

SUNSHINE-SHADDER

down the first summer arter I wus marrit on Albert Edaard—”

“How did that occur?” he asked, hoping the question would divert her rather personal inspection of his immaculate person.

“Wall, theer was a walk theer thet day, the ferst they ever had. Heaps 'n' heaps wur out the country roun'. Albert Edaard, thet's my man, tuk me fer a drive thet arternoon, 'n' as we driv' down the hill a-goin' ter Sunshine-Shadder, the crowds yelled fire, 'n' sure enough the buildin' wus a-blazin'. Lan', it mos' scared me into a miscarry, fer I wus in the fam'ly way fer Dan'l thet summer; but the wust o' the hull thing wus as we driv' through the street, fer ole Pete Burr, who was ackin' King James, got all riled up with smoke 'n' whiskey, 'n' wus fer drivin' the mare right into the burnin' buildin'; but, lan' ter goodness, they's pulled him back, though not afore the mane 'n' tail o' the beast wus singed.”

“How unfortunate?”

“Yees, 'twus, 'n' no one kin tell ter this day who set it afire,” she concluded, plaintively, as she made sundry dives into her pocket for a bit of cardboard, which the impatient conductor quickly divided in two. “Yere name ain't Hastin's, be et?” she inquired a few minutes later as she resumed her scrutiny.

“No, I have not the pleasure,” he answered with acidity as he turned his face from her persistent gaze and sought refuge in the pages of his partly-read magazine.

“Wall, ye could easy be a relative o' his'n, fer I