

He, on his part, was just as anxiously waiting for her to grow weary of the situation, and end it by resigning the domestic leadership she had claimed.

Still he kept steadfast to his conduct, and, to the outward eye, had become a sort of hybrid creature, with no more than interests in life than the proper handling of a broom, and the upward tendency in the cost of butter.

And still, when not at work, he wore his apron as badge of servitude, and still he persisted in performing unnecessary feats of domesticity in public.

And both of them were tired of the position of affairs, though neither of them would give in.

It argued wonderfully for the self-control of Aggie that she was able to maintain her outward semblance of unconcern. True she had stormed at him on other points, but here he had been able to hold his own.

"Reckon, if she don't give in soon I'm in for a lively sort of life," was his gloomy reflection in secret.

"I told him I shouldn't care, and I'm not going to climb down," was her private thought. "I'm just about mortified to death by what folks says and thinks, but I ain't going to let on that I care."

There came a day when Mr. Dapp, returning from a round on his bicycle, arrived at his own back door just in time to find a tramp with his foot neatly inserted in the door.

Two men of the village were away at work, and the tramp, openly demanding a good meal, had called at the Dapps' back door. Aggie, terrified, had refused to give him an entry, and now here he was pushing at the door, while she, on the further side, was pressing against it with all her weight.

That tramp's first notion of Mr. Dapp's arrival was that an earthquake had intervened between him and his coveted meal.

Mr. Dapp, quite forgetting to be lady-like at this crisis, seized the fellow by the shoulders, assailed him with foot and fist, and then sent him spinning with a final adroit punch.

The tramp, rising, philosophically declared that he knew when he had had enough, and shambled off. Mr. Dapp watched him out of sight, and then went into the kitchen.

Aggie, very white of face, was crying tremulously. She put her arms around her husband, and seemed to find comfort in his strength. Presently her sobs ceased, and Mr. Dapp stood back a little.

"I'm sorry," he said, penitently. "I forgot myself for the minute. I forgot I wasn't the master. I ought to 'ave remembered that I'm the under-dog."

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"Oh, don't talk like that!" she begged. "I was glad you come. Oh, Joe, I had no idea you could be so strong!"

"I 'adn't any call to show it," he said apologetically. "As I say, I forgot myself. You're master here, and praps I didn't ought to 'ave interfered. I won't forget myself again," he promised.

"But I want you to, Joe," she broke out. "I want you to go on being master! Oh, you don't know how tired I am of it all. Just to be able to do whatever you like—that's no fun to a woman. I've had enough of being the head of the house. And I've been feeling so silly with all the folks thinking you was henpecked. Only, of course, I wouldn't give in. Somehow, I don't mind giving in—now. I've seen how strong you are, and how you ought to be master."

"You actually mean you want to be mistress in your own 'ouse?" he cried.

"Just as much as I want you to be master," she replied. "I've been wanting a chance to tell you that, but I was too silly proud before. You see, I've been used to ordering folks about so long that—"

"I understand all about that," he said sympathetically.

"I haven't got any other excuse," she went on. "And if I hadn't been so stubborn I'd have given in as soon as ever you began to act the way you did. One thing, we know where we are now, so you won't ever have to do it again."

"That's fine!" he said, putting his arm round her. "Now we can start proper. I always knew you'd be all right, once you come to your senses."

And in this manner was the shrew tamed, nor did ever Mr. Dapp have cause to complain again of any contradiction of his rights. For though occasionally domestic breezes rose, Mr. Dapp had merely to glance at an apron to restore instant calm.

It's a Way They Have

he man had strayed into a big department store to execute some commission for his wife, and, as might be expected, he was lost. In this predicament, he naturally appealed to a floor-walker, to whom he mentioned the first item on his list. Now, a floor-walker has problems hurled at him every minute of the day, and some of them are puzzlers. So far as possible he has everything properly classified in his mind, but there are articles that do not seem to belong to any particular department and that somehow were overlooked when he stored the classification away in his mental warehouse. But he always knows what to do.

"You will find that," he said in this instance, "in the notions department."

So the man went to the notions department, and received the haughty rebuff that is generally considered due inexcusable ignorance. He was in the wrong aisle.

"But where, then, can I find it?" he inquired, doubtfully.

"Ask the floor-walker. He can tell you," was the prompt reply.

He hunted up another floor walker and again put his question.

The latter knit his brows and did some hasty but hard thinking. "Try the notions department," he said at last.

"The notions department," he said, with emphasis and some bitterness, "seems to be a sort of trade trash, or possibly I might term it a croquette. It is a constant source of wonder and surprise; you never know what's in it. If anything is missing, you say, 'Dear me! it must have been used in the croquettes or the hash.' But you don't know. It may be there or it may not; it's all guesswork, and investigation reveals the presence of a lot of things you didn't expect and mighty little that you did. Now I find that your croquette department is a sort of last resort—an excuse, a subterfuge, an easy way out of a dilemma. I have been sent there five times out of a possible eight, and I am weary. I won't ask you where to go for the articles I have in my list, but I will ask you where to go for information. That's what I want—information, authentic information. Where can I get it?"

"Yes, yes, of course," he said; "I quite understand—something you want and you've been unable to get it. Try the second counter in the third aisle to the left—the notions department." —Elliott Flower.

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