

A PAIR OF SHOES

By LINCOLN ROTHBLUM

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Dolly Copley, just twenty and pretty as a waxen doll, breezed into her home, closely followed by the protecting and admiring Jim Reardon. Dolly's mother, her gray hairs belying the youth and laughter in her eyes, glanced up from the bit of embroidery in her hands and noted a foreboding pout on her daughter's face, wondering as her gaze wandered to the flushed countenance of her future son-in-law, Mrs. Copley did not like the looks of the situation.

"Children, what is the matter now?" the "now" indicating that similar incidents had occurred before. Accustomed as Mrs. Copley had become to the petty quarrels of the young lovers, any new cause of disagreement evoked uneasiness lest in their childish tempers they invited much unhappiness.

"Well, who said what?" she added by way of an initial conciliatory step. "Oh, Jim's trying to act silly," said Dolly.

"You mean, Dolly won't be sensible," corrected Jim. "First one and then the other," patiently chided Mrs. Copley, laying aside her embroidery. "Now, Dolly, we'll hear from you, and," anticipating a long recital, "be brief."

Dolly, with cheeks prettily flushed, removed a large leghorn hat, its creamy whiteness enhanced by a blood-red poppy stitched to its side. She seated herself on a low bench before an open grate fire and placed the hat upon knees cocked up boy fashion.

"Really, mother," came the answer in tones of insulted dignity, "it is well I find it all out now. Jim wants a slave, not a wife." This with a withering glance at her prospective master, or husband, who sat twiddling the cigarette his impatience would not permit him to smoke.

"Careful, Dolly, careful," cautioned Mrs. Copley, but Dolly pretended not to hear.

"The play at the theater tonight was all about that man who wanted his

stalked from the house. And Dolly cried.

The night lengthened into a week and the week into a month, and the month into double and treble that number of days. And time, proverbial healer of discord and inharmonious, rendered impossible a concession of pride from either side. Dolly's interest in life ceased to center about gowns, teas and shows, and dwinded to reading the daily news with its disquieting announcements.

It was well into the fourth month since the unfortunate attendance at that performance, whose very moral, intended for them, failed to drive home the lesson. Jim Reardon moped down the town's busy street, dark shadows beneath listless eyes testifying to the gnawing canker of heart-sickness within.

For distraction he joined the onlookers before a shop window where an up-to-date business-getter had stationed his machine to secure the passing trade. "Rubber heels put on while U wait," read the legend in brilliantly silvered letters across the pane. The advertising psychology of the repairman was good. Jim glanced at his shoes, thought of rubber-heeled comfort and saw the excellent work being performed within the shop. He entered.

"Rubber heels, please," he courteously said to the gum-chewing clerk as he removed and handed him his shoes. He inserted his feet and twiddled his stockinged toes within the spacious confines of carpet slippers, as vacantly he watched the minute hand of the clock on the wall make monotonous progress. The whirr of the electric machinery was peculiarly soothing to his distraught mood.

A boy entered, and not receiving the immediate attention the majesty of his youth demanded, flopped a coin on the counter and, grabbing up a pair of shoes, made hasty exit just as the clerk advanced.

Jim took out his watch and confirmed the time of the wall clock. He had been there 30 minutes. He called to the clerk.

"Will you please see if my shoes are ready? I am anxious to get away."

The gum-chewing clerk glanced over the repaired work on hand and puzzled, walked over to the cobbler and inspected the work yet to be performed.

"Can't seem to find your shoes," was the laconic information. "Do you think that kid took 'em?"

Jim tried to look as dignified as his carpeted feet would permit. "Pray, how will it help me to know that?" came the acid rejoinder.

The ironic sarcasm was wasted. "Mebbe he'll come back," Jim fretted and fumed and waited—ten minutes, 20 minutes, another half hour. The embarrassing suspense was terrible. His collar wilted beneath the strain. If he could only arise and pace the floor. But one cannot pace the floor in carpet slippers. They simply will not stay on.

And then there blew into the shop a hurricane of tempestuous indignation, brandishing Jim's shoes in her hand—Dolly's hand. "What do you mean by sending me a pair of man's shoes?" she cried, advancing like a tumult of avenging wrath.

And then she saw Jim. With shoes in hand, she involuntarily made a step toward him. Jim shuffled to his feet. Four months of separation were nothing. They were together now!

"I've been a brute," Jim contritely apologized. The clerk giggled as he looked from Jim's feet to the shoes dangling from the girl's wrist by knotted shoe strings. "Don't ever say it, Dolly, don't ever say it."

But the "it" Dolly would say. Handing him his property, there came in gentle monotone, "Here, dear, are your shoes."

BYRON EXTOLLED IN PRESS

Two Tributes to the Memory of the Great Poet Have Been Paid for Many Years.

This is the anniversary of the death of Byron, observes the New York Evening Sun of April 19. If the reader were in London today and should visit the statue of the famous poet in that secluded and exclusive part of Hyde Park called Hamilton gardens, he would find the monument decorated with a single yellow wreath. And if he had brought with him a copy of the Times and would turn to the obituary column he would find there a notice of Byron's death and a proclamation of his fame.

These two tributes have been rendered annually to the memory of Byron for many years. They are paid for each year with the income of a sum bequeathed for that purpose by a woman admirer of the poet. The legend connected with the tributes runs that they are to be continued annually until the name of Byron is inscribed in the poets' corner of Westminster abbey. Byron died in Greece on April 19, 1824, in his thirty-seventh year.

All in the Wedding Cake.

The ring in the wedding cake means that the person who draws the piece containing it will be the first to be wed of those present. The thimble brings disappointment, an old maid's fate is wished onto the finger of the one who gets the thimble; the tiny wish bone, of silver or gold or whatever it may be, another popular ingredient in wedding cakes, allows the one who draws it to make a wish upon it which will come true. Then there is the penny or dime promising riches to its lucky finder. The button foretelling bachelorhood for the one whose place it falls upon.



MR. AND MRS. MALLARD.

"You're a handsome fellow," said Mrs. Mallard Duck, "with your green back and your orange legs and brown eyes and purple touches upon the wings."



"I Will Be Delighted."

"I think you're a dear, neat, pretty Mrs. Mallard Duck," said her mate, "with your brownish frock and its white edges. You're very much like Cousin Black Duck but you're lighter and you're far more handsome. You have touches of purple and blue upon your wings just as I have."

"I don't mean that at all," Mr. Mallard Duck corrected himself. "I mean they become you. They make you look so neat and nice and so handsome."

"I'm immensely flattered," said Mrs. Mallard Duck.

"Do you know," said Mr. Mallard Duck, "I am giving a dinner this evening. I do hope you will receive my guests for me."

"Where are you going to have it, by the meadows where we can find some grass or near the water?"

"I will have it near the water for there are some delicious mollusks about."

Mollusks are sea food—a kind of sea animal in a hard shell.

"That sounds very nice, Mr. Mallard," said Mrs. Mallard, "and I will be delighted to receive the guests."

They began to send out more invitations, for Mr. Mallard had just found that there would be enough for quite a few more and they called out in their quacking voices which sound very twangy and as though they were talking through their beaks—or as people would say—through their noses, bidding the guests come to the dinner.

"Quack, quack, come to the dinner party," each called again and again.

"Quack, quack, there is going to be food, food, food," said Mr. Mallard Duck.

"There is going to be food, food, food, sea food," said Mrs. Mallard Duck.

"Nice delicacies and the best of everything," said Mr. Mallard Duck, quacking hard.

In fact, they called so loudly that all the guests who had been invited before came hurrying along thinking that the dinner hour had been set earlier than they had last been told and as they didn't want to miss anything they wanted to be in plenty of time.

In truth they were ahead of time. And all of those who had just been invited came hurrying along. Everyone came rushing to the party.

They had a beautiful time and ate their mollusks in the shallow water near at hand.

The Mr. Mallard Ducks talked about some of their relatives who had lately been taken to the zoo to be shown off as beautiful ducks.

They also said that, sad to relate, some of their relatives had gone to be the dinners for people.

They said it was one thing to give a dinner party and another to be the food at the dinner.

The Mrs. Mallard Ducks talked of the nests they had built in the spring, all lined with soft feathers with lovely grass to make the home so soft and comfy.

And they talked of the grassy places near the water where they had hidden their nests and of the eight and nine little eggs they laid, dear, beautiful olive green eggs.



Everyone Comes Rushing.

"Well, quack, quack, your dinner has been a very great success," one of the guests said, thinking it was time to leave. They had all eaten a great deal and they had talked a great deal, too. There had just been a quiet spell and they thought that was the time to go.

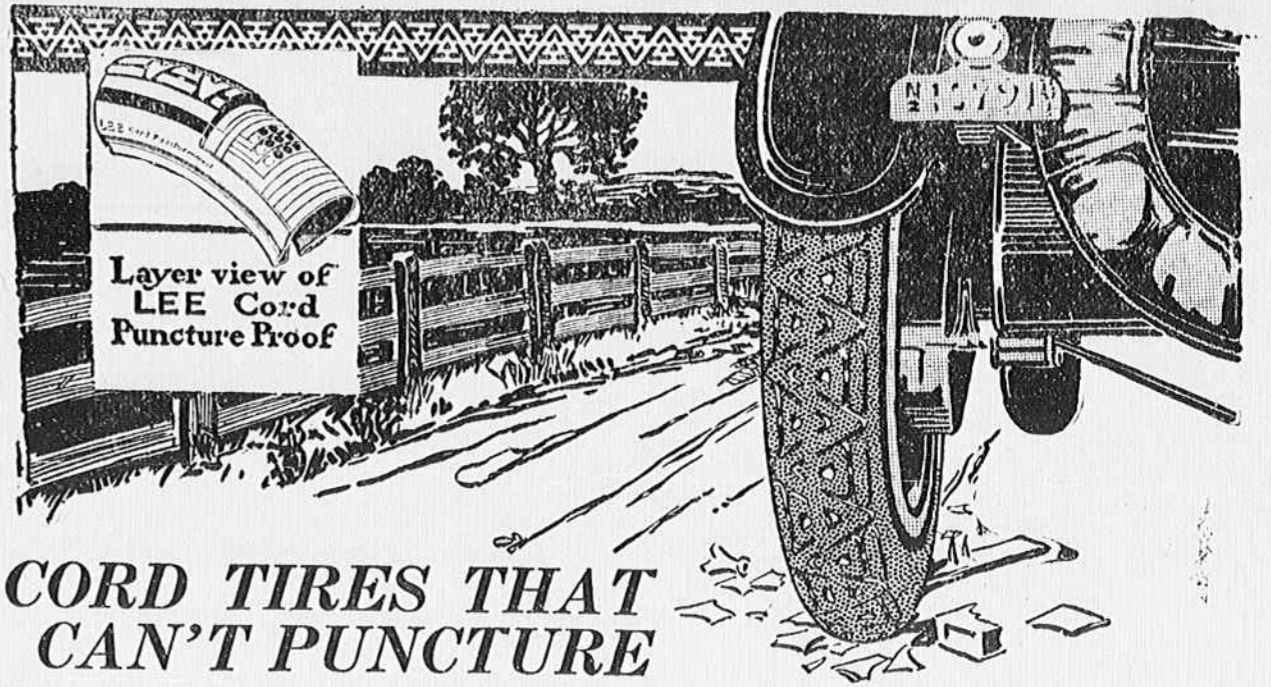
But Mr. Mallard Duck raised one of his funny feet, and said:

"Oh, no, you mustn't go yet. There is some delicious soft grass ice cream for everyone."

So they finished the party with grass ice cream which is made of soft grass which grows by the water and which is the favorite kind of ice cream among the mallards.

Stella Similben.

"How's that cold of yours, Jim?"
"G. I got rid of it."
"What did you take?"
"A fresh one."



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Jim's Shoes in Her Hand.

sweetheart to repeat the silly words, "Thank goodness, the table is set," and she wouldn't do it (which I am convinced was perfectly proper). So she gave him back his ring. And that's just what I'm going to do because Jim thought he could make me say, "Here, dear, are your shoes."

"I didn't say that," retorted Jim defensively, "I said—"

"Just a moment, please," pleaded Mrs. Copley, pleadingly. "Are you through with your side of the story, Dolly?" A blood head nodded in the affirmative. "All right, then, we'll hear what you have to say," continued the arbitrator, turning to Jim.

"Aw, after the show all I said was if I should ask her to bring me my shoes, if she would hand them to me kindly or would she be stubborn like the girl in the play. And Dolly said, 'Oh, I might and I might not.' I didn't like that very well, and I said, 'Dolly, let me hear you say, 'Here, dear, are your shoes.'"

Then Dolly said, "Don't be silly, Jim." And I said, "Please, Dolly, say, 'Here, dear, are your shoes.' Well, the long and short of it is, Dolly won't say it, and I want her to say it." And having delivered himself of this oration, Jim Reardon set his arms akimbo, spread out his legs and defied the world.

"No more of this nonsense, children," Mrs. Copley rebuked sharply. "Come, now, shake hands and drop the matter."

"But she hasn't said, 'Here, dear, are your shoes,'" came parrot-fashion and with masculine persistency from Jim.

"The which I won't say," snapped Dolly dangerously.

And the astonished eyes of Mrs. Copley saw the flash of a diamond as it whirled through the air and lay in scintillating beauty between the angry pair. In high-handed disdain Jim