

## Billy —Peacemaker

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WNU Service.

THE boy under the car thrust a greasy hand out and groped darkly along the edge of the running board, seeking a needed tool.

Merry was merely passing by, and had every intention of keeping right on passing by, for she wasn't the sort to stop and peer under cars. But the voice broke sadly into her reverie, and she hesitated long enough to push the wrench nearer the groping hand.

"Thanks," Peter grunted. "Give me the pliers, too, will you?"

Merry handed him the pliers and thought of walking along, but the voice under the car continued addressing her.

"Say, kid, I'll give you a dime if you'll climb in and reach through where the floor board isn't and hang onto that bolt with the other pliers."

"What bolt?" By a process of elimination they finally got to working on the same one.

"Now, hand me the little wrench, and don't drop the big one on my face." Apparently, Peter didn't realize to whom he was talking. Had he known that he was addressing Merry Wyeth, daughter of the local fish market proprietor, all—all might have been different. Presently he remarked, "How old are you, kid?"

"Why?"

"Your voice hasn't even begun to change yet, but you wear darn' big oxfords for a kid that young." Merry dropped the big wrench through the space where the floor board wasn't. "Oooof! Y'little idiot, want to knock me out?"

Merry drew a long sigh. "I'm so sorry. Have you turned around? I thought your head was there."

You and I, being of the understanding sort, know how these understandings progress. Billy Porter introduced them (Bill was the post-master) and from then on the town sat back and watched Peter neglect his work. He was selling some sort of an encyclopedia outfit.

Now, Peter wasn't the sort of lad who keeps six or seven fraternity pins in circulation at once. So when Merry ducked her chin shyly and showed me the little symbol of the Beta Tri hidden neatly behind the lapel of her velvet jacket, I knew that the two of them thought that they were being serious.

One evening Bill dropped in to see Merry's dad, and no one was home but the girl, waiting for Peter to wander around at nine o'clock when he had finished interviewing prospective owners of the encyclopedia. Bill stayed to keep her company, and when Peter came the boy was all excited over having just sold the tightest family in town.

Merry started playing little hunks of melody on the piano.

With startling abruptness the thread of music broke. Merry was walking softly across the room. I knew her mood—her eyes must have looked like, cold rain-swept stars when Bill looked up.

"Will you tell him," she asked, and he said he voice was quite steady but her mouth wobbled like a little kid's—"that I think he is being unbearably rude!"

He heard her running up the hall stairs. Peter was sound asleep.

In the morning I was in the post office when Bill told me all this; he wouldn't have mentioned it to anyone else, of course. I was sitting on a pile of magazines and parcels in the Morris chair; Bill was sorting mail. He turned and scooped the letters out of the little box under the slot, a small, squarish parcel thudded to the floor and rolled under the rusty stove. We both crawled around on all fours and finally I fished it out. A tag on it announced that it was from Merry Wyeth, Wenham, to a certain Peter. "Must be the fraternity pin," I remarked.

He took the tiny parcel from my hand, stooped cautiously and placed it with much care beneath the stove.

"Funny where that darn' thing went," he remarked, as he peered anxiously under the desk.

Bill started back into the post office and bumped into an anguished girl-person.

"Has the mail gone yet?" Bill looked thoughtfully at the assortment of used clocks that decorated his sanctum, then he hauled out his watch. "There was a little package," she went on. "I dropped it into the box last night; I didn't mean to."

"S'pose you were foolin' with Peter." Bill muttered sourly, and groped under the stove. "Something fell under here while I was getting up the mail, and I didn't have time—" He grunted and hauled forth a small square package, just about the size to contain a Beta Tri pin.

Merry snatched it eagerly. "I didn't mean to," she repeated, and started to leave. Then she came back.

"Say, Bill."

"Yeh."

"Did you tell Peter what I told you to tell him last night?"

"Nope. Thought it was a message in code and forgot how it went."

Bill started cleaning out his cache of two-cent stamps in the little rusty stove.

### Cleopatra Called the

#### 'Dark Queen of Egypt'

There is as much reason for supposing that Cleopatra was a blonde as for supposing that she was a brunette. According to the popular conception, she was a decided brunette, with dark skin, dark eyes and dark hair, and she is frequently referred to as "the dark queen of Egypt." But historical sources supply no evidence as to her actual complexion. It should be borne in mind that Cleopatra was a Greek by ancestry, and Egyptian only by birth. So far as known, observes a writer in the Indianapolis News, she did not have Egyptian blood in her veins.

The Ptolemies, it is supposed, remained pure Macedonian Greeks, and their capital, Alexandria, was the center of Greek rather than Egyptian culture. They even dressed as Greeks except on certain ceremonial occasions. Therefore, Cleopatra must be regarded as a Macedonian type, and the dark skin and black hair of the native Egyptian afford no clue as to her complexion. Many Greeks were dark-complexioned, but among the Macedonians white skin, fair hair and blue eyes were not uncommon, and one of Cleopatra's ancestors, Ptolemy Philadelphus, is described by Theocritus as having light hair and fair complexion. When an American actress played the role of Cleopatra in Shakespeare's tragedy she portrayed the Egyptian queen with red hair. Shakespeare alluded to Cleopatra as "tawny."

### Java's Water Kastel Is

#### Reminder of Harem Days

It appears that the Water Kastel, a famous attraction, was designed and built by a Portuguese architect about the year 1758, writes Eleanor N. Knowles, Djoca (Java) correspondent in the New York Times. It was in use until destroyed by earthquake in 1867. In its heyday it was complete with beautiful water gates and buildings of plaster and masonry, Portuguese in design, together with a complete subterranean establishment. From the ruins as we studied them there seemed to have been passageways bringing a low water level, as in one of the water palaces in use by a Prince of Bali. Because of the high retaining walls, the water could probably be raised to a higher level to keep out intruders.

One of the stories of its beginnings was that the water protection was to keep out invasions of the Sultan of Solo, or Surakarta, to the south. At the first hint of invasion the owner would retire with his harem to the subterranean quarters, there to remain until his faithful army had routed the foe. Since the Water Kastel was constructed a few years after the territory of Mataram was divided into the states of Jajakarta, Surakarta and Mangkoenegoran, and there are historical records that much quarreling existed between the Sultans in the early days, there is probably some truth to the tale.

### Diet of African Natives

It is said that the men of the Masai tribe in Africa, with a diet including milk and meat—rich in protein, fat and calcium—average about 5 inches taller and 23 pounds heavier than the Kikuyu tribe, who are vegetarians and live mostly on cereals, roots and legumes. The muscular strength of the Masai is said to be some 50 per cent greater than that of the Kikuyu, while Masai women average 3 inches more in height and 27 pounds more in weight than the Kikuyu women. But children show the most striking contrast. Three-fourths of the Masai tribe were "good and very good" in physical development, while in the Kikuyu group less than one-third received a similar rating. Dental defects were found in 40 per cent of the Kikuyu boys and 28.8 per cent of the girls, in only 5.3 per cent of the Masai boys and 7.3 per cent of the Masai girls.

### Pacers and Trotters

The name "pacer" is applied to a class of horses that are characterized by the ability to pace. They do not constitute a separate and distinct breed, but the American Standardbred trotting horse breed is the most potent source of pacers. According to the "Cyclopedia of American Agriculture," by Bailey, there was an opinion some years ago that a special type was evolving among pacers, because many old time pacers were steep in the hindquarters, had crooked hocks and pitched forward. However, time has demonstrated with the pacer as well as the trotter, that symmetry and graceful lines and style in action or repose are not opposed to speed. To be registered as a Standardbred pacer, a horse must meet certain standards set by the American Trotting Register association.

### The Origin of Coffee

In the Fourteenth century, an Arab noticed that his goats became frisky after browsing among certain shrubs. He curiously chewed berries from the shrubs and found them refreshing. Soon thereafter the beverage brewed from freshly roasted coffee beans was enjoyed throughout Arabia. The drinking of as many as 30 cups of coffee a day is a custom not uncommon in Arabia.

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