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The Elevator Romance

By RUBY DOUGLAS

(Copyright.)

GRACE O'BRIEN spent many hours of her day cooped up in the tiny outside box office of a moving picture theater. It was the only way she had of earning her living when she found herself a young widow.

Two elevators ran from the outside foyer of the theater where she sold tickets and two girls operated these lifts. They were relieved, as was Grace herself, by other girls who came on to do their turn at the work.

"Sometimes, Gay, I wonder whether the monotonous ups and downs of my life here in this elevator are not more wearing to the nerves than the life you live cooped up in that box," remarked one of the elevator girls to Grace when there was a lull in patronage.

"It's an even break," acquiesced Grace, "but I think we are lucky to have any jobs at all."

At that moment a man stepped up to the little window and asked for a ticket. He looked through the circular aperture at Grace O'Brien's face. Suddenly he reached his hand through.

"Grace—why Grace Lowe!" he exclaimed. "It is you?"

Grace looked at him scrutinizingly. "Bob Morton!" she cried.

For a moment each held the hand of the other but did not speak. It was ten years since they had seen each other.

"Aren't you lost?" asked Grace.

"I'm just on here for a visit. And you?"

"Oh—it's a long story with me," admitted Grace.

And then, urged on by the gathering string of patrons, the man disappeared.

"An old friend?" asked the elevator girl when there was a moment of rest again.

"He was more than that—in our school days," said Grace.

"Oh—" breathed the girl.

"We were really-truly sweethearts in those days and then I came East and then the war and George in his uniform and the call to the front and —well. I married George before he left. That's all. I have never heard of Bob from that day to this."

It was the next day that Bob Morton was dragged as by a magnet to the moving picture theater again.

"Isn't there some time, some place, somehow that we could have a visit?" he asked, after talking to Grace for a few moments.

Grace was silent. She would not ask him to the general parlor of the boarding house. She did not like to let him take her to some place of amusement.

"Why couldn't you just visit—here?" she said hesitatingly.

"It isn't exactly my idea of—of romance!" he laughed.

Bob stepped aside again. He was thinking. His time in New York was short.

"Gay says you are an old friend of hers," said a voice at his side.

Bob turned hastily and took off his hat. "From her home town, in fact. You—you call her Gay?"

"We call her that because she's such a brick in the face of all the trouble she's had."

Bob remembered that Grace was wearing black—all black—on both of the occasions when he had seen her. "She's—she's had trouble, then?"

"Oh—yes! Her husband was killed."

Bob was silent for a few moments. "I have been trying to get a few words with her, but she seems so busy," he admitted to the girl.

The elevator bell rang; the girl looked at her wrist watch. "She will be off duty in ten more minutes. Stick around."

Bob remained. The girl returned with a little placard which bore the lettering, "Temporarily Out of Order." She fastened it to the door of the elevator she was running.

"What's that for?" asked Bob, amused.

"It means," said the elevator operator, "that you and Gay are going to have ten minutes of privacy."

Bob laughed aloud. He looked at the sign on the lift door. Then Grace emerged from the little rear door of the ticket booth.

"I say, Grace," said her friend.

Grace looked from the girl to Bob and back again. "What's up?" she asked, feeling the nearness of something important.

"We—we have decided that though an elevator isn't a very sentimental place—it is very quiet when it bears this sign." She pointed to the card.

"Come in for just a moment, Gay," said Bob.

Grace blushed.

"In you go," urged the girl. "And you, too," she said, pushing Bob gently on the back.

She closed the door of the attractive little elevator and left the two alone.

When they emerged, Grace came up to her, her eyes bright with a renewed outlook on life. "Bob wants you and me to have dinner with him. We—we might have a lot to tell you."

"Well—my internal economy is not 'temporarily out of order,' so I'll go," said the girl, removing the sign from the door and turning the elevator over to the relief worker.

Wonderful Building

The Mormon tabernacle is in many ways unique, particularly in the construction of the roof. It was planned by Henry Grow and William H. Folsom. The building is a perfect ellipse, 250 feet long, 150 feet wide and 80 feet high, and has a seating capacity of over 8,000. The marvelous acoustic properties of the auditorium are due to the fact that the roof is entirely unsupported except at the walls. No nails were used in the roof, the timbers being tied in placed with cowhide and held together with wooden pegs.

Valuable Discovery in Tuning Church Bells

A church bell made from the finest bell metal may give forth a harsh, unpleasant sound, due to the fact that it is out of tune with itself. The stroke of a single bell sounds to us like one note, and until very recently even the most expert bell makers have not realized that the sound is really made up of five separate notes. The five notes must be in tune with one another in order that the bell may give forth a harmonious sound. What we then hear is a combination of what is known as the strike note; the nominal, which is an octave above the strike note; the hum, which is an octave below, and the third and fifth.

This recent discovery regarding the harmonics of bells has made possible the new art of bell tuning, a revival of what for two centuries was considered a lost art. The large bells are inverted on a huge turntable and revolved while the metal is pared away from the inside until it is correctly shaped to produce the harmonious tones.—Kansas City Star's Science Service.

Power of Calculation in Infants Instinct?

Andre Lenoir, a Belgian boy, is stated to be able, at the age of two years, to multiply any two five-figure numbers accurately and without hesitation. Whether this is an exaggeration or not I am unable to say, but every now and then the phenomenon of the "calculating boy" crops up and astonishes the world. The feats of these wonder children appear to be done by a sort of instinct, and sometimes the apparently magical power is lost as soon as a real knowledge of mathematics is gained.

A well-known calculating boy was George Parker Bidder, who was born in 1806, and was exhibited in his childhood as an arithmetical marvel. He became an engineer and was associated with Robert Stephenson in the London and Birmingham—afterward the London and North-Western railway—and was a founder of the Electric Telegraph company and president of the Institution of Civil Engineers. Among his best-known works are the Victoria docks.

Profits in Marsh Land

With proper care a bit of marshland, generally considered worthless, may be made to yield a profit. The tendency has been to drain such a piece of land and then cultivate it. Sometimes this works out, but often not. Instead of this, such wet areas may be more successfully utilized for the production of fish, wild ducks and geese, and beaver and muskrats. Wet areas may also be made to produce vast quantities of food suitable for feeding and producing millions of ducks, geese and other waterfowl, and certain fur bearers—animal life that would add materially to our supplies of attractive food as well as afford recreation through hunting, with either camera or gun.

Towns With Historic Names

Names famous in British history and literature are found in a small district of southern Ontario, Canada. Here is the city of London, one of the most important of the province, located on the Thames river. Less than fifty miles away is the city of Stratford, which, as in the Shakespearean tradition, is located on the Avon. Nearby is a town which bears the name of the great dramatist, while another community in the region is called Waterloo. Not far from Stratford is the city of Kitchener, which before the World war was called Berlin.—New York Times.

Pet Squirrel in Church

The strains of Lohengrin resounded through a Kansas City church. Just as the last "I do" was repeated at the blossom-laden altar, a bit of fur dropped lightly to the sill of a nearby window. A flash of gray and Perky, the bride's pet squirrel, landed squarely on his mistress' head. He sat bolt upright on his throne of orange blossoms and lace, his bushy tail curled over his back, and gave the audience stare for stare. After a slight pause the bridegroom gravely removed Perky from his seat and unceremoniously dropped him out the window.

Take Warning

A man who owns one of those Pray-as-you-enter bungalows on Long Island entered a large sporting goods house to purchase a canoe. The salesman tried to sell him a launch. Finally he left without buying anything.

"I wanted a canoe," said the man. "The salesman got me interested in a launch. Then I became dissatisfied with a canoe and not having money enough to get a launch I didn't buy anything!"

Super salesmanship.—New Orleans Item-Tribune.

His Classification

He was a good-tempered little man and very chatty, and it was unfortunate that he should have got into so dull a carriageful of passengers. He beamed upon them all, and tried to start a conversation in two or three directions, but without success. Silence reigned; the interest in newspapers was intense. The snubbed one, too, sank into silence, but at the first stopping place he got out, and before slamming the carriage door, witheringly remarked, "Waxworks, by gum!"

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Spoke Only the Mother Tongue

By BEATRICE A. VANDEGRIFT

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PRIVATE PETRONI, who was a soldier in a heavy tank company of the United States army, wanted his pretty young wife Maria to learn to speak English. He warned her that the time would come when she would be very sorry she could not.

One day Maria and her little boy Beppo set out to pick blackberries in the woods near the army post. They left the dusty road and penetrated the warm, shady forest. Maria had found a thicket of berry bushes and was picking industriously, exorting Beppo to do the same. Beppo would put a few of the glossy blackberries into his pail, then be diverted by a little red lizard or a strange purple flower like an orchid or a great tan oak ball that went pouf! between his fingers and turned dust.

After a while he grew tired and wandered off with his little bucket.

Maria's pail was nearly full when she heard a familiar and terrifying noise in the woods about her, a crashing like prehistoric monsters in battle.

"Beppo!" she called in terror, but he was nowhere to be seen.

The crashing came nearer. Cutting through the sweet smell of the woods came the acrid smell of gasoline—the tanks.

Beside them slowly walked a group of officers, inspecting the havoc the iron monsters had wreaked. A tank headed straight for Maria, then slued about. Another came behind it, and another. The woods were full of them. Maria's frantic call for Beppo was lost in their din. She shrieked wildly in Italian for the officers to save her baby, but none of them understood her.

One of the young lieutenants took her by the arm and tried to soothe her. There was a visiting general in the group whom they were trying to impress. Her awful cries simply must not reach his ears.

Suddenly, on the ground that the tanks had just passed over, Maria saw a bright object. It was Beppo's little pail, flattened. She swayed from side to side in anguish.

At length the party came to a clearing in the woods where the tanks were quietly ranged in a row like well-fed beasts. In the center of the clearing was a great log hurdle, six feet high. One of the tanks left the row and started towards it. Maria lapsed into an anguished silence and watched.

The huge tank laboriously began the climb, nosing upward and making horrible noises. At the apex of the pile it paused, its forty tons making the hurdle crack and groan. Then it found the center of its balance and began to seesaw precariously.

Suddenly, from a crevice in the bottom of the log hurdle appeared a dark curly head and a pair of brown, sleepy eyes.

"Beppo!" screamed Maria.

The men gasped and stood still. In a flash the gray-haired general, the mighty one from whom they had striven to keep all annoyance, darted forward and, in his spotless beautiful uniform and russet blots, knelt and slowly extracted the bewildered Beppo from the logs, while overhead, the huge tank seesawed its forty tons.

Without a backward glance, the general carried the fat little Beppo directly to Maria.

"I imagine this child is yours, madam," he said quietly.

Maria burst into a eulogy of the general in the most passionate and vivid Italian at her command. Then she stopped. He could not understand a word of it. Swiftly, she picked up one of his gloved hands and kissed it. Then she snatched up the naughty Beppo and ran in the direction of home.

When the father came home they had no berries to give him, but he didn't seem to mind, he was so elated with the events of the day.

"They picked me to do a special stunt for a visiting general," he told Maria, pridefully. "The old stunt of teetering a tank on a hurdle."

"You!" exclaimed Maria in horror.

Great heavens! He had been the one to nearly kill his own child, unknowingly, shut up in the iron monster, while she, pleading in a language no one could understand, was powerless to stop him.

She looked away for a moment while her eyes filled with tears. Then she faced him and said, passionately, "Guido! Teach me to speak English."

Visibility on Water

Under normal atmospheric conditions the visibility of a light is dependent upon its height and intensity. The luminous range is greater than the geographic. For the purpose of rough comparison, a light 130 feet high seen just at the horizon would be visible at a distance of 13.03 nautical miles, or 15.08 statute miles. However, so much depends upon the location and height of a light and the luminous range that an exact determination of the distance is impossible without more facts.

Only One English Pope

Adrian IV, who was pope in the Twelfth century, is supposed to have been born in England. He has been the only pope born in that country. His name was originally Nicholas Brakspeare.

Thought She Knew

An elderly couple were getting married at the little country church. The groom was very deaf.

When the clergyman read, "Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife?" the old man did not hear him, and asked his bride, "What's he say?"

The old lady bawled in his ear," "He wants to know if tha'll ha' me for thy wedded wife."

The old man looked surprised and exclaimed: "Why, sartinly, Mary, dear! Didn't I tell thee so t'other neet?"

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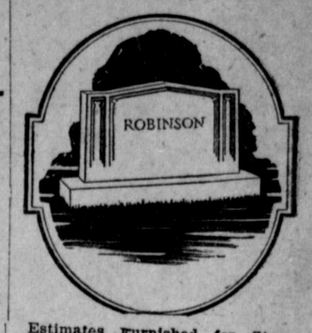
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