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BURGESS BEDTIME STORIES

(By Thornton W. Burgess)

TROUBLE IN THE DEAR OLD BRIER-PATCH

Trouble anywhere is sad,
But in the home is doubly sad.
—Old Mother Nature.

Peter Rabbit was safe. That is he was safe for the moment. It had been a narrow escape. Indeed it had. Reddy Fox had so nearly caught Peter that he had pulled a few hairs out of Peter's white tail. Peter dived headlong into one of his private little paths in the dear Old Briar-patch where he knew Reddy couldn't or wouldn't follow him.

But if Reddy couldn't or wouldn't someone else could and would. It was a Dog known as a Beagle, or Rabbit Hound. He had found Peter in the Old Pasture and driven him out of there across the open Green Meadows to the dear Old Briar-patch. Reddy Fox had seen this and had tried to head Peter off. You know Reddy always is an opportunist, and he wasn't afraid of that Dog because his legs were too short for him to run fast enough to catch Reddy.

Little Mrs. Peter had seen Peter's narrow escape and her heart had seemed to be right up in her throat



Peter and Mrs. Peter didn't wait for him.

as she watched. Now she joined Peter and at once began to scold. Had you heard her you wouldn't have thought she was the least bit happy over his escape. No, sir, you wouldn't. Her tongue was sharp. Relief is like that sometimes. She told Peter that no one was to blame but himself; that if he had remained at home there in the Old Briar-patch as he should have this wouldn't have happened; he wouldn't have had to run for his life, and it served him right that he had had such a fright.

Meanwhile that Dog reached the dear Old Briar-patch. Mrs. Peter's tongue suddenly was still. Her eyes seemed to grow big with unbelief and then fright. That Dog was inside the Old Briar-patch. He hadn't stopped outside as Bowser the Hound would have. No, sir, he hadn't stopped at all. He actually was inside and still coming. Now and then he stopped barking to whine or yelp as a bramble or a briar scratched him. He couldn't run along those private little paths as Peter and Mrs. Peter could, but his legs were short and he could push his way through if he didn't mind being scratched, and it appeared that he didn't. He just kept right on coming.

Peter and Mrs. Peter didn't wait for him. Certainly not. They took to their long heels, not fast for even they couldn't run fast in those narrow little paths that in places were really tunnels through the tangles of briars. Mrs. Peter kept right at Peter's heels.

Now they had cut many paths in all directions through the dear Old Briar-patch. They crossed and recrossed. They were wonderful for dodging about in. In doing this they couldn't feel that Dog. No, sir, they couldn't do that. They could get out of his sight, but they couldn't get away from his nose. Whenever they might go his nose could find the scent and he could follow.

Always the dear Old Briar-patch had seemed to them the safest place in all the Great World. Bowser the Hound never had tried to follow one of them in there. Flip the Terrier had tried it once or twice but had been glad to back out after a minute or two. None of the feathered hunters could get at them in there. The only enemies small enough to follow them in there were Shadow the Weasel and Billy Mink, and the latter seldom went as far as this from water. Now here was a Dog who so loved to hunt that he was willing to be scratched and have his tender ears torn. The dear Old Briar-patch no longer was the same. It was no longer the safe place it had been.

Outside Reddy Fox sat listening and grinning as he heard the yelps and whines of the small Dog. Perhaps one of those Rabbits would be driven out. That was what Reddy hoped. It was what he was waiting for. There was trouble in the dear Old-Briar and Peter had brought it there. Mrs. Peter didn't let him forget that.

Contract Bridge

By Josephine Cubbertson

NOT THE HAND FOR FINESSING

The sort of player who "loves to take finesses" would not enjoy the role of declarer in the following deal!

North dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

♠ A J 10	♣ 5
♥ Q J 9 3	♦ 7 2
♦ 4 3 2	♠ A K 9
♣ J 5	♥ 8 7 5
♠ 8 2	♦ Q 8 4
♥ K 8 4	♠ K Q 8 7 4 3
♦ Q J 10	♥ A 10 6 5
♠ A 10 7	♦ K 2
♣ 6 3	

The bidding:

North	East	South	West
Pass	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♠	3 ♠	4 ♠	5 ♠
Pass	Pass	5 ♠	Double
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass

The bidding was rather informative, and when, on top of this, West led the queen of diamonds, the expert declarer was able to formulate a very shrewd plan.

South ruffed the first trick, then led a trump dummy and ruffed a second diamond. Next, ignoring the opportunity to enter dummy and finesse for the king of hearts, South slyly led a low heart toward the board. West hesitated, but he could see no need for haste in putting up the heart king—"he could always win that trick"—and so he played low. Dummy's jack of course won, and South then ruffed another diamond.

With the stage almost set for the grand finale, South drew West's remaining trump by leading to dummy, ruffed the fourth diamond, and then cashed the heart ace. Now South led another heart, and West was in!

Undoubtedly, West regretted his previous decision regarding the heart king, for at this point he was "stuck"! With nothing but clubs left in his hand, he had to lead that suit, and this of course made South's club king good. The doubled contract was home.

The key of South's plan was his realization that East's hand was marked with long diamonds headed by the ace-king, could not have the ace of clubs or even the king of hearts—that with either of those cards, he would have opened the bidding. Thus, South did not take the heart finesse—if he had, it would have been automatic for West to win the trick and exit safely.



By Al Capp

KING OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED

By Zane Grey



JOE PALOOKA

By Ham Fisher



HENRY

By Carl Anderson



DOTTY DIPPLE

By Ruford



TIPPY AND "CAP" STUBS

By Edwin



BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McMahon



TILLY THE TOLLER

By Westover



PENNY

By Harry Morgan



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