

An Indian Legend.

"THE MORNING STAR."

(Continued from Saturday's article on Yucatan)

There was a vessel of the temple. The lamps and the copal-incense in the sacred vessels before the altar had been replenished, but the altar was piled high before it in thanksgiving for the abundant harvest gathered and stored.

Noh Ek, the Morning Star, was happy. Not only were her sacred duties faithfully performed, but joyous tidings had been brought to her. Ah May, the brilliant young warrior, the tallest and bravest of them all, had just won a glorious victory over the Caribs of the Yucatan, their old-time enemies.

When would he be among them to be acclaimed hero, and, in time, the High Priest, his place by right among the people.

His promised wife, as was the custom, had been dedicated until her childhood days should be ended, and she would become a woman, to the service of the temple.

Then she herself must choose her future.

By the law of ages, law too sacred to be changed by even the thickness of hair, none could seek to influence her desires. Whether as wife or mother, she would be one of some noble such as her father had been before the first darts of the Cupules sent him seaward to the Sun, or as Priestess of the Temple, Mother of the Vestals, to guide their chaste young lives along the light blue path of innocence, she chose must make the choice.

But Nature, who bends to no man's law—or if she bends it seems, it is but to mock them yet more rudely—Nature had whispered into the young girl's ears the name and by the miracle of her eyes had reflected upon her smiling heart the image of Ah May.

Ah May, with that reverence a strong man sometimes feels for sacred things set apart for time or for eternity from mortal thought and aims, did lift his eyes in deep humility as he passed him in the temple on her sacred duties.

Nature laughs at all of these things—makes light of them as she does of other laws of man's own weaving. Then, and once only, did the unbridled gaze of man meet the unguarded gaze of maid, and there was wrought the wondrous work of Nature's alchemy. Two hearts were melted into one, and neither time nor force could change them more. There was an unalterable thing in Nature's doing.

So time passed.

The hour had come when Noh Ek, the priest, was to make her final choice; to leave the temple, to enter the world, to be wife and mother, or to remain as priestess and offer sacrifice, or else to think no more of the sweet earth pleasures, of the ties that bind below, to become a priestess of the temple, a mother of the vestals.

Below the temple, the broad plaza was black with kneeling people, all the priests and nobles, clad in garments of their orders, were grouped about the massive serpent columns to witness the choice of the vestal.

The High Priest, clad in his richest vestments, called out to her in measured words, and slow, "O Noh Ek, the Morning Star, stand forth that all may see you."

She stood with the white-robed vestal in the deep of the temple shadow, jeweled pendants of the sacred jade-hung gleaming from her ears. About her slender neck were entwined fretted links and lace-like globes of fully-gleaming gun-metal. At the High Priest's call she took one step forward toward the light, one step nearer the people.

The High Priest spoke again, "O Noh Ek, Child of the Temple, what is your choice?" he said.

The stillness that fell about them was the stillness of the multitude. Of all the silences that this earth holds, there is none so awesome as the silence of a waiting multitude.

The voice of the Vestal, sweet, yet shrill with feeling, was heard through all the temple. It even reached the plain below, and the jet-black heads moved like the surging of the waves as she said, "O Father of the Temple, Brother of the Sun! My heart and my hopes call me downward. Let me go with them."

Again the High Priest called out to her, "O Noh Ek, stand forth in the light that all may see you!"

At the command thus given, the Morning Star took one step farther toward the light, and the other vestals, thus parted from their sister, took one step backward and deeper into the shadow of the temple.

The High Priest spoke once more, "O Noh Ek, Child of the Temple, I ask you for the second time, What is your choice?"

The stillness of the multitude, if it could be despoiled, was despoiled then. Once more her clear voice rang over the temple platform, down to the waiting people. Her every heart throb was a song, as she said:

"O Father of the Temple, Brother of the Sun! I take no shame to me that my heart calls out for human love, for the love of a noble man. My heart, my hopes, my desires call me earthward. Oh, let me go with them!"

But not a hum came from the mighty multitude. At first it seemed in the distance, like a wild bee's hum; then it grew louder and deeper, like the growling of an angry jaguar, until it rose up to the temple and there broke into that terrible sound, the wailing of myriad voices.

They laid him close by the altar; at the foot of the great stone altar. The sharp flint-point, broken, was still in the gaping breast-wound. Ah May had just died as the last black demon was pierced by the thrust of a dozen spear-heads.

Cold and calm amid all the tumult, the High Priest sat on the tiger seat and again his voice called out to the Vestal, though his eyes were kind and said:

"O Noh Ek, stand forth from the temple shadow that all may see you." She stood for awhile like one turned to stone; then, shivering as if with cold, came back to life again. But instead of moving forward into the light, she seemed to fade into the shadow of the temple.

The deep voice of the High Priest seemed like the tolling of a bell, and in its tone the mournful cadence rose and fell like echoes in the distance.

"O Noh Ek, Child of the Temple, I ask for the last time, What is your choice?"

There was no more stillness on the plain below. In its place was a nameless sound, born of walls of anger, sob of grief, and the sharp commands of those in power—the tumult of a multitude.

But had the stillness of the tomb been over all, her voice would not have reached the temple walk, it was so low and sad and broken, as she said:

"O Father of the Temple, Brother of the Sun! I have now but one wish, one hope, one home. Let me, I humbly pray, take the last and perfect vow, never to leave the blessed temple shadow until called to meet my loved one in the sun."

By some fearful mistake the latest paper had been thrown away and an old one kept. This fact I discovered after a five minutes search of the house and a third degree of its inmates. So I had to take my rest period in the company of a magazine instead of newspaper.

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.

Don't you?

In many homes the feminine time for reading the paper is after dinner, and so forth, but they do not read the news of the big world. I don't blame them for reading the gossip and the human interest stuff. I can't because I'm not above it. But I do think they ought to read the news, too.