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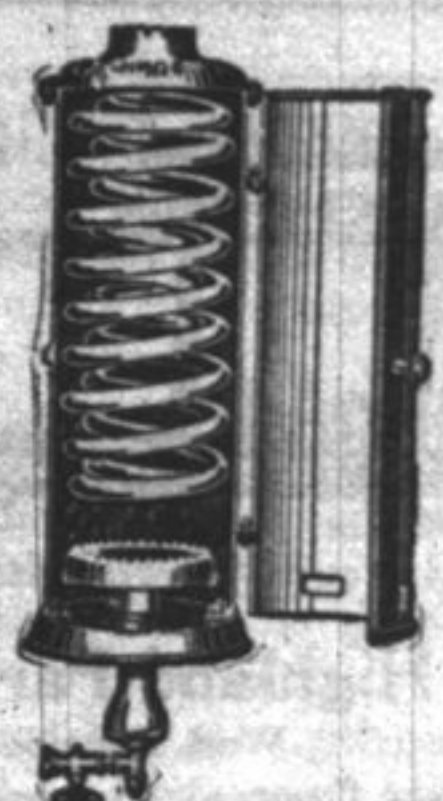
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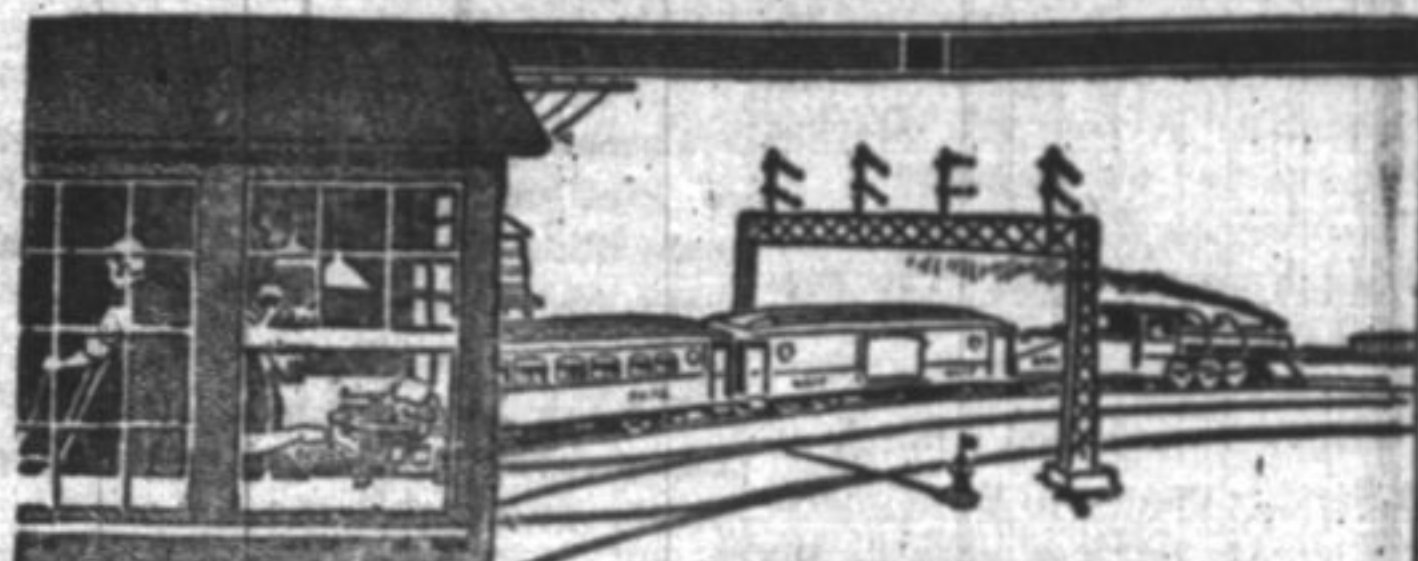
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The Other Side of the Wall

And Different Kinds
of Love

By CLARISSA MACKIE

A farmer boy not out of his teens was taking the horses to water. The setting sun threw their shadows so far that their bodies were lost in the distance, while the legs looked like telegraph poles. Leaning on a fence enclosing a yard about a cottage beside the road was a young girl. Her feet were on the bottom rail, her head and shoulders being above the top one.

"You're looking mighty pretty to-night," said the young fellow. The girl snickered. "The setting sun shining on that hair of yours makes it look yellow enough to be pure gold."

"That must be what you're looking for."

"What?"

"Gold. When you get a girl you can be sure she'll be the daughter of some rich farmer."

"Your dad isn't a rich farmer," replied the young man softly.

"I'm. I wasn't talking about myself."

"Whom were you talking about?"

"Well, there's Lizzie Blake."

There was no reply to this for the moment. He seemed to be thinking.

"I thought," he said presently, "that you and Lizzie were thicker than two peas in a pod."

"Well, what has that to do with it?"

"Why, I didn't think you would be jealous of her."

"Jealous? Who's jealous?"

"Oh, you're not, eh? Maybe you don't care who I keep company with."

"Of course I don't."

"Then I reckon I'll keep company with Lizzie."

"You can just do that as long and as soon as you want to; I don't care."

The young man gave a tug at the halter of the horse and moved on a few steps, when he stopped, turned and looked back at the pretty figure of the sixteen-year-old girl gilded by the last rays of the setting sun.

"Did you mean that?" he asked.

"Yes, I did," was the reply in a tone so bitter that it would have stung plainly to any one except the person to whom it was addressed that she did not.

His only reply was another yank at the halter, and, turning again, he led the horse to the barn, fed them, made their beds and left them for the night.

As for the girl, she went into the house and that night when she went to bed she cried herself to sleep.

These two had been brought up side by side and had arrived at the marriage age. A few days before the young man had kissed another girl on finding a red ear at a husking. And so what was about to happen did not happen. Fate makes many sudden turns.

"If I were a man," said Amelia Peddiferd impressively, "I would be tempted to use strong language."

"Don't mind me, Aunt Amelia," grinned her nephew. "Don't let your set bar you from any of the privileges of the—"

"Fiddlesticks!" snapped Amelia, quite restored to good humor. "Tom, what would you do about Donald Brown's chickens?"

"Catch 'em and eat 'em," said the practical Tom. "If they come into your garden and eat your lettuce and scratch up your corn eat 'em. They're fattened on your food, so to speak."

"I wouldn't do that," said Amelia thoughtfully, "but I was wondering if you wouldn't go over and speak to Donald about it."

"Certainly," agreed Tom. "And is old Brown's pretty niece stopping there now?"

"Linda, you mean?"

"Yes; pretty Linda Brown," said Tom sentimentally.

"Then I won't go—er—yes, I will. Aunt Amelia, shall I tell Mr. Brown that you, president of the Woman's Suffrage society of Blankton and a stern believer that woman is the equal of man, have sent me, a mere man, over to growl at him for permitting his chickens to invade the sacred precincts of your garden?"

"Tell him anything you please," sighed Amelia wearily.

Tom stepped through the open window and walked down a box bordered path to the high brick wall that separated the two places and provided tangible evidence that the old friendship between the Browns and the Peddiferds was no more.

And it had all been on account of marauding chickens on the one hand and Amelia's pet ram on the other side of the fence.

Tom knew a weak piece in the wall and kicked out a brick to gain a foothold. The brick assailed Donald Brown upon his rheumatic foot as he hobbled among his old-fashioned flowers.

Mr. Brown did not call for a substitute. He roared for himself. He greeted Tom's handsome face over the wall with a dark frown.

"You young rascal! What do you mean by throwing bricks at me?" he growled.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Brown, but it was an accident. I didn't know you were there." Tom swung himself around, balanced for a moment and dropped a

pair of substantial feet into the jaws of a cold frame.

Donald Brown danced about angrily and vowed vengeance upon the Peddiferds and all their tribe.

Tom stepped out of the rain he had created and shook a reproving finger under the handsome nose of the lady gentleman.

"Be a sport, Mr. Brown," he remonstrated.

"What do you want here?" demanded Donald Brown.

"I came to call upon Miss Linda."

"Linda—pooh! She isn't here, she!"

"Then I came to complain about the chickens. Aunt Amelia's garden is ruined."

"Humph!" snorted Mr. Brown. "Being unmarried, it's rather hard on Aunt Amelia," went on the young man gently. "If she had a husband to protect her rights—"

"Her own fault!" put in Mr. Brown gruffly.

Tom's eyes danced. Ho! There was an old romance here after all.

"She may have been hasty," agreed Tom.

"You mean she regrets—er—that she remained single?" demanded the other eagerly.

"Oh, no, I mean she regrets that she has had to speak to you about the chickens," explained Tom.

"Oh!"

What a world of disappointment was expressed in the ejaculation! Tom winced and discovered that he was actually feeling sorry for Donald Brown and Aunt Amelia. "Why hadn't they ever married?" he wondered. Together they would make a splendid pair; apart they nagged at each other.

"Both unhappy and don't know the reason why," he decided wisely.

"You know, a woman won't admit she hasn't made a happy choice when she decides to remain a spinster," explained Tom.

"Ah!" Mr. Brown sniffed a little and wiped his eyes with a spotless handkerchief.

"Still, it's never too late for a woman to change her mind on any subject," went on Tom.

"You might put it up to Amelia, then," said Donald Brown grimly. "If she'll change her mind I'll change mine."

"You mean it?"

"Certainly."

"Put it there, Uncle Don!" yelled Tom, pumping Mr. Brown's hand up and down.

"Please don't be quite so impetuous, young man," said Mr. Brown. "My niece hasn't exhibited any signs of interest in you—yet."

"Linda? Oh, she'll wait," said Tom airily, for his mind was filled with visions of restoring Aunt Amelia to the arms of Donald Brown. Of course there had been an old romance, and this couple, sored by time and loneliness, only waited a diplomatic hand to join theirs in betrothal.

"Linda and I'll be the bridesmaid and best man," thought Tom as he retreated toward the wall.

"So you're going to put the question to Amelia?" asked Donald.

"If you say so?"

"Of course! Tell her I'm sorry it happened and that I'll take all the responsibility. I'm killing off my chickens anyway. Only got a dozen left, and they're nailed up tight as can be in the poultry yard."

"I'll tell her," promised Tom as he vanished over the wall.

Amelia Peddiferd was sitting in her rose arbor knitting a shawl.

"Aunt Amelia," said Tom impressively, "I've talked with Mr. Brown, and he—er—says—er—that if you'll forget and forgive, why, he'll take all the responsibility and blame for the trouble."

Aunt Amelia stared. "Of course he was to blame," she said mildly. "He never should have kept chickens anyway. They ate up his own flowers and vegetables and—"

"And he wants to marry you, Aunt Amelia!" Tom confessed this hurriedly. He wanted the interview over. Had not Linda Brown just flashed past the house in her uncle's runabout?

"Donald—Brown—wants—to—marry—me?" shrieked Aunt Amelia wrathfully. "The old bigamist!"

"Bigamist?" gasped Tom.

"Of course! Didn't you know he was married? Married my old school friend, Lizzie Blake. Poor Lizzie's weak minded and been in the asylum for a dozen years. Marry me?"

"Perhaps he didn't mean that," admitted the wretched youth. "Let me tell you what he said, and you may understand."

"So painstakingly word for word he repeated what had been said between the two men on the other side of the wall, and when he had finished Aunt Amelia was laughing merrily, and Donald Brown, who had slipped into the yard and also heard, laughed sympathetically.

"I proposed to Miss Amelia to remove the brick wall at my own expense," explained Mr. Brown, "and I was asking you to assure her that I was ready to keep my promise; also that I was eating up my chickens as fast as possible, and there would be no further annoyance from that source. And, Amelia, if you can wait until the other twelve chickens are disposed of—"

"Save them, Donald," interposed Aunt Amelia. "You may need them for Linda's wedding feast."

"And Tom's?"

"It looks that way now."

Their eyes followed Tom's manly form as he scaled the wall and disappeared from view.

He was going to Linda—and happiness.

The two friends in the rose arbor smiled at each other, secure in the happiness that the healing of old differences brings about.

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