

ALICE ADAMS

by BOOTH TARKINGTON

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"**W**HY, yes," she said, briskly. "You don't realize what a little bit of a thing all this is to him. It's been a long, long while since the last time you even mentioned glue to him, and he's probably forgotten everything about it."

"You're off your base; it isn't like him to forget things," Adams returned peevishly. "He may seem to forget 'em, but he don't."

"But he's not thinking about this, or you'd have heard from him before now."

Her husband shook his head. "Ah, that's just it!" he said. "Why haven't I heard from him?"

"It's all your morbidity, Virgil. Look at Walter; if Mr. Lamb held this up against you, would he still let Walter stay there? Wouldn't he have discharged Walter if he felt angry with you?"

"That dang boy!" Adams said. "If he wanted to come with me now, I wouldn't hardly let him. What do you suppose makes him so bull-headed?"

"But hasn't he a right to choose for himself?" she asked. "I suppose he feels he ought to stick to what he thinks is sure pay. As soon as he sees that you're going to succeed with the glue works he'll want to be with you quick enough."

"Well, he better get a little sense in his head," Adams returned crossly. "He wanted me to pay him a \$300 bonus in advance when anybody with a grain of common sense knows I need every penny I can lay my hands on!"

"Never mind," she said. "He'll come around later and be glad of the chance."

"He'll have to beg for it then! I won't ask him again."

"Oh, Walter will come out all right; you needn't worry. And don't you see that Mr. Lamb's not discharging him because there's no hard feeling against you, Virgil?"

"I can't make it out at all," he said, frowning. "The only thing I can think it means is that J. A. Lamb is so fair-minded—and of course, he is one of the fair-mindedest man alive—I suppose that's the reason he hasn't fired Walter. 'He may know,' Adams concluded, morosely—"he may know that's just another thing to make me feel all the meaner: keeping my boy there on a salary after I've done him an injury."

"Now, now," she said, trying to comfort him. "You couldn't do anything to your life, and everybody knows it."

"Well, anybody ought to know I wouldn't want to do any injury, but this world isn't built so we can do just what we want."

He paused, reflecting. "Of course there may be one explanation of why Walter's still there. J. A. maybe hasn't noticed that he is there. There's so many I expect he hardly knows him by sight."

"Well, just do just thinking about it," she urged him. "It only bothers you without doing any good. Don't you know that?"

"Don't I, though?" he laughed feebly. "I know it better'n anybody! How funny that is: when you know thinking about a thing only pesters you without helping anything at all, and yet you keep right on pestering yourself with it."

"But why?" she said. "What's the use when you know you haven't done anything wrong, Virgil? You said yourself you were going to improve the process so much it would be different from the old one, and you'd really have a right to it."

Adams had persuaded himself of this when he yielded; he had found it necessary to persuade himself of it—though there was a part of him, of course, that remained unpersuaded; and this discomfiting part of him was what made his present trouble. "Yes, I know," he said. "That's true, but I can't quite seem to get away from the fact that the principle of the process is a good deal the same—well, it's more'n that; it's just about the same as the oge he hired Campbell

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DOINGS OF THE DUFFS



OUT OUR WAY—By WILLIAMS



AND IS GONE FOREVER—



THE OLD HOME TOWN—By STANLEY



THREE YOUNG HOODLUMS FROM HOOTSTOWN, WHO STARTED A RUMPKUS IN ED HEALY'S POOL ROOM, WERE EJECTED BY THE PROPRIETOR EARLY TODAY—

it, too, out on his own lawn a mile to the north; and if he did, would be guess what it was? Then Adams laughed at himself for such nonsense; but could not rid his nostrils of their disgust. To him the whole town seemed to smell of his glue works.

"The idea! The air is lovely tonight."

The air did not seem lovely to him, for he was positive that he detected the taint. He wondered how far it carried, and if J. A. Lamb would smell

with more than the smell," his foreman remarked one morning.

"How's that?" Adams inquired.

"That great big, enormous ole dead butterline factory across the street from our lot," the man said. "Notin' like settin' an example to bring real estate to life. That place is full o' carpenters startin' in to make a regular buildin' of it again. Guess you ought to have the credit of it. be

cause you was the first man in ten years to see any possibilities in this neighborhood."

Adams was pleased, and, going out to see for himself, heard a great hammering and sawing from within the building; while carpenters were just merging gaily upon the dangerous roof. He walked out over the dried mud of his deep lot, crossed the street, and spoke genially to a work-

man who was removing the broken glass of a window on the ground floor.

"Here! What's all this howdy-do over here?"

"Goin' to fix her all up, I guess," the workman said. "Big job it is, too."

"Sh! think it would be."

"Yes, sir; a pretty big job—a pretty big job. Got men at it on all four

floors and on the roof. They're doin' it right."

"Who's doing it?"

"Lord! I d'know. Some o' these here big manufacturing corporations, I guess."

"What's it going to be?"

"They tell me," the workman answered, "they tell me she's goin' to be a butterline fad, my again. Anyways, I hope she won't be anything

Tom Makes a Suggestion



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS—By BLOSSER



—By AL POSEN



OUR BOARDING HOUSE—By AHERN



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