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CLIMBING: WITH
GALSATEA : A BUCOLIC
ROMANCE



BY: CURTIS: DUNHAM



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GAMBOLLING WITH GALATEA



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(page 99)

I WOULD N'T ROOST IN A CHERRY TREE

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GAMBOLLING WITH GALATEA: A BUCOLIC ROMANCE

By *CURTIS DUNHAM*

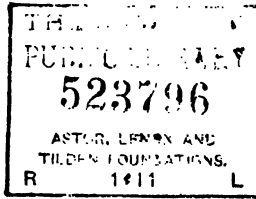
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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
BY OLIVER HERFORD



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GAMBOLLING WITH GALATEA


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PRELIMINARY

Preliminary and Confidential

AIR reader (and unfair one, of either sex), I pray you be not dismayed by the profundity of this discourse. Doubtless there are some light-minded observers who would have seen in the natural phenomena herein recorded the very quintessence of humor, the apotheosis of the comical. Such pretenders to scientific and literary eminence would entertain the same view of the noble Titanotherium Robustum, or the sublime Stegosaurus Ungulatus. They would have cast merry doubts upon the improving conversation between Balaam and his Ass; ridiculed the psychic resources of the Birds of St. Francis d'Assisi; scoffed at the gratitude of Æsop's

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Lion; denied the acumen of the Jumping Frog of Calaveras; yea, and presumed to say “scat” to the sacred Cat of Bubastis.

Fair reader (or unfair one), be warned against all such triflers with the important truths of nature. Life is earnest. Turn the page— read, ponder, and be wise.

C. D.

GAMBOLLING WITH GALATEA

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THE TWO-LEGGED PARTNERS

I

Initiation of the Two-Legged Partners

HE thing was incredible. It was intolerable — just cause for mutiny. Talk about injustice, arrogant denial of the equal rights of man and beast! Well, here was a spectacle calculated to make the heavens weep. Yet never had a June sky revealed a deeper shade of blue for fleecy clouds to sail upon. The wind that should have risen in a shriek of indignation blew softly around the corner of the barn, and was laden with fragrance from all the flowers that bloom. In the meadow just beyond the stone fence, the tall grass waved gently, whispering contentment to the brook that gurgled with happiness. Birds sang, grasshoppers chirped —

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Clarence could stand it no longer. With his neck stretched far out of his stall window, the colt lifted up his voice and whinnied remonstrance.

“O Amanda! Why are we still prisoners, and the sun half-way up the roof of heaven? It is an outrage, Amanda. Come quickly and let us out.”

Reginald — the round fat one with the tight kink in his tail — stood on his hind-legs inside the barnyard fence under the colt’s nose, and voiced his personal grievance in short sharp squeaks.

“Let me out, let me out, let me out! My trough is empty. My flattened belly cleaves to my backbone.”

On either side of him were Mrs. Cowslip and Gustavius, with their heads over the fence and their noses in the air.

“Amanda, O Amanda!” bawled the bull-



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calf, while his mother — she of the liquid eyes and the crumpled horn — lowed her gentle reminder: —

“ Good, kind Amanda, this yard is barren; in the pasture the long grass is luscious. Amanda, O Amanda ! ”

And William, the big-horned and bearded one, butted foolishly at the hinges of the barn-yard gate.

The others gave no heed to William’s puerile devices. He was only an addle-pated goat anyway, devoid of reasoning power and puffed up with vanity. They put their noses together and considered the matter, the bull-calf wrinkling his yellow muzzle at Clarence’s ear and dropping now and then a superfluous comment. Ordinarily the colt, having an exalted sense of his own superiority, would have indulged in no such familiarity with a placid old cow and her lubberly calf; but it was plain that the present

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occasion was one demanding the sinking of the individual in the organization. So Clarence patiently reviewed the situation, inviting their suggestions.

To go back to the events of the early morning. Why had that two-legged tyrant, who always responded so promptly to the vulgar name of Gabe whenever Amanda hailed him from the kitchen door, harnessed the mare and driven off, leaving them deprived of their customary liberty, and without a word of explanation? The act was contrary to the Professor's most sacred principle of equity for all living creatures, whether having four legs or only two.

“And yet just now you led us in our supplications to Amanda,” observed Mrs. Cowslip. “Why did you not remind the Professor of our —”

“Ah!” broke in Gustavius, “you can trust

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the Professor to understand the needs of a bull-calf.”

“You don’t have to ask the Professor twice when you want your back scratched,” grunted Reginald, his tail kinking tighter than ever with delicious memories.

“The Professor has a large, round, and most inviting stomach,” commented William. “Never before have I spared such a stomach. Yet never have I felt the slightest inclination to butt the Professor.”

Mrs. Cowslip turned her mild eyes inquiringly on the colt. “I suggest,” she said, “that we remind the Professor —”

“My gracious!” interrupted Clarence with impatience. “Can’t you fellows remember anything over-night? The Professor drove off behind my mother yesterday morning. There was a box beside him in the wagon. He wore his high hat. Mother came home without him.

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There 's nobody left in the house but Amanda and that two-legged Gabe."

Just then Gustavius tossed his immature horns and bellowed:—

"Amanda! Amanda!"

With an apron over her head and a tin pail on her arm, Amanda had come into view beyond the angle of the barn.

"She 's going to the strawberry-patch over beyond the orchard," said Clarence, excitedly. "Quick! Now, all together!"

Amanda had not the hardihood to ignore the resulting chorus of appeals to her. But she passed quickly on out of sight, after turning long enough to wave her hand and answer:—

"Jest be patient, you critters. Gabe 'll 'tend to you when he gits home."

The colt nearly burst with indignation.

"That settles it," he shrieked, lashing out with his heels so that there was a great clatter

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of things loose in the barn. Then he drew back his lips, baring his teeth, and began snapping at the latch-string of the barn-door, which was just beyond his reach.

“It’s a pity,” said Mrs. Cowslip. “I’ve seen your mother let herself in that way many a time, when she was full of grass and eager for her midday nap.”

“If I was only out of here, I could reach that string,” grunted Reginald, with one thought for the colt and two for himself.

“Oh, we know all about you,” retorted Clarence with exasperation. “If you could get out you’d scoot for those artichokes down by the brook and never look behind you, you fat, selfish, kink-tailed little beast.”

“Just you try me,” urged the pig, for he had great confidence in the colt’s resources.

Once more their noses were close together, while Clarence instructed them in the details of

GAMBOLLING WITH GALATEA

a desperate effort designed to gain freedom for them all.

To contend with the smug incredulity of those millions of human kind who spend their lives in little brick-and-mortar boxes set one on top of another in long double rows is the fate of all chroniclers of the important aspects of nature. But truth is mighty and will prevail. Let us therefore proceed calmly with the facts.

When Clarence had repeated his instructions several times, Reginald gave three sharp, intelligent grunts and ran straight to the barnyard gate. With his stiffened snout he began furiously attacking the hard earth beneath the lower bar.

“Not there, you idiot!” squealed the colt. “The other end. The other end, where the iron hinges are!”

Reginald stood corrected. While the dirt flew from under the hinged end of the gate, Gusta-

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vius galloped foolishly around the yard with his tail aloft, and William, with a coolly calculating eye on those hinges, backed away slowly, with significance understood by all the other conspirators. Mrs. Cowslip looked on benignantly. Presently the pig got his sturdy shoulders under the gate and heaved with all his might. William, with head down, leaped to the assault. The crash of his horns on those hinges reëchoed between orchard and wooded hills. But the gate was raised only an inch or two, and Reginald stuck fast. His squeals as he struggled would have melted a heart of stone. William backed away for another assault. It was while he was in mid-air that Clarence shrilled: —

“Not the hinges! The pig, the pig!”

William understood. This time all the weight behind his horns landed with a resounding smack on Reginald's inviting posterior. In the midst of heart-rending squeals the gate rose in the air

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and the barnyard prisoners looked out on liberty. Instantly Reginald was off in the direction of the artichokes.

“Stop!” shrieked Clarence. “As I’m a thoroughbred, you shall feel my heels among your spareribs!”

Reginald looked back, and seeing immediate menace in the lowered horns of Mrs. Cowslip and Gustavius, turned about, ran to the barn-door, stood on his hind-legs, seized with his teeth the leather string at which the colt was frantically snapping, gave one sharp pull — and the deed was done. If Amanda, a moment later, had looked up from her strawberry-picking, she would have seen, circling over the half-lawn, half-pasture between the barn and the house, all tails in the air, a triumphant procession consisting of one yearling colt, one cow with a crumpled horn, one bull-calf, one he-goat making short stiff-legged jumps with horns lowered, and

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one pig bringing up the rear with a tail now so tightly kinked that it lifted his hind-quarters clear of the ground at every second leap.

But Amanda's mind was glued on strawberries; and for the present other matters of moment require us, too, to leave the escaped prisoners to their own devices.

Half a mile away the Poet and his sister sat on a boulder beside the road. It was a semi-public road winding around the foot of a wooded hill. Behind them, a mile away, was the railway station. That mile had been mostly uphill, and the Poet did not love physical exercise. He was tall and lean, with a geometrical figure composed mainly of acute angles. When in a state of repose, it resembled a carpenter's pocket rule which protested at being entirely shut up. The Poet's sister, on the contrary, was mainly curves — those delicate, subtle curves

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that deny the presence of bones, yet repel any suggestion of fat. She was young; not too young—just young enough to have won the crowning glory of spinsterhood. She had quantities of red hair, the kind of red hair that always goes with that astonishingly transparent skin underneath which scattering amber freckles come and go over-night. There was one now on the side of her nose, which had a becomingly mirthful tilt at the end. Her lips were full at the centre, carmine, and with finely shaped corners which could not by any possibility be drawn downward. She wore a solid pair of calf-skin boots, with military heels which looked small while being ample in size. Her dark walking-skirt barely reached the interesting spot where her bootlaces were tied. Her waist, of a soft, cream-tinted material, left her neck and throat bare—for which the Lord be praised!—and a shapeless, yet shapely, fluffy white

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thing resting on the coils of her hair seemed to absorb warmth from them. In short, you will make no mistake when you keep your mind fixed on the Poet's sister.

“Just around the next turn of the road, George,” she was saying, “our little summer Elysium will burst upon your view.”

The Poet mopped the long, solemn countenance that was belied by his eyes and his manner of speech.

“Galatea, I have observed that most things elysian in this life are generally just around the corner. I am not impatient. I can wait. In fact, I should prefer to have that first view burst upon me while I am comfortably seated in the spring wagon of — What did I understand you to say the gentleman's name was, Galatea?”

“He is called Gabe.”

“Doubtless a corruption of Gabriel. I wonder if Gabriel blows his trumpet for breakfast?”

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Galatea's lips parted in a musical ripple of laughter. The sight would have caused a dentist to pass on, with misgivings about his future. The Poet merely remarked: —

“Galatea, are you sure we brought our tooth-brushes?” Whereupon the dentist would have been heartened by the sight of a tiny point of gold shining out of the crown of her left bicuspid.

“George, you lazy thing, come on. It's only half a mile further. Gabriel probably missed us at the station, and has returned by the main road.”

“Oh, well, if all roads lead to Elysium, I suppose it's no use waiting here.”

Slowly the Poet's angles adjusted themselves to the upright position, and he strode on beside his sister.

“So you really like the place, Galatea?”

“It's lovely — just the spot to give you in-

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spiration, George. I shall expect great things of you, dear."

"Will it inspire me to reduce the rhythm of Anacreon to ragtime, do you think?"

"O George! And there are the Professor's pets, you know — Mrs. Cowslip, Clarence, Reginald, Gustavius, and William. I told you about them. The Professor has the most wonderful knack of understanding domestic animals and making them understand him. Really, they look upon him as one of themselves. The Professor says we do our domestic animal pets great injustice when we overlook their loyalty and intelligence, refusing to meet them half-way in friendly companionship. Why, with only a little encouragement they develop the most remarkable emotions, almost human in their complexity; while their powers of expression develop correspondingly. Positively the Professor and his cow, and colt, and pig,

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and bull-calf, — William the goat, Napoleon the dog, and Cleopatra the mare were away the day I called to arrange about the lease for the summer, — are just one big happy family.”

Galatea’s cheeks were flushed with enthusiasm. The Poet’s eyes twinkled, but his face remained long and solemn.

“What name does the pig answer to?”

“Reginald; but he’s a nice, clean pig.”

“Yes, of course, being a member of the Professor’s family. By the way, did you have an opportunity to note Reginald’s table manners?”

“O George, how perfectly absurd!”

“Not necessarily. I give way to no man in my determination to do justice to my fellow creatures, irrespective of the number of legs with which they are equipped. As the Professor has left us in undisputed possession for the next six months, there’s no telling what we may accomplish. What sort of voice has Reginald?”

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“George, I shan’t tell you another thing!”

“There, there. It merely occurred to me that, as neither you nor I nor Arthur sings— By the way, Galatea, I suppose Arthur will run over occasionally in his new automobile, the lucky beggar?”

“I lay claim to no advance information respecting Arthur’s intentions,” answered the Poet’s sister, in cool, even tones. The flapping brim of her headgear was between the Poet’s eyes and her cheek, suddenly turned pink.

“Oh, well, I was only thinking what a boon Arthur’s banjo and my guitar would turn out to be if the pig should develop a romantic tenor voice. By Jove, Galatea! If that’s the place, I apologize for everything.”

They had reached the turn of the road that overlooked their summer Elysium. The Poet distributed his joints over another roadside boulder, while Galatea stood by his side, and

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gave his attention to the charming scene in detail.

“Really, a fine, rambling old house surrounded by shaded verandas below, and not too near the road. A stone-walled inclosure of half a dozen acres sloping down to a pretty brook that flows under the lower wall just below the barn — a comfortable red barn; a barn that is n’t red is only half a barn. A kitchen-garden and an orchard, and the rest pasture that is neat enough for a lawn. What romps we shall have, Galatea, with the colt and the bull-calf! What’s that vine-covered affair reared against the west gable of the house? Oh, a water-tank. Just so; there’s a pipe connecting underground with the brook, and that wind-wheel on the barn roof does the pumping. Good! I anticipate the luxury of an occasional tub. I was afraid Elysium was like Germany — lots of romance and no bathtubs. Galatea, we shall do — we shall

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do beautifully. But I say, what's that funny-looking thing on the peak of the house roof?"

"Is n't it the chimney?"

"It looks to me like a saw-horse."

They walked on. After passing through a grove of chestnuts, they had a nearer and better view of the house.

"No, it is n't a saw-horse," said the Poet. "It moves. Did you see it?"

Galatea looked embarrassed.

"Galatea, the thing on our roof looks to me uncommonly like a billy-goat. Galatea, it *is* a billy-goat — I can make out his whiskers."

"Yes," Galatea admitted reluctantly, "it must be William."

"Very well, I foresee trouble for William. I am quite willing to collaborate with the Professor and take William to my bosom on equal terms as a brother, but no billy-goat shall be

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the man higher up in *my* family. William has got to get down off that roof.”

Presently they turned in at the gate — and then the Poet doubled up like a jack-knife. Galatea plumped down on the grass and laughed till she cried. A nice clean fat pig, with a sort of Elizabethan ruffle about his neck, raised himself on his forelegs and sat at a little distance from Galatea, grunting mild inquiries respecting the object of her call. The ruffle was explained by the presence of several other articles of feminine wearing apparel scattered about on the grass, evidently undergoing the bleaching process. In making a selection for his own adornment, the pig had not been quite discreet. A sleek and motherly cow, with one crumpled horn, lay in the soft earth of a tulip-bed, chewing her cud. Her total lack of humor was manifest in the complacent glances which she bestowed upon her offspring, a reckless-looking



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bull-calf, which wore a peach-basket unnecessarily on one of his hind-legs. This scene of domestic contentment was further enhanced when a saucy yearling colt put his head out through the kitchen window and shook it knowingly at the intruders, as much as to say : —

“Go away, strangers. *We* are at home, and *you* ought to be.”

And then the colt, the cow, the bull-calf, the pig wearing the improvised ruffle, and the goat from his perch on the roof, united in a glance of intense astonishment at the girl seated on the grass. Why was she swaying her body up and down in that foolish fashion, while her hands beat the air aimlessly and her throat emitted incomprehensible gurgles, like the bull-calf with a turnip stuck in his gullet?

“Oh dear, oh dear!” choked Galatea. “Amanda’s stepped out somewhere, and Bos,

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Equus and Co. are in full charge. The cow chewing her cud in the tulip-bed — oh dear, oh dear! The bull-calf picking up stray peach-baskets, and the colt in the kitchen — oh dear, oh dear! The pig wearing one of Amanda's newest aramatums for a collar! Slap me on the back, George; I shall die — oh dear, oh dear! And the goat overlooking things from the roof! Come and fan me, George. Oh dear, oh dear!"

But the Poet had recovered his accustomed solemnity of visage. He stood with arms folded, contemplating the goat.

"Bos, Equus and Co. are plainly within their rights," he said, "excepting the goat. The roof of our house is not a proper place for any member of our family, two-legged or otherwise. William, come down from there!"

The goat wrinkled his nose at the Poet. It was as though he had said: —

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“Why should I waste words on a stranger and an interloper?”

“Come down, William. Come down, or I’ll assert the last remnant of my authority as a two-legged person.”

William stamped his foot on the shingles in a manner plainly hostile. The Poet picked up a good-sized cobble-stone.

“William, for the last time I warn you. Come down!”

The goat backed up two or three steps and shook his horns.

“Very well, William, your blood be on your own head”; and the Poet threw the cobble-stone.

Now, as is well known, a goat has only one really vulnerable spot, namely, his curved and bony nose. Furthermore, a goat’s nose — like the beard of the prophet — is sacred. Therefore, when the cobble-stone, flying straight

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from the Poet's incautious hand, struck William forcibly upon his most honored feature, the situation became grave. Stopping only to make one grimace of anguish, partly physical but mainly of his outraged soul, he ran to the west gable, leaped down upon the water-tank, thence to the woodshed roof, and from there one leap landed him on the ground. Measuring with his inflamed and malevolent eye his distance from the Poet, he began backing slowly, with portent that could not be misunderstood.

“O George, he's going to butt you!” screamed Galatea. “Sit down! sit down!”

But the Poet stood gazing at William like one fascinated. Having backed to a distance satisfactory to his nice discrimination in such matters, the goat lowered his nose and launched himself forward straight as an arrow aimed for the lank, concave surface which indicated

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the Poet's stomachic region. Perhaps it was the goat's waning enthusiasm over a mark so little inviting, — at any rate the impact of his horns was only sufficient to cause the Poet to sit down with promptness.

“O George, did he hurt you?” asked Galatea anxiously. “I told you to sit down.”

“I believe I took your advice, Galatea,” said the Poet, looking about him in a dazed manner.

The goat was slowly backing again. There was a look in his eye which said more plainly than words: —

“Perchance you've had enough? If not, there's more where that came from.”

“Don't get up, George,” said Galatea. “Don't move. Sit where you are and he'll go away.”

“I've no intention of getting up,” answered the Poet. “I'm perfectly comfortable where I am, thank you. Besides, I'm not one of those

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low-spirited, truckling persons who insist on standing in the presence of a superior.”

The cow, the bull-calf, the pig in his ruffle, and the colt looking out of the kitchen window, were regarding the spectacle with evident satisfaction. The goat, as though satisfied that his wounded honor had been sufficiently avenged, began slowly consuming one of the white garments bleaching on the grass.

In her excitement Galatea's hat had escaped from its fastening and fallen to the ground. Just now the sun shone through the branches of an old cherry tree, converting her loosened coils of dark red hair into a scarlet taunt which the bull-calf could not ignore. With hind-legs wide apart, because of the peach-basket, he was pawing the earth with his forefeet and uttering adolescent bellows of rage.

“Do you think, dear, that he means me?” asked the girl anxiously, starting to rise.

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“Yes, dear, it’s your turn,” replied the Poet complacently.

“But I’m — I’m sitting down.”

“It’s that red badge of provocation you carry about under your hat, Galatea. Why in thunder did you take it off? Look out! He’s coming!”

The Poet rose, intending to intercept the bull-calf, whose progress was somewhat impeded by the peach-basket; but, noticing the goat backing away for another assault, he sat down again.

“Quick, Galatea! The cherry tree!”

There was a comfortable branch at about the height of a man’s shoulder, with a wooden bench under it. With the bellowing bull-calf close at her heels, Galatea ran to the bench and — not without a generous display of striped hose — swung herself up to the branch, leaving the enemy pawing the earth innocuously below.

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“Galatea,” remarked the Poet solemnly, “I always said that those striped ones of yours were unlucky. Do you remember?”

“Shut up, George!” Galatea tucked her little boots under her on the branch, smoothed out her walking-skirt, and leaned against the trunk of the tree with the manner of a young lady accustomed to the usages of the very best society. George had the indecency to laugh.

“George, if I were a full-grown man I would n’t sit on the grass the whole afternoon just because of a poor, innocent little billy-goat.”

“Galatea, if I were a perfectly proper, highly educated and accomplished young lady just out of Vassar, I would n’t roost in a cherry tree just because of an innocently inquiring bull-calf.”

Then they both laughed.

Just then the colt whinnied long and joyously.

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“Giddap,” sounded a voice from the road.

A sleek-coated young bull-terrier, very much alert, bounded down the path and stopped suddenly, as though divided between astonishment and indignation at the sight of the cow in the tulip-bed.

“That must be Napoleon,” said Galatea. “Gabriel is returning.”

A spring-wagon, loaded with trunks and boxes, and drawn by an extremely well-fed bay mare, whose driver, stoop-shouldered and sunburnt, perspired uncomfortably in his Sunday clothes, came into view on the driveway beyond the cherry tree, and stopped.

“How do you do, Gabriel?” said Galatea, smiling upon him from the cherry tree.

“Pleased to meet you, Gabriel,” said the Poet affably, from his seat on the grass.

For at least a minute the man in the wagon

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gazed upon the scene in silence, slowly opening and closing his mouth. Then he jumped down, remarking : —

“ Jumpin’ Jehosephat ! Sic’em, Napoleon ! ”

The terrier jumped for Mrs. Cowslip’s nose. She rose from the tulip-bed, but stood at bay. There was a great clatter of hoofs in the kitchen, and the colt ran out through the open door and began kicking up his heels gleefully under his mother’s nose. The bull-calf, the goat, and the pig arrayed themselves, as for an argument, beside the cow.

“ Amanda ! ” bawled Gabriel. And then to the Poet : “ Be you folks hurt, or only skeered ? I must a’ missed ye, waitin’ for t’other train.”

“ We ’re only scared, I think,” answered the Poet, rising cautiously, with one eye on the goat. Galatea slid down from her perch and joined them.

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“Darn the critters!” said Gabriel. “It’s all Amanda’s fault. Of course she had to go trap-sin’ off somewhere. Amanda! O Amanda!”

Amanda appeared in the edge of the orchard, with a tin pail in her hand, indicating with a wave of her apron that she was coming as fast as she could with her heaping pail of strawberries.

“I locked ’em up,” said Gabriel. “But, laws, ’t aint no use lockin’ up critters edicated by a college perfessor.”

“Fer th’ land sakes!” ejaculated Amanda, arriving breathlessly and taking in the whole scene at a glance.

The pig went up to her, grunting amiably in his white ruffle.

“You shameless critter!” said Amanda, with her face aflame, as she tore the indecorous garment from Reginald’s neck.

“Ha! ha! ho! ho!” laughed Gabriel.

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“Serves ye right, Amanda, for goin’ off an’ leavin’ edicated critters loose around th’ house.”

“Shoo!” said Amanda, waving her apron at Mrs. Cowslip, who merely gave her a mild look of reproach.

“Git back to th’ barn, all of ye,” commanded Gabriel, with no better result.

“Say it, Gabe,” said Amanda, stamping her foot.

“No,” answered Gabriel, “I must n’t. It keeps their feelin’s hurt for a hull day. Th’ Perfessor would n’t like it.”

“I don’t care, Gabe, you jest say it.”

“Say what?” asked the Poet, overcome with curiosity.

“W’y,” explained Gabriel, “ye see, it’s th’ Perfessor’s idee that these critters are jest as good as he is. Ekel rights for man an’ beast, he calls it. You bet they’re willin’, consarn

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'em! It's only when they want to run th' hull place that he resorts to extreme measures, as he says. Then he shouts a queer, heathen word at 'em, an' they sneak off like a dog caught suckin' eggs."

Out of regard for the Professor's feelings Gabriel proceeded with such comparatively mild measures as flicking Mrs. Cowslip with his whip, and trying ineffectually to push the bull-calf toward the barn. The colt danced about, nipping at him with bared teeth. But it was Reginald who brought things to a climax. The pig, escaping the teeth of the terrier, ran between Gabriel's legs, sending him sprawling on his back.

"Say it, Gabe," called out Amanda.

"You bet I'll say it!" Gabriel replied, rising and confronting the four-footed mutineers, now grouped as though conscious that they had carried matters a trifle too far. Throwing

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out his chest, Gabriel thundered the single word:—

“ABRACADABRA!”

The effect was magical. The Poet and his sister could hardly believe their eyes. Instantly, with head drooping in the most dejected manner, the colt started toward the barn, followed by Mrs. Cowslip and the bull-calf, their tails now drooping and sorrowful. Next went the goat with conscience-smitten mien, and at the end of the melancholy file was the pig, squealing plaintively, all the kink out of his tail.

“Wait a bit, this won’t do at all!” suddenly exclaimed the Poet, with more excitement in his voice than his sister had ever before noted.

“Do ye want to be a friend to th’ critters?” inquired Gabriel.

“I’m going to be a brother to them,” said the Poet.

“And I’m going to be a sister to them, poor



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things!" said Galatea. "Didn't the Professor have some word with which he expressed his forgiveness, and his love, with a gentle reproof and warning to be more careful in the future?" she added, looking at Gabriel with soft appeal in her eyes.

"Sartin', sartin'." Gabriel scratched his head. "I can't jest remember. It begun the same, with a-b ab—"

"Of course," broke in the Poet. "The canonical form of pronouncing absolution."

He ran after the delinquents, calling them by name: "O Mrs. Cowslip! Clarence! Gustavus! William! Reginald!"

They stopped and looked back penitently. Galatea ran to her brother's side. He held out his hands and cried:—

"ABSOLVO!"

"Absolvo, absolvo!" echoed Galatea.

Cheerfully, but with subdued spirits, Bos,

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Equus and Co. gathered about their new friends, accepting their forgiveness with various tokens of gratitude. The pig lay down at Galatea's feet, grunting contentedly, while the colt brushed her cheek with his velvet muzzle. The Poet felt a warm nose in his hand, and was not amazed to find it was his late enemy's, the goat's.

“Well, darn my skin!” said Gabriel.

“Galatea, I think we shall do very well—
very well indeed,” said the Poet.

WARNING TO THE HORSELESS

II

Fair Warning to the Horseless



EATED on the veranda, in a low lawn-chair which caused his long shanks to thrust his angular knees up to the level of his chin, the Poet was perusing the Odes of Horace in the original text, and pencilling their English equivalent on the leaves of a small writing-pad. His handwriting was large and careless. Every minute or two he tore a filled sheet from the pad and dropped it on the edge of the veranda floor at his side. A straggling honeysuckle vine concealed from him the fact that William was present, and that, as each sheet fell to the floor, the goat was consuming it with every evidence of appreciation.

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Probably never before had a translation of Horace met with such instant success.

But presently William, becoming impatient at the Poet's deliberation, seized a sheet out of his hand and stood detected. At the same instant a musical peal of laughter from the open window of the breakfast room proved that the Poet's sister had been a delighted witness of the disaster. After one startled look about him, the Poet realized that the goat's attentions had been indeed thorough. He had recourse to his customary whimsical philosophy.

"Galatea," said the Poet gravely, "do you observe that the whole of my manuscript has been accepted without reading? That is the highest compliment possible to pay a poet."

"And yet you hear it everywhere that the classic poets are not appreciated nowadays."

The girl, still laughing, joined her brother on the veranda. She was all in pink — fluffy

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pink, with a fluffy pink thing flapping above her mahogany tresses, producing an effect impossible to describe, fatal to another woman, in her case charming. The goat put his forefeet on the veranda and seemed to nod his approval.

“William,” said the Poet, “you have given me an idea—an idea which may influence my whole career.”

“Why not?” commented Galatea. “Have n’t you and I been duly initiated as members of the firm of Bos, Equus and Co. ? Are n’t all our interests mutual ?” And again she laughed.

“I have long been undecided,” resumed the Poet, “as to whether my muse is classical and for the few, or modern and for the many; or, indeed, whether I should not give up poetry for the plough. William, it shall be for you to decide. I will now compose something for the masses. If you accept it instantly, as you have accepted my Horatian Odes— not for publi-

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cation, it is true, but — er — but for purposes best known to yourself, I shall at once take steps to become an honest husbandman. If, however, you decline what I am about to offer you, I shall consider myself a properly ordained Poet of the People, and shall act accordingly. William, a grave responsibility rests upon your discrimination.”

The goat nodded with an intelligent expression, his venerable beard sweeping the floor.

“O George, how perfectly absurd!” laughed Galatea.

The Poet scribbled on his pad for a couple of minutes, tore off the sheet, and offered it to William. The goat sniffed at it, and appeared doubtful.

“You are quite right, William. Others have found my handwriting illegible. I will read it to you.”

The Poet read:—

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“ Sir Mortimer’s poems of note
Were despised by his lady’s pet goat.
The goat said, ‘ Oh pschutt ! ’
And proceeded to butt
Sir Mortimer into the moat.”

“ Now, William, it’s up to you,” said the Poet, as his sister, regardless of her fluffy pink finery, sat down on the floor and shrieked.

But already the goat, looking deeply embarrassed, was trotting off toward the barn.

“ That settles it,” said the Poet solemnly.
“ I am ordained Poet of the People.”

Galatea got up, gurgling, and rested her flushed cheek on her brother’s collar.

“ George, you’re the most delicious old thing ever created.”

He held her off, regarding her curiously.

“ All in pink? Nothing like pink to show dirt. Wherefore all this regardlessness of expense, Galatea?”

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She took a letter from her bosom and gave it to him.

“It’s from Arthur. It came in the morning mail. I did n’t want to disturb you—and William—in your literary labors. You’d better read it now.”

The Poet read:—

“‘I’m taking a little spin out your way in my new Red Ripper. Will reach your place about noon. If you’ve nothing else to do, we can have a whirl down the old Post Road and back before two o’clock. Then I must be off to Stamford on an important engagement about a portrait—in fact, it means the price of this modest luxury on wheels. But do give me the two hours. Think what poetic wonders George may accomplish in that time, undistracted by your luminous presence.’”

“‘Luminous presence’ isn’t bad,” commented the Poet. “That is, for Arthur. Don’t



THE GOAT SEEMED TO NOD HIS APPROVAL

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you give him any of your impudence, Galatea. We can't afford to quarrel with people who can own Red Rippers."

"Rubbish, George. Arthur is sometimes very trying. He is n't half as handsome as he thinks he is."

"But you are, Galatea. Be charitable. You could do much worse than go through life in—in a Red Ripper. Noon, did you say?"

The Poet looked at his watch. "Why, it's eleven-forty already. Hello! What's the matter with our four-legged partners?"

Cleopatra, with Clarence at her side, had galloped up the driveway from the bottom of the pasture, and stopped, with head up, snorting loudly at something down the road. The colt could not snort as loudly as his mother, but he made up by snorting twice as often. Mrs. Cowslip and Gustavius, the bull-calf, quite in the dark as to the cause of the excitement,

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but willing to become excited themselves, were stopping en route to snatch an occasional mouthful of grass. Reginald's short legs were flying in the distance, while he uttered plaintive squeaks at being left behind. The goat was giving him the assistance of an occasional butt in the right direction. Napoleon, rudely awakened out of a deep dream of peace, barked wildly from the edge of the veranda. Amanda came out of the kitchen, wiping her hands on her apron.

"For the land sakes, what ails the critters?" she asked of Gabriel, who had run up from the potato-patch, armed with his hoe.

Gabriel ran to the side of the colt, glanced down the road, and came back laughing.

"It's one of them there hossless buggies," he said. "The mare never could stand the sight of 'em, and the colt takes after her. They take it as a personal insult for a buggy to go

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humpin' along like that without a hoss to pull it."

"It's Arthur," said Galatea. "He's made better time than he expected to, and he'll be unbearable."

The whirr of the wheels was now audible. Cleopatra and Clarence, with a final snort of rage, put their heads between their forelegs, slashed out vindictively behind, and galloped off to the far side of the driveway. The Red Ripper turned in swiftly from the road, giving Mrs. Cowslip the fright of her life as she plunged, bellowing, to the rear of her defiant equine comrades. At sight of the shining red enamel, Gustavius, for one instant, contemplated a valiant charge, but thought better of it barely in time to save his skin, if not his dignity.

As though to make the affront beyond all forgiveness, the driver of the red thing steered

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straight on toward the barn, then, describing a graceful circle about his outraged spectators, returned and came to an abrupt halt near the gateway. He lifted his cap to Galatea with easy grace, and jumped from his seat to take the Poet's outstretched hand.

"Good boy. You did that with almost human intelligence." The Poet's eyes twinkled — the nearest approach to a smile in which he had ever been known to indulge.

"Yes; rather neat, I call it. Isn't she a beauty? Only two tons weight and forty horsepower; maximum of sixty-nine miles an hour on a level road; climbs hills like a goat; the only sparking device that never hitches —"

"Kind to women and children and stands without hitchin'," drawled the Poet.

"Quit your kidding, George," and then, at a loud snort from Cleopatra: "I say, George, who 're your friends?"

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“Including Galatea and myself, they’re Bos, Equus and Co.”

“Oh, freedom of the place — part of the family, eh? You’re a queer chap, George. They don’t seem quite friendly. I hate to break up a happy home, you know.”

“It does look like it, Arthur. The mare can’t bear the sight of a vehicle that is independent of her services. The bull-calf resents its brilliant color. Besides, they all hang together on general principles. However, Galatea and I still retain a few of our characteristics unchanged by these associations. We forgive you.”

Gabriel and Amanda returned to their duties in potato-patch and kitchen. The Poet went into the house, leaving the Artist with Galatea on the veranda. She had given him her hand with a bewildering smile, but as he immediately began to chatter interminably about his auto-

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mobile and the great things he was going to do in the way of speed, her red lips shaped themselves into a curl that was not so pleasant, and if he had noticed the satirical little side glances she gave him now and then, his tone would have been much less complacent.

The Artist was really an excellent fellow, stalwart, straight-limbed, and undeniably handsome. His type originated with the new generation of popular fiction illustrators. You would instantly recognize his smooth-shaven face, his straight nose, and his determined chin for those of the plain American young hero who walks unconcernedly into the boudoir of the Crown Princess of Grossbock (who falls desperately in love with him at first sight), and presently rescues her from the very foot of the throne, dashing with her in his arms through a whole regiment of Hussars, without turning a hair. It was not to be expected that such a hero

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would remain sacred to the romances over which little girls weep tears of joy and longing. The daughter of Isaac Ickleheimer called her father's attention to him one day, and ever since then he has adorned the advertising pages of the magazines, attired in the most lovely ready-to-wear clothes, with shoulders more than human.

But the Artist could n't help this, any more than he could help chattering about his new automobile to a girl who was dying to have soft nothings whispered in her ear. After a while Galatea, realizing that such hopes were doomed to disappointment for the present, abruptly choked off the dissertation on Red Rippers by dragging the Artist in to luncheon.

With the human element thus eliminated, now occurred one of those scenes which gave to the present chronicler his chief inspiration.

The red thing being quiescent, Cleopatra and

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Clarence had ceased their snorting and were approaching cautiously, with occasional coy side-prancings, yet with a curiosity in their eyes that was not unmixed with vindictiveness. Mrs. Cowslip and Gustavius grazed near by, with one eye open to developments. William surveyed the red thing speculatively, evidently wondering whether it offered a profitable opportunity for butting, while Reginald, the pig, less imaginative than the others, rubbed one of his fat sides tentatively against a rubber tire.

“Not so bad,” grunted Reginald. “A bit too smooth, that’s all; don’t seem to take hold like the Professor’s finger-nails —”

“Look at that fool pig,” whinnied Clarence to his mother. “Reginald has no dignity. I would n’t demean myself by such condescension to an enemy with such a vile-smelling breath.”

“That proves that the thing is really alive,”



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commented Cleopatra. "It's eaten something that don't agree with it."

"It's breath smells just like Gabe's lantern when he's late with his work in the barn," said Mrs. Cowslip, coming up, with Gustavius by her side, shaking his sharp sprouts of horns truculently.

The pig braced himself against a corner of the metal framework in front, and grunted with more unction: —

"Ah! this is better."

"Why don't the thing show signs of life?" complained Cleopatra. "Then I'd know where to plant my heels. It was lively enough a little while ago."

Gustavius, with calf-like bellows of provocation, was exercising his sharp little horns on one of the rubber tires.

"Why should you be so incensed against such a lumbering old thing?" asked Mrs. Cow-

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slip, with a placid glance at the mare. "Seems to me you ought to be grateful to any sort of wagon that would leave you free to enjoy yourself."

"Trust an old cow not to see an inch beyond her own nose," snorted Cleopatra contemptuously. "Do you suppose I'd be welcome in this family if I was n't useful? There's nothing for me to do except pull the buggy, or Gabe's wagon. Why, even that delightful red-headed girl, who always has sugar in her pocket, helps Amanda in the garden."

"True," admitted Mrs. Cowslip. "And I give milk."

"Lucky for you," said Cleopatra significantly. "When I think of my Clarence and your Gustavius, I tremble."

Mrs. Cowslip looked startled. "What do you mean, Cleopatra?"

"I don't want to alarm you, my dear, but I



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can't forget that day when Gabe got into the calf's pen with a sharp knife in his hand."

"I've heard of such calamities to my race," whimpered Mrs. Cowslip, her moist nose turning pale; "but it never occurred to me that a child of mine —"

"It was Amanda who dragged Gabe and his knife away," continued Cleopatra. "Her words ring in my ears yet. She said: 'O Gabe, wait till he's older and we can roast him. I do love roast beef'; that's what Amanda said."

Mrs. Cowslip sidled affectionately up to Gustavius, who was still worrying the rubber tire with his sharp sprouts of horns, and licked his cheek tenderly.

"Don't bother me, mother," said the thoughtless bull-calf. "I feel that I'm making an impression on this thing."

"If you do," said Cleopatra, "and it shows signs of life, just you watch me, that's all";

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and, laying back her ears, she experimented with her heels to be sure that they were in good working order.

“Me, too,” said Clarence, following his mother’s example with a significance not to be misunderstood.

“If you’re really making an impression,” bleated William to Gustavius, backing away and shaking his horns, “one good, swift butt ought to do the business.”

Gustavius moved his hind quarters to one side, and bored away with one horn as hard as he could.

“Clear the track,” bleated the goat; “I’m coming!”

On came William with a rush that astonished even himself. The last leap was twelve good feet in mid-air. With his neck stiffened like a rod of steel, the roots of his horns struck the rubber tire squarely just below the boring

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sprout of Gustavius. There was an explosion and a fierce puff of something in their faces that sent both the goat and the bull-calf back on their haunches.

“It’s alive! It’s alive!” shrieked Cleopatra, as she wheeled about, filled with the joy of battle.

Lashing out with her heels at the red thing amidships, the mare’s heels clattered among the driving-levers most ominously. Clarence’s heels, being out of range in his excitement, did no damage. They looked around, snorting, awaiting the enemy’s retort. To their surprise the red thing remained motionless.

“Pshaw!” exclaimed Cleopatra, “what’s the use of attacking such a spiritless creature, anyway?”

“In my opinion you’ve killed it,” said Mrs. Cowslip. “I never saw such a smash in my life.”

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“It was I who finished the thing,” boasted Gustavius, finding himself unhurt. “I felt its last breath in my face.”

William turned away in disgust.

The pig, engrossed with his own selfish pursuit of new dermatological sensations, had been only momentarily disturbed by these events. He felt that something was lacking.

“If I could only get my back under something,” he complained. “I wonder if it’s safe to crawl under the thing?”

Reginald investigated, and was interested. “There’s a lot of little jiggers under there that look as though they’d just fit my back.”

He got down on his fore-knees and wriggled under the red thing, grunting, while the others still debated together on ways and means.

During luncheon Galatea’s mood had softened. She was no longer piqued at the Artist’s detailed accounts of the wonders of his new au-

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tomobile. Arthur, in a moment of intelligence, had squeezed her hand under the table.

“In case of a break-down of any kind,” observed the Poet, “I suppose you carry all sorts of tools and materials for repairs?”

“I never give the matter a thought,” said the Artist. “She’s such a perfect piece of mechanism that she can’t break down.”

“But suppose you should run over a pig, or a cow, and —”

“Oh, in that case I dare say the tool box might come handy.”

“Or punctured a tire?”

“The Red Ripper’s tires are warranted puncture-proof”; and the Artist entered into a long technical description of the new and improved process which had produced the Red Ripper’s impregnable tires. Galatea sighed several times, but it was useless.

“After all,” drawled the Poet at the first

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opening caused by a fish-bone sticking in the Artist's throat, "you can't make a sympathetic companion of an automobile as you can of a horse. Why, Galatea and I have the most improving conversations with Cleopatra and the pig."

"Yes," chimed in Galatea eagerly, "even Gustavius, the bull-calf, understands everything we say to him. It all proves the Professor's theory that we don't give these domestic pets half the credit they deserve for intelligent and affectionate interest in us and our affairs."

"I've heard of your Professor and his crazy theories about animals," said the Artist, having swallowed the fish-bone. "I'll bet you do just as he did — you keep your pockets full of sugar for the mare, and you scratch the pig's back."

"Arthur, you have n't the first conception —"

"No, Arthur," broke in the Poet, seeing the



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fire in his sister's eyes, "you could n't even see that Cleopatra was aware that your Red Ripper is a menace to her means of livelihood."

"Pooh! George, the mare is n't used to automobiles, that 's all."

The Artist looked at his watch. "I think we had better be going, Galatea; I've just twenty-five minutes in which to whirl you thirty miles and back."

Galatea disappeared, and returned in a moment with her fluffy pink costume, hat and all, covered by a hooded cloak of gray silk which became her exceedingly. The Artist put on his cap and gloves. At that instant a series of heart-rending squeals filled the air.

"Something has happened to Reginald!" exclaimed the Poet, and his long legs flew as he rushed to the rescue.

When Galatea and the Artist caught up with him, he was on his stomach half under the

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Red Ripper, tugging with all his might at one of Reginald's hind legs. The pig's squeals grew louder and more hopeless. Cleopatra, the colt, the cow, the bull-calf, and the goat, huddled together, looked on from a distance with expressions of wondering innocence. Napoleon barked furiously at the Poet's waving legs. Gabriel came running up with a fence-rail on his shoulder. The Poet emerged, perspiring and baffled.

“The critter 's stuck, darn him!” said Gabriel. “We must lift the machine.”

He thrust one end of the rail under the Red Ripper's frame. “Now, all together!”

The Poet and the Artist joined Gabriel with their shoulders under the rail, the machine rose an inch or two, and Reginald, choking a final squeal in his throat, scrambled out. At least three square inches of his back were ravished of their bristles. Not a particle of

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kink remained in Reginald's tail. Straight for the barn he ran, emitting short grunts of relief and contrition.

"Great snakes!" exclaimed the Artist. "Look at that rear tire. There's a hole in it you could throw a dog into."

Nobody could offer any explanation, the bull-calf having forgotten all about it. The Artist's eye suddenly lighted on the bent driving-levers, and for half a minute his language was far from polite.

"I warned you about Cleopatra," said the Poet; "but you would n't give the mare credit for sufficient intelligence to protect her personal interests."

"Do you think, Arthur, that we will be able to whirl thirty miles and back in twenty-five minutes with a flat tire?" inquired Galatea innocently.

"Of course you can," said the Poet solemnly.

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“The Red Ripper is such a perfect piece of mechanism that she can do it on three wheels.”

“That’s right, rub it in,” said the Artist. “When I came out here I didn’t count on being hoodooed by these four-legged friends of yours that can do everything but talk.”

“They can talk too,” retorted Galatea wickedly; “and they don’t confine their harangues to automobiles, either.”

The Artist winced. Galatea had one more shot for him.

“If you positively must be in Stamford at three o’clock, I’m sure Cleopatra will be only too glad to oblige you.”

“The blacksmith down to the station can fix you up in ten minutes,” spoke up Gabriel. “He’s a reg’lar genius at tinkerin’ up hossless buggies.”

“It’s mostly down-hill to the station,” said



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the Poet; "I'm sure Cleopatra will be charmed to assist the Red Ripper that far."

Galatea sat down on the ground and laughed.

"Gosh, yes," said Gabriel, starting for the barn. "I'll go an' git her harness."

The Artist surrendered. He sat down beside Galatea, while the Poet looked the other way, and whispered things that made her eyes shine.

When Gabriel reappeared with the harness, a whiffletree and a stout chain, Cleopatra's complete understanding of the situation could not be doubted. She thrust out her head for the collar, welcomed the bridle, and before the straps were buckled trotted proudly into position before the vehicle, which was now no better than an ordinary buggy.

"Is n't she a dear?" said Galatea.

"All aboard; git in," said Gabriel. "Mind and be careful about the brake — it's downhill."

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With a grimace the Artist placed himself in the chauffeur's seat. Gabriel handed him the reins.

"I'll foller an' bring back the mare," he said. "Giddap, old gal."

Cleopatra looked around, shook her head, and refused to budge. Gabriel laughed, and looked at Galatea.

"You'll have to git in. You can't fool the mare; she sees you're dressed for drivin'."

The Poet, with great gravity, helped his sister up beside the Artist. Galatea took the reins. At her cheerful, familiar, chirrup Cleopatra stretched her fine muscles, and, while the colt pranced about, kicking up his heels in irrepressible joy at this warning to the horseless, dragged the ponderous, vanquished enemy into the road and away. Never before stepped a mare of pedigree so proudly, nor trailed along a Red Ripper so ignobly.

PIG-MALION AND GALATEA

III

Pig-Malion and Galatea



ALATEA!" hailed the Poet
from the bottom of the stairs.

"Yes, George?"

"There's a letter from Ar-
thur. Come down."

"I can't, this moment. Je suis en deshabelle."

"I thought so; your voice sounds full of
pins. But you don't need to air your Vassar
French. The pig is n't listening."

"My French prose is better than your Eng-
lish verse. What does Arthur say?"

"He'll be out here early."

"What for?"

"Girl, have a care! While you are about it,
make the most of the small charms with which
the good Lord has endowed you."

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“I will, brother mine; I ’m expecting Reginald to have his back scratched.”

Truth to tell, the pig was already contemplating a call with that object in view. Since early morning Cleopatra and her yearling colt, Mrs. Cowslip and Gustavius, and William, the big-horned one, had diligently cropped the dewy grass of the lower lawn until their sides bulged, while Reginald was so replete with artichokes that he was constrained to sit on his haunches and grunt stuffily while making occasional rude comments on the gluttony of his comrades.

“You have often reproved me for being greedy,” grunted Reginald as the colt harvested a luscious bunch a yard from where he sat, “yet I have never tried to eat up the whole pasture between sunrise and noon.”

“Don’t give me any of your impudence,” retorted Clarence, with his mouth full, “or I ’ll

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shut my teeth on one of your ridiculous, flapping ears.”

“If you gave milk,” commented Mrs. Cowslip, “you would understand the necessity of a stomach filled with something better than artichokes.”

“Ha! ha!” laughed the pig, with his mouth wide open. “The sides of your son bulge like the sides of the barrel in which Gabe keeps your breakfast of bran. Ha! ha! does Gustavius give milk?”

“Let me at him, mother,” said the bull-calf, waving his tail aloft and lowering his horns. “I’ll teach him!”

“No, you don’t,” said the pig, showing surprising agility. “You greedy fellows annoy me; I’m going to the house and get that red-headed girl to scratch my back.”

So intensely satisfied with himself that the kink in his tail tightened to the verge of dis-

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comfort, Reginald scampered across the lawn and up the steps leading to the veranda. With his forefeet on the top step he halted at a gruff challenge from Napoleon. The bull-terrier, with teeth unpleasantly visible, barred his way to the door.

“My goodness,” said the pig, with easy assurance, “how you startled me! You were always such a joker.” And Reginald got his forefeet on the veranda floor.

“Now, that’s the limit,” growled Napoleon. “One step farther, and I’ll have your ears in ribbons.”

“You don’t know how handsome you are when you put on that fierce look,” said the pig in flattering tones. “Any stranger would believe you in earnest. But you and I know each other.”

“What do you want?” growled Napoleon, somewhat mollified in spite of himself by the pig’s flattery.

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“I’ve nothing to conceal from you, Napoleon. I never have. I’ve come to get that lovely red-headed girl to scratch my back.”

“You’ll have to wait; she’s inside.”

“I’ll go right in,” grunted Reginald complacently; “no trouble at all, I assure you. Just step one side, Napoleon, and I won’t disturb you in the least.”

“You’ll come right in?” Napoleon was boiling with indignation. “Who ever heard of a pig in the parlor? You’ll get right out of here before I make you.”

Reginald assumed a look of injured amazement as he replied: “Is it possible, Napoleon, that you really mean to do me this injustice? Have you forgotten that we are all on terms of equality here?”

“Not in the parlor,” growled Napoleon. “No pig gets into our parlor, not if I know it.”

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“But you go into the parlor whenever you please,” grumbled Reginald.

“It’s part of my business to go all over the house and see that there’s no trespassing. That’s what’s been expected of us dogs ever since the world began. Amanda raised an awful row that time the colt got in the kitchen. But I was n’t to blame, being away from home with Gabe and Cleopatra.”

The pig, with all the stubbornness of his race, refused to be convinced.

“The Professor used to invite me in often,” he complained. “The red-headed girl would, too, I’m sure, if she knew I was here.”

“No, she would n’t. She’s busy with that automobile chap. Can’t you hear their voices through the window?”

Reginald listened. Yes, it was the voice he loved so well—when accompanied by the delicious sensation of one of Amanda’s cast-off



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nutmeg-graters being rubbed smartly up and down his spine. It was cool and even, and was saying:—

“No, Arthur, I won't go for a walk, thank you. I don't think I like you very well to-day. You explain that you walked over from the station out of regard for the feelings of Cleopatra and Clarence, and yet you are wholly oblivious of my feelings. You come out here without your Red Ripper on an ideal day for a spin, and then you add insult to injury by talking of nothing else. Arthur, I hate your Red Ripper, I despise its phenomenally perfect sparking device, I loathe its triple-speed gear—”

The pig lifted up his voice in supplication. It was not in vain. Galatea emerged upon the veranda, smiling a welcome to Reginald, whom the Artist regarded with dark looks of resentment.

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“Good-morning, Reginald; won’t you be seated?” she said brightly, dragging forward an easy-chair.

The intelligent pig scrambled into the chair, making confidential little throaty grunts out of the side of his mouth into the ear of his hostess. The bull-terrier satisfied his dignity by barking one brief comment for Reginald’s benefit:—

“Now what do you think? This is n’t the parlor. Perhaps you’ll understand after this that the veranda is the limit, for a pig.”

“Hush, Napoleon,” commanded the red-headed girl. “Here, get up beside Reginald and make him feel at home.”

It was a wide chair. After but one instant of disgusted hesitation, the bull-terrier obeyed.

“What has the terrier done that he should be so humiliated?” asked the Artist, who

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had even more than the average man's respect for dogs as compared with other domestic animals.

The girl ignored the question. There was something odd and unfamiliar in her manner, a peculiar glint in her eye, her full lips were drawn in a straighter line than usual. Having no professional interest in the scene, the Artist — unluckily for him — observed none of these ominous signs. Galatea shook her finger in the terrier's face.

“Napoleon, your manner toward Reginald is not cordial. Sit closer!”

The terrier meekly obeyed. The pig gave him an expansive smile. The Artist began an impulsive protest: —

“Oh, now, I say, Galatea —”

“Napoleon! Reginald! Salute each other!”

The dog thumped the chair with his tail, the pig grunted amiably, and they pressed their

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cheeks together like affectionate children. The lank figure and solemn visage of the Poet appeared in the door.

“What is Napoleon’s crime that he should suffer such punishment?” he inquired.

“Just as I was remarking,” began the Artist; “but —”

“That will do,” said the girl, taking no notice of these comments. “Now sit up and look pleasant; you are about to have your pictures taken by a very celebrated artist.”

Both Reginald and Napoleon assumed attitudes really remarkable for their ease and naturalness.

“Ahem!” began the Artist, growing very red in the face, and stopped abruptly at a coolly inquiring glance from Galatea.

“Do I understand,” she inquired frigidly, “that you take the absurd position of Paderewski, Calvé, Jean de Reszke, and other public



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favorites, and disdain to exhibit your art upon social occasions?"

"Not at all," answered the Artist hastily, while the Poet regarded them solemnly, but with a twinkle in his eye. "No, but — Well, you see, I — I am not accustomed to have pigs sit to me for their portraits — at least, not upon social occasions."

"It is perhaps as well that you should understand fully that Reginald is a personal friend of mine, and that we are on terms, not only of sympathetic affection, but of perfect equality." And the girl placed her arm about the pig's neck with a caressing touch that sent him into a transport of appreciative grunts.

"If I thought that you were guying me —"

The girl turned upon him sharply. "Have I ever insinuated that you were guying me when you compelled me to listen for hours to mechanical details about your Red Ripper? I,

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to whom poets are proud to read their original manuscripts in advance of publication?"

"Arthur," said the Poet gravely, "Galatea is right. This is a case of love me, love my pig. Your professional pride need not suffer. In fact, the result of your labors may bear appropriately a title that is classical." He turned to his sister. "Galatea, I assume that you are to be in the picture—you will sit with the pig?"

"Certainly," said the girl, as a swift glance of understanding passed between brother and sister.

"Why, then, just consider, Arthur," said the Poet cheerfully, "you can send your picture to the Fall Exhibition catalogued as, 'Pig-Malion and Galatea.'"

The girl laughed in spite of herself. Even the over-serious Artist was not proof against a conceit so pungent. But Galatea's mood puzzled and disturbed him, for he really loved her as

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self-complacent young men often do love girls of keen wit and analytical minds.

“Unfortunately,” he said, “I have no drawing materials with me.”

“I can supply them,” replied the girl, rising.

Reginald grunted reproachfully and started to scramble down from the chair.

“O Reginald, forgive me. I had forgotten you came to have your poor back scratched.”

She turned to the Artist. “Arthur, kindly hand me that nutmeg-grater over by the honeysuckle vine.”

The Artist obeyed. The pig grunted in grateful anticipation. Galatea applied the nutmeg-grater where she knew by experience it would do the most good. Napoleon sniffed disgustedly, jumped down from the chair, and went to the Poet for consolation.

“Now, Arthur,” said the girl presently, handing him the nutmeg-grater, “you attend

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to Reginald while I go for the drawing materials.”

The Artist took the unfamiliar instrument, looked at it, and then at the pig, and then at Galatea. He seemed dazed. As has been remarked before in this truthful narrative, the Artist was a most correct and proper young man. He was fashionably dressed, and with excellent taste. He would have considered it a crime to wear a cravat that disagreed by so much as a single dot or stripe from the prevailing mode. The thought of having in any way transgressed the rules of good form, as laid down in the exclusive club of which he was a member, would have tortured him for weeks. Could he conscientiously scratch a pig's back — with a cast-off nutmeg-grater?

Galatea drew up a chair close to that occupied by Reginald. “Come, Arthur; you will not find Reginald ungrateful.”

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“Galatea,” said the Artist, with a supplicating glance into the girl’s eyes as he moved toward the vacant chair, “when I leave this evening will you walk part way to the station with me?”

“Are you going to be a true friend to my friend — to Reginald?”

The Poet had strolled to the other end of the veranda.

“Yes, Galatea. You could have no friend who would be unworthy of my friendship.” In spite of the nutmeg-grater in his hand, in spite of the waiting pig, his manner and his voice were romantic.

“Yes, Arthur, then I will walk with you to the station.” But the smile she gave him was reflective, and at least half of it rested on the pig.

The Artist sat down obediently and applied the nutmeg-grater with a will to Reginald’s back. Galatea disappeared within the house.

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Presently she was heard calling to her brother. The Poet followed her. He found her in the library, sitting limply in a straight-backed chair and holding her handkerchief to her mouth. With a gesture of warning she dragged him into her own little den off the library, closed the door, and gave her merriment full rein. The Poet regarded her solemnly. Presently she was able to speak, though her phrases were interrupted by convulsions of cachinnation.

“George, it is perfectly clear — that in one respect Arthur — is hopeless — Never, never, never — never in this world will he acquire the slightest sense of humor. Think of it! At this moment — with an old nutmeg-grater, he is scratching a pig’s back — with all the seriousness — and attention to detail — that he would give to a portrait of — the Empress of Russia — George, a little while ago I was angry with Arthur. I thought him stupid, self-sufficient,

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insufferable. But now, when I think of him out there — irreproachably attired — scratching Reginald's back — with all the grave politeness — and earnestness — with which he would hand around cups of tea at one of Mrs. Van Rensselaer's afternoons — I — I almost love him."

The Poet had not even smiled.

"Galatea," he said, without a trace of his customary solemn banter, "don't you carry this thing too far with Arthur. He's as good as gold. He's a young man among a million."

"George, Arthur is more than human. I won't have it. He's got to let himself down, like ordinary people."

"He is a man of honor — honor that is deep-rooted, ancestral."

"He is a slave to the perfectly correct forms endorsed by the Knickerbocker Club."

"He is a gentleman. He lives in the coun-

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try upon acres that are his own, and is a father to those who serve him.”

“He is sacred to the memory of ‘noblesse oblige,’ and he rubs it in.”

“Galatea, you are an impudent and improvident young woman. As your legal guardian I would feel justified in locking you in your room, and keeping you there until you could realize the blessings you have and the opportunities that are open to you.”

“George, you are becoming almost as stupid as Arthur is. I would n’t have thought it of you. Listen. I am going to reform Arthur. I admit he’s worth saving. It is hopeless ever to expect him to develop a sense of humor, but he shall at least cultivate a sympathetic interest in Bos, Equus and Co.”

She took from her desk and thrust into the Poet’s hands pencils and a sheet of Bristol board.

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“Take these to Arthur, please. I’ll join you in a minute.”

The Poet shook his head doubtfully, but obeyed. The girl stood for a moment with her finger on her lip, smiling. Then she took from a work-basket needles and thread and a yard or two of faded pink ribbon, and, picking up a somewhat dilapidated specimen of the fluffy chiffon headgear which she affected, she returned demurely to the veranda where the Artist was still painstakingly exercising the nutmeg-grater on Reginald’s back. The pig lifted his nose and grunted in her face, with language that could not be misunderstood:—

“Ah, at last! Our mutual friend here has been doing his best, but he falls short of exactly the right touch. Evidently he’s inexperienced.”

“Thank you, Arthur,” said Galatea amiably, accepting the post which the Artist sur-

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rendered to her. "Reginald says you have been very attentive. Now he will reciprocate by posing in his very best manner. Attention, Reginald!"

The pig assumed a serious and dignified expression. The girl sat beside him, placing the chiffon affair daintily over his ears. The Artist seated himself opposite with pencils and drawing-board. The Poet leaned against the veranda rail and looked over the Artist's shoulder. His long visage had resumed its customary expression of whimsical solemnity. The Artist's manner was unaffectedly professional.

"Does the hat belong to the pose?" he asked.

"Yes," said Galatea. "The idea is that of a girl thoughtful for the comfort of her dumb friend. To protect his head from the rays of the July sun she places upon it the hat taken from her own head, already well protected by nature."

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“True,” commented the Poet. “I’ve often thought how chagrined the July sun must feel when he attempts to vie with your blazing top-knot.”

“As a matter of fact,” went on Galatea composedly, “the flies have been worrying poor Reginald’s ears terribly. Hereafter he shall have the same protection as other civilized beings.”

The Artist’s pencil moved swiftly. With needle and thread Galatea attached a pink ribbon to each side of the hat, — while Reginald grunted confidential inquiries in her ear, — and then tied them in a bow under his fat chin.

“There, Reginald, you’re perfectly lovely. Now if you’ll promise to sit perfectly still for five minutes, while the gentleman takes your picture, I’ll give your back my personal attention.” And she showed him the nutmeg-grater.

“Your goodness of heart is only exceeded by your beauty,” grunted the grateful pig as plainly

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as words could have said it. "Believe me, I shall always be responsive to your slightest wish."

"I have an idea," said the Poet. "If you will excuse me I will go and indite a Dissertation on a Pig That was Not Roasted." And he disappeared into the house.

From time to time Galatea stole a glance at the Artist's face. It had the composure of a painter whose mind is concentrated on his subject and who feels that he is doing conscientious work. A look of more than admiration came into the girl's eyes. They grew tender. The nutmeg-grater had dropped from her hand, and she was deaf to the wheedling grunts of Reginald. Presently she seemed troubled, as though dissatisfied with herself.

"Arthur," she said gently, "I did n't expect you to do more than make a rough sketch."

"Oh, that 's all right, Galatea. This is a new

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and valuable experience to me. I've neglected animals. I could n't have a better chance than this. Would you mind asking Reginald to turn his face a trifle to the left? There — that's splendid."

The girl bit her lip and tapped with her foot on the floor. She even gave Reginald an impatient glance.

"I never realized until now," said the Artist, as he took a steady look at Reginald's profile, "how much expression there is in a pig's face."

"Indeed?" said Galatea shortly.

"Of course Reginald is an exceptional pig. He has advantages, and associations, which few pigs enjoy."

A sharp retort leaped to the girl's lips, but a glance at the Artist's perfectly serious and pre-occupied expression caused her to stifle it.

"I had a horse once," he went on, as he limned Reginald's snout with a sure hand,

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“who actually smiled in the most convincing manner. There was no mistaking it. I suppose that was because I spent so much time with him. After all, it is not so wonderful if domestic animals do acquire traits of some human friend who gains their confidence and their affection.”

Now this was one of Galatea's favorite arguments. But, strangely enough, the Artist's endorsement of it in the present situation did not seem to appeal to her. She drew her chair away from Reginald's, ignoring his reproaches, and asked: —

“Would n't you rather finish your sketch some other time?”

“No; I am ashamed now that I did not accept your suggestion with greater enthusiasm — Look up, Reginald! that's the idea — in the beginning. That double curve where the jowl meets the neck is different from anything

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I've seen in another subject. Unless you're tired, I'll be grateful for four or five minutes longer."

He had hardly glanced at the girl. Clearly the pig was claiming his whole attention. She turned upon Reginald a look that paralyzed him with amazement, and then addressed the Artist in her softest voice:—

"Do you think your automobile will be safe where you left it, Arthur?"

"Oh, yes, perfectly. Look! the intelligence of Reginald is wonderful. I was just wishing for a more serious expression, and he has already assumed it. Wonderful, really wonderful!"

"If some mischievous boy should tamper with the rubber tires, I should feel to blame," said Galatea. "There are no boys about here."

"No danger. Now if you'll lift that bit of chiffon out of Reginald's eyes— Oh, you frightened the poor chap!"

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Galatea turned her back on the pig. Once more she tried to show her amicable intentions.

“I did n’t quite understand your explanation of your new sparking device, Arthur. Does the spark ignite the gasolene? Or does the gasolene ignite the —”

“Yes, that’s right — Would you mind giving me one look at Reginald with the hat off? I want to be sure about that right ear.”

Galatea snatched the hat off so rudely that the pig squeaked his sense of unmerited rebuke. The Artist drew a few rapid lines and heaved a sigh of satisfaction. He held up the sketch for Galatea’s inspection.

“Do you think it will pass?”

“Magnificent,” she said, barely glancing at it. “Thank you so much. Now, if you must go, I’ll get my hat and walk with you.”

“Oh, will you? It is early. We can turn into



SIT PERFECTLY STILL FOR FIVE MINUTES WHILE THE
GENTLEMAN TAKES YOUR PICTURE



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that picturesque old wood-road, and you can easily get back before dusk.”

Galatea took the sketch into the house, and presently returned wearing a hat which was merely a fresher copy of the one which the Artist had replaced on Reginald's ears.

“Shall we invite Reginald to accompany us?” he asked. “He 's been so good.”

Galatea's indignant surprise nearly betrayed her. She managed to nod assent.

“Come, Reginald,” said the Artist, cheerily.

The pig scrambled down, squeaking his delight, and the odd trio, all at cross-purposes and none aware of it but the girl, passed out through the gate and strolled down the road. Galatea was silent. The Artist glanced at her with a troubled look, but her head was bent and the flapping chiffon thing on her coils of mahogany-colored hair concealed her eyes from his view. The Artist's star was in the ascendant,

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but he was the last who would have known it. It was a situation that called for blundering—and the Artist could be trusted to blunder.

“It was good of you to give me that chance with the pig,” he said.

“Reginald!” exclaimed the girl. “Reginald, run home, at once,” and she stamped her foot at the astonished pig.

With plaintive squeaks Reginald obeyed, making his short legs fly back over the road.

They walked on in silence until they had entered the shadows of the wood-road. Suddenly Galatea sat down on a stump, put her handkerchief to her eyes, and began to sob.

“Why, Galatea, what have I done!” The Artist turned pale. “Are you ill? Shall I go for help—for a doctor?”

An emphatic shake from the shapeless chiffon thing.

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“Do you want to be alone? Shall I leave you?”

Another shake—and more sobs.

The Artist fell on his knees beside the stump and dared to take her hand.

“Galatea, never in this world could I knowingly give you one moment’s pain. You know how I love you, and I know how hopeless is my love. I shall continue to love you to my dying day, and there is no sacrifice I would not make to see you happy. Tell me, Galatea, how I have offended you.”

She raised her head and looked at him steadily. He wondered that she did not look her displeasure. Instead, there was something in her expression—he could not think what—that made his heart thump.

“Arthur,” she said, “will you do just as I tell you?”

“Only try me, Galatea.”

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“Stand out there, in the middle of the road.”

He did so. She rose and faced him at arm's length.

“In the first place, don't you dare to interrupt or contradict me.”

He bowed, wondering.

“Arthur, I'm a mean, low, deceitful creature, and I don't deserve any consideration whatever from anybody. Just now I've made up my mind to reform—but that will take time. I want you to come out to see us often and note how I'm getting on. Now, look over your left shoulder.”

He turned his face from her. Quick as a flash she leaned forward, her lips brushed his cheek, and the next instant she had turned and was flying down the road homeward. He stretched out his arms and started in pursuit of her, crying out:—

“Galatea! Stop! Come back!”

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Then he remembered her commands, and, seeing that she ran faster than ever, prudently turned his steps in the opposite direction. But he could n't feel his feet touch the ground. Yet, in the midst of his tumult of exultation, he was puzzled. Suddenly he smote himself on the chest and exclaimed: —

“Of course. It's because I had sense enough to be polite to the pig.”

THE OBSEQUIES OF BOS NEMO

IV

The Obsequies of Bos Nemo



NOT all was gladness and light in the entwined lives of Bos, Equus and Co. There came a day early in July when the confidence of Galatea and the Poet in their four-legged partners was stretched almost to the breaking-point. But for the wisdom of the Poet, which assured him that, after all, civilization is only a thin veneer which is liable to crack open under stress of provocation and reveal the savage man or the unenlightened beast, Mrs. Cowslip and her bull-calf, on that memorable day, would have been condemned to solitary confinement in the barn, while Napoleon, the bull-terrier, would have fallen victim to the flimsiest of circumstantial evidence.

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Ordinarily the activities of Bos, Equus and Co. did not have their daily awakening until at least an hour of sunshine had striven with the dew-laden meadow. Gabriel's duties were light, and rheumatic warnings urged him against braving early damps. Amanda, most energetic of housewives, refrained from disturbing her pots and pans out of regard for the Poet and his sister, who dearly loved that last hour of slumber made more sweet by the chirpings of early birds under their windows.

On this particular morning the dozing Poet was conscious that the voices of the birds were eclipsed by ominous rumblings which, instead of arousing him to complete consciousness, plunged him into the midst of a perilous adventure. He was on the deck of an ocean liner enveloped in the dense fogs of that awesome region off the Banks of Newfoundland. His body and soul were shaken by the vibrations of

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the siren, whose long-drawn warning was being echoed from out of the mists. No, it was not an echo — it was another siren. Its menace was growing louder! A ghastly gray shape hove near. The officer on the bridge seemed frozen with terror. The relentless ocean, scoffing at sirens and rudders, was hurling two ships into a fatal embrace. The Poet jumped for a life-preserver, striking his head violently upon — upon an old-fashioned walnut bedpost.

Then he realized that it was the melancholy voice of Mrs. Cowslip, interrupted by lamenting bellows from Gustavius, that had so nearly brought him to a watery grave. He ran to the open window, and heard Amanda complaining:

“Gabe, what on earth is the matter with the critters? For the land sakes do git up!”

From his window the Poet could see Mrs. Cowslip and the bull-calf side by side, with their necks stretched out over the barnyard

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gate, sending forth their lamentations toward the bottom of the pasture, where the brook ran under the stone-wall into a thicket of old willow trees heavily encumbered with wild grapevines. He could hear Cleopatra and Clarence clattering about uneasily on the floor of their stalls, while Reginald squealed for his breakfast with more than his usual insistence, and their neighbors in the hennery cackled inquiringly.

Gabriel was kicking on his boots outside the kitchen door when the Poet and Galatea hurried down, eager to know how they could calm the feelings of their four-legged partners.

“Oh, pshaw!” said Gabriel, seizing a tin milk-pail, “critters are like folks; they have their ornery spells without knowin’ what ’s the matter with ’em.”

“I never saw Mrs. Cowslip paw the dust up over her head before,” said Galatea. “See! Now Gustavius is doing it.”

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“She ’s giving her offspring lessons in some mysterious rites of her species,” said the Poet oracularly. “I shall investigate and make a note of it.”

“No, it ’s instinct,” said Gabriel, as the Poet and his sister accompanied him to the barnyard. “You can edicate critters till you ’re blue in the face. You can teach ’em to act like human folks almost, and then some day, all of a sudden, they ’ll forgit everything and do the same fool things their great-grandmothers did.”

Gabriel entered the barnyard with a three-legged stool, butted his head into the flank of Mrs. Cowslip, and proceeded to play a pleasant tune on the bottom of the tin pail. Gustavius was not distracted by this familiar operation. Suddenly he redoubled his bellowings over the barnyard gate. Mrs. Cowslip wavered between surges of emotion and her respect for Gabriel.

“So, boss,” commanded the man with the

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half-filled pail between his knees. And then, as Mrs. Cowslip switched her tail in his face: “Stand still, darn ye!”

Such language at such a time was not wise. Mrs. Cowslip, ignoring intervening obstacles, rushed to join Gustavius in a duet of lamentation, leaving Gabriel on his back with the milk-pail overturned into his protesting bosom. He rose, gasping, with arms hanging limp like a man trying to get as far away from his clothes as possible. At that moment Amanda emerged wildly from the hennery, screaming: —

“Gabe! Gabe! They ’s only four eggs under the speckled hen!”

“What ’s that?” asked Gabriel, startled out of his fury at Mrs. Cowslip, although he could feel streams of warm milk trickling down into his boots. “Only four, Amanda? The hull dozen was there, yesterday. I took the hen off an’ counted ’em.”

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They looked at each other as though stunned by a calamity too dreadful for words. Amanda was first to recover her speech. Her eye traveled down Gabriel's soaking garments to the tin pail bottom up on the ground, and, with the genuine feminine logic which men find so charming in such moments, she said:—

“Gabe, I do believe you've spilled all the morning's milk!”

“No,” drawled the Poet soothingly, “he has it all in his pockets.”

“Hush, George,” said Galatea. And then to Amanda:—

“Were the eggs valuable ones?”

“Valuable!” exclaimed Gabriel. “They was only one settin' of 'em in th' hull county. Amanda was crazy for 'em, and so was Si Blodgett, darn the old hypocrite! He and Amanda bid against each other till I had to pay fifty cents apiece for them eggs!”



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“Oh dear!” said Galatea. “Then they were n’t hen’s eggs at all?”

“Hen eggs? I should say not. They were Golden Guinea eggs, and no more to be had for love or money.”

Mrs. Cowslip and Gustavius lowed dismally, casting dust upon their heads.

“There’s sympathy for you,” observed the Poet. “Never tell me again that a cow lacks intelligence, or a bull-calf perspicacity. Any one can see that they’re bemoaning disaster to those eggs.”

“For the land sakes, Gabe, turn the critters out,” said Amanda.

“No,” said the Poet solemnly, disregarding Galatea’s warnings not to trifle with disaster, “they must be held as witnesses; a crime has been committed.”

Just then Napoleon crawled under the fence, lifted one front paw, cocked one ear, and looked

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inquiringly in the face of the dripping Gabriel. Amanda seemed startled by a sudden suspicion.

“Gabe,” she said, “do you suppose the dog —”

“I’ll settle that in two shakes of a lamb’s tail,” said Gabriel, who had already divined Amanda’s suspicion.

He took the whimpering terrier by the collar and dragged him toward the gate.

“Wait a bit; not so fast,” said the Poet. “Where’s your evidence against Napoleon?”

Gabriel pointed to certain yellow stains about the terrier’s muzzle.

“That’s egg — Golden Guinea egg at fifty cents apiece. Open the gate, Mandy.”

“What are you going to do?” demanded the Poet. “You can’t condemn and execute a member of the firm of Bos, Equus and Co. on one little bit of circumstantial evidence.”

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“No, indeed not,” said Galatea.

“But I can give him the third degree, darn him, an’ make him confess,” declared Gabriel, who, as constable of the township, had taken pains to post himself on the latest police methods.

The suspected criminal, his accusers, and his two champions, proceeded to the hennery and to the nest of the incubating speckled hen, amid a chorus of cackling inquiries. Straight up to the ravished nest Napoleon was led. The speckled hen pecked him sharply on the nose. Napoleon yelped.

“There!” exclaimed Galatea. “It’s perfectly plain that the hen could defend herself against a small dog like Napoleon.”

“Lift her off the nest,” said Gabriel.

The speckled hen squawked, but Amanda was firm. Galatea lifted up the terrier and rubbed his nose in the nest.

“What did I tell ye?” said Gabriel in tri-

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umph. “D’ye see the guilty look in his face?”

“It is n’t guilt,” declared Galatea hotly; “it’s reproach — reproach for your unjust suspicions.”

“It’s righteous indignation,” said the Poet.

“It’s guilt,” said Amanda, restoring the hen to her four eggs. “When a dog has been stealin’ eggs, an’ you rub his nose in the nest, he always looks that way.”

“Besides, there’s the yaller on his nose,” said Gabriel. “Napoleon, you’re goin’ to git th’ lickin’ of your lifetime.”

“Wait,” said Galatea. “That’s yellow paint on Napoleon’s nose. I repainted some croquet balls yesterday, and he’s been playing with them.”

“Ah,” said the Poet, “think of all the innocent men who have been hanged on circumstantial evidence.”

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“It’s egg,” said Gabriel stubbornly.

“It’s paint,” said Galatea. “Gabriel, don’t you dare punish Napoleon.”

“At least it’s a case for the experts,” observed the Poet. “We must have a chemical analysis of Napoleon’s nose before he can be convicted.”

“Gosh!” said Gabriel, “what a lot of fuss all on account of a dog.”

“You forget,” said Galatea. “Napoleon is a member of our family; we’re all on terms of equality here.”

During this argument for and against the guilt of Napoleon, Clarence, with his head through a small window in the wall which separated his stall from the hennery, had been an interested spectator. As though to indicate his approval of Galatea’s last remark, he bared his teeth and nipped Gabriel sharply in the region of his hip pocket.

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“Ouch!” said Gabriel.

“One more witness for the defense,” said the Poet. “Hello, what’s this?”

A ragged-edged square of dark woolen cloth, with a blue stripe, hung from a rusty nail in the ledge of the window through which Clarence had withdrawn his head in dodging a slap from Gabriel.

“Behold!” said the Poet, displaying the bit of cloth, which was about the size of a man’s hand. “Behold proof of Napoleon’s innocence!”

“How d’ye make that out?” demanded Gabriel.

“By the process known as inductive reasoning; the same kind of reasoning which enabled Edgar Allan Poe to solve the Nassau Street murder mystery after the police had given it up. It is perfectly plain that the thief who stole those eight expensive eggs wore trousers of the same pattern as this bit of cloth. In

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taking the eggs from the nest he stood where you were standing, Gabriel, when Clarence nipped you. The speckled hen was not to be ravished of her eggs without a struggle. She pecked and she squawked. Clarence heard her and flew to the rescue. He put his head through the window, as he did just now, and he nipped the thief just as he nipped you, Gabriel — that is, in the region of the hip pocket. Only in this case Clarence knew that he was dealing with a violator of the law, and he nipped deep. His teeth tore away and hung upon that waiting nail the clue which will one day convict the criminal. Look for the man whose dark, blue-striped trousers have a patch over or near the hip pocket. How strange are the ways of justice!”

“Well, I swan to man!” said Gabriel.

Amanda was twisting the corners of her apron nervously. Gabriel gave her a stern glance.

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“Mandy, have you been losin’ any more keys of the henhouse?”

“I missed one yesterday,” said Amanda meekly. “Maybe I left it in the lock, havin’ my hands full of fresh eggs.”

Gabriel snorted. He released Napoleon, who ran to Galatea for consolation, and got it; and then the court adjourned to the barnyard, where Mrs. Cowslip and Gustavius were still lamenting.

“I suggest,” said the Poet, “that, as the case is tolerably clear against the man with the blue-striped trousers, we excuse these somewhat doubtful witnesses, who seem to have troubles of their own.”

Thereupon all the four-legged members of Bos, Equus and Co. were turned loose, and the two-legged members repaired to the house in search of their belated breakfast.

During the next hour the agony of mind

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displayed by Mrs. Cowslip and Gustavius was somewhat eased by the fresh flavor of the dew-washed grass with which they set about restoring the rotundity of their sleek bodies. But they grazed always in the direction of the stone fence where the brook ran under it, and ever and anon they lifted up their half-filled mouths and mourned as eloquently as could be expected of a cow and a bull-calf in such circumstances.

William, he of the big horns and whiskers, who was similarly employed, — there being no succulent sheets or pillow-slips left out to bleach at so early an hour, — regarded his melancholy companions with a coldly critical eye. Reginald could be heard grunting thankfully among the artichokes. It was Cleopatra and Clarence who, alone, had sufficient good breeding to accompany their morning repast with amiable conversation.

“Mother,” the colt was saying, “what do

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you make of the extraordinary conduct of Mrs. Cowslip and her offspring? Is it colic, or is the weather going to change?"

"My son," replied Cleopatra between nibbles, "when you have lived as long as I have, you will cease all attempts to discover the motives which actuate the cow kind. Beings of that species have no intelligence. They have only a sort of blind instinct and an emotional capacity which stamps them as primitive in the extreme, and therefore unworthy to associate on equal terms with our highly intellectual race."

Clarence turned this chunk of wisdom over in his mind several times, and, being unable to assimilate it, observed:—

"I overheard Mrs. Cowslip saying something to Gustavius about smelling death in the air this morning. I at once counted noses, and none of the family was missing."

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“That reminds me, my son, that the cow kind have a strange custom which probably dates back to some prehistoric ancestor as superstitious and unphilosophic as themselves. I refer to their custom of holding unseemly ceremonies over their dead. I remember once—”

“But, mother,” interrupted Clarence,—for the colt was young and Cleopatra was an indulgent parent, — “there are none of the cow kind in our family except Mrs. Cowslip and Gustavius. You can see for yourself that they are both alive.”

“Have n’t I told you, my son, that out in the great world beyond the stone fence— which you may visit some day when you are older— there are many families like ours, including the cow kind?”

“Now I understand, mother; perhaps some Gustavius of the great world beyond the stone fence has met with a violent death, and our Gus-

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tavius and his mother feel some intimation of it in the breeze which comes from that direction."

"My son," said Cleopatra, with a proud glance at her offspring, "I see daily evidences that the development of your intelligence does credit to my teaching. Doubtless you have hit upon the right solution of this mystery. Observe: Mrs. Cowslip and her son, as they graze, proceed steadily in the direction of the stone fence. It would not surprise me if you should soon see with your own eyes some such ceremony as I have mentioned."

Cleopatra and Clarence continued their nibbling in silence, while each kept one speculative eye upon the comrades whom they considered so far beneath them. William evidently had pleasurable anticipations, also, for he postponed his usual morning observation of the surrounding country from the woodshed roof.



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Presently he was observed to rear his horns aloft and stamp one foot menacingly.

“Look at that fool goat, mother,” said Clarence. “He’s forever looking for trouble.”

Cleopatra raised her head and looked off down the road. Then she went on quietly nibbling.

“Can you see anything, mother?” asked Clarence, who was thrilling with curiosity.

“Nothing, my son — nothing but that strange young man in the buggy that runs without my assistance.”

“Gracious!” exclaimed the colt, kicking up his heels gleefully. “Now we’ll have fun.”

“No, my son, the uncanny thing is beneath our notice.”

Clarence looked at his mother in astonishment.

“The other time that evil-smelling red thing came swooping into our front yard,” he said,

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“you kicked two ribs out of it because you said it was a menace to our means of livelihood.”

“Hush, my son. Were they not compelled, after all, to rely on my services to get the thing off the premises? With a slight injury it had no more life in it than an ordinary buggy. I thought of this while I was dragging the clumsy affair to the blacksmith shop. No, my son, that sputtering red thing with the shocking bad breath is a false alarm. Our occupation is safe.”

Indeed, the Artist, as he gracefully turned his Red Ripper into the driveway and stopped near the veranda, was relieved to notice that its late enemies gave it only an indifferent glance. He was attired from top to toe in the most irreproachable new automobile togs, and in his buttonhole was an orchid of price—purple, shading delicately into pink. The Artist's spirits appeared to be as high as his boutonnière was

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high-priced. It was as though some invisible herald had announced : “Lo, the bridegroom cometh.” The truth is, it was the Artist’s first visit since the day of Galatea’s impulsive act of penitence in the wood-road, and he still thrilled with the memory of the swift kiss she had left upon his cheek the instant before she sped away. All this was well enough ; but it was impossible for the Artist not to blunder. His present blunder was in being over-confident in the memory of that kiss.

The moment the Poet’s mahogany-haired sister, in a trig costume of glossy white linen, including the prettiest of high-heeled little slippers, came out upon the veranda and cast her eye over the immaculate, exultant visitor, you would have been sorry for him — sorry that God had not gifted him with a modicum of subtlety in matters feminine.

“Good-morning, Arthur.”

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Galatea's voice was as cool as one of Amanda's unplucked cucumbers.

Arthur sprang lightly up the steps, and, screened by the honeysuckle vine, seized her hand and kissed it ardently.

"Why, Arthur! Are you ill? Has the sun affected your head?"

"Don't play with me, Galatea, I'm too happy — so happy that I'm serious. The time has come for us to understand each other."

Galatea looked curiously at the much-kissed hand.

"Arthur, you'll forgive me if I confess to doubts about ever being able to understand you."

"Dear — don't, don't say that, after that moment in the wood-road."

"The wood-road?" She put her finger pensively to her lip. "Oh, yes, now I remember. I brushed a mosquito off your cheek."

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The Artist would not be warned — it was not his fault, he was built that way. He took her hand again.

“Galatea! Galatea! For the first time you let me tell you how much I love you. You confessed that you had not treated me with consideration, and you asked me to come often and note the progress of your reformation.”

Here the Artist paused and kissed Galatea’s hand a great many more times. He did not see the mischief in her eyes as she drew her hand away and asked: —

“Arthur, tell me, why do you do that?”

“Why do I kiss your hand?”

“Yes.”

“Perhaps it is because I have not courage to kiss your — Galatea, why did you kiss my cheek in the wood-road?”

A series of throaty bellows were wafted to their ears from the direction of the stone fence

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at the bottom of the meadow. Galatea drew the Artist toward the end of the veranda where there was a clear view.

“Oh, Arthur! Look at Mrs. Cowslip! She'll kill poor Gustavius!”

The bull-calf's situation was indeed precarious. He was neatly balanced on his stomach on top of the stone fence, while his mother, with frantic bellows, after the manner of her kind was endeavoring to boost him over with her horns. Gabriel was hastening to the scene, with a pitchfork in his hand, and Napoleon, forgetful of late humiliations, barking at his heels. Cleopatra and Clarence were snorting their alarm from a little distance. It remained for William to relieve the general tension by planting a terrific butt with such precision that Gustavius, launched headlong from the fence, made his first actual acquaintance with the great world beyond. Before Gabriel with his pitch-

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fork could head off Mrs. Cowslip, she, with a mighty leap and scramble, joined her offspring, and together, bellowing, they rushed into the tangle of willows and wild grapevines. Gabriel followed with Napoleon.

Galatea, having alarmed the Poet, hurried with her brother and the Artist down the meadow. Before they reached the fence, Gabriel's head appeared over it. He waved the pitchfork, addressing Galatea.

“Git back! Git back! A cow funeral ain't no place for wimmen folks!”

“Oh, Mrs. Cowslip must be dead,” sobbed Galatea, restraining the Artist as the Poet hurried on and shot his long legs over the stone fence. “Poor, dear, good Mrs. Cowslip! Promise me, Arthur, that you'll save Gustavus.”

She was clinging to his arm beseechingly. Arthur experienced one of his rare moments

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of real intelligence. He drew a long breath, and thrust out his chest.

“And if I succeed, Galatea?”

“Oh, if you succeed, Arthur, — dear Arthur, — I shall try and remember, some day, to tell you how much I — how much I really love you.”

The Artist had the most excellent good sense to kiss her fervently, on the lips, and the superlative intelligence thereon to leave her and rush to the rescue of Gustavius. Galatea returned to the house, went into the library, and for quite half an hour kept her eyes fixed on one page of a book that was upside down.

The spectacle that met the Poet's gaze as he burst through the grapevine thicket caused him to exclaim: —

“The obsequies of *Bos Nemo*, as I'm a sinner!”

The truth of this remark was obvious. On

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the margin of the brook, whither his instinct had prompted him to crawl when fatally stricken with what Gabriel explained was "the black leg," lay the lifeless body of a strange steer, nameless so far as any one present knew ; and near by, with their noses to the ground while they pawed dust over their shoulders, Mrs. Cowslip and Gustavius, according to the custom of their kind, were bellowing and mooing the last rites for the dead. In vain Gabriel prodded them with his pitchfork ; the obsequies continued with an increasing display of emotion.

"This is news to me," said the Artist, when Gabriel had explained that horned cattle never neglect to hold funeral ceremonies over the dead of their kind. "It's like a wake — barring the pipes and bottles."

"Darn the critters' skins," said Gabriel ; "when that cow an' bull-calf come out of their

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tantrum they 're goin' to be locked in the barn to think it over the rest of the day."

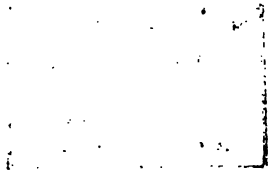
"No," said the Poet, "that 's not according to the rules and regulations that govern the firm of Bos, Equus and Co. Equal rights and privileges to all, irrespective of the individual equipment as to legs — that 's our constitution, Gabriel. Mrs. Cowslip has just as much right to her funeral as I have to mine. Besides, can't you see, she 's teaching Gustavius the orthodox bovine ceremony."

Leaving the Poet and Gabriel in charge of the mourners, being assured that their grief would presently wear itself out, the Artist hastened back to Galatea. He found her in the library, and his thrilling tale of how he saved the life of Gustavius merited all the reward it inspired.





SEIZED HER HAND AND KISSED IT ARDENTLY



EQUUS MINOR, DETECTIVE

V

Equus Minor, Detective



"All the crazy notions!" sniffed Amanda.

She was filling glass jars with raspberries out of a kettle on the roaring kitchen stove, while Gabriel screwed down the metal tops, perspiring freely in the super-heated midsummer temperature.

"Pshaw!" said Gabriel, "this here Poet an' his sister ain't a bit crazier 'n the Professor was. D'ye recollect what the Professor said 'bout 'the emotional capacities of so-called dumb animals,' — I seem to hear his lingo now, — jest before he went away, after playin' his flute in the barnyard till pretty near midnight?"

"The Professor was a nice man," admitted

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Amanda, “but when it came to dealin’ with critters he was crazy as a bedbug.”

“I dunno, Mandy. I sneaked out to th’ barn that night, an’ th’ way th’ cow an’ calf took to th’ Professor’s music made my flesh creep. You know, Mandy, they ain’t nothin’ in natur’ so doggone stubborn an’ foolish as a bull-calf — not even a pig. Well, you ought ’a’ seen th’ ca’m an’ peaceful way that bull-calf laid his chin on the Professor’s shoulder an’ bla-a-ted softly to himself when th’ slow an’ solemn tunes was bein’ played.”

“Gabe, you tend to them jars an’ quit your jokin’.”

“Honest, Mandy, true as I live an’ breathe. An’ when the Professor see I was lookin’ on, he stopped playin’ an said to me: ‘Gabriel,’ says he, ‘give me time, an’ I’ll teach this bull-calf to sing the doxology.’ An’ I ’m darned if I don’t believe he ’d ’a’ done it.”

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“I’ve heard dogs howl when somebody played the fiddle,” observed Amanda, “an’ that’s all there was to it. You can’t say the Professor ever had the crazy notion this here Poet has of givin’ a birthday party to a yearlin’ colt.”

“T ain’t th’ Poet, Mandy; it’s his red-headed sister. She was out to th’ barn th’ first thing this mornin’, while I was milkin’, an’ braided th’ colt’s mane full of red and blue ribbons. I saw her kiss Clarence on the nose an’ wish him many happy returns o’ th’ day.”

“For the land sakes!” said Amanda.

“She got me to fix up a table in the shade of the old chestnut on th’ lawn, out of a barn door an’ a couple of sawhorses. There’s goin’ to be a birthday dinner at two o’clock, an’ all th’ critters are invited.”

“Be you goin’, Gabe?” inquired Amanda, with subtle sarcasm.

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“Gosh, no! The dog an’ I ain’t speakin’ since that trouble ’bout th’ Golden Guinea eggs. You know it’s reely Napoleon that’s givin’ th’ party.”

“Gabe, you jest go ’long!”

“Honest, Mandy. That’s th’ Poet’s idee. He says th’ dog could n’t do less after th’ colt savin’ him from that lickin’, ’count o’ them eggs.”

“Well, I never!” Amanda sat down and fanned herself with her apron.

“Yes; an’ they’s goin’ to be speech-makin’ an’ music. That there artist chap is comin’ out with his banjo, an’ while the critters are eatin’ an’ drinkin’ he an’ th’ Poet with his guitar are goin’ to play duets, jest like they do in them high-toned restaurants down to New York. I heard ’em talkin’ it over when I was fixin’ up the table out under the chestnut.”

“Be you sure the artist-chap’s comin’,

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Gabe?" asked Amanda, all at once losing interest in the main topic.

"W'y, yes. W'y not? Anything wrong, Mandy?"

"I dunno; she's been treatin' him awful cool the last few days."

Gabriel laughed. "I was awful gone on a red-headed girl once myself, — long 'fore I met you, Mandy,—an' I tell you they keep you guessin'. You never know how to take 'em. It's always a toss-up what to say or do when you court a red-headed girl. One day you can grab her and kiss her behind the door, an' she'll act as if she wanted to thank you for it, an' the very next day she'll go into tantrums if you even wink at her. I tell ye, Mandy, my red-headed girl kept me guessin' which way she'd jump till I got so thin I could n't cast a shadow."

"Served you right," snapped Amanda. "Men

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are so stupid. I s'pose when you got so thin she could see right through you, she was thankful to settle down as an old maid."

"No," said Gabriel solemnly, "she married and proved a great blessin' to her husband."

"You don't say! How could that be?"

"W'y, ye see," drawled Gabriel, "he was th' livin' skeleton in a circus, an' a month after th' weddin' he 'd lost so much flesh that they doubled his salary."

Then they both jumped guiltily at the sound of another voice: —

"May I come into your kitchen, Amanda?"

It was Galatea. She was biting her lips, which were hardly more brilliant than her mass of mahogany hair, and her eyes twinkled.

"I merely wanted to ask Gabriel if he has time to pull some young carrots, turnips, and red beets for our birthday party. George has dug some artichokes for Reginald." Then she

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added: "Of course you're coming to the party? There'll be music, you know — guitar and banjo duets."

"Sartin, sartin," said Gabriel with alacrity.

"You'll want some loaf-sugar for the mare and her colt," said Amanda, bustling about.

"How good of you! Now I'll go and give Napoleon his instructions as host of the occasion."

With the exception of the bull-terrier, all the four-legged members of the family had their noses together in the shade of some willows down by the brook. They were exchanging views on a matter that puzzled them greatly. Cleopatra was apprehensive about the ribbons entwined in Clarence's mane.

"I've half a notion," she was saying to her gayly decorated colt, "that you and I had better take to our heels till this thing's over, whatever it means. It's too much like what I've

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seen at the County Fair in my time — yearling colts fixed up that way led off by some strange man and never heard of again.”

“It ’s all right, mother,” said Clarence, who was very proud of his ribbons. “You can trust that red-headed girl. When she put these pretty things on me, she laughed and kissed me on the nose. Besides, look at that fool pig.”

Truly, Reginald did look rather foolish with the fine bouquet that was tied in the kink of his tail with a bit of yellow ribbon.

“That ’s all I got when I went up to the house to get my back scratched,” grunted Reginald. “But Gustavius was no better off. He wanted that long-legged chap to rub his silly little horns, but was sent away with that jim-crack over his ears.”

Reginald referred to a garland which had given the bull-calf quite an ancient Roman look until Mrs. Cowslip had eaten half of it. But



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this was no more than fair, as Gustavius had done as much for his mother, whose crumpled horn still retained some twisted stems of daisies and dandelions. As for William, no amount of butting could have freed him from the trellis-work of wire, silver foil, and sunflowers of which his sturdy horns were the foundation. He seemed grieved and humiliated over it.

“And you, yourself, mother,” resumed Clarence, “are included in some scheme of general festivity. Never have I seen the luxuriant hair of your tail crimped so beautifully.”

“It may be that the Professor is returning,” suggested Mrs. Cowslip. “I, for my part, shall welcome him warmly.”

“Ah,” said Reginald, “when you mention the Professor I am thrilled by the most delicious memories. I seem to feel his highly cultivated fingers along my grateful spine at this moment.”

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Suddenly Gustavius gave a truculent little bellow, and shook his horns.

“By the fat on my ribs, it ’s the dog!” said Reginald, who secretly liked Napoleon as little as did the bull-calf, with memories of sharp teeth nipping his heels; “I marvel at his condescension!”

“What did I tell you, mother?” said Clarence. “No one ever heard of a dog being led off, yet look at the ribbons on Napoleon.”

The terrier was truly a gorgeous spectacle as he trotted proudly down the pasture. A decoration of red, white, and blue ribbons crossed his broad chest diagonally, passing under one fore-leg, the two ends being tied in a large bow on his shoulders. The colt advanced to meet him. They had always been staunch friends from their mutual infancy; so friendly, in fact, that when Amanda was away and Clarence expressed

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a desire to go into the kitchen in search of stray tidbits, Napoleon always managed to be looking the other way. Now, as they met, the colt with head lowered and ears pointed forward in token of the utmost amiability and good will, the terrier leaped up, licking his velvet nose and barking eagerly : —

“ You are to come up to the house at once, old chum; everything is ready.”

“ Is Amanda away, and the kitchen door open ? ” asked Clarence.

“ Oh, this is different,” said Napoleon hastily. “ It’s the red-headed girl’s affair. What do you say to young turnips, and carrots, and lumps of sugar afterwards ? ”

“ Will there be enough for mother, too ? ” asked Clarence, taking care not to speak loud enough to excite anticipations liable to disappointment.

“ Yes, for everybody,” barked Napoleon so

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that all could hear; "you're all to come at once."

"Well," grumbled Gustavius, with a shake of his sprouting horns, "you need n't be so stuck up about it."

"I had an engagement with the red-headed girl, anyway," grunted Reginald, starting for the house at a fast trot.

"You just head off that pig, Napoleon, or he'll make a mess of everything," said the colt. "Come on, mother!"

With Clarence and Cleopatra in the lead, and Reginald sent squealing back to the rear with Napoleon's teeth at his heels, the summoned guests proceeded, with rather more decorum than was to be expected, to the banquet table under the old chestnut, where Galatea awaited them smilingly, with outstretched hands. Catching sight of several inviting peck measures on the table, Mrs. Cowslip and Gustavius

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broke into a trot, with the result that the last dozen yards were a neck-and-neck race, except for Reginald, whose fat legs forced him to squeal plaintively along behind. As the guests arrived, Gabriel and Amanda hastened out from the kitchen, while the Poet, doubled up over his guitar, and the Artist, holding his banjo gracefully, with their backs to the chestnut tree, strummed forth a spirited march.

“Napoleon,” said Galatea, “take your place at the head of the table.”

The terrier leaped into the host’s chair, put his paws on the cloth, and awaited further instructions.

“Come, Clarence; as the guest of honor you will stand on Napoleon’s right, and, Cleopatra, your place is by the side of your son.”

With a pat on the nose for each, the girl brought them to their places. Meanwhile Gabriel had coaxed Mrs. Cowslip and Gusta-

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vius, with William, to places opposite them, while Amanda prudently stood guard over the peck measures. Galatea poured balm upon the wounded feelings of Reginald by inviting him to take the chair at the foot of the table. It was a most fortunate arrangement. The pig would have died rather than show himself inferior to Napoleon in the matter of table manners.

“Galatea, what’s the first course?” sang out the Poet.

“Turnips *au naturel*, George, with chicken *à la Marengo* for Napoleon.”

The Poet, for the first time in his life, almost smiled.

“Arthur,” he said, “I think ‘The Battle of Waterloo with Variations’ will go well with Napoleon’s chicken *à la Marengo*.”

Rendered more than usually docile by the music, the guests ate their turnips decorously

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from the hands of Galatea, Amanda, and Gabriel, while Napoleon, as host, nibbled daintily at his special dish. When the chicken and the turnips had disappeared, the host and his guests looked expectantly at Galatea. Napoleon thumped his short tail against the back of his chair. The music ended with a flourish.

“George,” said Galatea, “Napoleon requests you to make a few appropriate remarks.”

The Poet laid aside his instrument, unfolded his lank limbs, and strode to the side of Napoleon, fixing his earnest gaze on Clarence, the guest of honor, who pricked up his ears. The other guests — whose usual morning indulgence in grass and artichokes had eliminated the fiercer gustatory pangs — were round-eyed and attentive. Amanda caressed Mrs. Cowslip’s crumpled horn to hide her embarrassment at being a party to such foolishness, while Gabriel chuckled inwardly.

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“Clarence,” began the Poet, “and fellow members of the flourishing firm of Bos, Equus and Co., we have come together upon this happy occasion to declare a dividend of mutual confidence and esteem. The occasion — which may have escaped the notice of some of you — is the first anniversary of the birth of one of our youngest, yet most enthusiastic members. Clarence, many happy returns of this day. We salute you.”

The Poet bowed to the colt, who nodded his head intelligently.

“Yes, yes!” barked Napoleon excitedly; words could not have said it plainer.

“Gosh!” whispered Gabriel to Amanda, “who would have believed it?”

“Clarence,” resumed the speaker, “the host of this joyful occasion” — he turned to Napoleon, who nearly wagged himself off his chair — “desires to express publicly his thanks for



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the great service you rendered him in that dark hour" — here the Poet frowned and shook a reproving finger at the chuckling Gabriel — "when he faced unjust punishment on the monstrous charge of having ravished the nest of the speckled hen. Then and there, Clarence, you rebuked the short-sighted minion of the law by nipping him smartly in the same sensitive region where you had nipped the real marauder, tearing from him the clue which will sooner or later bring him to justice."

The Poet took from his pocket a ragged square of blue-striped dark cloth and submitted it for Clarence's inspection. The colt laid back his ears and nipped at it. The Poet cast a glance of solemn triumph around the table.

"Friends and partners," he said, "do we need any further evidence that it was indeed Clarence who was a witness of the crime, and

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performed this service for Napoleon and for justice?"

The point was overwhelmingly conceded.

"Doggone my skin!" whispered Gabriel to Amanda, "th' colt remembers that rag by th' smell!"

The Poet put the damning evidence back in his pocket. Suddenly Amanda nudged Gabriel.

"Of all things, Gabe, here comes Si Blodgett with a basket on his arm!"

An undersized, sanctimonious person, with a smooth upper lip and a tuft on his chin, carrying a covered basket, was approaching from the driveway. He seemed pained at the evidences of festivities progressing. When he had approached within a few yards of the banquet-table he put down the basket carefully and said:

"Brother Gabriel, Sister Amanda, what is the meaning of this unseemly scene of levity?"

The Poet looked interested.

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“If, as your manner indicates,” he said suavely, “you don’t approve of this little celebration, I recommend that you address your remarks to headquarters. I speak for the host, — Napoleon, here at the head of the table, — who is giving a birthday party to our friend and comrade, Clarence.”

He waved his hand at the colt, and paused expectantly. The visitor rolled up his eyes and raised his hands.

“Vanity, vanity, all is vanity!”

“Oh, your name must be Blodgett,” said the Poet. “I’ve often heard you mentioned. Won’t you join us?”

“I would join you in prayer,” groaned Si Blodgett. “Would that I might snatch you from the seat of the scornful.”

Gabriel chuckled. The Poet turned to the guest of honor, and continued: —

“In conclusion, Clarence, and fellow mem-

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bers of Bos, Equus and Co., I wish to say for those of us to whom nature has given but two legs instead of four, but has made partial compensation by bestowing upon us the power of speech, that we are proud to claim you as friends, as partners, as equals — ”

“ Stop ! ” groaned Si Blodgett, with hand upraised. “ Remember Moses and the golden calf ! ”

“ Look here, Si, ” said Gabriel, “ don’t you slander our bull-calf. He ain’t gold. He ’ll be doggone good beef some day. ”

“ Oh, ye unregenerate ! ” almost screamed Si Blodgett. “ Soon ye will be bowing down to wood and stone ! ”

“ Galatea, ” said the Poet, “ what ’s the next course ? ”

“ Carrots, George. ”

While Si Blodgett continued to groan unavailingly, the carrots were served. The Poet

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resumed his instrument, and never before was that classic, "Hiawatha," adapted for banjo and guitar, so inspiringly rendered. It was repeated until Galatea produced the dessert of loaf sugar, and Si Blodgett showed signs of frothing at the mouth over the ungodliness of the scene. As Galatea tripped around the table, dropping lumps of sugar into grateful mouths, Si Blodgett came forward, stretching his arms across the table to Gabriel. He had failed to notice that the colt was keeping one eye on him, with the accompanying ear laid back.

"Oh, brother, brother," he said, "beware —"

Whatever the warning was to be, it was cut short by a grunt caused by the colt thrusting his hind quarters brusquely into Si Blodgett's stomach.

"Darn th' critter!" exclaimed the exhorter,

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with an astonishing change of voice and sentiment. And he slapped Clarence smartly on the flank.

“Look out, Si!” shouted Gabriel. “Th’ colt don’t like ye.”

Si Blodgett dodged barely in time to escape Clarence’s heels. The other guests were becoming restless. The Poet and the Artist joined Galatea beside Napoleon’s chair. The exhorter went and picked up his basket, and, approaching Gabriel, said:—

“It is our duty to be good to those who spitefully use us. Brother Gabriel, hearin’ you ’ve been disapp’inted in your hatchin’ of Golden Guinea eggs, and havin’ a couple o’ pair of the chicks to sell, I came over to offer you the first chance. They’re scarce, you know. I’ll take four dollars a pair.”

For the space of at least a minute there was amazed and breathless silence. Even the Poet



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found himself speechless. Amanda stared at Si Blodgett, and then at Gabriel, whose eyes were fixed on the basket while he opened and closed his mouth dumbly. At length speech burst from him.

“Si Blodgett, where’d ye git the eggs to hatch out them Golden Guinea chicks o’ yourn?”

“The Lord cares for them that serve Him,” said the prudent exhorter. “I got them eggs where you got yourn, an’ what’s more, I only paid twenty cents apiece for ’em.”

“You was there, Si Blodgett, biddin’ agin’ me,” said Gabriel, doubling up his huge fists, “an’ you heard th’ guarantee that there wa’n’t no more Golden Guinea eggs for sale in th’ hull county.”

“That was true, Brother Gabriel; but, ye see, I’d already bought mine three days before, an’ they wa’n’t for sale, neither.”

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Gabriel gurgled and managed to swallow part of his wrath.

“Give us a look at them chicks,” he said.

Si Blodgett knelt down on the grass and picked at the knot of the string that held the cloth over his basket.

“George!” exclaimed Galatea in a startled whisper, “look! That man’s trousers are of dark cloth with a blue stripe!”

“Yes, but wait a bit. Look at Napoleon and the colt.”

The terrier had jumped down from his chair and was growling, with bristling crest. Clarence, with ears laid back, had turned about and was shaking his head at the man on his knees, whose back was toward him.

The knot was refractory. Si Blodgett’s coat-tails fell apart, revealing a key-chain, one end of which disappeared in his hip pocket.



THE GUESTS ATE THEIR TURNIPS DECOROUSLY

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EQUUS MINOR, DETECTIVE

“There!” whispered Galatea. “See that patch!”

“Wait!” said the Poet. “The psychological moment approaches — Ah!”

With a sudden rush the colt fell upon Si Blodgett’s rear, nipped savagely at the region of his hip pocket, and backed away triumphantly with his teeth closed on a chain from which a bunch of keys dangled. The man yelled in fright, then, seeing what was in the colt’s mouth, as Gabriel sprang forward to capture the aggressor, he jumped up, exclaiming:

“Never mind, Gabe; he’ll drop ’em in a minute.”

“Clarence!” said Galatea softly.

The colt took a high-kicking turn about the chestnut tree, swinging the keys from his teeth, and then trotted up to the girl and dropped them in her hand. Si Blodgett reached for them, but Amanda was too quick for him.

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“W’y, of all things,” she said, holding one of the keys in a firm grip, “if here ain’t that lost key of our henhouse!”

Si Blodgett’s face turned red, then pale, and then he laughed nervously.

“Ye don’t say, Sister Amanda. I was wonderin’ if it was yourn, the day I found it in — in th’ road.”

Gabriel was beginning to look dangerous, but he could n’t resist a thrust at Amanda.

“What do ye go ’round sowin’, henhouse keys for, Mandy? Expect to raise a crop of ’em?”

“I left that key in the henhouse door,” said Amanda stubbornly, “an’ that’s all there is to it.”

“O Lord, how long, how long!” groaned Si Blodgett, returning to his exhorter manner. “But I don’t bear malice. I’ll take my basket and go on my way in peace.”

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“You’ll stop right where you are, Si Blodgett!” thundered Gabriel.

“Oh — er — Mr. Blodgett,” drawled the Poet, coming forward amiably. “I believe you have the reputation of being an earnest worker in — er — in the Lord’s vineyard?”

“If some have been brought to the throne of grace through my exhortations, it’s only the Lord’s mercy. I make no boast. I will be humble. I will take my basket and go.”

He stooped to pick up the basket, above whose rim peeped four little Guinea chicks. The Poet’s gentle hand restrained him.

“Perhaps you’d better go, Mr. Blodgett — presently. But if I were you I’d leave the basket, and — er — its contents.”

“I — I don’t quite understand,” said Si Blodgett weakly.

“Why,” said the Poet mildly, “one who is engaged in your chosen work of — er — of

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saving souls ought to neglect no opportunity of pointing a useful moral. Now, here is this little matter of circumstantial evidence which seems to convict a — er — a holy man of robbing his neighbor's hennery."

"Prove it! prove it! I defy ye!" snarled Si Blodgett.

"Be calm, Mr. Blodgett. Let us consider the subject from the standpoint of the exhorter. Imagine yourself addressing an assemblage of young men — young men who are a little wild, we will say, who have raided watermelon patches, and are in a fair way to break into their neighbors' henneries. Think of the effect upon those young minds when you tell them about the lost key of a looted henroost found in your pocket!"

Si Blodgett laughed. "What does a key prove?"

"Then," continued the Poet, "you go on to

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tell about the contributory evidence — the fact that the real thief wore dark trousers with a blue stripe, just like your own.”

“How do ye know he did?” snarled Si Blodgett, casting an uneasy glance down the legs of his dark trousers with their blue stripe.

“Just like your own,” the Poet went on, “because, as the real thief was carrying off the valuable eggs he ’d come for, a yearling colt put his head through a window into the hennery and playfully nipped him in the region of his hip pocket, tearing away a ragged square of cloth, which was found hanging to a nail on the window-ledge the next morning.”

The Poet took Clarence’s trophy from his pocket and examined it reflectively. Si Blodgett’s knees shook, and his mouth hung open.

“Finally,” said the Poet, “you might drive home your useful moral by explaining to your young hearers that your own dark trousers with

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their blue stripe bore a patch the exact size and shape of the square of cloth torn from those of the robber of henroosts— Why, Mr. Blodgett!”

At mention of the patch, the exhorter had turned and fled toward the road.

“Hi, there! Si! Si Blodgett!” yelled Gabriel.

“No,” said the Poet, restraining him. “You have a good, serviceable basket, and four fine, lusty Golden Guinea chicks— worth four dollars a pair. Don’t be greedy.”

“Clarence, you’re a wonder!” said Galatea, with her arm about the colt’s neck.

“Mandy,” said Gabriel, “you put these here chicks with their brothers an’ sisters in th’ henhouse— an’ don’t go ’round sowin’ no more keys.”

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VI

Taurus Cupid, Esq.



As jocund Summer merged into placid Autumn, Gustavius throve mightily and waxed fat. His shoulders broadened, his voice deepened, his sharp-pointed horns acquired a high polish through painstaking friction upon every available object, and became rigidly embedded in his thickening skull. He could summon the red glow to his eyes in moments of anger, and he exulted in the knowledge that his stout heart was bursting with courage. Gustavius was putting bull-calfhood forever behind him, and each day brought him increased yearnings for valorous deeds.

In view of this physical and moral transformation, Gustavius wondered at his tolerance of

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the familiarities still recklessly practiced by his comrades. But how could he stoop so low as to enforce respect from a pig or a goat? The dog was eliminated from the problem, because it was a dog's natural prerogative to nip at the heels of superiority and avoid punishment by flight. As for the mare, she was uniformly courteous, and the playfulness of the colt disarmed him.

Concerning the two-legged members of the family, Gustavius felt himself the victim of hereditary respect for the sternly authoritative person called Gabe, and there was something so soothing in the manner of the lank, long-limbed man who spent most of his time lounging about the veranda that it was impossible to offer him any sort of challenge. The red-headed girl — ah! Gustavius was not ashamed to confess to himself that the bare sight of her made him glow with docile affection.

“And yet,” said Reginald impudently, —

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for Gustavius's later reflections had unconsciously resolved themselves into speech, as he stood with his comrades in the afternoon shade of the willows, — “and yet a bit of anything else as red as that girl's hair sends you into convulsions of rage. Talk about inconsistency —”

“Shut up, pig!” said Clarence. “You're jealous.”

Suddenly Gustavius began to bellow and paw the earth.

“What disturbs you, my son?” inquired Mrs. Cowslip, between the finish of one cud and the beginning of another.

“It's that rank outsider again, who is forever butting in with that vile-smelling red wagon,” said Gustavius, lifting his nose toward the lawn. “He angers me beyond words. I've laid for him a hundred times, but he has n't a drop of sporting blood in his body; he's for-

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ever hanging on to the skirts of the red-headed girl.”

Galatea and the Artist, carrying a long, flat box between them, were walking about the lawn midway between the house and the willows. Presently they found a smooth, level space, opened the box, and proceeded to drive into the ground two gaudily painted stakes and some arches of wire.

“It’s very annoying the way that chap’s always about nowadays,” admitted Reginald. “I was just thinking of going up to get my back scratched, but it’s no use now.”

“My time will come one of these days,” said Gustavius. “Just let me catch that chap alone once, that’s all!” And he began industriously sharpening his horns on the stone fence.

It was nothing short of wonderful, the influence unconsciously exerted by the Poet’s sister

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over these four-legged comrades whom she had captivated on the very day of her arrival, as you cannot fail to remember. Now Mrs. Cowslip, Cleopatra, Clarence, Reginald, and William, who ordinarily prided himself on his independence of action, left the grateful shade of the willows, and, with perfunctory nibblings at grass, of which they were already over-full, slowly approached the scene of preparations for that ancient and honorable game called croquet. Soon that influence was too powerful even to be resisted by Gustavius, notwithstanding the hated presence of the Artist, and he moved sulkily after the others.

The Artist was pensive, and occasionally, as his adoring glance rested on Galatea's graceful figure, he sighed. His attention being thus divided, it was not strange that he should miss the second arch.

“How foolish of you!” she said. “I can

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now save you further exertions by taking your ball around with me.”

Being already past the first side arch and in position for the middle one, with the Artist's ball an easy victim, she was able to make good her promise. The Artist could not regret his inevitable defeat; it left him free to follow Galatea about and pour into her ears a lover's woes.

“Sweetheart, why do you continue so cold and distant to me? One would suppose that when a girl is engaged—”

“Arthur, take your foot away from that arch!”

With beautiful precision she made the long “split” stroke, and was safe for the first stake.

“As I was saying, dear, when a girl is engaged—”

“Arthur! you are trying to make me miss the stake! Can't you play fair?”

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“I’m not playing at all, darling. I can’t play. I can’t eat. I can’t sleep. One would expect a little mercy from a girl who wears his engagement —”

“There! you moved your ball just as I was about to strike for it!”

The Artist groaned and replaced the ball. She plumped her own into it dexterously from half-way across the field, and proceeded on the home stretch.

“I don’t know how long I’m going to stand this suspense,” sighed the Artist, “and yet you resist all my pleadings to name the day —”

“Arthur, *I* am playing croquet. Will you kindly stand one side?”

She played safely up to the last arch.

“If the date was fixed, dear, I think I could bear your lack of — enthusiasm; that is, if the date were reasonably near —”

“Can’t you keep away from the handle of

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my mallet, Arthur? Now I'm staked on your ball, and must risk all on one last stroke."

"Oh, you'll make it," groaned the Artist. "I wish that ball was my head. Any sort of attention would be better than none at all. I've lost all hope of getting another kiss —"

"Ha! Whitewashed! whitewashed!" sang the girl, dancing about the stake. "Perhaps there's some other game you play?"

The Artist sat down on the grass with his head in his hands.

"Does your head ache, Arthur?"

"My heart aches. Darling, have pity on me and name the day when we two —"

"Why, certainly — Wednesday."

The Artist leaped to his feet.

"Day after to-morrow — how happy you make me!"

"Oh, I have n't decided on any *particular* Wednesday."

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He threw himself back on the grass.

“But I’ve a feeling that it will be *some* Wednesday, Arthur, dear.”

Then she stooped over quickly and kissed him.

“I wondered whether Arthur would have sufficient diplomacy to let you win, Galatea,” said the Poet, with a perfectly straight face, his approach having been unobserved; “but it seems that I did him an injustice.”

“I don’t know what you mean,” said Galatea with dignity; “but if you want to make it a three-handed game, I’ll undertake to white-wash you both.”

“Oh, there’s nothing in it for me,” drawled the Poet aggravatingly; “however, I’m obliging by nature; I don’t mind simplifying things for Arthur.”

Galatea, with her nose in the air, sent her ball through the first two arches with a single

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stroke, and with the two thus gained took position, made the third arch, and with a swift safe drive for the middle one, which she missed, found herself well out of the way of hostile balls.

“There,” she said; “I don’t mind giving you the advantage by starting first.”

“Your generosity deserves a better reward,” said the Poet, as he selected a mallet with great care, “but some twenty years’ observation of the game has taught me that the croquet field is where friendship ceases.”

The Poet’s lank, knobby figure was about as symmetrical as that of a daddy-longlegs, but he had the eye of a champion marksman, and no nerves at all. He followed his sister’s tactics, and improved upon them. He took his position at the third arch with such nicety that in striking through it he sent his ball to within a yard of where Galatea’s lay.

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“Any odds?” he asked coolly, as he clicked them together.

Galatea was scornfully silent. The Poet’s “split” for position at the centre arch was defective, and with brutal disregard of the Artist’s feelings he took position directly in line with the two first arches.

“Arthur,” ordered Galatea, “come straight through and use your two strokes to get George’s ball.”

“Oh, well, if you’re going to play partners against me!” And the Poet threw down his mallet.

“There’s no rule against coaching,” snapped Galatea.

But the Artist’s mind was not on croquet. The game resolved itself into a contest between the Poet and his sister as to which should take the greatest liberties with his ball. Thus they were neck and neck at the centre arch on the

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home stretch, with the Artist still at his second arch. Galatea missed, and the Poet found himself in cocksure position for the last two arches and the stake.

By this time all the four-legged members of the firm of Bos, Equus and Co. had drawn near and were watching the progress of the game with lively curiosity. Reginald, with his customary assurance, now advanced with ingratiating grunts out of the side of his mouth, and rubbed his side against the Poet's leg, who had a sudden inspiration.

"Two to one I can make it with the pig's legs for arches," he said.

Galatea experienced renewed hope. The Poet cajoled Reginald into standing between the two arches with his kinked tail resting upon the one nearest the stake. There was a narrow, though clear, space between his legs, in line with the arches.



ALL THE FOUR-LEGGED MEMBERS OF THE FIRM HAD
DRAWN NEAR

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“Attention, Reginald!” and the Poet struck his ball with just the requisite force to send it through the two arches.

Unfortunately, at that instant Reginald sat down, and the ball, striking his fat stomach, bounced hopelessly out of position. Galatea dropped on the grass and shrieked.

“I’ll give you the game,” said the Poet. “It’s an antiquated pastime, anyhow.”

“Sour grapes,” laughed Galatea.

“Not at all. I’ve thought of an improvement, that’s all,” said the Poet. “Stay where you are, Reginald. William, come here.”

The goat put his nose in the Poet’s hand and followed him to the other end of the field, where he suffered himself to be stationed between the two arches opposite the pig. Over the two arches on one side the Poet stationed Cleopatra and Clarence, and opposite them Mrs. Cowslip and Gustavius. The bull-calf wrinkled

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his yellow nose and looked mutinous, while his comrades seemed much gratified. Then the Poet went calmly around the field and pulled up all the arches, except the centre one, and said: —

“There, all we lack is a camel or an elephant for the centre — but nothing is perfect in this world, at the start.”

“George,” said Galatea, wiping her eyes, “for out-and-out idiocy you certainly take the prize.”

“Not at all. That’s what’s said at first about every great discoverer. There has n’t been a single improvement in this game in seven hundred years. Now for the first time in history you’re going to see croquet played with living arches — Ouch!”

Clarence had made a sudden playful leap from his position and nipped the Poet’s lean thigh. He was led back and admonished so

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severely that he meekly refrained from making any further demonstrations.

With perfect gravity the Poet led Galatea and the Artist in a game of croquet calculated to make history. If Mrs. Cowslip had not kicked the Poet's ball clear off the field when it bounced smartly against her tenderest pastern, and if Gustavius had not destroyed the Artist's nerve by bellowing hoarsely in his ear at a critical moment, it would have been a bewildering success.

"Anyway," said the Poet, when Galatea had won through rank favoritism on the part of Reginald, who refrained from sitting down in *her* critical moment, "anyway, we've given one more demonstration that all are born free and equal in the firm of Bos, Equus and Co., even when it comes to croquet."

"One thing I don't understand," said the Artist, who, being in love, was quite hopelessly

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serious, "and that is how you manage these animals turned out loose this way, when they become unruly, as all animals are apt to at times."

"The learned Professor of whom we rented this place, and who attended to their early education, did n't neglect that point," answered the Poet, with a solemn glance at Galatea which brought before her mind's eye a vision of their first exciting experience with William and Gustavius. "In times of mutiny one magic word uttered by the Professor brought them to their senses completely humbled."

"Indeed!" said the Artist. "This is most interesting. I've heard of such methods being used by animal trainers. What is that word, George?"

"Its efficacy, Arthur, consists in the rarity of its use. It is pronounced only as a last resort, as familiarity would breed contempt for it.

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The word, Arthur, is” — and he whispered in the Artist’s ear — “Abracadabra.”

And Galatea related the circumstances of their single observation of its potency, — as recorded in the early part of this veracious chronicle, — with special stress on the advantages offered by a low-limbed cherry tree in case of pursuit by an enraged bull-calf.

“What you have told me is really wonderful,” said the Artist. “Never again will I doubt that domestic animals are possessed of reasoning powers, as well as capacity for affection.”

“Here comes Gabriel,” said Galatea. “He looks alarmed. I wonder what has happened?”

Gabriel caught his breath and said, addressing the Poet: —

“Si Blodgett fell off a haystack an’ thinks he’s goin’ to die. He wants to confess about them eggs.”

“Oh, the poor man!” said Galatea.

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“This is n’t the first time I’ve been mistaken for a clergyman — that is, at first sight,” said the Poet. “Is he really badly hurt, Gabriel?”

“They ain’t no bones broke, but Si’s groanin’ somethin’ terrible an’ says it’s his insides.”

“But he can’t want *me*,” said the Poet. “Why, I put together the links of circumstantial evidence that proved he stole the eggs.”

“That’s jest it. Si says you’re th’ Lord’s instrument sent to awaken his sleepin’ conscience — darn him! — an’ he’s afraid of hell-fire if you don’t come an’ hear his confession.”

“Poor man!” said Galatea, with tears in her eyes. “Come, George, I’ll go with you. It’s only a step. Arthur, you wait here; we’ll soon be back.”

Conducted by Gabriel, they disappeared down the road, and the Artist was alone with his fate.

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He had no premonition of disaster. He lay on the grass with his eyes closed, wrapped in the joys and miseries of being in love.

The living croquet-arches, with one impulse, got their heads together and considered the situation.

“I, for one, shall go and take a look around the kitchen,” said Clarence.

“It’s the roof of the house for me,” said William; “I have n’t had a good view of the surrounding country since strawberry-time.”

“What about that chap on the grass?” asked Gustavius. “What will he be doing?”

“That reminds me,” said Reginald; “now’s your chance, Gustavius. You’ve been longing to catch him alone.”

The bull-calf shook his horns sulkily. “I kind of hate to do it. He seems to be a friend of the red-headed girl.”

“Besides, my son,” observed Mrs. Cowslip,

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“none of our race ever attacks a sleeping person.”

“Leave that to me,” said Reginald; “it’s time an example should be made of these outsiders.”

Clarence agreed with him. They began circling around the prostrate enemy, gradually drawing nearer, nipping at his legs or arms and darting away, until at length Clarence’s teeth brought their victim to his feet with a yell of mingled surprise and pain. But the Artist was not of a vengeful disposition.

“Ha! ha!” he laughed, “you’re spoiling for a frolic, I see!”

He ran toward the colt and then turned, as though inviting pursuit. The invitation was accepted with a unanimity that thoroughly alarmed the Artist. Even Mrs. Cowslip and Cleopatra were making hostile demonstrations, while William was backing away with a signifi-

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cance that caused the Artist to seize a croquet mallet as he dodged about the field. This was enough for the bull-calf, who began bellowing and pawing the earth, while his eyes turned red.

“Good fellows! good boys!” said the Artist, holding out his hand.

But they gathered about him closer yet, with snorts, bellows, and grunts which convinced the Artist it was time to exert authority. So he shouted in a stern voice:—

“Away! To the barn, all of you!”

For answer the indignant pig ran between his legs, all but upsetting him, and the others crowded in closer yet. Thoroughly frightened, the Artist decided that extreme measures were justifiable. Recalling the magic word whispered in his ear by the Poet, he raised his hand and thundered:—

“ABRACADABRA!”

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The effect was instantaneous, but disconcerting. After one instant of general stupefaction, Clarence stood on his hind-legs with his fore-feet beating the air, and addressed his companions in a shrill whinny, which they readily understood to mean : —

“What! Shall a miserable interloper presume so far!”

“Let me at him!” roared the bull-calf, with horns low and tail high.

The Artist turned and fled, with Gustavius bellowing at his heels, urged on by his comrades following close behind. Straight for the house sped the fugitive. The low-limbed cherry tree was nearer, and, luckily, he remembered it in time. Having sufficient presence of mind at the last moment to fling his forty-dollar Panama hat into Gustavius's face, he swung himself into the tree, and was safe.

Gustavius kept one eye on him while prac-

TAURUS CUPID, ESQ.

ting on the hat, which was presently only an expensive memory.

Clarence, finding the kitchen door open, walked in. By way of a rain-water barrel, the woodshed, and the water-tank, William mounted to the peak of the house roof and proceeded to enjoy the prospect. Reginald made himself comfortable in a veranda rocker. Mrs. Cowslip found the soft earth of the tulip-bed conducive to somnolence and cud-chewing, while Cleopatra grazed near by on some late pansies. Such was the scene that presented itself to Galatea when she returned alone, having found Si Blodgett more scared than hurt.

“Why, Arthur!” she exclaimed. “What are you doing up there?”

“Call off your bull-calf, and I’ll come down and tell you.” The Artist was annoyed.

“Gustavius? Why, he would n’t hurt a fly.”

GAMBOLLING WITH GALATEA

“Would n’t he? Just look at my forty-dollar Panama!”

“Oh, Arthur, surely there must be some mistake — some misunderstanding.”

“It’s past the misunderstanding stage when I’m treed like this.”

“You must have said something that offended Gustavius. He’s terribly sensitive, poor fellow!”

“Said something! I treated them like friends and fellow citizens till they all set upon me at once; then, seeing it was a conspiracy, I said ‘Abracadabra,’ of course.”

“Oh, Arthur! You forgot that you had no right — that you were not a member of our family — yet.”

“They seemed to remember it all right — especially the bull-calf. I nearly burst a blood-vessel getting up here.”

“It is really most unfortunate, Arthur.” She

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looked about her, at the late pansies, at the tulip-bed, and at the house roof, and said reproachfully: "William! Mrs. Cowslip! Cleopatra!"

The goat came meekly down from the roof. The cow and the mare walked slowly off toward the barn, much mortified.

"You don't seem to mind Gustavius — and me," complained the Artist.

Galatea sat on the grass and took off her hat.

"You may come down presently, Arthur. I have long wanted to say certain things to you, but you are so impulsive in your — in various ways, that it seemed necessary for me to wait for some such opportunity as this, when you are — otherwise occupied. Arthur, you have pressed me to name a day for a certain ceremony —"

She was interrupted by a bellow from Gus-

GAMBOLLING WITH GALATEA

tavius, consequent upon a sudden movement of the Artist, who immediately concluded *not* to forsake his perch.

“*Must* you interrupt me, Arthur?”

“I did n’t; it was the bull-calf; I don’t bellow.”

“Well, Arthur, I *would* oblige you and set a date for our wedding if I were quite sure that we understand each other.”

“Galatea, there’s nothing to understand except that I love you to the extinction of every other thought or feeling, and always shall.” He paused to regain his balance, for the tree was a small one, and swayed under the stress of his emotion.

“Then, dear, if I set an early date, will you promise faithfully to love me in all my moods, no matter what I say or do, and never be angry, or dispute with me about anything?”

“Bless you, my darling! I swear it!”

TAURUS CUPID, ESQ.

“Have you no misgivings, Arthur?”

“None, none! Not one!”

“Not even when you remember that my hair is red?”

“I adore red hair!”

“But not on other girls, Arthur?”

“No; only on you, darling.”

“Thank you, Arthur, dear. If the second Wednesday in October, five weeks hence, will suit you, then you may come down and kiss me.”

“Galatea!”

Gustavius pawed the earth, and he hesitated.

“Can a bull-calf stand between you and me, Arthur?”

“Never!” He leaped far out from the tree and took her in his arms.

Gustavius gave them one glance and walked away in disgust. Being only a bull-calf, he did not realize that he had accomplished in a

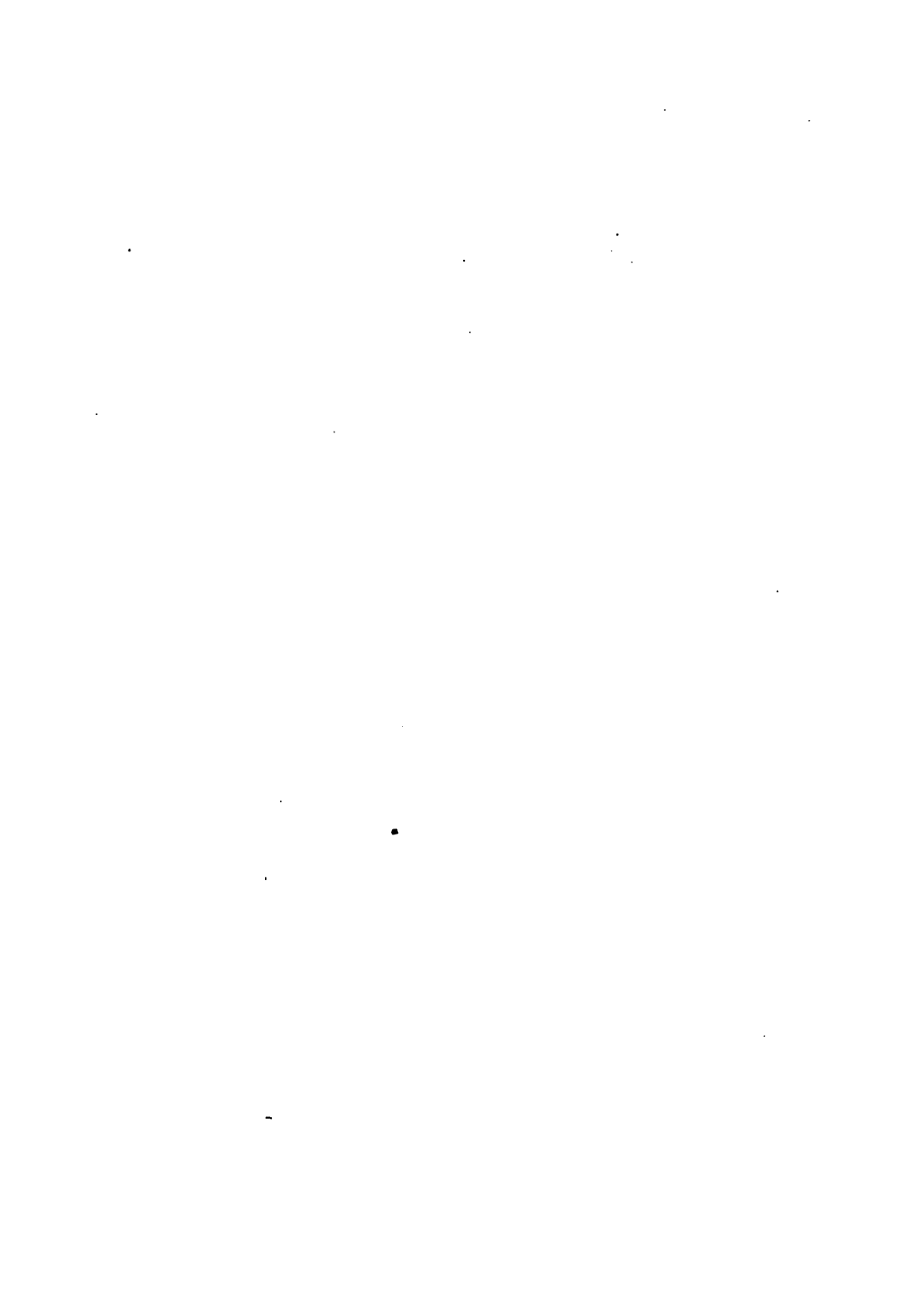
GAMBOLLING WITH GALATEA

“Eh, what’s that — the second Wednesday in October?” said the Poet.

“Why, on that happy date,” said the Artist, as Galatea flung her arms about his neck, “Bos, Equus and Co. are to take in a new partner.”



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