# OUR SHORT STORY

"A Tender Ideal."

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"Who in the world are the Holm-sure. Let me thank you for accepting my invitation. It is pleasant to meet eses?" said I, letting fall on my lap the note I had just opened. "The Holmeses?" queried my hus-

band sleepily from the hammock. "Have you found acquaintances away off here?"

"Not at all," replied I; "that is the mystery. I never heard of them." And I read the note aloud:

'Dr and Mrs. Holmes would be pleased to have Professor and Mrs. White take supper with them on Wednesday next, at 6."

"Mrs. Mackenzie will tell us," said my husband, as our landlady appeared, and again I inquired, "Who are the

olmeses?"
"Ah!" said Mrs. Mackenzie, smiling; "are you invited there?"
"We are, indeed, and I am sure they are perfect strangers to us. Do you know them? Do they live here, or

"I know them well," said my land-lady, "and when I tell you about them you will want to accept their invita-tion, I am certain. They are Virgin-ians," she continued, settling herself comfortably in a rocker, "and they came here ten years ago. He is a doctor, and a first-class one, too. He had a splendid practice and lots of friends and a lovely home—some peo-ple who knew them in the South told me so-and were as happy as two people could be, when all at once his wife's mind began to go. He traveled with her and doctored her and did everything for her, but she grew worse and worse. She isn't violent, you see; she is as quiet and gentle as can be, only she gets things mixed; she seems to think backward, as you may say. And then she loves to recite. She wants to speak pieces all the time. Things she learned in school, you know, when she was a girl. And the doctor, he just humors her in everything. He brought her here to Mackinaw to be quiet, thinking she might get well where the air is so good and nothing excites or worries her. And here they live all

and she drives around with him on his calls, and I guess, after all, they pretty happy."
But," ejeculated I, in amazement, "all this makes this invitation the stranger! Surely he does not want outsiders to see his poor wife and know of her condition, and she cannot

clone; he helps her cook and sweep,

want to meet anyone if she at all realizes her state." "That's the queer part," continued my landlady. "When summer comes she gets so uneasy, he can't do any-thing with her. She wants to invite everybody she sees. in the south she loved to entertain, and she thinks she must do it still. So her husband finds out quiet people like you and the professor here, and he just asks them, and that makes her feel satisfied. He can't deny her anything. He is just

"But," objected I still, "why could White call on us and tell as this and then invite us? I hate to go there without even seeing him first. "Because he knows I'd explain it for Mrs. White?" she added abruptly. him," said Mrs. Mackenzie, gently.
"He can't bear to speak of it. He just acts as if he didn't see anything wrong

with her; and he loves her so, and is so proud of her! But you'll see. 'How dreadful it is," said I. "What a sorrow to bear; what a tragedy their lives must be!"

said my husband, thoughtfully, "I am not so sure about that. It is a great grief, of course. But it is better than some troubles they might have had. They love each other, and are in some sense happy to be together. He undoubtedly hopes her resoration, and that brightens her life. No. Alice, I don't agree with It isn't a tragedy at all.' 'Well," said I, "it seems a good deal like one to me, but we can tell better when we have been there. I suppose we must go.'

'Of course, we must," said the professor, in his most decided tones.

And we went, but, oh, how I dread-Mrs. Mackenzie directed us to their cottage at the farthest end of the village, on the cliff looking out over the magnificent sweep of water where Lake Michigan and Lake Superior mingle. In the front yard were masses of nasturtiums in red, yellow and bronze, and beds of geraniums, and dahlias, and all the sturdy flowers which flourish in that short cool summer. On the porch stood Dr. Holmes, a tall broad-shouldered man, with iron-He came to meet us as we paused at the gate, and, with a courtly gesture, said, "Professor and Mrs. White, I am

delight and joy in her beautiful baby is always eccompanied by more or less care and solicitude, and a certain degree of drain on her needs all the strengthwhich is possible not to fall a victim to the organic weaknesses incident to maternity. The grandest help in the world for expectant mothers or nursing mothers is Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. imparts health and strength directly to the delicate organs and nerve-centers involved

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W. R. Malcolm, of Knobel, Clay County, Ar-W. R. Malcolm, of Knobel, Clay County, Arkansas, writes: "Since I last wrote you we have had a baby girl born to us. My wife took your 'Golden Medical Discovery' and also your 'Favorite Prescription' all during the expectant period and until confinement, and she had no trouble to mention. A stouter, heartier child was never born. Our child will be one year of age the 8th inst. and she has not been sick a day. Has not had so much as the colic. It is a fact, sir, and we have not had to be up with her as often as twice at night since her birth."

those of the outer world, and I am honored in your coming."

After a little talk about Mackinaw, and the summer visitors, and the glorious view, we went indoors, and he introduced us to his wife. She was a gentle, brown-haired woman, with a

timid manner and delicate features.

My fears vanished; I felt as in the presence of a shy child, and sitting down by her, tried to talk with her.

But in a moment she slipped from the room. My host had found a congenial spirit in my husband, and both were deep in the books which filled two sides of the room. I listened, amused at their common enthusiasm, until Mrs. Holmes came back, and said shyly, as a child might say it,

"Please come to supper. The table was daintly laid, with flowers upon it, and looked as any supper table might, except for one thing. Over it, from the hanging lamp, hung a coiled brass wire, such as bird cages are suspended from, and attached to it was the note I had written accepting the invitation. The breeze blew in at the window and caught it, and as the spring danced up and down, my note fluttered about in each gyration. I dared not look at my husband, but I saw just one gleam of distress cross the doctor's face. Evidently the note had been hung up after his inspection of the table was

I shall never forget that meal. The little wife served it herself, passing quietly about from table to kitchen. Everything was delicious, and as Southern as could be, but it was

served backward. First came waffles, crisp and brown, and with them delicious maple syrup. "How fragrant this is," I exclaimed as I tasted it. "It is so woodsy. That we have in the city is made of brown

sugar.' "How strange," replied Mrs. Holmes,
"The bees make it here. We hang little tin buckets on the trees, and they fill them. Do you remember how the Bible says, 'My son, eat this honey, for it is good?' I always recall that verse when we have waffles."
"The bees have a short summer with you," I replied. "Don't you find the

winters very long and cold?" "Oh, no," smiled she. "You see, I tend my flowers and vegetables in the garden, and feed the chickens, and gather wild strawberries, and the day

"My wife is very fond of out-door life, Mrs. White," observed Dr. Holmes, as he heaped my plate with fried chicken and rice. "Gardening and books absorb most of her time. I think she reads her Shakespeare through every winter."
"Shakespeare loved nature, too," murmured Mrs. Holmes.

"And this our life exempt from public Finds leaves on trees, stones in the running brooks. thing.

But won't you have a beaten biscuit, "Beaten biscuit!" I echoed. "Indeed I will. I have never eaten them in the North. You are a Southerner, Mrs. Holmes. Do you remember anything of the war, or were you too young?" "Oh, I remember the last of it perfectly," she answered. "I can never forget how my mother cried when Grant surrendered to Lee at Gettys-

"Are you fond of fishing, Mrs. White?" interrupted our host. caught these lake trout this morning. We think our ice-cold water makes them firmer and sweeter than those

elsewhere." "My husband is a great fisherman," said Mrs. Holmes, before I could re-ply. "I often put on my snow-shoes In the first place, the sick Mi and go with him, especially in the

"My wife raised this okra in her garden," said Dr. Holmes, as she brought the soup in. "I fancy these islanders think it an outlandish vegefew people who Indeed, appreciate it as we Southerners do." 'The crowded line of masons with trowels in their right hands," Mrs. Holmes, but her husband rose

from the table, and we followed. As and his once gay scarlet comb and we entered the parlor our hostess came to her husband's side and whispered to him. Instantly he turned to us and said: "My wife used to recite years ago very beautifully. Would it give you

pleasure to have her do so now?" "Indeed," I said, "it would be delightful." And with a pleased smile she left the room, and returned with a large tray filled with small while her husband lighted them she moments transformed. Her hair was braided down her back and tied with a blue ribbon. She had on a white "I can't understand why our master tarlatan dress, with an over-skirt dones't kill that miserable old Min-Her sleeves came to her elbow, and she wore white kid gloves, which she wore wrists. But in her house cat, who understands the talk house cat, who understands the talk lighted up with excitement, interest, enthusiasm. She looked like a girl about to step upon the stage for the first time. She was eighteen again;

low courtesy she began: "To be or not to be, that is the question,"

I had heard Booth and Irving repeat those same lines in all the outward semblance of the Dane, but never did they seem so full of meaning as when this woman recited them in her tarlatan dress and white slippers.

When it was over, she paused a moment, and began again, this time

Poe's "Raven": "Once upon a midnight dreary-" It echoes today in my ears as I re-

call that evening. "Caught from some unhappy master, whom unmerciful disaster Followed fast and followed faster, till his song one burden bore. Till the dirges of his hopes that melancholy bore-

Of 'Nevermore-nevermore!' " Tears filled my eyes as I watched them, that husband and wife, so bound together by tenderest love. How many men could have borne to open such a sorrow as his to the gaze of strangers? And yet he did it gladly, to give the ne pleasure possible to that poor darkened life.

Our good-nights came speedily. Mrs. | time he ventured to crow right in the Holmes was as happy as a girl now, doorway, and beamed with delight as we thank- But the

mind. It is not a tragedy. It is an but he hadn't a good head for figures, idyl, the sweetest, the tenderest I so he said lightly: know. He has his love for her, the "Oh, they are just the same, my know. He has his love for her, the "Oh, they are just the same, my deepest one could imagine, because it dear Mrs. Leghorn—just the same, I is full of pity for her loss, and yet as assure you. full of admiration and devotion as when they were lovers. He may shield her and help her and care for her as no one else could or would, and he finds his reward in her childlike hap-

piness and devotion."
There they live on that desolate island today. The flowers bloom and the water sparkles. The strangers come and are entertained and go away. Winter comes and heaps the snow around their cottage, and they the fires high and open their Shake-speares. And when the wind howls restlessly about the house and the wife moves uneasily from room to room, the husband says, "Put on your beautiful white dress, your slippers and rose-buds, and recite for me,' becomes again the happy girl. No, it is no tragedy, but an idyl, sweeter than poet ever sung.-Harper's Bazar.

Boys and Girls.

The Realm of Pansyville.

(By Arthur Macdonald Dole.] Down by an old arbor, a wee dimpled Once founded a kingdom, and happily played That she was a queen and was ruling

with skill beautiful realm called Pansyville. Each morning she summoned her court in review. And did everything that a good queen Most tenderly guarding her subjects All worshiped the Queen of Pansyville.

Her royal prime minister, vested in His small wizened countenance haughtily gruff. Stood by her Lord Mayor, in lavender Upholding the pomp of Pansyville; Her ladies-in-waiting were gowned in

soft white. And each one attended by noble or Robed richly in purple of velvety Beloved by the Queen of Pansyville. The green-tinted dwellings on each

tiny street Held fairest of vassals e'er ready to Their Queen when she passed; always nodding good-will.

These bright little wights of Pansy-This liege-folk lived loyally true to the

Courageously striving their realm to defend. And when King Frost's bowmen shot arrows of chill, They feil for their Queen in Pansy-

The Adopted Chid:

[By Clara J. Denton! The Minorca rooster, the handsomest fowl in the poultry-yard, was sick, and it was whispered about among his friends and relatives that he was go-

ing to die. "Yes," said the White Leghorn hen, who had scratched her way through five or six summers, "he'll not be may rest assured the Minorca around here long, for I nave noticed er's neck is safe. when fowls begin to hang their heads they soon slip away somewhere and

are seen no more."

However, the White Leghorn, al though so very wise, had not yet learned that humans are not all alike, and, in spite of her long experience she was much surprised at

In the first place, the sick Minorca was given his food in a separate dish, warm summer days when there is so very tempting food it appeared, too; then, next, the master took him up in his arms and carried him into the warm hen-house, where the incubator and the brooder was kept. After that, when on warm days, the door of the hen-house was open, the north of the old Mason and Dixon line brood gazed through the wire netting at the forlorn-looking fowl lying on a

bunch of straw near the lamp of the quoted incubator. His once beautiful greenish-black feathers had lost their gloss, wattles hung limply about his head in The bantam rooster "craw-crawed" softly to himself as he moved along,

followed by his troop of dainty little hens, and when he was well out of the Minorca's sight, he gave a proud crow that stretched his handsome little throat to its utmost. "You see," he said, flying on the glass top of an overturned wash-tub, "that kerosene lamps. Those she placed on is what happens to a bird that thinks

the floor in a row for foot-lights, and too much of himself and gives himself airs," and therewith he flapped his slipped out, and reappeared in a few wings hard and gave three lusty crows. "But," said the White Leghorn hen,

> told me today there are one hundred Minorca eggs in the incubator, and

they are expected to hatch tomorrow."
'What in the world do they want of this was the dress she had worn when 'so many Minorcas?" said the Buff she graduated from school. With a Cochin; "they are poor, delicate things at the best," and she gave a sidelong peck at a spruce young Minorea hen who stood near listening to all the The next day the house cat went

strolling around the poultry-yard, and as he went he whispered a strange piece of news through the wire fence: "Out of the one hundred eggs put into the incubator only twelve chickens were hatched.' How the hens cackled and chuckled and squawked over their terrible fail-

"So much for this proud man, our master," said first one and then another; "he thinks he and his incubator are of more consequence than all the hens in the poultry-yard put together. Well, he deserves his great disappointment; and now we will see what his 'brooder' will do for the little chicks, poor dears! never to be clucked to, never to be scratched for, in all their

As time went on the mild days became more frequent, and the flock often stood for many minutes at a weaken or impair their faculties and time watching the little chicks run- strength in any particular." The same ning in and out of the brooder. Meanwhile the Minorca lay in the warmest corner of the hen-house on his clean patch of straw, but never even turned his head to look at his old comrades. "Just as good as dead," whispered the bantam rooster one day, and this

But the sharp old white Leghorn' ed her. Dr. Holmes was as courtly hen had been looking very clasely at and gracious as ever, but we knew he the chicks picking up food in the outwas glad it was over. | er part of the brooder. | er part of the brooder. | "What has become of the chicks?"

our hearts full. "It is a tragedy," she whispered to the bantam rooster, said my husband at last. "How much "It seems to me that the flock is not better it would have been had she died nearly so large as it used to be." The bantam rooster perked his head years ago."

The bantam rooster perked his head "No," I replied, "I have changed my on one side, and tried to look wise;

> But the white Leghorn wasn't satisfied, and she and the Plymounth Rock talked the matter over all the after-

Well indeed, might they wonder, for some strange disease, which their owner did not understand, had carried the poor little chicks off, until there were only four left in the brooder. But one mild March day the flock stood longer than usual staring through the wire netting, for there be fore them were two things which they could not well understand; there was only one little lonesome chick feeding in the brooder, and the Minorca rooster

was up and walking about! While they all stood gazing in silent astonishment, "Shoo, shoo!" cried a voice behind them, and they scattered to a safe distance, where they could watch their master's movements. Pretty soon he came out of the henhouse, carrying on his right arm the Minorca rooster, and in his left hand the last lonesome little chick. He put the chicken down on the warm, soft earth, and he at once ran about as happy and gay as a chicken could possibly be. The Minorca was carried to a fenced-in corner of the poultry-

yard, and when the master had gone the flock hastened to look the matter They found the rooster provided with food and water, and a fine shelter from rain and the chilly night air. As the Minorca made no replies to the crowing of the bantam rooster, nor the cackling of the various hens, they soon all wandered off and left him to

himself. By and by it began to rain hard and fast, and the little chicken who had been so happy ran "yipping" about in a very lonesome way. He tried to share the shelter of the larger fowls, but with many sharp pecks and much squawk-ing they drove him off, the hen-house was closed, and his master seemed to have forgotten him, so there was nothing left for him but to run up and down the poultry-yard crying with all

his might. But in his wild running about he came near the fence that shut in the Minorca rooster, and his bright eyes at once spied a little hole in the wire netting: he quickly squeezed himself through the gap and ran to the Min-

orca's comfortable shelter.

A few minutes after the master of the poultry-yard came wheeling home in great haste. He had remembered the baby chick. But as he failed to find him anywhere in the yard, he made up his mind that he must have gone off into some corner and died. "Poor little thing! the rain was too much for it," he thought; "but I'll look after the Minorea: I don't want

When he came '~ rue Minorca's pen, lo! there was the good old fellow sit-ting flat on the ground, under his snug roof; and under his wing, safe and cozy, was the baby chick chirping away to itself softly and contentedly. After that the little chick slept under the Minorca's wing through all the chilly nights, and ran to him also when the days were cold and damp. When the warm weather came, and the fowls were turned out to roam the

meadows, these two kept constantly together; the old rooster scratched for his adopted baby, called it when he found a choice morsel to eat, and fought for it like a good old motherly

Now, don't you think that was worth saving? The whole family is ready to praise and pet the handsome felow now, and however hungry they may become for chicken pie, you -The Outlook.

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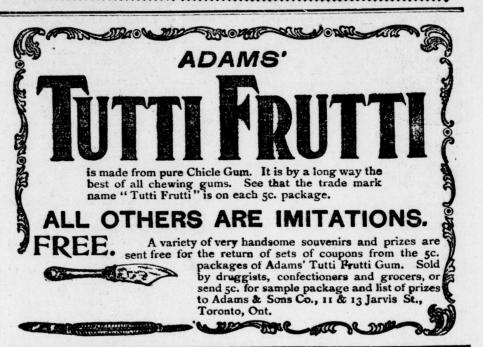
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