

A Husband by Proxy

By JACK STEELE
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Oh, Jerold, I'm so glad," she said. "I don't see why you have to go away at nine!"

She was radiant with blushes. He recognized a cue.

"And how's the dearest little girl in all the world?" he said, handing her the box of confections. "I didn't think I'd be able to make it, till I wired. While this bit of important business lasts we must do the best we can."

He had thrown his arm about her carelessly. She moved away with a natural gesture towards the man who had opened the door.

"Oh, Jerold, this is my Uncle Syke—Mr. Robinson," she said. "He and Aunt Jill have come to pay me a visit. We must all go upstairs to the parlor." She was pale with excitement, but her acting was perfect.

Garrison turned to the narrow-eyed old man, who was scowling darkly upon him.

"I'm delighted to meet you," he said, extending his hand.

"Um! Thank you," said Robinson, refusing his hand. "Extraordinary hononym you're giving my niece, Mr. Fairfax."

His manner nettled Garrison, who could not possibly gauge the depth of the old man's dislike, even hatred, conceived against him simply as Dorothy's husband.

A greeting so utterly uncordial made unlooked-for demands upon his wits.

"The present situation will not endure very long," he said significantly. "In the meantime, if Dorothy is satisfied there seems to be no occasion for anyone else to feel distressed."

"If that's intended as a fling at me," started Robinson, but Dorothy interrupted.

"Please come upstairs," she said, laying her hand for a moment on Garrison's shoulder; and then she ran up lightly, looking back with all the smiles of perfect art.

Garrison read it as an invitation to a private confidence, much needed to put him properly on guard. He bounded up as if in hot pursuit, leaving her uncle alone there by the door.

She fled to the end of the upper hall, near a door that was closed. Garrison had lost no space behind her. She turned a white, tense face as she came to a halt.

"Be careful, please," she whispered. "Some of my relatives appeared here unexpectedly this afternoon. I had to wire on that account. Get away just as soon as you can. You are merely passing through the city. You must write me daily letters while they are here—and—don't forget who you are supposed to be!"

She was radiant again with blushes. Garrison was almost dazzled by her beauty. What reply he might have made was interrupted. Dorothy caught him by the hand, like a fond young bride, as her uncle came rapidly up the stairs. The door was opened, and he saw a white-haired, almost bearded woman, large, sharp-sighted, and ugly, with many signs of both quaintness and acquisitiveness upon her.

"So, that's your Mr. Fairfax," she said to Dorothy. "Come in here till I see what you're like."

Dorothy had taken Garrison's arm. She led him forward.

"This is Aunt Jill," she said by way of introduction and explanation. "Aunt Jill is my husband, Jerold."

Aunt Jill backed away from the door to let them enter. Garrison realized at once that Dorothy's marriage had excited much antagonism in the breasts of both these relatives. A sudden accession of boldness came upon him, in his plan to protect the girl. He entered the room and faced the woman calmly.

"I'm glad to meet you," he said, in a style no longer modern, save for the installation of electric lights. It contained a piano, a fireplace, a cabinet, writing-desk, two settees, and the customary complement of chairs.

The pictures on the walls were rather above the average, even in the homes of the wealthy. The objects of art, disposed in suitable places, were all in good taste and expensive.

Quite at a loss to meet these people to advantage, ununiformed as he was of anything vital concerning Dorothy and the game she might be playing, Garrison was rendered particularly alert by the feeling of constraint in the air. He had instantly conceived a high appreciation for Dorothy's art in her difficult position, and he rose to a comprehension of the role assigned to himself.

He had earlier determined to appear affectionate; he now saw the need of enacting the part of protector.

In the full illumination of the room, the glory of Dorothy's beauty was startling. His eyes sought her face with no need of acting, and the admiration blinding in his gaze was more than genuine; it was thoroughly spontaneous and involuntary.

The moment was awkwardly fraught with suspense for Garrison, as he found himself subjected to the indignantly unfriendly appraisal of his newly acquired relations.

Aunt Jill had been waited for a moment only. She looked over their visitor with undisguised contempt.

"Well, I dare say you look respectable and healthy," she said, as if concealing a point, with a little reluctance, "but appearances are very deceiving."

"Thank you," said Garrison. He sat

down near Dorothy, occupying a small settee.

If Mrs. Robinson was personally pugnacious, her husband harbored far more vicious emotions. Garrison felt this in his manner. The man was looking at him narrowly.

"How much of your time have you spent with your wife since your marriage?" he demanded, without the slightest preliminary introduction to the subject.

Garrison realized at once that Dorothy might have prepared a harmless fiction with which his answers might not correspond. He assumed a calm and deliberate air, he was far from feeling, as he said:

"I was not aware that I should be obliged to account to anyone save Dorothy for my goings and comings. Up to the present, I believe she has been quite well satisfied with my deportment; haven't you, Dorothy?"

"Perfectly," said Dorothy, whose utterance was perhaps a trifle faint.

"Can't we all be friends—and talk about—"

"I prefer to talk about this for a moment," interrupted her uncle, still regarding Garrison with the closest scrutiny. "What's your business, anyway, Mr. Fairfax?"

Garrison, adhering to a policy of telling the truth with the greatest possible frequency, and aware that evasion would avail them nothing, waited the fraction of a minute for Dorothy to speak. She was silent. He felt she had not committed herself or him upon the subject.

"I am engaged at present in some insurance business," he said. "It will take me out of town tonight, and keep me away for a somewhat indefinite period."

"H'm!" said Mr. Robinson. "I suppose you'll quit your present employment pretty soon?"

"With no possible chance of comprehending the drift of inquiry, Garrison responded:

"Possibly."



DR. ARNE (Born 1710)
Composer of "Rule Britannia." His Centenary to be Celebrated in England This Year. Died in 1778

he foresaw some money struggle impending. "She can tell you that up to the present moment I have never asked her a word concerning her financial status or future expectations."

"Why don't you tell us you never knew she had an uncle?" demanded Robinson, with no abatement of acidity.

"As a matter of fact," replied Garrison, "I have never known the name of any of Dorothy's relations till tonight."

"This is absurd!" cried the aggravated Mr. Robinson. "Do you mean to tell me—"

Garrison cut in upon him with genuine warmth. He was fencing blindly in Dorothy's behalf, and instinct was guiding him with remarkable precision.

"I should think you might understand," he said, "that once in a while a young woman, with a natural desire to be esteemed for herself alone, might purposely avoid all mention both of her relatives and prospects."

"We've all heard about these marriages for love," sneered Dorothy's uncle. "Where did you suppose she got her house?"

Garrison grew bolder as he felt a certain confidence that so far he had made no particular blunders. His knowledge of the value of half a truth, or even the whole truth, was true to the mark. "I have never heard of this house before tonight," he said. "Our 'honey-moon,' as you called it earlier, has, as you know, been brief, and none of it was spent beneath this roof."

"Then how did you know where to come?" demanded Mr. Robinson.

"Dorothy supplied me the address," answered Garrison. "It is not uncommon, I believe, for husband and wife to correspond."

"Here we are, and here we'll stay," said Mr. Robinson. "Till the will and all the business is settled. Perhaps you'll say you didn't even know there was a will."

Garrison was beginning to see light dimly. What it was that lay behind Dorothy's intentions and her scheme he could not know; he was only aware that tonight, stealing a glance at her sweet but worried face, and realizing faintly that she was greatly beset with troubles, his whole heart entered the conflict, willingly, to help her through to the end.

"You are right for once," he answered his inquisitor. "I have known nothing of anything of my wife affecting Dorothy, and I know nothing now. I only know you can rely upon me to fight her battles to the full extent of my ability and strength."

"That nonsense! You don't know!" exclaimed Mr. Robinson. "Why don't you tell the truth?"

"It's the truth," interrupted Dorothy. "I have told him nothing about it."

"I don't believe it!" said her uncle. "But whatever he knows, I'll tell him this, that I shall have my day and my right, before my brother's property shall go to a scheming stranger!"

Garrison felt the need for enlightenment. It was hardly fair to expect him to keep up further stories, in the face of his watch ostentatiously.

"I did not come here expecting this sort of reception," he said truthfully. "I hoped at least for a few minutes' time with Dorothy alone."

"To keep up further stories, I presume," said Mr. Robinson, who made no move to depart.

Garrison rose and approached Mr. Robinson precisely as he might have done had this been more than a fiction.

"Do you require Dorothy to go down in the hall, in her own house, to obtain a moment of privacy?" he demanded.

"We might as well understand the situation first as last."

"I have a voice barely above a whisper. I didn't expect them. When I found out they had come I hardly knew what to do. And when they declared I had no husband I had to request you to come in here to help me."

"Something of the sort was my conclusion," Garrison told her. "I have blundered along with fact and fiction as best I might, but what am I supposed to have done that excites them both to insult me?"

Dorothy seemed afraid that the very walls might hear and betray her secret.

"My supposed marriage to me is sufficient," she answered in the lowest of undertones. "You must have guessed that they feel themselves cheated out of this house and other property left in a relative's will."

"Cheated by your marriage?" said Garrison.

She nodded, watching to see if a look of distrust might appear in the gaze he bent upon her.

"I wouldn't dare attempt to inform you properly or adequately tonight, with my uncle in the house," she said. "But please don't believe I have done anything wrong—and don't desert me now—"

She had hardly intended to appeal to him so helplessly, but somehow she had been so glad to lean upon his strength, since his meeting with her relatives, that the impulse was not to be resisted. Moreover she felt, in some strange working of the mind, that she had come to know him as well within the past half-hour as she had ever known anyone in all her life. Her trust had gone forth of its own volition, together with her gratitude and admiration, for the way he had taken up her cause.

"I left the matter entirely with you this afternoon," he said. "I only wish to know so much as you yourself deem essential. I feel this man is vindictive

and crafty. Are you sure you are safe where he is?"

"Oh, yes, I'm quite safe, even if it is unpleasant," she told him gratefully for his evident concern. "If need be, the caretaker would fight a pack of wolves in my defense."

"This will," asked Garrison. "When he is going to be settled—when does it come to probate?"

"I don't quite know."

"When is your real husband coming?" he inquired, more for her own protection than his own.

She had not admitted in the afternoon that she had a husband. She colored now as she tried to meet his gaze.

"Did I tell you there was such a person?"

"No," said Garrison. "You did not. I thought—"

"Perhaps that's one of the many things I'm obliged to know," she said. "Perhaps, a moment, adding: 'If you'd rather not go on—'"

She lowered her eyes. He felt a thrill that he could not analyze, it lay so close to jealousy and hope. And whatever it was, he knew it was out of the bargain, and not in the least his right.

(To be continued)

REGIMENTAL PETS

AT the moment of writing, the men of the 2nd Royal Irish Rifles at Dover are jubilant because their brindle bulldog pet, Billie, who had fallen into disgrace through biting a boy, has been reinstated in the regiment. The dog had gone forth that Billie should be banished from the regiment. When it is mentioned that Billie was presented to the regiment in South Africa, and that he had won medals for the Boer War, and had war medals bestowed upon him, the affection which the men of the Royal Irish Rifles have for him will be readily understood.

His lapse of good behaviour reminds one that Sausage, the pet of the Grenadier Guards at the Chelsea Barracks, has several times fallen into disgrace. Sausage is a beautiful collie which was entered "on the strength of the regiment" six years ago, and strongly resents any intrusion by other dogs, many of which had reason to regret going into the barracks. Sausage was found in South Africa, went through several sharp engagements with the regiment, and is said to have been wounded two or three times. He has a commanding presence, and is seen to advantage when he wears a massive collar, to which is attached the South African War ribbon.

Perhaps the most distinguished regimental pet, however, was Bobby, of the Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment in Afghanistan. Bobby's most brilliant achievement was at the Battle of Maidwand, where he kept running to the front and biting the heels of the enemy till a bullet tore nearly all the skin off his back. Returning to England with his regiment, he was decorated by Queen Victoria with the medal for bravery, but it also enables the workman to maintain a comparatively high rate of wages, corresponding much more to his needs than is the case with the wages of the Russian workman. The average earnings of the American laborer in 1900 was \$425 while the Russian workman during the same year received the meagre sum of \$100 on an average. Of course a workman with a family, having to live as a rule in a populous district, can on such a wage maintain only a beggar's existence.

The greater capacity for work which the American workman displays is due, in the opinion of this writer, to his higher general and professional intelligence, to the superior machinery employed, to the high development of the spirit of self-help in American, and the free conditions which prevail here, all of which, we are told, give American industry a class of workmen who are stronger, less exhausted, and more developed physically, mentally, and morally than the working class in Russia. As if any further proof of the poverty of the Russian were needed Mr. Press gives the following illuminating figures. Taking the entire population of Russia the yearly output per person amounts to \$19. In Germany the per capita production a year is \$92, in France \$116.50, in England \$139.50, in the United States \$176, and in Australia \$187. This writely shows the chief cause of Russia's economically low level in the unfavorable political conditions, which do not permit the free play of individual enterprise.

The economic status of a country depends chiefly on three factors, the natural resources, the native gifts of the people, and the amount of political liberty they enjoy. There can be no light that as regards the first two factors Russia ought to occupy not the last but one of the first places among the civilized nations. Therefore, if Russia has remained lagging so far behind as we have seen above, then the only reason is her lack of political freedom, which is an indispensable for the economic development of a country as air is ganism."

poor, but they are on the verge of destitution. Mr. A. Press, writing in the St. Petersburg Zvezda, gives the following vivid illustration of the utter pauperism of the great bulk of the Russian people:

"It is known that the comparatively high-priced food-products, like meat, butter, eggs, fruit etc., are used in much smaller quantities by the Russian population than by Americans, English, German, French and other civilized nations. It would seem therefore that for the proper maintenance of life the Russian would make up for this lack by a larger consumption of grain foods. But in reality the very opposite is the case. For instance, in 1904 the consumption of grain per person in the United States averaged 1,954 pounds, and in Russia 660 pounds, that is, one-third of that in America. The same low level of consumption is noticeable in all other products constituting the necessities of life. The consumption of cotton per head in the United States during the same year was 20.4 pounds, and in Russia only 5.4 pounds; sugar in America 78 pounds in Russia only 13.2 pounds, and so on. The most characteristic measure of the comparative wealth of the two countries is in the relative consumption per individual of iron and anthracite. In the United States the per capita consumption of iron in 1904 was 50.4 pounds and of coal 8,568 pounds, in Russia 45 pounds of iron and 3,501 pounds of coal."

This low consumption, says Mr. Press, is reflected sadly enough in the general misery of the great majority of the Russian people, the awful ravages of disease, and the extremely high rate of mortality among them. The lack of proper and sufficient nourishment necessarily shows also in the low productive capacity of both the agricultural and industrial workman of Russia, and this Mr. Press illustrates again by a few striking examples:

"The grain output in the United States in 1904 was 2,628 pounds per person, and only 954 pounds in Russia. In the industries the yearly production of one laborer in America in 1900 amounted to \$2,377, and in Russia to \$633. The difference between these figures is so great that it sufficiently accounts for the national wealth of America and the indigence of our own people. The great productivity of American labor not only makes possible the rapid growth of

rough fellow, after indulging in ugly taunts, threw at him fated, loafstools and a dead snake.

Then an Indian appeared, who, in a drunken rage, stimulated by some fancied injury, rushed at Hubbard with a tomahawk, probably intending nothing worse, however, than to get even. A severe fright, which he certainly succeeded in doing.

Help came from an unexpected quarter; for at that moment an old bull came tearing down the road. His attention was attracted by the stocks, and with a roar he prepared for a charge.

Alarmed in his turn, the savage dashed off. The bull made a dash at the stocks and carried away the corner post, but without even grazing the object of his apparent wrath. Whether he was disgusted by the little he had accomplished, or his animosity was thus satisfied, he started off, bellowing and shaking his head, much to the relief of the said Hubbard.

And then the unfortunate man was left in comparative peace to his own meditations and the cutting sleet of a November day.

THE JARR FAMILY

Mr. Jarr's Uncle Henry Wastes Every Penny of \$1.60

WELL, I see there's a letter from Uncle Henry," said Mr. Jarr, as he glanced at his morning's mail beside his breakfast plate.

"Wonder what he has to say?"

"You never mind what he has to say," said Mrs. Jarr. "You go ahead and eat your breakfast! You can read your correspondence and your newspaper afterward! For I want to tell you that Gertrude is complaining at the way meals drag in this house. You can't expect a girl to put up with it, and I'm sure I do not blame Gertrude one bit!"

"But, get whizz! I'm not reading the morning paper. You're doing that!"

"You're not reading the morning paper?" said Mr. Jarr. "I just happened to mention that there was a letter from Uncle Henry!"

"Well, it doesn't interest me at all," said Mrs. Jarr. "I mean Uncle Henry's letter. And as for the paper—if I didn't run my eye over it at the breakfast table I never would get to know what's going on in the world. For, after you go, I don't have time to sit down to rest one minute, let alone read the newspaper."

"And that reminds me that Cora Hickett asked the other day if I had found Henry James obscure and if I had ever read Morgan's 'It May Never Happen Again.' As if I had time to read anything, with two children to keep neat and to get off to school and a husband who makes me more work than the two children put together, and who doesn't care how he throws his things around!"

"I and your soiled things all over the place and you don't care where you drop the ashes of your cigar, and you make me more work, just following you around picking up after you! So I just had to tell her that I most certainly did find Henry James most obscure. So obscure, in fact, that I hadn't read anything he ever wrote. And as for 'It May Never Happen Again,' it hadn't happened to me at all. But I do declare, all the old maids, like Cora Hickett, have gone crazy since that play has come to town, which gives them a chance to say that their case is just the same as that poor girl in the play—their fathers interfered—what were you going to say!"

"Are you going to read me Uncle Henry's letter?" asked Mrs. Jarr. "I suppose you've afraid of Oh, you ran around with that old villain, and goodness knows what the two of you were up to! I have my doubts about Uncle Henry, only I know he is too stingy to be wicked if it costs anything!"

"My life is an open book," said Mr. Jarr. "and so I'll open Uncle Henry's letter."

"Swoppe-Corner, Yesterday. He'ty was at the deppo in Smithville with a democrat."

"A Democrat!" cried Mrs. Jarr. "I thought Uncle Henry was an ardent Republican! Oh, well, their case is just to see him because he had been away so long!"

"A democrat" is a light spring wagon," said Mr. Jarr, and went on with his reading.

"Which Lew Burkitt lent her because the bookboard had a bustid spring. He'ty looked right, peart, and that sort o' riled me, and I up and says:

"Well, it's pretty carryings on you been havin' while I bin in that lonely big city, and you havin' a good time on the farm, right at home, where yer meals cost yer nuthin'!"

"She didn't say a word, which was strange for He'ty. Doggone it! that me more than ever! He'ty and me's been married over forty years, and I've gotten to be the woman. And finally she says to me:

"If you can go gallivantin' in the city I kin go gallivantin' right here at home."

"I knew what that meant—more expense. But if winter will let me manage and drive a man to the poorhouse, why let 'em do it! So I says to her:

"If it's gallivantin' ye want I'll give it to you!"

"So I went to the Smithville Grand Hotel and put up the boss, which cost a quarter, and got our supper, which cost seventy-five cents—because they're charging thirty-five cents for square meals at the Grand Hotel now, 'stid of a livin'." That night we went to a camp fire dinner given by the Ladies' Oxi'lary of John A. Logan Post, G. A. R., ten cents apiece to git in and fifteen cents apiece for bean soup and hardtack and coffee."

"The Ladies' Oxi'lary is all female veterans of the civil war, and was presided over by Sis' Jane Beasley, who was bewitched by Abe Lincoln back in Illinois before the war. Logan Post Fifo and Dragoon Corps discoursed sweet music, and I wan to send me a dollar sixty, which was my expense, because you set me the bad example of spending money on my wife."

"Sis' S'pse I'm an old fool to do it. Why marry a woman if you got to spend money on her afterwards, he'y! Answer me that and send me the dollar sixty. Your lovin'."

"UNCLE HENRY."

BILL: "Jake said he was going to break up the suffragette meeting and the other night. Were his plans carried out?"

DILL: "No, Jake was."



FREDERIC CHOPIN (Born 1810)
The Famous Composer. Born at Warsaw, Poland, of French Parents. His Centenary Occurs This Year. Died at Paris in 1849

CHAPTER IV. Unspoken Antagonism

Garrison crossed the room with an active stride and closed the door firmly. Dorothy was standing where he turned. She, too, was standing.

"You can see that I've got to be posted a little," he said quietly. "To be honest, I've made no mistakes."

"You have made no mistakes," said Dorothy in a voice barely above a whisper. "I didn't expect them. When I found out they had come I hardly knew what to do. And when they declared I had no husband I had to request you to come in here to help me."

"Something of the sort was my conclusion," Garrison told her. "I have blundered along with fact and fiction as best I might, but what am I supposed to have done that excites them both to insult me?"

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WHY THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE ARE POOR

RUSSIA often shares the honor with our own country of being designated a land of unimproved possibilities. If the chief factor taken into consideration be the potential wealth of economic resources lying buried in Russian soil, there is good ground to doubt for the coupling of two countries which, in point of actual resources, are farthest removed from each other economically. But while Russia is actually the poorest of all civilized nations, the United States is the richest. The mass of the Russian people, the Russian political economists tell us, are not only

A DAY IN THE STOCKS

RECORD on file in the Library of Congress contains an account of the adventures of a certain Hubbard, who was sentenced in Boston to the stocks for having indulged in an unwarrantable fit of ill temper. When he had taken his seat for the day there came along a drove of swine, which seemed to cast upon him those leering looks that only a fat pig can bestow. A dog followed, sniffing at the prisoner's feet, and making feints—unpleasantly approaching reality—of biting him. Then a cock, mounting to the very top of the stocks, crowed his derision upon the victim below; and presently a