

THE TOILER

LADYLOVE

MARITA M'CUILLICH-WILLIAMS

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the last I was afraid he'd see through it, although truly it is a document you can read pretty well any way you choose. My heart was in my mouth until Aunt Nan took the bait. Now we have plain sailing. Before the fortnight is up we can be—



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JILTING OF S. E. SAVACOO By W. H. OSBORNE Copyright, 1924, by T. C. McClure

Sarah Elizabeth Savacool was one of the nicest little girls in the world. One day she'd never had a beau. The other girls in Cypress Hills had beaux by the dozen, but not Sarah Elizabeth Savacool—she belonged to the class that somehow had to do without.

The Tollivers were giving the largest dance of the season and, of course, Sarah Elizabeth was invited to attend. "I simply cannot—will not—go," she told herself. "I can't go through a thing like that again." Her mother, however, tried to keep her to the front.

John Post escorted Sarah Elizabeth to her home. After that he escorted himself on divers occasions to the same place. There was a charm about Sarah Elizabeth that peculiarly attracted him. There was a charm about him that attracted her.

An evening he came in rather late. He did not remove his overcoat, and he held his hat still in his hand. He had something on his mind. "Sarah Elizabeth," he began, looking

everywhere but at her face. "Do you do you still think as much of me as ever? I—I want to know," Sarah Elizabeth's breath came in gasps, but she assented. "I want to be honest," went on John Post. "I want you to know the truth—there's no good of spoiling two lives simply for—for the sake of a sentiment."

He did not look at her. "Yes," gasped Sarah Elizabeth. "I suppose so." John Post swallowed hard. "And so," he went on. "I thought I'd come around and tell you—that that I'd better stop coming here before any talk began about our—about our going together, you know."

"Before any talk began!" As though it had not been a foregone conclusion that he and she were steady company of the most pronounced kind. Her heart sank as she thought of what the people would say now—now that she was—

"I do not," Jack said, then in a constrained voice: "But—forgive me, Miss Nancy—has he said so? I think not." "Why, bless and save us! Are you crazy?" Miss Cresswell demanded. "Not a bit of it!" Jack retorted stoutly. "Only that you have misunderstood. Here is all the first page about how he has admired you all his life and now that he has reached man's estate 'hopes for a closer alliance'."

A judge of one of the United States circuit courts has a five-year-old niece of whom he is very proud. A few days ago she came to him and said with a very serious air: "Uncle, there is a question about law I want to ask you."

As Jack Vanston stepped through the French window into the library at Cresswell he made half a motion to turn back. Ladylove was crying hard, her head buried in her folded arms on the big library table. Aunt Nan sat a little way off, frowning, yet beaming over a letter. She it was who caught sight of Jack and called to him with little excited breaks between her words: "Don't go away, Mr. Vanston. You must help me make this headstrong child listen to reason."

"If she's badly in need of discipline suppose you let me take her for a walk this morning?" Jack said, pulling a rebellious curl that strayed down over Ladylove's neck. "She told me yesterday she hated me."

"I didn't!" It was just because I thought you were lonely and wanted one—and there were so many of us at home one could well be spared," Ladylove broke in. "And I had rather go back to daddy and the pigs and the chickens and the children and have only calico frocks than marry this—this cat."

She was standing at the last word, one little foot stamping hard as she spoke. Jack dared not look straight at her—if he did he knew he should catch her in his arms and comfort her. That would ruin everything. It was clearly a case for diplomacy. He said softly: "Then to Aunt Nancy?" "I agree with you, Miss Cresswell. Sandy Corlew is a fine, solid fellow, who may always be depended on to do the right thing. But please let me see his letter—I'm not asking out of impertinent curiosity, as he saw denied in her face."

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"Why, the pig is ten years younger than I am," Miss Cresswell said weakly, stealing a glance at herself in the mantel glass. "And looks five years older at the very least," Jack said. "That is one advantage of being so—ahem—well, so finely built. At least think it over. Tell him you'll take a week to consider his proposal!"

There is a charming story told of the great French painter Corot. Being hospitable he frequently assembled his friends to dinner, and a dish of haddock and potatoes, which everybody hated, invariably followed the soup. The friends, who thought Corot partial to the dish, always gave it when he dined with them. At last, in reply to the painter's query, they admitted that they detested the dish, but supposed he liked it.

Corot was grinning broadly. "My dear fellow, if you only knew how I hate the sight of it. But Adele, my cook, simply adores haddock and potatoes. And it is no good—I dare not go against her wishes. It is as much as my place is worth. Not for worlds would my awe of Adele induce me to undecipher her as regards the value I attach to this one particular article of diet."

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