachers went wild with delight as we dashed on to victory. The score at the end was 29 to 0, and there was lots of fight still left in us. Two men fought even as the cheering undergrads carried them twice around the field on their shoulders. These two were Tom Burns and Billy.

There was a big bonfire on the campus that night, and everybody, coeds and all, attended. At about the middle of it there was a cry for an ax, and as I vaguely remembered having seen one around the corner of the grand stand where the carpenters had been working I went for it.

I made plenty of noise coming, but there were two people around there in the dark that didn't hear me. They were Miss Pink and Billy. I was near enough to hear what they were saying when I stopped, and I couldn't help listening. Miss Pink was talking.

"I—I said it for a joke," she was saying. "There isn't any Richard Randolph. I'm sorry I did it. I would never have done it if—if I had thought you would get so angry with me."

"I wasn't angry with you or any one," said Billy, stubborn as a barn full of mules.

"Oh, but you were! You were very, very angry, indeed, and it was splendid, and—and—I love you for it!"

It always pays not to argue with a woman, and there are sometimes when it pays better than others.

I hurried away as fast as I could, but I couldn't get away fast enough not to notice that Billy realized this was one of the times that called for action, not words.

## MODERN WARFARE.

**Manning the Trenches and Locating the Enemy by Dust Clouds.**

A column of infantry, marching four abreast—the regular marching form—will pass a given point at the rate of 175 a minute. At that rate it will take a division, which contains about 10,000 men, about an hour to pass.

A division, which is the largest body known in the organization of the American army, will fully man two miles of trenches. The regulation distance in the manning of a trench is a yard to a man. There are three lines, however, needed to fully man such defenses—the firing line, which is down in the trench, a yard between each man; the support, which is back a short distance, and the reserve, which is behind the support. These three parts of the defense are of equal size.

In locating an enemy dust clouds are often excellent indications. A low, thick cloud indicates infantry, a high and thin cloud indicates cavalry, while a broken cloud indicates artillery or wagon trains. An experienced scout can closely estimate the character and strength of an enemy solely by the dust cloud.

An aeroplane to be perfectly safe must keep at an elevation of at least 4,000 feet above the ground.

Although the telegraph and telephone have become generally used in battle for purposes of communication, for distances under half a mile the old fashioned courier and horse are still exclusively used. These have been found a swifter and surer means of communication for short distances than either telephone or telegraph.—Washington Star.

## ORIGIN OF STARS.

**It May Be That the Nebular Hypothesis Is All Wrong.**

The nebular hypothesis is that the stars were formed by the cooling and cohering of the gaseous nebulae. These "filmy veils of luminous gas," which are visible to the naked eye in the Milky way, are supposed to be star stuff. Many of these clouds have in their centers tiny spots of bright light, the supposed beginnings of new stars and suns.

In 1910 astronomers at Lick observatory discovered that the older a star becomes the faster it travels through space. Then the question arose, Can nebulae be stars in formation when their speed is even greater than the oldest stars?

The astronomers began to doubt the old theory. Some years of hard work at Mount Hamilton and at the University observatory in Chile were required. Now the velocities of forty nebulae are accurately known. The incredible speed of these nebulae suggests that they are older, not younger, than the stars. It is possible that they are disintegrated stars and not stars in the making at all.

The director of the Lick observatory says: "The effect upon our ideas of the connection existing between planetary nebulae and the stars is revolutionary. Apparently the stars have been evolved from planetary nebulae.

"What, then, are the nebulae if they are not star stuff? That is what the astronomers at Lick have set themselves to determine."—Exchange.

**Unique Engineering Feat.**

When railroad building was undertaken in Alaska following the discovery of gold a unique engineering feat was performed. At a point eighty miles out of Skagway the survey had been made for the road along the shore of a lake, but it was found to be so irregular and broken by so many coves that the plan was adopted of getting a better line by lowering the level of the lake. This was done by cutting an outlet channel, through which fourteen feet of the lake drained off. But presently the new channel, having been cut through a sandy hill, gave way, and the escaping lake water wore an enormous canyon through the country and reduced the lake level again over seventy feet. A fine, level roadbed was secured over what was formerly the bed of the lake.—Argonaut.

**When Knights Were Bold.**

When knights were clad in complete armor from top to toe it was essential that they should bear some sign by which their followers could distinguish them in battle, and this was the function of their armorial bearings. Knights who omitted to wear their own arms ran considerable risk, and it is related that at the battle of Bannockburn the last of the De Clares owed his death to his omission to wear his bearings. He was slain unrecognized, whereas had he been known he would have been held prisoner for the ransom or as a hostage.

**An Extreme Case.**

"They tell me your daughter is very musical," said the visitor.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Pikestaff. "The fact is she is so very musical that we cannot induce her to practice either her singing or her piano lessons, the amateur quality of the work grates so on her sensitive nerves."—Judge.

**Cause For Apprehension.**

"I object to that man on the jury," said the lawyer for the defense.

"On what grounds?" asked the court.

"I was instrumental in getting him married."—Philadelphia Ledger.

**Self Evident.**

"A man has invented a trousers pocket which a wife can't discover."

"He wasn't a married man."—Baltimore American.

Too much rest simply means rust.—Sir Walter Scott.


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