

It didn't make no difference to Dallenbeck how people wanted their milk. Doctors was liable, it appeared, to git bit with these here fool notions, and you had to humor them. Dallenbeck believed in humoring them, and then if things went wrong, why, there you were. Certainly I could have the milk from the red cow. It would be a little trouble, of course; well, twelve cents a quart was low considering he'd have to attend to all of it himself.

But Dallenbeck appeared to be honest, and when I had agreed with him at thirteen cents I thought I had the milk problem settled for a time. But this proved a vain hope. One evening not long after I was called from the dinner table and found Dallenbeck on the piazza. He said he wanted to do the square thing, and he just came around to say he'd have to sell that cow. She ate too much and gave too little milk, any way. But the fact was he needed ready money, and he would have to part with her. He thought his cousin over in New Jersey would take her. I began to see the point. The baby was getting along finely, and Roxana had forgotten for some time to wish she was dead. I was anxious not to break the charm. I offered to pay Dallenbeck for a month's supply in advance if he would keep the red cow; and he brightened up at once, and went away with the money in his pocket.

"What did he want to see you about?" asked Roxana, when I came in.

"Oh, about the milk bill."

"Why, Sylvester," said Roxana, reproachfully, "you told me it was paid."

"So it is," I returned. "Eleven cents is an awful price, though," quoth Roxana. "Don't you think so?"

"Outrageous," said I.

"I don't see why you ever agreed to pay Jones any such price as that. But his milk is so good now I hate to change," Roxana went on. "He sends another man with it now, though."

"Yes, I thought it was another man," I observed, with discretion. It seemed to me afterward that I spent the better part of the summer in following up that red cow. When she was indisposed, I paid for a veterinary surgeon to prescribe for her. She was lost once, and I scoured the country for the most of two afternoons on a bicycle helping to find her. In August, Dallenbeck's affairs, as might have been expected, came to a crisis, and he was sold out by the sheriff. I restrained a strong impulse to buy in the red cow and pasture her on the back lawn, so that I might know where to look for her. Dallenbeck's hired man, Murphy, bought the cow for a song. When the sale was over I looked for Murphy to come to an understanding with him. As I went through the house inquiring for him his voice came up to me distinctly from the back porch.

"Yis," he was saying, "an' cheap, too."

"But what do you want with her?" asked somebody; "she's no great milker."

"Ah, let me tell ye, byes," rejoined Murphy, and I could almost hear the twinkle in his eyes—"it's not so much the amount of milk she'll give—though she's not so bad, neither. But ye see, they's a felly down the road here a bit who's been pretty near crazy about this here cow; has a sick kid or somethin', and he'll pay two prices right along to get all his milk from this one cow. He give Jones eleven cents a quart, and Dallenbeck got thirteen. What d'ye think of that? I used to hear him talkin' to the old man. 'Now, Mr. Dallenbeck,' he'd say, 'you're sure I'm gittin' it from the one cow?'"

"Sure," says the old man, tippin' me the wink. "An' it's all handled in me own cans?" "Av course," says Dallenbeck. "that's what yer payin' extry for, ain't it?" An' then when the felly went the old man'd say to me—"That's easy, Murphy," he'd sav.

Jest fill his can outter the reg'lar supply, as usual."

"What," said one of Murphy's listeners, "didn't he get miik from the red cow at all?"

"Red cow nothin'," said Murphy. "That there cow's went dry six weeks ago!"

I turned around and went home. Before night I had made an arrangement with another milkman, and I did not insist upon one cow.

I did not think it necessary to tell Roxana. The boy was getting chubby and rosy, anyway; and the perfect confidence which should exist between man and wife is best preserved by judicious silences. But it happened that Roxana's sister visited us about that time. Her baby also had been bottle-fed, and troublesome.

"I don't know what to try next," she declared. "My doctor thinks, though, that the milk is too uneven. We think of putting the baby on milk from one cow."

"Oh, no," expostulated Roxana, earnestly. "You know," she continued, "that idea is quite exploded, quite. The fact is that milk from the herd is much more even than from any one cow; the inequalities balance each other, you see. I thought of trying that, but my doctor wouldn't listen to it."

I gazed at Roxana, and drew a long breath. "My dear," I asked meekly, "may I ask when did the doctor say that?"

"Why, last June," said Roxana. It was when the baby was so sick. There was one night, Lulu, when I was nearly distracted, and I raked poor Sylvester over the coals for not asking the doctor about the milk. And the very next day I telephoned him myself, and he told me to keep on with the regular mixed supply. Why, surely you remember that night I carried on so, Sylvester."

"Yes, Roxana," I replied. "I remember it."

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Dolly

By Edna Mason

When Dolly wears her garden hat
The flowers come out to see,
But no rose in all her garden
Is half as sweet as she.
On fairy feet she trips about
Among her flowers, in and out,
And Dolly's neat and Dolly's sweet,
And—well it's naught but folly
To try and tell what Dolly is,
For Dolly is—just Dolly

Dear Dolly in her garden hat
Is sweetest of the sweet,
Her eyes are blue as violets,
She's dainty and petite
Demure, she asks, will I tie
Her hat strings in a "butterfly"?
And Dolly's small and I am tall
And—well it's naught but folly
To grow so angry at a kiss:
Who wouldn't kiss you, Dolly?

When Dolly wears her garden hat
Sir Cupid sits upon it,
But then Sir Cupid's always there
If it be hat or bonnet:
Still a garden hat has wider brim
And makes a splendid place for him,
And Cupid's near and Dolly's dear
And—well it's naught but folly
To try to keep one's heart intact
When Dolly's such a Dolly.

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