

# MC2465 POOR DOCUMENT

## After the Storm.

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Brooks raised the shade and looked out, saying things to himself. A sudden landscape merged into leaden skies, and a fine, driving rain veiled the world. A shiver of misery of the storm. Across the road a score of ducks waddled contentedly through the mud. They fed to a puddle that had formed in a corner of the lot, but half a dozen bedraggled hens squawked dolefully as they picked up the angleworms driven to the surface by the continued rain and rubbed back to shelter. The cows in the side pasture huddled under the dripping trees, and the dog trotted across the road with his tail dragging almost in the mud as he made for the protection of the barn after being driven from the lavatory kitchen door.

Brooks had come to Centerville for a purpose—a purpose that was not best served by confinement in a country boarding house for seven days and nights. Once or twice there had come a break in the steady rain, but in an hour or so it only came down the harder, as though to make up for the time it had lost.

He had wanted to take Bess over to the Big rock, where they had first met the summer before, and there make the avowal of love that had been trembling upon his lips ever since. He had been able to take a whole month the year before—four golden weeks filled with sunshine and love.

Then Bess had come to Europe as companion to a rich relative, and just as she returned Curtis Brooks had been called to South America on a matter of great importance. They had corresponded with such regularity as their uncertainty of movement permitted, but there had been no opportunity for a proposal, and now their waking time was divided between the parlor and the dining room of the old farmhouse. Seven days of rain had got on Brooks' nerves. With his whole en-



every bent upon taking back to town Bess' promise, the dreary round of peevish life irritated him. He had been told that Bess had been the life of the storm-bound party, had rechristened Willow farm the Ark, with an allusion to the animals that went two by two. The innkeeper was Noah, the colored servants Ham and his wife, and with a sudden switch to "Piaffore," Langdon had insisted that Brooks was Dick Doodley because of his disposition, and Brooks had not belied his nickname. It was not easy own for a patient man to sit quietly and see the hoped-for opportunity pass, and Curtis Brooks was not a patient man.

All through those last weeks in Columbia he could shut his eyes and see the Big rock with Bess and himself standing beside it just as they had done the summer before. Now that he was here he could not even see it from the windows because of the curtain of mist and rain. Tomorrow he would have to return to town, and then there was another long trip to Carreana.

The woman was still on Brooks' face when he went down to breakfast. Langdon's jollity irritated him, and when they went back to the parlor after the meal he was gloomy and dispirited. Even Bess could not win him out of himself, and finally he went to his room to write some letters, he announced.

Writing consisted in sitting before a table with pen and ink and paper near at hand and staring at the drenched landscape before him. Even the ducks had sought cover, for now the rain was coming down in sheets. He could scarcely see across the yard, and with a groan at the lost vacation, he let his head sink forward upon his arm.

A light knock at the door had to be twice repeated before he heard it. Bess stood in the hall, smiling as though there was no such thing as rain.

"Don't you want to go up and have a look at the Big rock this afternoon?" she asked. "I think it's going to stop raining at last. Anyway, I can wrap up well. It would be a shame not to see the old place before you go back."

"Bess, you're an angel," was all he could say. She laughed at the remark. "It would be more reasonable to call

use a duck," she reminded. "I'll be ready at 4 o'clock."

She darted away, and Brooks, with a new hope in his heart, caught up a pen and wrote the letters that he had been trying to compose all the week. Bess was prompt, and at 4 o'clock they met on the piazza. The rain had gone back to a light drizzle, but Langdon affected to take a last farewell of them and promised to try and recover their bodies after the flood.

"Being grave than a sunny reply, and they started down the road. It was a hard climb up the steep side of the mountain at the foot of which Centerville nestled, but after the stuffy atmosphere of the house the wet earth filled the clean air with a fragrance peculiarly its own.

Bess drank deep drafts down into her lungs. "I'm glad that we came," she declared. "It isn't so very wet, and I did want to have you see Big rock again."

"I was afraid that it would be washed away before we could get up here," he said, with a smile. "There has been a nightmare week, Bess. What can you think of the way I've been acting?" "I don't blame you," she said softly. "It must be hard to have your only week spoiled. But there is Big rock."

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## USED BIBLE AS CIPHER

A Verse From Solomon Told of a Marriage Engagement.

When she left her home in the small town to come to New York to take up a special course of study her pet sister was fast reaching the crisis of a love affair. The pet sister was a most winsome young lady and had long kept a goodly train of suitors a-sighing. The elder sister was the grand affair. The older sister hoped so, for she liked the young man cordially—thought he was just the sort to make a proper brother-in-law.

But the weeks passed, and not a bit of definite news about the progress of the affair did the older sister receive in her city boarding house. She became anxious. Louise, she thought, must not go on recklessly trifling in such important matters.

Then one night about 10 o'clock, just as she was going to bed, came a telegram. The servant brought it up. The elder sister was country girl enough to be thoroughly frightened by the pale manila, black inked envelope. How ominous it looked! At length she gathered courage to open it. This is what she read:

Solomon six three. Louise. Solomon six three! Whatever in the world! Oh, why, yes, stupid, it of course meant the Song of Solomon, sixth chapter, third verse! But—and her cheeks flushed with shame—she had no Bible!

There was a great scurrying about the boarding house, to find a copy of the sacred book. The girls were excited out in vain. On all sides the cry arose, "Who's got a Bible?" Just then the sister trying to sleep that night without knowing what that verse was, it would have been just like a woman to lie down to pleasant dreams, content to know that she could satisfy her curiosity in the morning—not!

The landlady, good soul, came to the rescue. She was no heathen. She had a Bible. Up to her room with it flew the sister and shut the door. Such a turning over of pages by eager, nervous fingers! Solomon six three. She found it, and then she cried "Hurrah!" and laughed, for the verse was:

I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.

THE SPECTER SWIMMER.

A Legend of the Sea That Still Appeals to Sailors.

The sailor as a class still holds fast to the superstitions that have been his special heritage throughout all ages. To him the sea is still peopled with phantoms. Men there are still who sail the sea believing in the power of the Swimmer, men who believe in the Walrus of unholy fame and in the existence of the specter shark. Lucy to be seen at any time dodging in and out of the crevices and bays of the South Carolina coast. This is the tale of the Swimmer.

Near Cape Finisterre there lived a fisher maiden in days when the world asked fewer questions than now, and she lived her father's sweetest. On their wedding night, runs the yarn, smuglers came down on their village, a thieving, drunken band. When they left, having done all the damage they could, the fisher maiden's sweetheart had disappeared, whether with them or through them was never known. Instead of pining uselessly, as would most women, she dressed herself in men's clothes and started to find him, dead or alive.

For years she wandered over the earth and ocean, and though her disguise was penetrated several times and she passed through a host of troubles which vary with each telling, she succeeded in keeping up her hunt. Finally after escaping from an English prison the vessel she was on was lost at sea, and the simple Breton fisher-ess enshrined her in a legend which still in search of the man she loved and being cast off as a dream.

A sailor, he was Yankee or Portuguese, matter of fact in all things, and a greedy, unscrupulous, believes firmly that if you hear the hall of the Swimmer on a dark night at sea and answer it pot woe follows swiftly.

## Weak Kidneys

Weak Kidneys, surely point to weak nerves. The back aches, the head aches, the stomach, find their weakness, not in the organs itself, but in the nerves that control them and strengthen them. Dr. Shoop's Restorative is a medicine specially prepared to reach the controlling nerves. To doctor the kidneys alone, means, it is a waste of time, and of money as well.

If your back aches or is weak, if the urine is pale, or is dark and strong, if you have symptoms of Bright's or other distressing or dangerous kidney disease, try Dr. Shoop's Restorative a month. Tablets or liquid, and see what it can and will do for you. Druggists recommend and sell.

## Dr. Shoop's Restorative

"ALL DEALERS"

Forests. Russia leads the world in planting forests, America in devastating them.

Persian Clothes. Persians are fond of fine clothes. The usual costume for men includes a collarless shirt of light, pretty material cut low at the neck and with long, loose sleeves and a vest that fits snugly to the figure, also with wide, flowing sleeves.

Wedding Rings. Wedding rings were worn by both Jews and Romans at dates long prior to the Christian era.

Flower Essences. To extract the essence of any flower, the petals in layers in an earthen jar, covering each layer with one of salt. Do this until jar is full. Cover closely and put in a cool place. Leave for a month, then strain off the essence by means of a press. Put essence in a bottle and add a few drops to every pint of water. It will impart a most delicate fragrance.

Posters. Posters were originally stuck on posts; hence their name.

Plain Food. The man who enjoys plain food, says the Lancet, is miles ahead, physically and physiologically speaking, of the man who would leave his meal untouched if it were not that every item of it was calculated to "tickle the palate."

The Largest Serpent. The largest serpent ever measured was an anaconda which Dr. Gardner found dead in Mexico. It was thirty-seven feet long, and it took two horses to drag it.

Washington. Washington was a Mason in 1732 and attained a higher dignity in the order than any of the other presidents, though Andrew Jackson was grand master of Tennessee.

The Peaceful Dove. In spite of the fact that the dove is the emblem of peace, a couple of cock birds of this beautiful species can give a very good account of themselves in a fight. The weapons they employ are their wings, which they use with terrific force.

The Yellowstone Park. The Yellowstone National park is sixty-five miles from north to south and fifty-five from east to west.

Rabbits. While not fond of the water, rabbits can swim if they are forced to. They have a swimming position all their own and look queer enough in the water. They keep the head and tail high and dry, while the front part of the body sinks deep in the water.

Wives by Purchase. Wives are still obtained by purchase in some parts of Russia, in the district of Kanyshin, on the Volga, for example, this is practically the only way in which marriages are brought about. The price of a pretty girl from a well to do family ranges from \$100 to \$200, and in special cases a much higher sum is obtained. In the villages the lowest price is about \$25.

Fire Killed Wood. Government tests of fire-killed timber have demonstrated that this wood is good and should be considered as thoroughly seasoned timber so far as its use is concerned.

A Cunning Cricket. A hunter in tropical regions tells of seeing a cricket pursued around the trunk of a tree by a lizard. Suddenly the insect settled itself in a small depression in the bark, spread out its wings slightly and fastened itself so that the lizard actually crawled over it and went away without ever knowing what had become of it.

Ocean Drift. A box thrown overboard by the steamer Hunter was picked up twenty months and twenty-six days later, having drifted in that time a distance of 4,791 miles.

Trees and Lightning. Some trees are more liable to be struck by lightning than others. Thus the oak and the elm are often struck and destroyed, but the ash is rarely struck, and the beech, it is said, never.

Spider's Web. A web two and a quarter miles long has been drawn from the body of a single spider.

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