

HER OWN SWEET SELF

By ROBERT MCLENNAN.

It had been her fate to be seen by him always at a disadvantage—and she resented her fate fiercely. In fact, she was all wrapped up in plans of which he was the central figure.

Of course she was a most ridiculously juvenile figure of a girl. Nobody—excepting her own people and the playmates of her childhood—would believe she was a grown-up person. At least they all affected to believe that she was a mere child and treated her with the freedom and condescension of that estate. Why, the men actually kissed her as a greeting and everybody called her "little girl" or some other abhorrent and belittling title. Her resentment had been growing for a long time, but it burst into white flame that summer when he appeared on the scene. Not that she cared for him, excepting in a most impersonal way, but for all that it galled her very soul to have him treat her like a child.

She was interested in him—indeed, who was not, and who had not the right to be? One privilege the clergy always have—the interest and care and attention of the women, young and old, little and big, rich and poor. Indeed, if the ladies did not look after the clergy who in the world would?

So, in common with the rest of the girls in the camping party, Elsie was interested in the grave and handsome young clergyman who had joined them at the invitation of one of the young men—a college chum—in the hope that a season in the woods would restore the steadiness to his nerves and the redness to his blood, which had been so sadly sapped during those trying years since he had quit college to try to build up a church in one of the poorest districts of the great city. And the languorous shade and the lazy life were doing their work and the color was again in Morton Graham's face and the ginger had come back into his stride and the old whimsical expression into his tired eyes.

Now Elsie had conceived a most romantic idea regarding the Rev. Morton Graham the instant she set eyes upon him. He was young, ardent, ambitious and devoted to his calling. He plainly needed a wife—a helpmate to care for him and cheer him on in his climbing of the heights. Plainly he never would have sense enough to realize this need himself, therefore some one else must attend to it for him. Therefore Elsie determined to assume the task herself.

She spent many sleepless nights and brain-racking days in her pursuit of this problem—and the further she got into it the more hopeless it appeared. At first any one of the girls appeared to be plenty good enough for him, but as the days went by the circle of eligibles narrowed rapidly.

In the meantime, however, Elsie labored assiduously and bravely. She arranged the most seductive tête-à-têtes in the stern of the boat, the most romantic moonlight rambles, the most lonesome fishing trips, always managing to get the Rev. Morton paired with the particular girl she had in mind for him on that particular day.

But, alas! it all appeared to be in vain. Nothing definite seemed to come of it, and as the season waned Elsie was distinctly impatient and cross about the entire affair.

In the meantime she necessarily had been thrown into daily contact with the Rev. Morton Graham and it had been her inclination always to be at a disadvantage. At first she did not care at all; then she was simply a trifle annoyed. For, after all, what did she care? She was interested in him only to the extent of securing for him a wife. Why, indeed, should she care how she personally appeared to him. And yet she was annoyed and finally it came to be the source of great humiliation and shame to her.

Just so sure as she sneaked out in front of her own tent and hidden by the flowers and foliage at that, after her bath and with her hair down to dry in the sun, in a loose wrapper, of course he must come along and stop to admire the foliage and the flowers and catch her red-handed, looking like a perfect fright. And when the pony threw her and she landed in a most humiliating heap at the side of the road, with her skirts principally over her head, of course he must be the one to rush to her rescue, arrange her skirts as best he could and try to soothe her like some tired child. Oh, how she hated him for it.

Then when they went to the dance at the village hotel, the night Archie and Tom and Ted were called to town and only the older fellows, and they mostly engaged, were there, of course the Rev. Morton Graham must rescue her from the most embarrassing wall-flower position she ever had experienced and taken her out for an ice and a walk under the trees on the village street. Yes, and he even had danced with her, a most decorous square dance, but she had not failed to notice that he danced extremely well and was very graceful. But all the time he had regarded her with those whimsical eyes, and she resented the expression of amused interest with all the strength of her nature.

But the very limit was reached when, despite the advice of all the party, and particularly of the young clergyman—indeed, it was his advice that drove her to it—she insisted on going in swimming with a storm coming up and was caught in the storm

and swept out into the lake despite every effort she could make.

Of course it was the Rev. Morton who dashed into the water and grabbed her just as she was about strangling with the great waves and took her to shore in his strong arms. Even though she wanted to laugh at his bedraggled broadcloth, the quizzical expression in his blue eyes maddened her beyond endurance, and she sputtered like a half-drowned chicken.

He carried her up into the green fringe just beyond the reach of the waves and set her down with great gentleness.

"You will be all right in a few minutes," he said, cheerily.

"I hate you," she responded with tears in her eyes.

"Why?" asked Graham, gravely turning a keen glance on her which sent the color to her cheeks and caused her to drop her eyes.

"Because I had made the nicest plans for you," she replied, "and you are obstinate—and stupid—and horrid."

"Dear me, not so bad as that," he replied, with genuine distress in his fine features. "Come, little one, what is it I have done? Wherein have I offended the princess?"

He shot a glance of admiration at her which deepened the color in her cheeks. Indeed, she was well worth the glance as she sat there all huddled up in her dripping bathing suit which clung to her dainty form fast enough to suggest the perfect outlines. Even a clergyman must admire the perfection of nature, you know.

"You won't marry anybody," she retorted. "Here I have spent all summer trying to pair you off with Emma or Nell or Agnes or—or any of the girls, and you only blunder along and find me in all kinds of humiliating positions."

"But my dear girl," replied Graham, "I could not fall in love with those girls, for I am in love with another girl."

She was silent for a moment, looking out into the storm with unseeing eyes.

"And you never let me know," she said, reproachfully. Then breathlessly: "Who is it?"

"Your own sweet self," he said, reaching for one of the wet little hands. "And all the blessed summer you have not given me a chance to talk with you excepting when I was fortunate enough to find you in trouble. I have found myself packed off with one of the other girls and I never knew how it happened—until just now. I had hoped perhaps you might find it in your heart to love me and make my life one long dream of joy—but I suppose I am too old—and serious—and—"

Just then the rest of the party burst upon them with wraps and rubber gosamers and things.

"Well, if there isn't the preacher holding hands with Elsie," cried Emma with a shriek of laughter. "Please explain at once, sir, how you make such conduct comport with your cloth."

Graham flushed to his temples and his lips trembled. Before he could frame and answer Elsie spoke up clearly and without a tremor in her voice:

"Because she is to become his wife," she said.

Graham drew a long breath and placed an arm about the shivering form in the bathing clothes and threw a glance of triumph at the party.

"Oh," said Emma.

(Copyright, by Daily Story Pub. Co.)

BOOK AGENT AS HE ISN'T

Fable in Words of One or More Syllables That is Credited to New York Man.

"You have sent for me," said the book agent, entering the busy man's office.

"Yes, yes," said the busy man. "Have a chair, please. Shan't keep you long."

"I can come some other day, if you prefer," said the book agent, edging toward the door.

"No, no," cried the busy man. "I want to see if you can sell me a set of Dickeray."

"I suppose I could," replied the book agent, dubiously, "but I don't believe a busy man like you will ever have time to read it. Why don't you wait until you have retired from business life and then decide whether you are still interested?"

"I must have it," said the busy man, sharply. "I want something nice in crushed levant, with gold tops and all that; a limited edition de luxe, if you have it."

"Won't it be somewhat of a drain on your purse?" suggested the book agent. "This paying for books month after month becomes monotonous. A man may think it a trifle at the start, but after the first six months it gets on his nerves. Why not go to a regular store and buy your set of Dickeray in cloth at a cash price for about one-sixth of what I can offer you?"

"Oh, all right," growled the busy man. "Have it your own way. But I'm sorry to have taken up your time."

"Oh, that's nothing," said the book agent. "Some day you may have a real need of something in my line and then I'll be glad to sell it to you. Good morning!"—Frank M. O'Brien, in the New York Press.

Mixed.

Mrs. Willis—It has 5,000 feet of film and cost \$200.

Willis—Must be some picture.

Mrs. Willis—It is.

Willis—What's its name?

Mrs. Willis—Name? It isn't a moving picture; it's a new dress.—Fuck

Popular Illusions in Manhattan

SKIMMING down Fifth avenue or Broadway you frequently see enormous "sight-seeing cars" laden with expectant tourists.

One is marked "Chinatown," and the occupants are holding their breath in anticipation of the thrills of horror they are to experience when they behold the dark wickedness of the Celestial empire, which is secretly practiced in the heart of New York.

They arrive at a populous district where there is a fair sprinkling of Chinks to be seen about the streets, and they are allowed to peep into what they think is an opium den, but what is in reality merely a dirty little chop suey house.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor. "Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.

But is it an opium den? And are they really smoking opium? Most assuredly not!

Uncle Sam and the mayor of New York wouldn't stand for it for a minute. It is only a nicely arranged little "fake den," run for the special benefit of the tourists.

There are a few unprepossessing Chinamen sitting or lying around with their pipes, in an opium stupor.

"Opium fiends," whisper the thrilled tourists to each other, as they shudderingly gaze on the dark spectacle.