

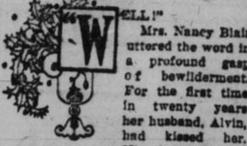
### The Lord of Christmas Week

WE have long dreamed of the perfect ruler, some happy prince who shall love his people well, whose leadership shall be wise, gentle, and just. History is wistful with man's effort to find him—the hero, the strong man, the righteous ruler—and then to establish him in dominion over their broken lives and warring wills. Long ago they found Him. But all who find Him lose Him, though all have found Him fair. The eager dream came true, when there issued out of Bethlehem the man of good-will, the lover of the race. Each year, for a handful of days, so brief, so swift to go, Lord Christ assumes the leadership. Each year we give Him Christmas Week, permitting His will to prevail, His brooding spirit to rest upon the nations. Towards that gentle interlude—the days of the Truce of God—men longingly look through the tale of the weary months. And when the brief term is ended, yearningly our thoughts turn back to that time when we were good together. His spirit is breathed through the pensive season, like faint music in the night. Strife, anger, tumult, and the hurry of the little days are banished. For our sad mood and lonely heart He brings a comfort. In His authority we find our peace. A while we dwell in that felicity. Touched with mortality, as is all earthly beauty, the rapid days glance by, and we have lost them while the welcome is still on our lips. He comes and He passes, because our hospitality is short of duration and we are troubled about many things. We crowd Him out for other guests less radiant. If His dominion over the hearts of men were more than a lovely episode—if He might but abide, it would be well with us.

### Kissing Time and Christmas Time

By GENEVIEVE ULMAR

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"KISS!" Mrs. Nancy Blair uttered the word in a profound gasp of bewilderment. For the first time in twenty years her husband, Alvin, had kissed her. His face took on a sudden flush of color, showing that his strangely unusual act had moved her to the depths. "It's the Christmas spirit," muttered Nancy, but she was wrong, and stood staring after the man she had taken as a life partner because she had truly loved him.

"What in the world does that mean?" she murmured.

But Alvin was gone, as if half ashamed at his impulsiveness and hurried to his wagon outside.

"Kissing time!" he soliloquized, and aptly, it transpired. "I couldn't help it. Poor dear! She seemed to prize that first token of romance of the dull plodding years."

Alvin hummed an old love song that took him back to the early days of courtship. He slowed up the horses as he peered through the leafless trees of a grove near the road. Then he chuckled as he caught sight of a slim, girlish figure and a companion. She was Lucilla Morse, the daughter of a neighbor, and beside her was his own handsome, stalwart son, Noble Blair. They stood near together, fairly close to face, and their attitude betokened acknowledged lovers.

"This will give Nancy a genuine surprise," ruminated Alvin. "Well now, look at that—more surprising still!"

This time, near the dairy barn, Alvin noticed his hired man, Alan Day-



Peered Through the Leafless Trees.

ton, conversing with Marty Remick, and then he kissed her. Alvin thought of how his wife had feared that the helpful, dependable Dayton would soon leave for his home in the next county.

"He will stay and they will marry," declared Alvin, "and I will be glad to let them have the little cottage, for it solves the farm management. Oh, this golden kissing time! He bent his ear attentively as the echo of music reached him from the direction of the house.

"The old organ, cracked, broken, pretty well out of commission," he said reminiscently. "And Nancy so enjoys music. If it takes the last cent I've got she shall have a Christmas present worth having," and the memory of the kiss and the holiday tinge to everything about the business portion of the town influenced an hour of brisk, practical shopping. Then Alvin started homeward; back in the wagon, cased up, was a fine victrola.

He found Nancy strangely excited when he went into the evening meal. More than once her hand went secretly to her dress pocket which held a precious letter she had received that day. Then she began speaking of their daughter Elsa, who had eloped two years ago with Ronald Bruce.

"Alvin, I have heard from Elsa. They are longing to pay us a visit."

"They?" repeated Alvin, a deep frown crossing his face.

"Yes, Oh, Alvin, don't be pitiless! I have heard grand news. Ronald has steepled down. Elsa is so happy. Can't they come?"

"I shall not exactly abuse them," he uttered, "but it will not be pleasant to think they ran away."

"To mend it again, for oh, Alvin! they love the old home, and you and me. They will be here tomorrow ready for Christmas and your blessing."

He came into the house just after dusk the next evening and from the parlor proceeded strains of music that told that Nancy was already enjoying the victrola. Then in the darkened hall Alvin stumbled over a baby carriage and then—

"Oh, Alvin, is that you?" cried out Nancy joyously.

He entered the parlor. It was to stand transfixed as Nancy held towards him a smiling, happy-eyed little child who put her baby arms about his neck and then kissed him.

"Your present, Alvin," spoke Nancy in a quiver of delight. "Their baby, only a year old—ours—" and Alvin pressed the little treasure to his heart and forgot all the past.

It was a royal Christmas eve and Noble and his fiance, and even Dayton and Marty were present at a celebration that made kissing time and Christmas time the happiest occasion of their lives.

All we know about Salesmanship is to let a customer alone, don't worry him, and don't hurry him. He'll buy if he looks long enough.

If a woman can't find any other way to spend her husband's money, she'll spend it on something for him.

When it comes to charity, I notice that the great bulk of mankind are sticklers for economy.

A wife's idea of a needed invention is a fool-proof pay envelope that can't be opened until the bearer gets home.

After you roam around for a while you will discover that most of the people who like to sing can't.

We know a man who regards the use of tobacco as a filthy habit and yet he is passionately fond of hamburger and onions.

Appendicitis can happen to a man but once. But it is different, with marriage.

Men are careless. Even those who do not know a thing about horses or lots have real estate at their finger ends.

The trouble with the Easygoing man is that he is so blame hard to get started.

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