

spoons; he dropped four plates and broke only two of them; he threw a knife in the air and the fourth time caught it and cut his thumb; he threw an oyster cracker on high and nearly caught it in his mouth, but lost it down his neck instead; he did an imitation of Chaplin's stop-and-slide, fell on his face and got a ripping roar for that. It was a success. He was a hit.

Once, as he approached, Shorty, his lord and the man who was Evelyn's choice of all the kitchen cabinet, was getting two club sandwiches and a piece of huckleberry pie punched into a check. He observed Gus's queer actions.

"What's a matter witchou?" asked Shorty. "Try-in' to break a leg?"

"Oh, let him alone," said Evelyn. "The poor nut is trying to be funny. He's a yell."

See? She was taking his part. She was his Portia, pleading his side against the man who a few hours earlier had felt so sure of her. The system was doing its duty. The frigid post-luncheon mitten would be a warm and snuggling little hand in his after the last dinner check had been brought in on a truck and settled.

There remained only the clinching detail of assert-