Oh Boy! Ain't It Great?

"Poor, Crazy Hobo"

By EDWIN BALMER

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One crime remained for No. 32—mixed freight, west bound. Short-handed and overloaded (five in the crew and eighty-three cars), she had "broken" twice, stopped for hot box four times, and had been forced to double over every hill from Crews to Stockton.

Therefore, at Benton she had "laid out" No. 17, east-bound passenger; at Jefferson she had held up No. 35, the fast freight of refrigerated perishables rushing to Chicago; at Evans she had delayed passenger No. 15 for half an hour; at Brunswick she had held back passenger No. 24; and last, at Lavern she had laid out, for almost an hour, the crack Transcontinental Express No. 9, east bound.

In ten minutes No. 32 would complete the calendar by laying out No. 10 also, the twin Transcontinental rushing up from behind. The siding at Stockton (which the freight had been allowed fifty minutes to reach from Lavern, ten miles back) was still eight miles ahead, and forty of the fifty minutes were gone.

The crew, out thirty-eight hours, were exhausted, exasperated, humiliated. They had freighted too long to mind the mere thirty-eight hours' exhaustion and exasperation, but this time the humiliation was overdone.

Their superiors had humiliated them personally and pointedly at the larger towns and by wire at the stops between. Their equals on the other trains had humbled them as they slunk into the sidings; but what was entirely intolerable, their inferiors and worse, the very hobos stealing rides on the train, had mocked them and rubbed it in.

Thirty hobos had boarded the train at the hill beyond Lavern, overborne the weak crew, broken into a car of foodstuffs, and, after eating what they wanted, had scattered the rest along the right of way till it had ceased to amuse them.

The crew had found it best to sulk very silently in the caboose at the end of the train till the volley of stones smashing through the windows told that the tramps had departed. Then, as one man, the crew of No. 32 sprang forward for revenge.

The object was still asleep in the "empty" at the middle of the train. The crew had come upon him some hours before; but that was before they had learned the personal advantages of enforcing the rule to eject tramps, and before they had laid out the last two passenger trains and the Transcontinental, and received the telegraphic comments thereon.

Harring kicked the object to consciousness while Kalvert and Bender, one on each side, picked him up. One of the others opened wider the big door of the box car.

"One," Harring remarked, with another kick, as Kalvert and Bender swung the hobo between them.

"Two," Harring kicked again. No. 32, in a last spurt to reach the siding before No. 10 could overtake it, put on speed and jumped ahead, but the men in the car did not heed it.

"Three!" The hobo, at the touch of Harring's foot, swung free from the hands on either side and dove out through the door in a low parabola. A howl! and for an instant a gray gap appeared in the flying hedge beside the track.

"He's hit the road," muttered Harring. "What do you want to hurt a man for?" He blamed it upon the others. "Why couldn't you let him go into the bush?"

Kalvert spat upon the floor, but turned his face away from the lantern.

"We're hitting it up," he observed carelessly. "The damned hobo."

Bender grunted gruffly.

The hobo drew himself up on his hands. He felt stunned and deadened all over, and was conscious more of a battered dullness than of pain. He had a numbed understanding that he must have been quite senseless after he struck—not for very long, but for a few moments anyway.

Yet as he dragged himself around and sat up, he saw that he could scarcely have lost consciousness. They had thrown him off half-way around a curve, and the red light of the caboose was still visible at the farther horn of the crescent.

He gazed at it stupidly and rubbed his eyes with his swollen knuckles, but still the red light persisted there, and it came to him slowly that the train must have stopped.

The wagon road the tramp had been thrown upon might lead to a town, but he couldn't tell how far off it might be, or in which direction. The train was there, and now that he was hurt the hobo thought he might get the crew to let him ride to the next station; if not, he might hide himself somehow.

He was wondering only whether he could catch them in time to ask them to let him on again; and if they wouldn't, he was planning where he might hide from them.

Then he saw that something was the matter with the train. The cars were not straight on the track, but were lying across it in every direction. The roofs had slid down and the sides bulged out. Big boards and barrels and boxes were thrown about, and as far as the tramp could see through the darkness, the wavy line of cars zigzagged crazily over both sides of the track. Some were rolled over on their sides.

But nowhere in the long line was there a sound or sign of life, although the little flaring wick in the red lamp at the rear of the train still burned. The tramp pulled the lamp from its fastening and walked along the wreckage, until, from under a pile of boards at his feet, he heard a groan.

The hobo kicked the boards and the groan sounded again. He leaned over, and, with a queer, silly feeling at his weakness, tugged ineffectually at the planking. His fingers kept letting go their hold and he sat back helplessly, but he knew the man underneath was conscious now, for the mutterings were audible, though still incoherent.

"Number ten . . . ten . . . ten . . . ten . . . damn . . . ten . . . ten . . . ten—" the man underneath was saying as the hobo tugged over him.

The tramp tore a board free and the man below shuddered and twisted his head in the ragged hole.

"Number ten, damn you," he gasped in pain from the weight of which his lungs were relieved.

"Stop ten . . . ten . . . you damned hobo," he gasped as the pain gripped him again, "stop ten—the express train behind us," he explained madly, "stop it . . . stop it . . . lantern there . . . run . . . run . . . run!—"

The hobo understood at last, and Harring sank back again unconscious.

The tramp was running mechanically, automatically, at the trainman's bidding. From far away the whistle of No. 10 came to him, half startled him from his automatism, and he raced on more consciously. His legs wobbled queerly as he forced them and he stumbled between the ties, sometimes staggering two or three steps backward to save his balance before he could lunge madly forward again.

The second screech from No. 10 echoed past him, and, as he looked fearfully ahead and did not see the engine, he suddenly recalled that he was on the curve and spurred on more desperately, throwing himself forward now as he stumbled and pressing himself up again with his free hand when he fell. It was quite two hundred yards to the beginning of the straight stretch which he must reach to signal the train.

Again No. 10 whistled, but now the sound, instead of coming around the crescent ahead, seemed to the tramp to come through the woods at his side, and, as he glanced aside, it seemed to come directly through the opening where a path ran through the trees. Spontaneously facing about to the direction of the shriek, the tramp raced into the cut-off.

The pound of the train now came to him clearly as he ran; but the smooth dirt of the path spread before him. Yet he lurched over it with high, strained strides, and, still feeling for the treacherous ties when they were no longer there to trip him, he slipped at first. But his stride soon adapted itself and he reeled on to beat the train.

To beat the train! The exhaust of the Transcontinental's great engine already hissed through the trees about him, yet he had to beat the train. He had to beat it, but he could hear it coming so fast that his little steps seemed nothing. He could feel the pain of his muscles and the beat of his feet upon the path, but compared with the tremendous rush of the train, he seemed held by a weight.

In the opening ahead he saw the track where it crossed his little path, and he had to beat the train to that track! Madly, thinking only to win the race, and to lighten himself, he hurled the signal lantern from him and seemed to gain a little.

The track showed plainly before him, almost at his feet, so plainly that he knew the headlight of the engine was almost over the spot where the path crossed it. To beat the train there—to beat the train. He didn't know where his strength came from or that it came at all till it stiffened his legs and steadied him. He was ten feet from the track, but the train was almost as near the crossing.

To beat it now—to win at the finish! The white glare of the headlight smote his eyes but he shut them and threw himself forward blindly, with his arms thrown out.

It was the end of the race, and wildly, madly now, the engine—the big, pounding engine beaten by the little man—roared to try to frighten him away and win after all; but the little man wouldn't be frightened or cheated. With the blind, reckless burst of his triumph, he gathered himself, hurtled forward—and beat the train to the track.

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"The crazy, damned hobo," the engineer of No. 10 sputtered to the group which gathered about the pilot. "Suicide; suicide, that's what it is. Jumped right out of the bushes there and threw himself under the wheels. Heard me whistle, didn't you? But he was bound to kill himself.

"Thought he might be crazy and I gave her sand and reversed her; but he was under the wheels as soon as I saw him. Suicide; suicide . . . dove right under the wheels . . . and I'll get raked for killing him! Killing him? Lord!"

A man—Bender—blood-spattered and winded, burst through the group and clung, panting, to the engineer.

"Thank God y' stopped. Thirty-two's all over the track 'round the curve and . . . what stopped ye? Ran over man? . . . Lord! It's the crazy hobo we swung off 'bout here. . . . Lucky f'r you he got on the right o' way . . . and f'r us, too—the poor, crazy hobo—"

But the engineer of No. 10 was kneeling and fingering gently the rough cloth of the sleeve of the man lying under the pilot.

"Poor, crazy hobo," he murmured very softly, "poor, crazy hobo."

General Pershing's Religion.

General Pershing was understood to be a Presbyterian, but according to published reports, he has later been confirmed as a member of the Protestant Episcopal church. The Living Church, an organ of that faith, states that the confirmation service took place in France, and was conducted by Rt. Rev. Charles H. Brent, bishop of western New York. It is said that General Pershing desired to unite with the Episcopal church in memory of his wife, who was of that faith. She and their three daughters lost their lives in a fire at the Presidio military buildings at San Francisco, August 27, 1915.

Madam's Maid

By S. B. HACKLEY

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When Katherine Burman and Enid Shelton, the married sisters, came home in June, visiting, and found Roger Cuthbert most any time in their father's kitchen, heating up eggs or helping Judith wash dishes, while the black cook looked on, encouraging such folly, they were horrified.

That Roger Cuthbert was the "biggest" man on the football team of Colbert college, the valedictorian of that year's graduating class, a genius in science and Judith's worshipful lover, counted for nothing with the sisters. One must be rich, or one's folks must have been rich, or be akin to the rich, to put one in their graces.

"What do you mean, Judy," they said to her, "having old Lee Cuthbert's boy here under foot half the time—a paper-hanger's son?"

Judith's blue eyes flashed. "All the nice people in town invite Roger to their houses, Enid!"

"Perhaps," she admitted; "but that's to please his class. Now he's through college, they won't. And, anyway, there isn't a parent of our set who'd be willing to take him for a son-in-law!"

"There's one," Judith said quietly, "father!"

"Judith Prentice, you don't mean to tell us you have any intention of marrying Roger Cuthbert?"

"Just that!" she answered.

"When?" they demanded.

"When he gets through at Harvard and gets a place that pays him enough for us to live on. Meanwhile this vacation he's going down South to tutor two rich men's sons and act as chauffeur to one of them."

The sisters' took heart. They had feared the worst—intention of immediate marriage. They took Judith home with them and threw her, somewhat unwillingly, into a whirl of social activities.

Took the Rose From Its Vase.

"You must write me sometimes, Chickie," Roger had told her, "but I don't want anybody nagging you over letters, so I will send only cards that all the world may read. But every card will bring you my heart—all my heart, Judith."

Early in September there came a postcard for Judith. "I am coming through your city," it said, "on my way to Cambridge. If you want to see me—and I'm scared stiff you don't, since I have heard of the devotion of that Blanchard Knox!—let me know if I may stop off for a look at you.

"Roger."

"She musn't see him, Kit!" cried Enid, who saw the card on the hall table. "It will undo all our work if that big, good-looking, red-haired creature comes on the horizon now when we are just getting her interested in Blanchard Knox!"

Moved by a sudden inspiration, Katherine opened the hall door and a window. The high wind swept through and caught up the card and carried it out in the yard, where it lodged under a hydrangea and stayed! Some days later Judith received a letter from Joyce Christie, one of the Cuthberts' neighbors.

"Roger's gone to Cambridge," she wrote; "left yesterday; said he passed through that town you are in. He is looking, oh, so handsome, Judith! Ella Gands is wild about him! She told him you were engaged to a rich fellow down there. Are you? I don't think Ella has any chance, though. Roger wouldn't let any of us see the picture he owned was in his watch."

"And he didn't stop to see me, or write," thought Judith drearily. "Oh, Roger, I hope she loves you!"

That October Judith's father died, and when the debts were paid there wasn't much left. To her sisters' chagrin, Judith declined to live with either, or to marry Blanchard Knox, but went to another city and set up a modest sewing establishment.

In the sixth year of her work Mrs. Elethea Loring, one of her patrons, asked her if she would not like to travel abroad. To travel! Judith's heart twisted a bit painfully. Roger and she had used to plan to see the world together when they'd got the money!

"I'm going abroad next month," said Mrs. Loring. "My daughter, Lavise, is in England with friends. She has written me to bring her a maid. I——" she went on, a little doubtfully; "I thought of you with your exquisite taste and skill. Would you mind going if I pay you more than you are able to make here? It would give you opportunity to see something of the world, my dear."

In London they were joined by Mrs. Loring's daughter, a beautiful, dark girl with a fire and dash in her manner that was but an attractive veneer that covered a hard and selfish nature. They went to Paris, and there Judith was kept selecting and buying until her head whirled.

One evening, unnerved and weary, she came into Mrs. Loring's sitting-room to find that lady looking at the photo of a young man with an upstanding shock of curly red hair, a good firm mouth, and fine eyes.

"One of Lavise's friends," she explained.

"Where does he live?" Judith forced her lips into steadiness.

"He is at Antwerp now. His company had so much confidence in his ability they sent him there two years ago to take charge of their great plant there. His salary, of course, is remarkably good, but Lavise will not need to marry a rich man." She smiled confidentially. "I hope—I think he will be my son-in-law one day. But—not a word, my dear!"

Quite suddenly the Lorings announced they were going to Antwerp. One evening there came a caller for Lavise at their Antwerp hotel, and Judith heard Roger Cuthbert's voice. Then Lavise called from the little salon: "Oh, Judith, bring me that rose on the chiffonier!"

Judith stood still a moment, uncertain and trembling. When the imperious call was repeated she took the rose from its vase and drew aside the portiere.

Through the window a ray of the setting sun turned her bright hair to gold, and her cheeks above the somberness of her maid's black dress were a delicate rose. Roger Cuthbert thought he had never seen a human creature more beautiful. He sprang to his feet and held out his hand.

"Why, Judith—Judith! How glad I am to see you again!"

"And I you," she said demurely, as she gave him her hand, "one does not often see an old friend from home in Europe, Roger." Lavise's eyes sparkled with quick, indignant fire.

"So you knew my maid in America? How interesting!" she said, and added in instant dismissal. "Give me the rose, Judith; I hear mother calling you."

Late that evening, tingling with indignation, Judith went to her bedroom. A little nightboy tapped softly on her door. Would mam'selle come down to the office telephone, please?

"Is that you, Judith?" came over the wire. "This is Roger, Judy; and since I saw you this evening I'm not going to wait another day to ask you something I ought to have found out six years ago. Did you get that card I wrote you just before I went to Boston asking you if I might stop by to see you at your sister's home?"

"Why, no—I thought you'd got tired—I mean I thought you didn't want to come! I thought perhaps there was another girl!"

"Thought that all this time?"

"Yes," whispered Judith.

"And I—I thought you married that rich fellow they said you had engaged yourself to!"

"Oh!" cried Judith—a cry that held heartache, revelation, joy, all commingled. "But Miss Loring, Roger——"

He answered her unspoken thought flatly.

"I'm not engaged to her—and not going to be, Judith. I have known her for some time. I know—but these folks around here don't speak much English. She quarreled at you for recognizing me this evening, didn't she? Yes? Well, it'll be the last time—if you—(I'll risk the listeners, Judy!)—Say, I'm going home to America in two weeks, for the company, and if you feel as you used to—— Oh, Judith, will you marry me tomorrow?"

Over the wire went a faint but very joyous "Yes!"

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Of all Africa's many tribes, none is more distinctive than the Masai, that warlike race of British East Africa, whose women are regarded as the best looking of all negroes. They are slender, well formed, and lack the abnormal hips so characteristic of many other natives. Pride in personal adornment is shown by ornaments of a remarkable nature, telegraph wire being coiled about their arms and limbs in spiral fashion.

So awkward is this remarkable jewelry that the wearer cannot walk properly, nor can she sit down nor rise like other human beings. Round her arms she has wire coiled both above and below her elbows, while still more wire is coiled round her neck horizontally, till the head seems to sit on an inverted iron salver. Put on at an early age, these ornaments must remain unless they are sawed off. As a result of this compression the limbs remain like mere stilts, the wire frequently becoming embedded into the flesh. Besides this iron wire, often weighing 30 pounds or more, great quantities of beads and iron chains are hung in various ways round the neck.

During the period of engagement the girl wears round her head a band covered with cowries from which hang a number of strings forming a bridal veil. For the first time she dons real clothes, consisting of an apron in front, suspended from the shoulders behind. The hairs of the eyebrow are pulled out to further enhance her beauty.

HOW ROMANS GOT THE NEWS

Bulletin Boards Furnished Information to the Citizens of the "Capital of the World."

Caius Julius Caesar knew the value of publicity. As far back as when he was consul (60 B. C.) he ordered the publication of senate acts and discussions. These "Acta Senatus" were published on a whitened wooden board called "album," the neuter of "albus," which means white. In imperial days, at least as early as 29 A. D., there was an official publisher, "Curator Actorum." This news corresponded to what we get in our Congressional Record and contained—as our record once did—the interruptions and the applause. In 60 B. C., Caesar also ordered published "in albo" the private news of general interest, "Acta Diurna Populi Romani."

The bulletin boards of the modern newspapers had their precursors in these white tablets ordered to be displayed publicly by Caesar. In New York there are men who haunt the bulletin boards of the metropolitan dailies, jot down the news displayed thereon, and later telegraph the items to the dailies in small cities which do not support so extensive a news service as that furnished by the United or the Associated Press. So in Rome, the writer of news letters or circulars copied the news published "in albo" and sent the most important items to his subscriber out of the city. Scandal was featured in "Acto Diurna," and society news, in modern fashion, was furnished by families concerned.—From the Quill.

Unprotected Feet.

With regard to feet we confront a proposition our forefathers were not familiar with. High shoes or boots were always worn and the ankles protected. We now live in an age where we prefer oxfords and the ankles are exposed. Few wear spats and fewer wear heavy stockings. Mostly silk or other light-weight hose are worn. How can we expect to subdue catarrhal conditions if we do not protect ourselves? The soles of the feet are more susceptible to cold than are the ankles.—Exchange.

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