



NEVER argue with a man that talks loud. You couldn't convince him in a thousand years.

MISS SELINA LUE

A NOVEL OF GOOD CHEER BY
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(Continued from last week)

SYNOPSIS OF FOREGOING INSTALMENTS

Miss Selina Lue, generous and tender of heart, and endowed with what is called "faculty," keeps the grocery at River Bluff. One day Bennie Dodds runs in to the grocery to ask her to come and nurse his sister's thumb which she has caught in the machine. On her return she feeds the five babies whom she cares for in soap boxes by a sunny window in the rear of the store. Her friend, Cynthia Page, a charming young girl, calls on her and learns that she has taken a young artist, named Alan Kent, to board.

MISS CYNTHIA laughed merrily at the idea of Ethel Maud's nose, which was a tiny, turned-up dot, supporting a clothes-pin and a pea at the same time, and Miss Selina Lue's chuckle showed that she appreciated the humor of the picture. When Miss Cynthia laughed it provoked a smile from everybody in hearing distance, and Miss Selina Lue's mirth was ever responsive to the slightest call.

"Miss Cynthia, honey," she said after a few minutes, "I've got a new soap-box baby and I was mighty anxious for a while as to how it would be, but now—"

"Oh, Miss Selina Lue with all you have to do!—another? where is it? In a box with the others? I am going back to see it," and Miss Cynthia sprang up with alacrity.

"Oh, no! He stays in the barn with Charity and he won't be home until noon, so set down and let me tell you about it, for I mistrust myself in doing it, though the pictures are beautiful. Of course I oughter be willing to do something for art's sake, which it looks like is just his love of this beautiful world put right down for theirs to see. And then it's true they ain't another barn about here that's as good as mine to paint in. Anyway, ain't he a stranger within my gates?"

"Miss Selina Lue, what are you talking about? At first it sounded like a baby then a calf—"

"You'd think it was both by the way it drinks milk, and the helplessness of it, but it's a man."

"A man?"

"Yes, a man! And I ain't sure I had oughter done it, for a strange man might be a mistake for a single woman like me to have about the house. But he was that persuading and nice, and I couldn't see no good reason not to take him; so what could I do?"

"Miss Selina Lue," said Miss Cynthia, the dawn of an alarmed wonder



An Intruder Interrupts the Tea Party

The delights of a country life are never more in evidence than during the summer season. Too often we who live amid the delightful scenes of nature fail to appreciate the beauties that surround us. Occasional picnic parties, either on a small or large scale, will be enjoyed by all, and will result in material benefit, far exceeding the sacrifice of the time.

showing in her big eyes, "you don't mean that you have got married while I—"

"Child," said Miss Selina Lue, don't never ask me that question again! When they buried all of Adoniram Millspaugh they could find to bring home from the explosion the marrying part of me went into the grave with the fragments and I ain't seen fit to ever dig it up again.

Though there is many a good woman as have done that very thing after having been married to their husband for years before they lost him. But I ain't one to criticize 'em for it, 'cause some seem to think it compliments one good husband to git another,—and maybe it do."

"What's your—friendly like?" asked Miss Cynthia interestedly.

"He's a kinder forlorn-like young man that paints pictures what are plumb uplifting for other folks to see. They are jest out and out surprising. When I seen his heart was so set on the barn to work in—I jest ain't one to hold out against other folks hankering fer what's mine, and so—lands alive, there he comes now!"

Up from the river over the bluff came the forlorn one, and the two or three minutes he consumed in striding across the lot to the grocery door Miss Cynthia spent in a paralyzed regard of him.

He was tall and broad and had a square chin and laughing, dark eyes, so much she could see no further details were obscured, for perched on his right shoulder was the Blossom, nodding like a flower in the breeze, and on his left arm bobbed Carrots and the flaming hair. To one knickerbockered leg clung Bennie Dodds while the pocket on his other side sagged with the wounded hand of Ethel Maud, who ran to keep up with the procession.

In due time they arrived at the foot of the steps on which stood Miss Cynthia, still hypnotized with surprise, and Miss Selina Lue, anxious to do the honors in the way of introduction. The swaying of the Blossom and her clutch of his hair had hid Miss Cynthia from the sight of the artist, and his surprised eyes took in the radiant vision in white linen and large rose-garden hat with such a start that there threatened a rain of babies on Miss Selina Lue's devoted head.

"Make you 'quainted with Miss Cynthia, Mr. Alan—not as that's his last name, as is Kent, but we feel so friendly with him now we compliment

cool, formal self that acknowledged the introduction with graceful aloofness. This most appropriate attitude toward the strange young man was somewhat modified by having to descend to the step above that upon which he stood in order that she might get possession of Blossom, who was dropping toward her with an enchanted gurgle. As Miss Cynthia raised her arms she also raised her long lashes a fraction, and inadvertently let forth a gleam of mischievous amusement that sent little tongues of flaming embarrassment all over the still dumb Mr. Kent.

It was enough to floor any man to find suddenly that a girl was laughing at him—and such a girl in such a hat. Of course he realized that he looked like a new style perambulator, but what—The rain that steadied Blossom tremble—and she was about to be lowered—into the embrace of her waiting friend, when with a little squeal and a scornful kick of one pink foot she clutched determine a absterment of his black hair and absolutely refused to leave her perch. In vain, Miss Cynthia wooed with outstretched hands; Blossom held to her coign of vantage.

A mean little feeling of gratification cooled the embarrassment in Mr. Kent's veins, and he said gently, too meekly perhaps: "Try lower down. Carrots will, I am sure, more amenable to the same charm." And he rolled that very sleepy young gentleman into her outstretched arms.

A gleam of vexation was all the return he got for the trick he had played on her, and with a shrug of dismissal for both Blossom and him, Miss Cynthia turned and mounted the steps and made her way to the back of the store.

Rage, yes, actual rage was boiling within her as she laid the heavy baby on the pillow and threw the mosquito netting over him. The man's calm assumption of an intimate familiarity with Miss Selina Lue and the babies and the grocery and she had almost included herself, was unendurable. And Blossom, who had always been overjoyed at her attentions, refusing to leave him for herself was the last straw.

But, even worse, could the man have meant to insinuate that she was consciously exerting a charm, for him, over Blossom's shoulder? The mere suspicion of such a thing settled matters! With her head in the air she walked to the front of the store and demanded a paper of tacks, which Miss Selina Lue hastened to wrap up for her, all unmindful of the proximity of the volcano.

"I do wish you didn't have to go, Miss Cynthia, honey. I was jest counting on our sitting with us a while to git 'quainted with Mr. Alan. He do talk so interesting about pictures and things we don't know nothing about. You can learn a heap from him. Why, Mr. Dobbs was saying jest last night that the things he tells us about are plumb educating. You must come down often to see him." And within a yard of Miss Selina Lue stood the helpless victim of her enthusiasm, Blossom in his arms swaying with sleep. The color of his face and ears and the set of his square jaw told the tale of his embarrassment which flared up into rage surpassing that which burned in the bosom of his adversary as she answered gently, very gently:

"Thank you, Miss Selina Lue; I am sadly in need of instruction in many things." And with her chin in the air and the suspicion of a tilt to her very classic little nose, Miss Cynthia swept out of the door without so much as a glance either to the right or the left.

"Now, ain't she the sweetest thing?" exclaimed Miss Selina Lue as she leaned out of the door and watched the retreating figure with admiring eyes, all unconscious of the snub and the feelings of the snubbed. "She's

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