

# THE STORY TELLER

## NOTHING TO READ.

You have nothing to read?  
Is that what you say?  
Then put all your books,  
Put your papers away,  
And go for a stroll  
Out under the skies,  
Where the fields ripple green  
And the cloud shadow flies.

Go list to the singing  
Of birds on the wing,  
The laughter-like gurgle  
That comes from the spring;  
Go stand where the grasses  
Rise green to your knees,  
And the trees whisper back  
In soft tones to the breeze.

Go walk when the vault  
Of the heavens at night  
Is purple and dark,  
And a star is alight  
Here and there, like the gleam  
Of a lighthouse that shows  
A soul's way to port  
With the gleam that it throws.

You have nothing to read?  
Put your books by a spell,  
And go for a walk  
Where in mountain and dell  
Are tales for your reading  
And pictures to fit,  
And the breeze sings a song  
That the Master hath writ.  
—J. M. Lewis, in Houston Post.

## A DOUBLE DECEPTION

BY BLANCHE EARDLEY.

YOU have apartments to let, I believe? I shall be so glad if you can let me stay here!"

And a pair of wistful blue eyes gazed into the good-natured face of the homely woman who had opened the door of the farmhouse.

"Well, miss," the woman answered, hesitatingly, "I've two rooms vacant; but there's a gentleman staying with me for 'is' calth, and 'e made me promise not to take any one else, so that there would be perfect quiet for 'im."

"O, but I would make no difference, really!" pleaded the girl, in a sweet, low voice, that penetrated, however, into the sitting room, the window of which was wide open, and the sound of that plaintive voice made the man inside put down his book and listen unconsciously.

"You see," the girl went on, "I shall be quiet, as I am just to rest for a few weeks, by order of the doctor, and I thought a farmhouse would be the place for me. I can assure you that your other lodger would not know I was in the house."

Just then the sitting room door was flung open, and a man, with a pale, intellectual face, appeared in the wide, old-fashioned hall.

"That's all right, Mrs. Jenks. I shall not object in the least to your taking in another lodger. My mandate was concerning large families of children. I don't think you will be a troublesome neighbor," he said, as he approached the girl.

Then, with a bow, he retreated into the den—not before he had caught a glimpse of a simply dressed girl, with a demure, sweet face, from which the dark hair was brushed severely away, revealing a low, creamy brow of Madonna like purity.

The blue eyes that met his for a moment were like a flash of southern skies, but they were averted shyly as he eagerly sought for another glance.

Once installed in the second best "parlor," that looked out on to a tangle of fresh smelling flowers and a wide expanse of meadows and sweet, sleepy-looking pastures, Mrs. Jenks' new lodger flung her neat straw hat on an old-fashioned horsehair couch, and with her two white hands ruffled the primly dressed head until the rebellious curls tumbled about her brow.

"There," she whispered, "that's like my old self once more! Ugh! What a school miss I did feel in that monstrous pancake! But I have come, and I have seen his lordship—and before I return to town I shall have conquered and become engaged to marry his lordship!" She laughed gleefully. "He's not so bad looking, either, in spite of what Dick said—and already he approves of my sweet simplicity."

Then she sat down at the cottage piano, and presently the strains of "Annie Laurie," sung in a pretty, girlish voice, reached the ears of Mrs. Jenks' gentleman lodger.

"What a sweet voice," he murmured, "and what a wistful, desolate little soul she seemed when she stood begging to be allowed to stay! Probably she is some hard working governess come down from town for her annual holiday."

Then he took up his hat and went out for a stroll before dinner—for Mrs. Jenks looked after her liberal guest as well as though he were in his own house. It must have been chance that led his steps past the window of the sitting room the singer occupied, his feet scrunching the gravel noisily; and perhaps it was also chance that made him send a swift glance at the window, where a neat, dark head was bending over some needlework, apparently oblivious to his presence, though her window was open.

The heat was causing a thin blue vapor to hover over the distant fields, and the voice of nature was so hushed that the silence seemed full of that suppressed intensity that so often precedes a storm. A few soft-eyed cows waded knee deep in a stagnant pond, and lowed invitingly to their companions to join them. A sleepy bumble bee buzzed languidly on a half dead

rose that had fallen but recently from a girl's bosom.

The only persons who seemed to have any energy left were Mrs. Jenks' two lodgers, whom a trifling number of incidents had made friendly. First it had been a bound book lent to Miss Starr; then had followed a timely interference between Lottie and an irate cow, who took exception to a red sunshade flaunted in its face; and from that stage the rest had been comparatively easy.

Lottie had learned that his lordship's incognito was simply "Mr. Medhurst," and that her landlady was in ignorance of his identity.

"Medhurst," she had murmured thoughtfully, "it sounds like a family name of a country place; he is sure to have several."

In the meantime she had kept up her pose of a simple little worker in the city, and the soft braids of neat brown hair and bewitchingly trustful blue eyes had never looked so alluring to her admirers in the boxes as they did to Mr. John Medhurst, who found it difficult to peep beneath the floppy fringe of her blue sunbonnet without longing to kiss the rose face of its wearer.

She had waited in vain for a stray word that would betray his lordship to her, but he had preserved as strict a silence on the subject of his real identity as she did about her connection with the Felicity theater in town.

That morning Lottie had received a letter from the stage manager of the Felicity, telling her that rehearsals would begin shortly, and sending her the typewritten copy of her part in the "Rustic Maid."

"You are looking thoughtful to-day. Tell me, will you, Miss Starr," said John Medhurst as he entered her little sitting room, "is it because you are nearing the end of your holiday?"

Lottie nodded. She was wondering what to say that would make her companion speak those magic words that would send her back to town the future "Lady Carslake." Unless he proposed soon, she would have wasted a whole month, when she might have gone with Meta Gay and had a good time.

"Yes," she murmured; "I don't look forward to going back to the roar and turmoil of London. Earning one's own living is not always a happy lot, especially if it is uncongenial."

He took her slim white hand in his and stroked it softly.

"Poor little girl! It is awful for you to have so few pleasures in your life, while I throw money away so carelessly."

Lottie's heart bounded. Then he was going to tell her that he was really the rich Lord Carslake! She was relieved, for of late a wild doubt had seized her as to his identity with Dick Haslam's cousin. She had also, strangely enough, sometimes found herself wishing that she had not come down to Enfield with the purpose of "catching" him, if he did not fall into her net she would feel humiliated; and yet, if he did, she would feel herself the meanest and most contemptible of creatures. There was something so different from what she had expected to see when she made her plans.

Her fingers were still clasped in Mr. Medhurst's strong brown ones, and as she endeavored to withdraw them she suddenly caught a glance from his dark, expressive eyes that made her heart leap with a strange gladness and her pulses throb with ridiculous rapidity. She closed her eyes with a little shiver. Ambition! Ambition! Her brain seemed to be mocking her with the memory of what she was to succeed in winning from the man beside her. And yet, louder than the voice of ambition, she heard the call of love clamoring for admittance into her heart—and she knew, as she listened, half dazed, that love had already crossed the threshold of the hitherto empty throne room of her heart.

"Lottie, Lottie, you know—you must know, darling, that you are all the world to me," John Medhurst was saying, in quick, uneven tones. "Tell me, darling, that you love me—that instead of going back to the cold, noisy city, where you earn your poor little living, you will come to me!—be my treasured wife, and let me stand with my back against the world, protecting you from all that is hurtful."

She turned her head and gazed through the window at the distant meadows and blossom hung orchards. How beautiful everything was—all except herself, who, a mass of deceit, cunning, and ugly ambition, was listening to the eager love words of a man whom she had plotted to marry. If he only knew that she had been aware all the time of his incognito!

"I never thought that I could love any woman as I do you, dearest and sweetest of little rustic maids in truth," he laughed, softly; "and yet your pure face and simple, girlish ways have made me forget every other face I saw before." He drew her to him. "Look at me, Lottie; let me see the answering love in your dear eyes!"

"No, please don't say any more; you don't know me as I really am, or you would hate me, not love me," burst from her trembling lips, as she faced him desperately. "I—I," she went on, steadily, "am just a fraud—a pitiable fraud! All this month I have known who you are."

He started, and paled a little.

"I don't understand how you can be anything but yourself," he said after a pause. "I love you, Lottie—just you, and nothing—not even the knowledge that you have penetrated my disguise—will make me love you less, because I feel sure that you return my love. I read it in your face a moment ago. And whatever else your lips may say, your eyes spoke the truth."

"And my lips will also speak the truth," she replied, in a low, rapid tone; "the truth that will make you loathe me. I am not one of the things that you think me. My name is Lottie

Love, not Starr, and instead of earning my living in the city I am a chorus girl in the Felicity theater."

John Medhurst opened his mouth to speak, but she stopped him with a gesture.

"Wait! You must hear all before you tell me what you think of me. I heard from your cousin, Dick Haslam, that you hated women in general, and chorus girls in particular; and he also told me that you were coming to this farm under another name, so that you would escape being worried by friends—"

She paused, again seeing things through a mist, and did not notice a look of bewilderment on the pale, set face of the man who listened to her.

"I—I meant to try and see if I could make you propose to me," she continued, almost in a whisper. "I was ambitious, and thought it would be a fine thing to marry a lord who hated chorus girls, so I came here, and pretended to be all that you thought me. I told you lies, even my name was a lie; and it was all done on purpose to make you ask me to marry you."

Her voice came to a sudden stop. She half waited, as though dreading, yet hoping, he would speak—say anything—rather than keep so awfully still. But he made no sign, and with a curious stiffening of the muscles of the throat, she turned away.

"One moment, Miss—Love. I want to ask you a question," John Medhurst's voice cried quickly after her.

She stopped, looking at him fearfully.

"Why, if, as you say, your ambition was to make me propose to you," he began slowly, "did you, when your mission was accomplished, reveal your plot to me? You could easily have waited until you had made quite certain of your quarry. I don't understand what you gain by having told me now."

"Why did I tell you all this?" she broke in, quickly, a burning color staining her face. "Because something happened that held me back from letting you think well of me longer. Something so wonderful, so—sad, and yet so terrible, that I was obliged to let you know the truth, and receive another punishment besides your scorn of me."

"What was it happened that could be a punishment to you?" he said in a low voice.

She clasped her hands to her face for a moment, and when she looked at him her eyes were bright and steady.

"Love! I loved you, and, to my bitterness, I knew that it was to be a worse punishment than anything. The knowledge that I had wronged the man I loved!" She flung out her hands passionately. "I tell you now—this is my triumph, Lord Carslake. I could not go on with the deception because the thing for which I plotted was the stumbling block in my way. I wish I had never met you, or that you were really the plain John Medhurst you seemed to be. But as it is, I will go out of your life as I came into it."

He caught her hand in his.

"You love me? You would marry me if I were just plain John Medhurst, with no rank?"

She looked at him proudly.

"Yes, I would marry you if you were plain John Medhurst." I would be content to live in a cottage with you, content with you—and love! So you see you have conquered."

He drew her to him with a glad little laugh.

"Yes, I have conquered. I and—love. I have no other feeling for you sweet-heart, save reverence and honor, in spite of the little plot you have confessed. It does not even affect me, for your love is for the man, not for the peer."

"Yes, yes," she murmured. "You, John, just you—and, O, to think that I can never prove my love! That a doubt as to my sincerity must always linger with you. That is punishment enough for me."

"It need not be," he returned. "I also have a confession to make. I am not Lord Carslake, the man you plotted to marry. I came here and took these rooms that had been thrown over at the last moment by another man, presumably Carslake; so, darling, you may really know that you are marrying a man who believes in your love."

"Not Lord Carslake! O, how glad I am!" she cried, with a tremulous laugh. "How glad that I may prove my love is for you, even though you were a beggar, so long as I could walk by your side!"

Then he bent his head, and their lips met. And in that kiss of love Lottie left the world behind her.

Four weeks later a quiet little wedding took place at a rural church. The bride and bridegroom came out quietly and drove to the station. Lottie had broken her contract with the Felicity management, and ignored the many questions of her friends as to her retreat into country life.

As she and her husband were stepping into the train a neat man servant stepped up to them and touched his hat.

"Everything is all right, your lordship. Yours and her ladyship's things are in the front van."

Then he moved away, and as the train steamed from the station Lottie turned to her bridegroom.

"John, there is some mistake! That man called you 'your lordship.'"

Her husband slipped his arm round her waist and drew her closer.

"I'm afraid he's right, darling," he said, regretfully. "When I told you that I was not Lord Carslake I did not add that Medhurst was my family name, and that I was instead John Lord Sherrington. Forgive me, darling, for making you a ladyship after all. I am not to blame—I wanted you so—and it seemed that you might possibly slip through my fingers."

And Lottie's kiss satisfied him that he was forgiven.

## NORTH DAKOTA'S ASSETS.

### Population Growing Rapidly. Her Schools and Development are Truly Wonderful.

The area of North Dakota is 70,172 square miles, containing 44,910,080 acres.

North Dakota has more schools, in proportion to population, than any state in the union. Her schools have a land endowment now worth \$50,000,000, and rapidly increasing in value. In a few years the schools and state institutions will be self-supporting.

The state abounds in lignite coal, selling at from \$1 to \$3 a ton, according to distance from mines.

The ranches number 6,150.

The state has an area of 70,172 square miles.

The population in 1900 was 319,146. Estimated population for 1903, 480,000.

There are 3,480 miles of railroad.

The postoffices number 850.

There are 246 newspapers.

The value of the dairy and creamery industries for 1903 amounted to \$3,000,000.

The assessed valuation of real and personal property—less than 20 per cent of its actual value, is \$146,537,444.

The value of the farm products of 1903 was fully \$135,000,000.

There are eighty-four flouring mills.

Lignite coal taken out of sixty-eight mines.

There are eight cheese factories.

The creameries number about seventy-two, with plans for about twenty more under discussion.

There are 43,868 farms.

### Horse Thieves.

An unusual amount of horse stealing is being done in the central counties and those farther west, and many of the animals stolen have been traced to the wooded country of the Turtle mountains. It is said that an organized gang of thieves has been at work there for some time, making headquarters in the timber, and making raids here and there as opportunity offered.

The Turtle Mountain country is well adapted to this work, as it is heavily timbered, cut up with ravines, and sparsely settled. The fact that the international boundary line passes through it is also an aid to evil doers, as the pursuit of peace officers of either nation must stop with the line, and before action can be secured by the authorities across the line, there has been time for the criminals to escape.

There are several hundred square miles of territory in that direction not reached by either railroad, telegraph or telephone, and this, of course, makes the pursuit of law-breakers more difficult.

A sentiment is growing along the border in favor of a general cleaning up, as the settlers have been annoyed almost beyond endurance.

### How to Treat Rust.

Every farmer in the state should send to the Agricultural college for bulletins 20 and 21, the first treating of the character of rust, its manner of propagation, and the means which may be taken to guard against it, and the second dealing with seed wheat. Professor Bolley does not think that any treatment of the seed will affect the development of rust in the following crop, as the spores of rust are in the air, and are not attached to the seed grain. He points out, however, that where grain is shrunken from rust or any other cause, it is not wise to use it for seed, as the chances are that it will produce plants lacking in strength, and hence subject to the attacks of rust and other plant enemies.

### Ladd's Eye on the Druggists.

It is probable that Pure Food Commissioner Ladd will go after the druggists after he gets through with the violators of the pure-food law among the meat market men. He has been analyzing port and blackberry wines, put up on prescriptions by physicians for persons recovering from typhoid and other fevers. In some of the samples there was not a trace of blackberry wine, and the port wine was of such low grade that it is criminal to deal it out to a convalescing patient.

### Case Dismissed.

On motion of Assistant State's Attorney Barnett, the case against W. J. Colbert charged with violating the pure food law, was dismissed at Fargo. Colbert is shop man for Chas. Voller, the Broadway butcher. The state's attorney was of the opinion that Colbert was not responsible for the doctoring of the meat and on his agreeing to pay the costs in the case he was dismissed.

### News in Brief.

Mack Hamilton, a farmer near Wimbledon, has raised 2,000 bushels of onions this year.

A Courtenay man had 21 bushels of wheat per acre on one field, and on another which was seeded a week later the yield was but 11 bushels.

On account of the high price of meats three Ward county threshing crews who have cook cars have clubbed together and are doing their own butchering; they claim a saving of not less than ten cents on the pound.

Two additional rural delivery mail routes are reported to have been established at Bowbells.

At Spiritwood the separator of Squires Bros. was burned.

Lisbon will be equipped with an artesian well in the near future, as R. S. Adams has agreed to stand the expense.

Piso's Cure cannot be too highly spoken of as a cough cure.—J. W. O'Brien, 322 Third Ave., N., Minneapolis, Minn., Jan. 6, 1900.

It's a shame that men are not as smart as 65 as they thought they were at 25.—Chicago News.

A good deal of the money that makes the mare go is invested in wild oats.—Puck.

Fits stopped free and permanently cured. No fits after first day's use of Dr. Kline's Great Nerve Restorer. Free \$2 trial bottle & treatise. Dr. Kline, 631 Arch st., Phila., Pa.

The czar's new baby has heaps of trouble before him. Incidentally, he has got to learn to talk Russian.—Boston Globe.

Advertising has become an art, for it engages all the other arts.—Brooklyn Eagle.



Many women are denied the happiness of children through derangement of the generative organs. Mrs. Beyer advises women to use Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I suffered with stomach complaint for years. I got so bad that I could not carry my children but five months, then would have a miscarriage. The last time I became pregnant, my husband got me to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. After taking the first bottle I was relieved of the sickness of stomach, and began to feel better in every way. I continued its use and was enabled to carry my baby to maturity. I now have a nice baby girl, and can work better than I ever could before. I am like a new woman."—MRS. FRANK BEYER, 22 S. Second St., Meriden, Conn.

Another case which proves that no other medicine in the world accomplishes the same results as Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I was married for five years and gave birth to two premature children. After that I took Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and it changed me from a weak, nervous woman to a strong, happy and healthy wife within seven months. Within two years a lovely little girl was born, who is the pride and joy of my household. If every woman who is cured feels as grateful and happy as I do, you must have a host of friends, for every day I bless you for the light, health and happiness Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has brought to my home. Sincerely yours, Mrs. M. P. WHARRY, Flat 31, The Norman, Milwaukee, Wis."

Actual sterility in woman is very rare. If any woman thinks she is sterile let her write to Mrs. Pinkham at Lynn, Mass., whose advice is given free to all would-be and expectant mothers.

\$5000 FORFEIT if we cannot forthwith produce the original letters and signatures of above testimonials, which will prove their absolute genuineness. Lydia E. Pinkham Med. Co., Lynn, Mass.

**Wabash**  
LINE.  
"Banner Blue Limited"  
BETWEEN  
**ST. LOUIS & CHICAGO**  
The Finest Day Train in the World.

Leaves St. Louis Union Station	11:00 a. m.
Leaves St. Louis World's Fair Station	11:14 a. m.
Arrives Chicago	7:00 p. m.
Leaves Chicago	11:03 a. m.
Arrives St. Louis World's Fair Station	6:49 p. m.
Arrives St. Louis Union Station	7:03 p. m.

For Man For Over 60 years For Horses

**Mexican Mustang Liniment**

Has been the STANDARD REMEDY for curing aches and injuries

For Cattle For Poultry