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At the Court of Rex

By FANNIE REASLIP LEA

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"I am lost!" said the pretty maiden with a quaintly tragic air.

She stood back against the window of a big department store on Canal street and scanned the surging crowd before her. It was Mardi Gras day in New Orleans, and the pretty maiden

New Orleans, and the pretty maiden had been in town only three hours, two of which had been spent in a hotel.

"I have lost my mother," she said again as if to impress the fact upon herself—"and my father,"—then she added as an afterthought, "and my

In the street the people crowded each other for more room, and there was a constant stream of maskers, gay dom-inoed fellows with tinkling bells and snapping whips, and the pretty maiden watched them from the entrance to the department store, and her ideas quite lost their balance and toppled over into the mad whirl of carnival. "I'm glad I'm lost," she said to her-

self; "they'll know I was separated from them by the crowd and they'll be fearfully worried, but after awhile they'll find me, and meantime I feel as if something were going to happen-a wild adventure perhaps. Oh, I love carnival. I'm glad I came."

A drum throbbed subtly in the distance, the crowd surged to the edge of the banquette, then surged back again with easy laughter, for no parade ap-

"Ah," said some one at the pretty maiden's elbow. "I beg your pardon, but I thought I was never going to find you. The crowd is so thick."

The pretty maiden stared. A young man, clean shaven and eminently pre-sentable, was regarding her, hat in "I'm afraid you don't remember me,"

he suggested, a trifle crestfallen. "Isn't this Miss Preston?" The pretty maiden's eyes widened To herself she cried, "The adventure!" but aloud she said quite coolly:

"I'm afraid the advantage is yours."
"I'm sorry," he answered stiffly. But please don't think me an impertinent stranger. My cousin wrote me to meet you here, you and your sister. She asked me to show you around for the parade. I—my name is Robert Randolph," he finished awkwardly.

The pretty maiden hesitated a bare moment, but the carnival spirit was strong within her, and the trick that in her natural environment would have been impossible unfolded itself like magic in this atmosphere.

The moment was a bare one—then—

"Oh," she said, with the friendliest smile imaginable, "you are Bobby Randolph? "Of course," he agreed cheerfully.

"It's been a great while since we saw each other, but still"— "So it has," said the pretty maiden cunningly. "Let me see, just how long

"Just ten years," said Mr. Randolph; "ten years, three months, seven days, two hours and, I think, twenty-seven

"Dear me," she murmured breath-

"And, by the way, where's your sister? Didn't she come?"

"My sister? said the pretty maiden, quite astonished. "My sister? Oh—er—yes, of course she came. But she nad a fearful headache, and she decided to stay at the hotel, and I hate to miss the parade, you see."

"Of course. Too bad she won't see it," said Mr. Randolph regretfully. "The trip was so long and tiresome,"

said the pretty maiden incautiously. "Two hours' long! I like that. Why it's only forty-eight miles between here

and Pass Christian." "Distance," said the pretty maiden ententiously, "is not a matter of miles with me, at least," she added pru-

dently.
"Well, we can have a jolly time by ourselves, anyhow," Mr. Randolph as-

The pretty maiden hesitated—that is, she would have hesitated, but Mr. Ran-dolph's cheerful confidence left her no

room to do so. They walked on rather slowly, for

the crowd was dense, and Mr. Ran-dolph's shoulders acted as a buffer more than once,

"We'll have time to go and get some hot chocolate before Rex gets here," he calculated cheerfully. "Look out there, will you?" This last to a line of

college boys who were going through the crowd like an animated wedge. The pretty maiden laughed deli-

"You looked so angry," she explained between gasps, then stopped sud-denly because a small red devil, with battered mask, aimed a shower of con-

fetti at her laughing face.
There was a blare of trumpets down the street and the long roll of a drum.

A wave of excitement submerged the A wave or excitement submerged the people. Randolph used shoulders and elbows with a skill that bespoke long experience on the football field, and the pretty maiden found herself in the front of the crowd. Mounted policemen paced slowly past her, a band shrilling forth "If Ever I Cease to Love," and

then Rex and his cohorts.

The pretty maiden dimpled and blushed from sheer delight at the gorgeous spectacle, and the capering maskers on the fantastic floats repaid her interest. One threw her a great fragrant bunch of violets, which she clasped with both hands like an excited child; another tossed an armiet of brass; a third a box of French sweets, until young Ran-dolph was hugely proud of her. Then, dolph was hugely proud of her. Then, when the last silver tower and shim-

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mering veil had melted down the street. he swung her into the crowd again, her cheeks pink with excitement and the great purple violets nestling in the furs under her pretty chin.

"Now let's have that chocolate," said Mr. Randolph. They found a corner in a pretty tea room, and he dispatched a waiter for their order, while the room filled steadily. "Do you know," he said, "you've changed somehow?"

The pretty maiden came back with a start to the fact that Mr. Randolph was not a lifelong friend.

"Have I?" she asked safely. "Yes," he repeated, "somehow you've changed. You always were pretty, you know, and I always was your abject "I've changed?" asked the pretty

maiden mournfully. "You're so-so much more so," he explained lucidly. "You remember," asked Mr. Ran-

dolph presently, "how we used to love each other when you were ten and I was fourteen?" "We didn't," she said, with a start.

"Oh, nonsense! You cried your eyes out when I left for school. And you said you'd marry me when you grew up-and when we said goodby-you kissed me."

"I did nothing of the sort," cried the pretty maiden, very pink and furious.
"You've forgotten," said Mr. Randolph. "There's no reason why you should be ashamed of it. A childish affection is the most sincere-and you certainly were fond of me," he finished

"I've changed very much," said the pretty maiden, thoughtfully selecting a macaroon from the plate of cakes. "I'm sorry," said Mr. Randolph simply, "because you're even nicer than you used to be."

"I want to tell you something," she said. "I'm not Miss Preston—I never saw you before. I'm here for the carnival, and I lost my people in the crowd this morning; and then you came and-I know it was horrid of

"Well," said Mr. Randolph stiffly. "Well, it was just a lark," she pleaded defiantly, "and won't you please go -now-hurry, please." The pretty maiden had seen her mother and father cross the room.

"If you wish it, of course," said Mr. Randolph with most unreasonable dig-

"I think you better," she said, and fairly pushed him away, and in a mo-ment she turned to her father and mother with indignation in her eye. "Well, you lost me," she said with hypocritical anger, "for two whole hours, and I'm nearly starved."

The pretty maiden and her parents dined with friends that night, and the ent in to dinner with Mr. Randolph, to her unbounded surprise. Mr. Randolph looked a similar feeling. Then they both laughed "The world isn't so large after all,"

she said. "My world," said Mr. Randolph, 'comes only just up to my shoulder.'

A Malay Water Slide

In Perak, a state in the Straits Set-tlements, the Malays have one form of amusement which is probably not to be enjoyed anywhere else in the wide

There is a huge granite slope in the course of a mountain river, down which the water trickles about two inches deep, the main stream having carred out a bed by the side of the bowlder. This rock, the face of which has been rendered as smooth as glass by the constant flow of water during hundreds of years, the Malays—men, women and children—have turned into a toboggan.

children—have turned into a toboggan. Climbing to the top of the rock, they sit in the shallow water with their feet straight out and a hand on each side for steering and then slide down the sixty feet into a pool of water.

This is a favorite sport on sunny mornings, as many as 200 folks being engaged at a time and sliding so quickly one after another or forming rows of two, four or even eight persons that they tumble into the pool a confused mass of screaming creatures. There is little danger in the game, and, though mass of screaming creatures. Incre is little danger in the game, and, though some choose to sit or a piece of plantain, most of the tobogganers are content to squat on their haunches.

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Mme. Myriam Harry, the Parisian

novelist, who traveled about the world a good deal, described what evidences a good deal, described what evidences of affection are prized by men and women in different countries. In Je-rusalem she once met a young Arab woman who had not a tooth left in her head. Mme. Harry's native servant said: "Lucky woman! .der huspand knocked all her teeth out. He does love her!" In Cochin China Mme, Harry was told that there a husband was ot believed to love his wife properly until he had made a present to her of a coffin. In Galicia, among the sect of Masochists, a man values his wife's af-fection by the degree of suffering which she causes him to endure. Mme. Harry there once heard a betrothed youth say to his affianced bride, "If you really loved me you would consent to bind me and flop me with this whip." Stockholm a woman sued her husband for divorce on the ground that he did not love her soulfully.

Eat Slowly.

The propriety of eating slowly ought always to be remembered. Mr. Gladstone's thirty-two bites are historical. stone's thirty-two bites are historical. Napoleon was a terribly fast eater, and this habit is supposed to have paralyzed him on two of the most critical occasions of his life, the battles of Leipsic and Borodino, which he might have converted into decisive and influential victories by pushing his advantages as he was wont. On each of these occasions he was known to have been suffering from indigestion.—Lone don Standard.

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