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The New Spirit of Rural America

By HERBERT MYRICK

The girl's face is to the future;
 She knows not why, but Nature knows.
 Looking o'er the bounteous fruit—
 Whose richest bloom is not more rare
 Than her own unadorned beauty—
 She feels a strange joy and gladness,
 The hope and confidence of youth.
 Self-reverence practicing,
 She grows in power and grace,
 Composed, resourceful, strong,
 In character nobly planned,
 By wise training truly fit,
 To do well her part in life—
THE GLORY OF AMERICA!



How like our land, this maiden fair!
 A daughter of our mighty race,
 Reared upon the soil that bears them,
 With health of body, mind and soul,
 Readiness of will, skill of hand,
 To make the rough or waste land smile,
 The fields with bursting harvests laugh,
 Orchards to groan with ruddy fruit,
 Gardens in plenty, barns well filled,
 Cattle upon a thousand hills,
 Foultry for profit, swine and sheep,
 Useful forage, cuts, waving grain,
 Food for untold millions!



'Tis not wealth of land or forest—
 Farms, banks or factories larger,
 Spouting oil, cotton or sugar,
 Metals from mines, water's power,
 Rivers free, roads, coasts and harbors,
 Salmy skies, flowers, good climate—
 That insures this country's future!
 It is her people's SPIRIT!
 Endowed with splendid genius,
 Indued with noble courage,
 Earnest and firm of purpose,
 Eager for arts and sciences,
 The farmer will be indeed
THE GLORY OF AMERICA!



A NEW ENGLAND FARMER'S PEACHES

"Sixteen peaches in the basket,
Twice sixteen on the limb;

Another peach just owest sixteen
Stands thoughtfully between."

The above remarkable photograph inspired the interpretation expressed in the blank verse at the left.—These lines may well be spoken in school, or may suggest topics for discussion in family, school or college.

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The Five-Thirty Train

A Thunderstorm That Welded Together a Broken Engagement

L. M. Montgomery

First published *New England Homestead*, August 16, 1913.

The three-thirty train was just puffing out from Loweway station when a young man, with an overcoat on his arm and a valise in one hand, came pelting up the long, dusty road. When he reached the platform the last car was just disappearing behind a shaggy fringe of woodland beyond the curve.

Harris Allen did not swear, possibly out of respect for the three awkward looking girls, in loud shirt-waists and sailor hats, who were gaping after the receding train. But he looked things not lawful to be uttered as he stalked into the waiting room and thumped his valise down on the hard, uncomfortable bench which ran around three sides of it.

“Missed your train, hey?” said the red-headed station master in a bicycle suit.

“Looks like it,” said Allen grimly. “When does the next one go?”

“The next train is the evening express at five-thirty,” was the consoling answer, as the official sauntered away.

“Two hours to wait in this hole,” thought Allen in disgust.

He made up his mind to go for a walk, but a glance at the sky convinced him that a drenching would be poor compensation for his delay. A thunderstorm was coming up. The air was hot and close, the clouds dark and lowering. Allen, with a muttered exclamation strode back into the dingy waiting room and flung himself down beside his valise. The station master locked his private office and went home. The shirt-waist girls and the small boy hangers-on disappeared and Loweway station became as silent as the grave.

Just as the first big drops splashed down on the dusty road a buggy drove rapidly up to the platform and a girl sprang out, carrying a satchel and a shawl strap. She dismissed her small, freckled driver with a nod, and the buggy whirled down the road again with all the recklessness of a youthful Jehu, while the girl hurried along the platform into the waiting room.

When her eyes met Allen’s he started very perceptibly, while Margaret King was guilty of a blush. But the only greeting that passed between them was a cool nod. Allen’s unspoken thought was, “How on earth did Margaret come here?” while Margaret’s was, “Harris Allen, of all people!”

She looked inquiringly at the ticket window, which was tightly shut, and took out her watch with a frown.

“Do you know where the ticket agent is, Mr Allen?” she inquired politely, with the air of one who would much rather not speak if she were not possessed with a burning desire for information.

“I think he’s gone home,” said Harris impersonally. “If you want to see him I’ll go after him.”

“Oh, no, I only want to get my ticket. Of course he’ll be back directly. The four o’clock train is almost due.”

“There isn’t any four o’clock train,” said Allen quickly. “The next train goes at five-thirty. The three-thirty train went half an hour ago. That is probably the one you meant to take. I missed it, too, unluckily.” He hesitated slightly over the adverb. After all, the ill luck had been qualified.

Miss King looked dismayed. “I don’t understand. I certainly thought there was a four o’clock train. Aunt Hester said there was. And Jimmy has gone back home!”

“The time table has been changed lately, I think,” said Allen, wondering fiercely who Jimmy was. “At any rate, we can do nothing but wait patiently. I undertook to walk from the Bay Shore hotel over here and got left.”

Miss King did not answer. She arranged her traps neatly on the opposite bench, sat down, and looked out of the door. She was a very pretty girl, with such brilliantly perfect coloring and ruddy golden hair that the bare-necked lady in the soap advertisement above her looked quite faded and pale by contrast. Her eyes were a delicious brown, her lips the most kissable ever molded, and the dimple in her chin something no mere man could resist.

She was dressed in a natty traveling suit and looked every whit as pretty and provoking and unattainable as she had looked on the occasion of their last meeting, when they had quarreled and broken their engagement.

Allen was determined that he would not look at her, so he fixed his eyes firmly on the gorgeously framed map of a trunk line hanging on the wall and glared at it for ten seconds. At the end of that time he found himself looking at Margaret instead, without being conscious of having moved his eyes.

Those little fluffy rings of hair were falling on her forehead just as they used to do when he had liked to slip his fingers through them—in particular, through the one that lay on her left temple, and the two others that curled close against her neck from behind.

He squirmed restlessly. What a fool he had been! It had been all his fault; he had been a jealous brute, and she had been quite right in declaring she would never forgive him. He knew she never would; she would probably annihilate him with one scornful glance of those brown eyes if she even suspected what a wild desire he had to go over and sit down beside her, drew her head against his shoulder, and slip his finger through those rings of hair.

At this point in his musings Margaret turned her head and Allen gazed with his soul in his eyes at the lady of the advertisement.

“He looks dreadfully thin,” thought Margaret, trying to believe that it was the

approaching thunderstorm which made her heart beat so. "But he is as handsome as ever. I wonder if he cared. No, of course he didn't. If he had wanted to come back of course he would have. I daresay he is engaged to some other horrid girl by now. He told me dozens of times that he never would or could love any girl but me. But, of course, he has forgotten all about that. Oh, dear, I wish I hadn't made such a silly mistake about the trains."

The rumblings of thunder grew louder, and Margaret looked apprehensive. When Allen rose and stalked to the door she turned so pale that the soap lady temporarily recovered her ascendancy. Surely he was not going to leave her there alone with a furious thunderstorm coming up! She would die of fright. Didn't he remember how storms always terrified her, or had he forgotten that as he had everything else? Margaret recalled a thunderstorm the summer before when they had been together. Something in the memory made her choke and she was furious to find tears in her eyes.

"I don't care," she thought miserably. "No, I don't. But I won't be left here alone if it is going to thunder."

Allen had meant to leave the waiting room. He honestly believed that his presence there was obnoxious to her, and he felt sure that he would make a new kind of fool of himself if he remained.

But when he reached the door a louder clap of thunder made him pause. He knew she was always terribly frightened during thunderstorms. It would not do to leave her alone. The storm grew worse rapidly, the peals of thunder were louder and more incessant, the lightning flashed brighter. The dismal little room was in semigloom. Outside the rain streamed down.

Simultaneously, with a glare of blue fire and a fearful crash in mid-air came a pitiful, gasping, little cry behind him. He wheeled around and saw Margaret huddled up in her corner with her face against the wall. In an instant he was beside her.

"Margaret, darling, don't be frightened. The storm will soon be over."

"Oh, I can't help it," sobbed Margaret.

She wriggled herself about until her face was against his coat instead of the wall. Allen put his arm around her and drew her close. She sat quietly, shuddering at every crash. He bent his head and laid his face against the soft hair under the hat, which had slipped aside. Then, growing bolder, he kissed the curve of her neck where the little lovelocks of reddish gold hair lay. Margaret lifted her hand and pressed it against his cheek.

"It's all right again, isn't it, Margaret?" he asked.

"Oh, yes," she whispered back.

When the station master came back the thunderstorm was over and the sun was bursting through the ragged clouds up the track. Barefooted small boys were peeping out of their retreats in order to be in at the death when the mail train came. The station master pushed up the window and sold Allen two tickets with the air of a man conferring a tremendous favor. He had an objectionable way with him, but Allen and Margaret thought he was the most delightful public official they had ever seen. They were so happy that they felt they could love everybody in the world, even a supercilious station master with a red head.

When the five-thirty train came in Allen carried a valise, overcoat, shawl strap and satchel in one hand, and with the other led his companion unblushingly on board. They had looked so radiant that the train hands all supposed that they were bride and groom, although Allen was dusty and Margaret's hat was crooked.

"That shower has laid the dust considerable," remarked the station master complacently as the train moved off.

It had done more than that.

"We grow like what we think of; so let us think of the good, the true and the beautiful."

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Mis-spelled words and printer errors have been fixed.

[The end of *The Five-Thirty Train* by L. M. (Lucy Maud) Montgomery]