

it, hangin close' to the door of my room, an' it was to ring when the Chink made his attack. Jest before she went upstairs she reached into the bosom of her dress an' fishe dout a revolver about the size of a watch charm, an' looked into my face with her lips set.

"What do you use them for?" sez I, thinkin' mobbe the mosquitos was bad. "I carry it all the time," sez she, ruffin' up like a hen when you pick up her chicken. "To defend myself an' child in case the Chinaman should come when we were alone." An' she was so earnest about it that I nearly choked swallowin' a grin; coz, honest, I could a-snuffed the thing up my nose.

I pulled a long face, an' sez to her as solemn as a judge: "Is there enough food an' water in the house to stand a siege in case the Chinaman 'd pen us up?" She looked at me a moment before she caught the twinkle in my eye, an' then she tripped upstairs with a smile on her face, an' I backed into my stall an' took a look about. The' were some swell-looking books on the wall, an' I begun to read the "Ten Years' Conflict," but the guy that wrote it wasted too much time in getting into the scrap, so I started to prepare myself fer to-morrow's duties, as the preacher sez. After I'd onened my roll an' took out my guns so 'at I could show 'em to her in the mornin' an' sort o' cheer her up, I shed my boots an' proceeded to occupy my hunk. Sav, it was like floppin' down on a tubful o' suds. Springs! Well, you should have seen Uncle Harry bounce in' up and down, I reckon I went to sleep in mid-air, coz I was too tired to remember whether I was a husky maid er a tender man.

When I awoke I thought it must be sure the last day an' that I had waited for the last call. The dinner-hell was a-knockin' all the echoes in the house loose, an' they was fallin' on my ear-drums in bunches. I rushed out into the hall an' grabbed that bell by the tongue, an' give a yell to let her know thaff was ready for orders. She onened the door an' came to the head of the stairs an' sez: "Tush-shh! don't make any noise."



"When we struck the earth I knew it would never happen again. I'd shoot first."

"Noise!" sez I; "the' ain't any left. You used up all the raw material. What seems to be wrong?"

"Fido has just been growlin'," sez she in a low whisper, an' I heard a noise out in the bushes.

"What shall I do?" sez I. "Come up there an' toss Fido out into the bushes, so as to kill two birds with one stone?"

"No," sez she; "if you are willin' to take the risk, I wish that you would go

out the front door an' lock it after you, an' look around to see if he is settin' fire to the house. Take my revolver an' Fido, an' do be careful not to get hurt, an' don't kill him unless you have to."

"Well," sez I, "I won't kill him unless I see him; an' he won't hurt me unless he sees me first. You better keep Fido an' the gun; I don't want to be bothered with a lot of non-combatants."

Fido was a little black woolly-faced dog; an' he didn't impress me as bein' no old Indian fighter. I went out an' chased a cat out o' the bushes, but didn't find a single thing wantin' to disturb the peace, except the goat. He purt nigh got my tag before I heard him comin'. I rummaged the place pretty thorough, an' after telling her that all was well, I folded my wings an' roosted on the leather bunk again.

Twice more that night I got up and hunted imaginary Chinamen, an' then my patience begun to get baggy at the knees. I wanted to be up in time to gather the milk before the heat o' the day, an' I was a couple o' nights shy on my sleep already. The last time I took Fido along an' dropped him into the feed-bin, where he could hunt Chinamen to his heart's content 'thout disturbin' my beauty sleep.

Our days flowed along, smooth an' gentle; but most o' the nights I put in huntin' Chinamen. No, I wouldn't 'a' killed one if I could 'a' found him—well, not all at once. I got so I could churn an' dust an' do fancy cookin' until if they'd been any men in that locality I reckon one would 'a' chose me to be his wife. An' then came the cousin. She'd been tellin' me all about him. He was from Virginia, an' was goin' to college to study chemistry, whatever that is; an' he was an athlete an' a quarter-back an' a coxswain—oh, he was the whole herd, the cousin was. I begun to feel shy whenever I thought o' him. I feared he might arrive when I was peelin' spuds with my apron on, an' he might choose to kiss me.

I drove to the station after him; but nobody got off the train except a nice-looking boy an' a couple o' trunks. After the train had pulled out, he sez to me, sez he, "Can you tell me the way to Mrs. B. A. Cameron's?"

"I ken sight ya pretty close," sez I; "that's my present headquarters. You— you ain't Ralph Chester Stuart, are ya?"

"You win," sez he, as though we had made mud-pies together. "Come on, let's load the trunks an' trip along. I'm troubled with what they call a famine."

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but it also preserves the
teeth, and the fragrant
taste it leaves in the mouth
is most refreshing.