

NEWS AND VIEWS FOR WOMEN READERS

The Girl Who Was Followed

By H. LOUIS RAYBOLD

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Nothing will pull me sooner than washing dishes. So Emily Curtis thought as she viewed the toppling pile stacked beside the sink.

Tackling them half-heartedly, she let her gaze wander through the open windows across the meadows, sweet with ripened grain. Mellow October sunshine filtered through the apple laden trees of the orchard, and the vagrant wind brought to her ears the dull chop-chop of the silo.

But Emily had neither eyes nor ears for the sights and sounds of the farm. She had had enough of farms.

Pausing in the act of lifting the dishes from their bath of suds into the drainer, she dried her hands on the roller towel, and from her blouse took a crumpled letter which had been brought by the rural mail carrier that very morning.

She had not showed it to John. John had never approved of Maisie.

Only one paragraph in it was really important to Emily. The rest was froth in Maisie's best style.

"You ought to be here with your voice like a bird," the note read—"Old Gunter needs more girls. It's easy work, and you could bunk with me. I've been trying to get somebody. It cuts room rent in half."

What good did a voice like a bird do one on a farm, thought Emily bitterly. You ruined it shouting your head off to the men that dinner was ready, or calling to John that the wood box needed filling.

Singing Sunday evenings in the church choir where there were six altos for every soprano was only torment, if only she had the courage of a kitten?

Vague thoughts of rebellion were stirring within her, but the dull round of household tasks claimed her, crowding in on her discontent.

The next morning Emily stood plucking her summer hat on her trim little head. It was the day for the weekly drive to Jamestown to do her marketing and meager shopping. She always looked forward to it.

But when John entered, to her surprise he was in his old farm clothes.

"Emily," he began, hesitatingly, "I'm sorry, but I can't get off this morning. That last hand I hired went out on a spree last night and hasn't shown up."

"There's no need for you to give up going though! Jim can drive you as well as I." Jim was the boy they had taken from the county orphan asylum to do the thousand and one things about the place that did not require a man's strength.

"And here," he plunged his hand into his pocket and brought out a wrinkled bill. "Perhaps this will help make up for your disappointment," he said awkwardly. "It's a little extra I had come in."

During the long drive Emily nursed her anger at John for spoiling her fun, as she put it to herself.

For one thing, rigidly brought up, strictly conventional John would never take her back.

Shivering with the cold which penetrated her thin jacket, she noticed with relief that the sinister shadow which had dogged her footsteps had evidently given up the idea that she was coming tonight. Yet she cast anxious glances over her shoulder until she reached the shelter of the narrow doorway which opened at the foot of the bare flight of stairs.

Climbing them wearily, she opened the door of her room. Striking a match, she touched the tiny gas jet, which gave off a warm flicker of light. Yet, by its feeble flame, Emily saw that which made her clutch her throat in terror, and utter an involuntary scream.

There at the table, his head buried in his arms, his hat slipping from his head, sat the man who had been following her.

Almost paralyzed, she yet managed to back noiselessly toward the door. But, roused by her cry, the man at the table lifted his head—and in his tired eyes, his unshaven face, Emily saw her husband.

"John," faltered Emily, the color which had left her face flooding it again.

"It's me, Emily," said her husband slowly. "You needn't be afraid. I've been seeing you home nights for some time. At first I was very angry with you—swore you should never darken my home again. But as time went on, I—I missed you, and I got to thinking of you—and I—well, I came up to see if I could find you. I kind of thought you had gone to that Maisie. After I did find you, I wanted to make sure what kind of life you were living, and so I took to following you, fixed up so you wouldn't know me. Tonight I thought you weren't coming. The farm is going to rack and ruin. I don't suppose you want to give this up?"

"Give it up?" Emily, who had been standing one hand on the door-knob, looked about her at the bed with its enamel peeled off in splinters, at the dirty wall paper, at the doorless cupboard with its meager display of cracked dishes.

"It's getting spring on the farm," went on John eagerly. "The meadow where the brook runs through is covered with violets—I saw two robins by the lilac bush—"

"I don't deserve it," whispered Emily, and buried her face on John's shoulder.

CONSOLATION FOR THE FAT

Surety Company Gives Stout Denial to the Statement That "Nobody Loves Them."

Fat men need no longer go hungry for affection. The surety companies love them. Men who resort to exclamation marks when the razor slips or the back collar button detaches its post of duty may be hard on the nerves of the household, but they bring joy to bank auditors.

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It is good to have the statisticians give final judgment on a point which the literary students of human nature have left in doubt. If Tartuffe was under-derided, Chaudband exuded hypocrisy out of a mass of embonpoint. If Uriah Heep had the slimmest demanded by clothes styles with a difference, Pecksniff filled out his raiment admirably.

Falstaff, on the whole, would have made a poor risk for the post of bank teller, though it is highly possible that his pliftings would have been confined to comparatively small sums, enough to pay for the day's sack and vestments.

One doubt occurs. If the fat man's rectitude is due to contentment with a capon-lined world, what are the chances of getting a fat man to swear? This is perhaps the reason why 100 per cent honesty is unsustainable. That ideal can only be realized in a world inhabited by men weighing over 150 who cuss out the water.—New York Post.

The Month of Marriage. June, the month of roses, is also Hymen's own. This is not a coincidence but an inherited custom handed down to the present day through the centuries.

In pagan times the Romans considered June the most propitious season for contracting marriages, especially if the chosen day were that of the full moon; or the conjunction of the sun and the moon.

These and many other superstitions were retained in the Middle Ages especially those which belonged more especially to the spirit of Christianity; people then had recourse to all kinds of divinations, love philters and magical invocations, as well as prayers and fastings, which were modified according to the country and the individual.

A girl agitated water in a bucket to see the image of her future husband and was careful to meet or not to meet certain animals or objects on her way to the church.—Chicago American.

Identified by Veins. Since the finger-print method of identification has come into use, several other methods have been suggested. An Italian scientist has suggested the use of the veins in the hand. He has found that the veins are different in different persons. The veins are easily seen when viewed with a source of light that has no red rays. The mercury-vapor arc light is suitable.—Popular Science Monthly.



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KEEPER FOUGHT MONKEYS. Had Wild Experience When Animals Escaped From Cages. New York, Feb. 5.—Six monkeys and a one-legged keeper fought for hours in the hold of the transport freighter Montana, as ten yaks and a brown bear screeched in chorus. All the while heavy seas battered the ship, which arrived here yesterday a week overdue, after a 31-day voyage from Hamburg.

Karl Hagenbeck shipped the animals to this country in charge of Hans Fimm, who lost one of his legs before Verdun, and who is scarred from neck to heel with animal bites. One of the monkeys was killed before they had been pushed back into cages, which had been so damaged by the pounding of the waves against the hull that the monkeys were able to slip through openings between the bent bars.

H. R. Grant, formerly of the city auditor's department, Toronto, has been appointed town treasurer of Sudbury. A. A. Smith has been appointed engineer of the eastern highway division with headquarters at Kingston. C. A. Robbins is a resident engineer at Brookville. Arthur Henderson, secretary for home affairs in the Labor government, but who still lacks a seat, has accepted an invitation to contest the by-election in Burnley.

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