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PRETTY TIME O' DAY

By Mary C. Francis

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"If Judge Chester A. Ballard of Helena, Mont., was formerly of College Corners, O., and would like to meet an old friend, he will be cordially greeted in the red parlor. If the conjecture as to identity be incorrect, please send reply by letter, as the writer declines to meet a stranger."

Thalia Lambert, with a thrill half of fear, half of daring, thrust a coin into the uniformed messenger's hand, and bidding him make haste, slipped behind a palm.

"It's almost like answering a personal," she said, half laughing. "What if it should not be he? But it must be! I know that after he married Helen they moved to Denver. After she broke off our correspondence I heard they had gone to Helena. Thank goodness, if it isn't Chester Ballard, he can't find out who I am!"

Her knees shook under her as a tall, well formed man of middle age entered the room and looked around inquiringly. Then she came from behind the palm, and these two, who had been plighted lovers twenty years before, met once more face to face.

Thalia never was able to recall just what was said by either at first. The unexpectedness of the meeting made both perfunctory. Then Thalia relaxed.

"I was determined if it were you that you should not go out of town until we had talked over old times. How is Helen? Did you bring her with you?"

"I am here alone on business," she said, with a grave dignity which seemed to reprove her flippant manner. "I shall be here ten days only at the furthest. My mission is to handle the interests of a mining syndicate, and then I return to Helena. But tell me all about yourself. Are you still Thalia Lambert, free?"

Thalia was smiling a little. Here was the old, masterful manner of the one man in the world of whom she had ever been afraid. She gave a coquetish shrug.

"I am none other than Thalia Lambert, and a woman is always free until she puts her neck into the marriage yoke."

He smiled. That evening they dined together. The constraint of their first meeting had worn off, though the judge had been told by a mutual friend that Thalia was engaged to Stewart Curtis, and Curtis himself, lunching with Thalia, had told her that her old friend was now a wealthy and influential lawyer, likely to be nominated for the senate.

The orchestra played "Love's Young Dream" as they dined with their coffee after dinner. Judge Ballard smiled across the table at his companion.

"Do you remember all the foolish little things we used to do in the old academy days—the notes we used to write in class?"

"Of course I do. But do you remember the time we got caught? I wrote you a note—'What time is it? Do you love me?'—and you wrote on the margin: 'Half past 10. Of course I do.' And wrote on the bottom, 'A pretty time of day,' and sent it to me."

"Well, the old man was right. Wasn't it a nice time?"

"Oh, yes," vaguely—"that is, nice for the first time."

"Have there been other times, Thalia?"

"Why not?" defiantly.

"Surely; many other times—times and half times and times between times. That's a woman's record."

The music thrummed in Thalia's veins. Her throat swelled, but she met his gaze steadily.

After that they were more or less formal.

The last night of Judge Ballard's visit came, and it was 10 o'clock when he rang the bell of Thalia's flat. Curtis in the act of departing almost ran into him. Thalia stood near her desk, pale and agitated.

"I'm sorry Mr. Curtis went on my account," said the judge. "It's not worth while to spoil your evening by my brief leaving."

Thalia recovered herself with difficulty, and her breath was still irregular. He took both of her hands in his masterful way and fixed on her the dark, powerful look that had always compelled both men and women. At the magnetic clasp a strange calm fell upon Thalia. She knew that she would rather tell this man the truth and walk alone the rest of her days than to part from him with a half lie, acted if not uttered. She met his searching look squarely.

"Mr. Curtis has not gone on your account," she said. "He went on mine." Judge Ballard regarded her gravely, it seemed to her almost sternly.

"Let it be only a lovers' quarrel, Thalia. Life is too short to waste in trivialities."

"It is not a lovers' quarrel," she said hotly. "It is final."

"Don't say that, Thalia. Very few things are final in this world."

The warning solemnity of his tone carried a chill. Insensibly she leaned toward him as if for protection.

"But it is final," she whispered. "I have sent him away, and he will not dare to come back."

Judge Ballard's tall, dignified figure seemed to grow rigid.

"And why have you sent your promised husband away?" he asked as if cross examining a witness.

"My promised husband?" gasped Thalia. "Why, I've just refused him."

"My darling! My darling!"

He snatched her in strong arms and showered on her face and hair fervent and specifically injudicious kisses not provided for in the statutes of Blackstone. Thalia, half drowned in this lawless onslaught, finally managed to partially free herself and to pant indignantly, "How dare you!"

He only said, "I couldn't help it." Like any schoolboy, but he looked totally unrepentant and remained in dangerous proximity.

Thalia, her cheeks burning and her heart thumping, gasped: "You have no right to say that! You should have remembered—your wife!"

"My wife! Thalia, my wife has been dead for five years."

He caught her swaying form and supported her tenderly.

"You inquired about her in such a way that for the moment I merely said that I was alone, intending to tell you about it later. When I asked you if you were free, you gave me an evasive answer, so when I was told on the afternoon of the same day that you were engaged to Stewart Curtis I thought you had deliberately equivocated. I met him here. You said nothing. What was I to think? Naturally I withheld my own confidence and got what pleasure I could out of the last times I ever expected to see you. Then, you told me just now—and I couldn't help it."

His voice deepened to a sonorous whisper as he paused, but Thalia's head was bowed low on his breast, and he felt her quiver.

"Dear, are you angry?"

No answer.

"Are you angry?"

Silence.

He deliberately lifted up her face and devoured it with a look. And then he put Blackstone to much more confusion in the same illegal manner as in the previous case. The silver chime of the clock on the mantelshelf struck the half hour.

Thalia pushed the hair out of her eyes and laughed.

"What time is it? Do you love me?"

"Half past 10. Of course I do."

A Scotch Rite.

The traditional history of the Scotch regalia ring is of the most tragic, not to say melancholy, character. It is believed that it was the favorite ring of Mary Stuart and that after her judicial murder in Fotheringhay castle it was transmitted to her son. From James it descended to Charles I., at whose coronation at Stone in 1633 it played a distinct part. Once more did this ill fated ring figure at an untimely and ill merited death, for, with almost his last breath upon the scaffold at Whitehall, Charles bequeathed it to Bishop Juxon in trust for his son.

In due course of time the ring came into the possession of James II., and was carried away with him on his flight to the continent. When, however, he was detained by the fishermen at Sheerness, the ring, which had been secreted in the king's underclothing, only escaped robbery by the luckiest of mistakes on the part of the sailor who searched him. Thus the ring was passed on unharmed to James' descendants till by the bequest of Cardinal York it became the property of the reigning dynasty once more and was by them replaced among the royal jewels of Scotland, from which it had been separated for many a long year.—Good Words.

He Didn't Say It.

He was a good little boy, and he lived not many miles from Boston. He never disobeyed his mother, he never called her names when her orders were not his wishes, and he had the face of an angel. Next door lived little Rosy, a girl who proved the proverb about small pitchers. One day Harry was allowed to go over to play with Rosy, but with strict orders not to take off his hat and coat to go in the house if Rosy could not come out into the yard.

Rosy could not come out, but would not Harry take off his things and play inside? Harry quoted sadly his mother's injunction.

"Your mamma is a silly," said Rosy, crossly.

Harry went home and told his mother what Rosy had said. "She is a very naughty little girl," his mother declared. "You must never say such a word."

"No, mamma, I won't," said the dutiful Harry.

A few days later he was again forbidden to do something which he greatly desired to do. "Mamma," said he, lifting to hers his angelic face, "do you remember what Rosy said about you?"

—New York Tribune.

Turkish Educational System.

The educational system of the Turks is not entirely bad, but is mostly for religious instruction. The mekteb, or primary schools, are general and afford every boy and girl in the city an opportunity to learn to read and write and obtain a knowledge of the Koran. Such schools are attached to every mosque in the empire. The itidalayeh, or secondary schools, afford opportunities for learning geography, arithmetic, history and the modern languages, but there are only twenty of these schools in all Constantinople for a million and more of people. The medresseh, or colleges, teach philosophy, logic, rhetoric, theology and Turkish law and generally take the place of the universities found in other countries. They are the highest educational institutions maintained by the Turkish government.

Eyes Only For Her.

Martha—You don't mean to say you have accepted that Mr. Spooner? Why, he is so awkward, you know! I saw him holding an umbrella over you the other day, and all the water it caught he allowed to drain right on to you.

Nancy—What better proof could I have that he is in love with me? He hadn't the least idea that it was raining, the dear man!—Boston Transcript.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF

WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE WEEK IN TERSE FORM

All the News Condensed in a Few Lines as Possible for Reporter Readers

A big vein of natural gas was struck at Hespworth.

The grain crop of the United States is the greatest for years.

Santos-Dumont is building an airship to carry eight passengers.

Mr. Adam Warnock, a prominent citizen of Galt, died Friday night.

General Booth, of the Salvation Army, is to be in Ottawa on Oct. 21.

A son of W. J. H. Pearce, Ottawa, was killed by a street car on Thursday.

The Ontario Municipal Association meets in Brockville on Sept. 9th and 10th.

Andrew Carnegie has offered \$25,000 to Dawson City to establish a library.

Of \$26,897,869 of Quebec city property, \$7,296,970, is exempt from taxation.

The Ontario provincial Y.P.S.C.E. convention will be held in Ottawa, October 7-10.

Canada will have eight Rhodes scholarships, says Principal Parkin, instead of two.

A farmer living near Smith's Falls sold 24 hogs the other day for the neat sum of \$270.00.

157 new elevators are being erected in the Northwest with a capacity of 4,500,000 bushels.

President Roosevelt will be asked to call a special session of the congress to deal with the coal strike.

George Douglas Brown, the author of "The House with the Green Shutters," died suddenly at London.

Fire in Mr. T. Burns' confectionery store at Ottawa did damage amounting to \$3,500 on Tuesday last.

Since the beginning of the present calendar year the C. P. R. has placed orders for 116 new engines.

Charles Shaw, a harvest hand from Hastings' County, was struck by lightning at Roland, Man., and killed.

A writ has been served on Sheriff Dawson for \$4,000 for alleged illegal practices at the Frontenac election.

By-laws to raise \$36,000 for good roads, a new school and a Carnegie library were voted down at Lindsay.

The English journalists say they are in Canada as investigators, for the British press, of Canadian conditions.

John Emery, a farmer near Ashton, was accidentally shot and killed by an orphan boy in his employ one day last week.

General Manager Hays, of the G.T.R., is reported as favoring Montreal as the terminus of the fast Atlantic line.

L. Baynes Reed, a Victoria book-keeper, whose family came from London, Ont., committed suicide by shooting at Banff.

Fourteen mines are in active operation in the anthracite coal region, and they produce for shipment about 2,500 tons each day.

A petrified tree of large dimensions has been unearthed at Blake's quarry in Pittsburg township. A section has been sent to Ottawa.

Montagu Holbein failed in his attempt to swim the English channel, having to be taken out of the water about a mile from Dover.

Miss Fannie Willis, of North Toronto, and four other persons were drowned near Battle Creek, Mich., their skiff being run down by a steamer.

The Japanese government will erect a separate building for the exclusive use of Canadian exhibitors at the forthcoming industrial exposition at Osaka, Japan.

Complaint is made at Ottawa of a shipment of apples from Galt to Winnipeg containing very inferior fruit, and the inspector has been instructed to prosecute the shipper.

The act passed at the last session of the Dominion Parliament prohibiting the landing in Canada of any immigrant or other passenger suffering from disease will be enforced.

Mr. T. Sloan, Protestant Association, was elected for South Belfast, to succeed Mr. W. Johnston, Conservative. Mr. Sloan's majority was over 800 over his Unionist opponent.

Albert Smith has been fined \$100 and sent to jail for thirty days for operating an illicit still in South Norwich.

The still was stolen after its seizure from Cresswell & May's in New Mexico and one of 4,500 from Southern California, will be pastured at Cypress Hill ranches. Both have been inspected by Canadian officers.

The English birthrate is declining.

Lord Strathcona was 82 years old last week.

Sir Wilfrid will not return to Canada till about Oct. 1.

Wheat in western Ontario is running 40 bushels to the acre.

Queen Wilhelmina celebrated her 21st birthday on Sunday.

Official statistics give 18,040 deaths from cholera in the Philippines.

The C.P.R. built 200 miles of new railway in the Northwest this year.

Sir George White, the hero of Ladysmith, has just written a coronation ode.

The British War Office is considering a plan to reduce the expenses of cavalry officers.

A large pack of wolves is said to be ravaging the sheep flocks around Buckingham.

Five tenders have been received for the construction of the Canadian mint at Ottawa.

Loud noises and falling cinders, dust and ashes point to another eruption of Mont Pelee.

William Baxter was killed while riding a bicycle across the M. O. R. track near Tilsonburg.

The Ottawa plumbers are out on strike, and the employers say they don't know what is the reason.

Prof. Goldwin Smith entered upon his eightieth year on Saturday last. He is reported in good health.

Scarcity of coal has raised the price of gas in Ottawa to \$1.10 per 1,000 cubic feet, an increase of 10 cents.

Trouble is said to be threatening in the Sudan and the government is preparing an expedition against the tribes.

It is expected that the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose feebleness was so apparent at the coronation, will resign.

Mr. Andrew Carnegie has given \$15,000 for the foundation of a free library at Sturbridge, Worcestershire, England.

Annie S. Swan, the famous English authoress, is in Winnipeg. Her mission is to secure employment in the west for English women.

W. W. Anderson of Rossmore reports to the Belleville Intelligencer a yield of 336 bushels of fall wheat from 36 acres—36 to the acre.

The potato crop of the Bruce peninsula, promises, the Warton Echo says, provided there is no rot, to be the best in the history of the peninsula.

The Canadian Grocer reports that the stocks of sugar in the United States and Cuba amount to 426,139 tons, or 129,365 tons more than last year.

Mr. A. W. Campbell, deputy minister of public works, has visited the district devastated by the Chetiverville cyclone and will report to the government.

It is rumored that an immense paper combine is being formed in England to operate mills in Canada. The capitalization of the company will be about \$25,000,000.

The Essex, Eng., Chronicle, says it hears that Cecil Rhodes bequeathed to the Countess of Warwick lands in South Africa which have been sold for a million dollars.

There were in 1901 no less than 127,891 persons in Canada who had been born in the United States, but of these 66 per cent had become naturalized British subjects.

Canadian capitalists have secured a block of 129,000 acres of land in Kentucky, which has indications of channel coal and iron ore, and is covered with much virgin timber.

The cost of the coronation is estimated, will be £125,000. When Queen Victoria was crowned the cost was £69,401; for William IV. £43,150; and for George IV. £248,388.

Lady Raglan, one of the British peeresses who took part in the coronation, exhibited herself in her coronation robes at three pence a peep in order to raise money for a hospital.

L. W. Paisley, secretary of the British Columbia live stock association, is in Toronto. He has a commission from British Columbia stockmen to buy about 1,500 cattle in the east.

On Saturday Police Magistrate Tierney, of Arran, sentenced Thomas Rogers to two years in Kingston penitentiary for the theft of a watch from a room-mate at the McPhoe house.

It is said Sir Edward Hutton, formerly commanding the Canadian militia, and latterly in charge of the military forces of the Australian commonwealth, has been recalled by the war office.

Prescott elevator has been sold to Woolwin Syndicate Co. for \$85,000.

This company recently purchased the steel barges belonging to the elevator company. This plant originally cost \$300,000.

A new railroad to be known as the Ottawa, Brockville and St. Lawrence line was organized in Ottawa on Monday. It will pass through Richmond, Merrickville and the Rideau country and will make a 55 mile run from Ottawa to Brockville.

Love in her eyes—oh ecstasy!

My heart leaps with a hope divine,

Love in her eyes—but not for me.

She sees an ice cream soda sign.

—Chicago "Record-Herald."