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## A House to Please the Birds

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# "It Happens in the Best of Regulated Nests"

By HARRIET SCHLEITER

"RACHEL Robin, where have you been?" twittered Mr. Robin, a little impatiently, "I came home an hour early to see you."

"Oh, my dear Richard," Mrs. Robin answered, perching on the edge of their nest and speaking in an excited chirp. "I was just coming back from the market with some things for dinner and I stopped at the window of the House to talk to the Canaries. They are such lovely people, not at all affected, even tho they live in that gorgeous wicker mansion."

"Yes, lovely people. What did they have to say?"

"I wondered if you weren't ever going to ask that. The people in the House had a quarrel yesterday. A most dreadful quarrel."

"Well, well, what was it all about?"

"I'll tell it to you just as they told it to me. They said that all the afternoon The Girl sat on the davenport and read a book and ate chocolates. It got later and later, and the Canaries were awfully worried because she didn't seem to remember about getting dinner for The Man."

"And finally they heard The Man whistle like he always does, and The Girl didn't move until he was clear in the room. Then she jumped up and ran and kissed him and said,

"'Oh, honey! I've been realing 'The Sheik,' and it's wonderful."

"'Like it, dear?'" said The Man. He began to look around for signs of food.

"I just couldn't stop reading. The Sheik is the most wonderful man in the world, except you'."

"'Yes, but dearie, I'm awfully hungry,'" ventured The Man.

"'Have a chocolate, they are luscious. Let me read the part where—'"

"'But honey, aren't you going to get anything for me to eat?'" pleaded The Man.

"'Well, there is some fruit in the refrigerator. I could make you a salad, and I guess I could find something to make a sandwich or two,'" said The Girl thoughtfully.

"'But listen,'" she went on, brightening, "'I have just a few chapters to read. Couldn't you run and fix it for yourself while I finish. Then stack your dishes in the kitchen. I'll be through by that time and we can go to a movie.'"

"'No, I won't!'" said The Man firmly, or very firmly.

"'Why—why—deary—'"

"'No. I won't this time or any other time. I work hard all day and you could at least provide substantial food for me twice a day.'"

"He was angry and so was she. She stamped her foot and threw back her head and said,

"'Well, if that is why you married me, why didn't you hire a c-cook? You j-just want f-oo-food.'"

"Then she started to cry.

"'It's my right to at least be provided with substantial food twice a day, and besides—'"

"'Ooooo I can't stand this. You hurt my feelings,'" sobbed The Girl.

"'That is—at—least—anyhow—'"

"The man was looking less and less angry and more and more miserable.

"'I mean—oh, honey, don't cry like that. I'm sorry! We'll go out for dinner and I'll never—'"

"'Ooooo, I'm sorryer. I'll always—Oh!'"

"Is that all?" asked Richard Robin.

"Well," answered his wife. "I told you the Canaries were lovely people. They didn't look after that."

"But I suppose," said Richard Robin, putting his wing tenderly around his wife. "I suppose he did like this."

"Oh, Richard, you'll tear my net and muss up my feathers."

A lesson hath March—if a teacher stern—

A lesson 'twere well for the heart to learn.

If the sky is dark and the winds are cold,  
If the snows are deep on the moor and wold,

If the brown buds lie in their cells  
asleep,

And the clouds come only to frown or weep;

If the spring be late in her warm embrace,

She comes at last with rush and shout,  
She will put all the legions of Frost to rout.

Ah! thus if life is a weary March,  
We pass to joy through a victor's arch.

—Helen H. Rish.

Ah, March! we know thou art  
Kind-hearted, spite of ugly looks and threats,

And, out of sight, are nursing April's violets!

—Helen Hunt.

## A House to Please the Birds

By ESTHER RAYBURN

IF YOU would build a castle in the air, build a bird house. Birds are airy creatures so they must have their houses in the air. Whether it is a small log cabin among the vines on the back porch, a half cocoanut shell near the eaves outside the bedroom window, a many porched and windowed affair perched on top of a pole in the garden, or a swinging twig house hanging from a tree, it should be made attractive to both the bird dwellers and the good people who put it there.

Small boys and grandfathers delight in building quaint houses for the birds. They somehow seem to know just the kind of a home each bird will be looking for in the springtime.

Perhaps most popular of all to the wee wrens is the house made from a very small tin can. After a winter of pancakes and maple syrup there is sure to be a good supply of Log Cabin maple syrup cans for boys to experiment with. Indeed a little brown cabin peeping from the vines near the back door is very

perky. There is sure to be a wren settled there as soon as this family of birds are back from southern resorts.

Blue birds sometimes build in houses. Maybe, if there was a half cocoanut shell fastened up under the eaves just outside the bedroom window, this little bird would come and build a nest there. Of course, the shell must be fastened securely between nails so that when there are small birds there won't be any danger of the nest falling.

From the tree in the front yard, why not have a swinging twig house? Grandfather will know how this house should be made and with the boys help will surprise even the birds with the cunning affair. Sometimes these little swinging houses can be made to resemble rustic summer houses that appeal to the woodsey bird. On some rare occasions these houses have been known to attract even the wily brown thrushes.

Of course the twig house, the log cabin and the cocoanut houses are the most practical, but all the same what fun it is

to have a more aristocratic looking residence perched loftily on a pole in the garden. This is in hopes that sometime a bird will come with enough of a tilt to his beak to appreciate this rather stylish dwelling. It must be larger than the rest and have chimneys and doors, perches and windows. There will be apartments inside so if the birds so choose they could live with city comfort.

Where there are bird houses there must be bird baths. As the garden is the rendezvous of the birds, there the bath must be. A green earthen bowl hung by chains from a tree where the early morning sun will fall would please any bird, large or small. It is here the birds will gather to splash and chatter in the early morning.

Remember to make the openings small for wrens and larger for the bigger birds. Perhaps because you've built a home for the birds they will in return teach you to go sailing off through realms of fancy with them. It would only be fair to return the favor, you know.