





47

DOREEN

**F**ER 'er sweet sake I've gone an'  
chucked it clean:  
The pubs an' schools an' all that  
leery game.  
Fer when a bloke 'as come to know  
Doreen,  
It ain't the same.  
There's 'igher things, she sez, fer bloks to do.  
An' I am 'arf believin' that it's true.

— THE SENTIMENTAL BLOKE.

# DOREEN

BY

C. J. DENNIS

Author of "The Glugs of Gosh," "The  
Moods of Gingermick," "Doxeen and  
the Sentimental Bloke," etc.

NEW YORK: JOHN LANE COMPANY  
TORONTO: S. B. GUNDY . . . MCMXVIII

PR 6007  
E 54 D 55  
1918

Copyright, 1917,  
By JOHN LANE COMPANY



#0.50

DEC -1 1917

©Cl.A 479449

No. 1

5 + 11. 2 ec. 20. 17.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
WASHING DAY . . . . .	9
LOGIC AND SPOTTED DOG . . . . .	15
VI'LITS . . . . .	21
POSSUM . . . . .	27





## WASHING DAY

**T**HE little gipsy vi'lits, they wus  
    peepin' thro' the green  
As she come walkin' in the  
    grass, me little wife,  
    Doreen.

The sun shone on the sassafras, where  
    thrushes sung a bar.

— The 'ope an' worry uv our lives wus  
    yellin' fer 'is Mar.—

I watched 'er comin' down the green; the  
    sun wus on 'er 'air —

Jist the woman that I marri'd, when me  
    luck wus 'eadin' fair.

I sees 'er walkin' in the sun that lit our  
    little farm.

She 'ad three clothes-pegs in 'er mouth, an'  
    washin' on 'er arm —

Three clothes-pegs, fer I counted 'em,  
    an' watched 'er as she come.

## WASHING DAY

“The stove-wood’s low,” she mumbles,  
“an’ young Bill ’as cut ’is thumb,”  
Now, it weren’t no giddy love-speech, but  
it seemed to take me straight  
Back to the time I kissed ’er first beside ’er  
mother’s gate.

Six years uv wedded life we’ve ’ad, an’ still  
me dreams is sweet . . .

Aw, them bonzer little vi’lits, they wus  
smilin’ round me feet.

An’ wot’s a bit uv stove-wood count, wiv  
paddicks grinnin’ green,

When a bloke gits on to dreamin’ uv  
the old days an’ Doreen —

The days I thort I snared a saint; but since  
I’ve understood

I ’ave wed a dinkum woman, which is fifty  
times as good.

I ’ave wed a dinkum woman, an’ she’s give  
me eyes to see.

Oh, I ain’t been mollycoddled, an’ there  
ain’t no fluff on me!

But days when I wus down an’ out she  
seemed so ’igh above;

## WASHING DAY

An' a saint is made fer worship, but a  
woman's made fer love,

An' a bloke is growin' richer as sich  
things 'e comes to know . . .

(She pegs another sheet an' sez, "The  
stove-wood's gittin' low.")

A bloke 'e learns a lot uv things in six  
years wiv a tart;

But thrushes in the sassafras ain't singin'  
like me 'eart.

'Tis the thrushes 'oo 'ave tort me in their  
choonful sort o' way

That it's best to take things singin' as  
yeh meet 'em day be day.

Fer I wed a reel, live woman, wiv a  
woman's 'appy knack

Uv torkin' reason inside out an' logic front  
to back.

An' I like it! 'Struth I like it! Fer a  
wax doll in a 'ome,

She'd give a man the flamin' pip an' long-  
in's fer to roam.

Aw, I ain't no silk-sock sonkie 'oo ab'ors  
the rood an' rough;

## WASHING DAY

Fer, city-born an' gutter-bred, me  
schoolin' it wus tough.  
An' I like the dinkum woman 'oo . . .  
(She jerks the clothes-prop, so,  
An' sez, so sweet an' dangerous, "The  
stove-wood's gittin' low.")

See, I've studied men in cities, an' I've  
studied 'em out 'ere;  
I've seen 'em ard 'ard thro' piety an' seen  
'em kind thro' beer.

I've seen the meanest doin' deeds to make  
the angels smile,  
An' watched the proudest playin' games  
that crooks 'ud reckon vile.  
I 'ave studied 'em in bunches an' I've read  
'em one be one,  
An' there isn't much between 'em when the  
'ole thing's said an' done.

An' I've sort o' studied wimmin — fer I've  
met a tidy few —  
An' there's times, when I wus younger,  
when I kids meself I knew.  
But 'im 'oo 'opes to count the stars or  
measure up the sea,

## WASHING DAY

'E kin 'ave a shot at woman, fer she's  
fairly flummoxed me . . .  
(" I'll 'ave to 'ave *some* wood," she sez,  
an' sez it most perlite  
An' secret to a pair uv socks; an' jams a  
peg in, tight.)

Now, a woman, she's a woman. I 'ave  
fixed that fer a cert.

They're jist as like as rows uv peas from  
'at to 'em uv skirt.

An' then, they're all so different, yeh  
find, before yeh've done,

The more yeh know uv all uv 'em the  
less yeh know uv one.

An' then, the more yeh know uv one . . .

(She gives 'er 'air a touch:

"The stove-wood's nearly done," she sez.  
"Not that it matters *much*."

The little gipsy vi'lits, they wus smilin'  
round me feet.

An' this dreamin' dilly day-dreams on a  
Summer day wus sweet.

I 'eaves me frame frum orf the fence,  
an' grabs me little axe;

## WASHING DAY

But, when I'm 'arf way to the shed, she  
stops me in me tracks.

“Yer lunch is ready. That ole wood kin  
easy wait a while.”

Strike! I'm marri'd to a woman. . . . But  
she never seen me smile.

## LOGIC AND SPOTTED DOG

**U**NLESS you '*ide* that axe," she sez, "'E'll 'urt 'imself reel bad.

An' after all — Now, Bill, don't cry! — the trouble that I've 'ad

Wiv 'im thro' croop an' whoopin' corf,  
'e goes an' cuts 'imself!

Why don't you 'ang it on the wall, or  
'ide it on a shelf?

But there it wus, jist thrown about. You  
*ort* to take more care!

You left it there!

"You left it there," she sez, "an'  
now. . . ." I sez, "'Old on a jiff.

Let's git the fac's all sorted out before we  
'as a tiff.

I'm mighty careful wiv that axe, an'  
never leaves it out.

LOGIC AND SPOTTED DOG

An' I'd be mad if that young imp got  
knockin' it about."

"Ole axe!" she sez. "Look at 'is *thumb!*  
A precious lot *you* care!  
You left it there!"

I am marri'd to a woman; which is nacheral  
an' right.

I sez that over to meself, fer safety, day  
an' night.

Most times I sez it fond an' proud wiv  
gladness in me mind;

But sometimes philosophic-like an' wot  
yeh'd call resigned.

"An axe as sharp as *that,*" she sez. "It  
reely isn't fair!

You left it there!

"The way you pet that axe," she sez —  
"the way it's ground an' filed,  
The way you fairly fondle it, you'd think  
it wus a child!

An' when I picked the ole thing up to cut  
a bit uv string

Yeh rave an' shout. . . ." "Wait on,"  
I sez. "But ir'n's a different thing.



## LOGIC AND SPOTTED DOG

An' you wus choppin' fencin' wire!" She sez, "Well, I don't care.

You *left* it there!"

I 'elps meself to spotted dog, an' chews, an' thinks a while.

"I'm reely sorry," I begins. Then, as I seen 'er smile,

I plays 'er fer the fun uv it, an' sez, "But, all the same,

If he gits foolin' wiv that axe 'e's got 'imself to blame."

'Er eyes spark up. "A child like that! Now, Bill, it isn't fair!

You left it there!"

I cuts another slice an' sez, "This spotted dog's a treat.

Uv course, 'ooever left it there," I sez, "wus — indiscreet."

"Careless!" she sez. "You *know* you are! 'E might 'a' cut 'is face!

An axe as sharp as that," she sez, "should be kep' in its place."

"Quite right," I sez. "An' not," she sez, "jist thrown round anywhere.

You left it *there!*"

## LOGIC AND SPOTTED DOG

An' then I lets 'er 'ave it, an' I sez, " Now,  
think a bit.

I put that axe away last night when all the  
wood wus split."

" Well, that's enough about it now," she  
sez. I seen 'er wince,

An' sez, " I put that axe away, *an'  
'aven't used it since;*

But someone else wus usin' it this mornin',  
I kin swear,

An' left it there."

" Well, never mind. . . . Poor Bill!" she  
sez. " Was 'is poor thumb all  
'urt?"

(Oh, it's entertainin' sometimes fer to  
argue wiv a skirt.)

" There's someone else," I sez, an' grins,  
an' kids I'm doin' fine,

" Wus usin' it this mornin' fer to cut a  
bit uv pine.

So now," I sez, " apolergise! I've beat you  
fair an' square!

*You* left it there!"

Fer 'arf a mo she pets young Bill, an'  
would'nt meet me eye.

## LOGIC AND SPOTTED DOG

Thinkin' she wus — I knew she wus. An'  
then she lets it fly:

“If you 'ad cut that wood,” she sez, “an  
I implored you to,

There wouldn't be no need fer me to  
'ave sich things to do!

It ain't right fer a woman. . . .” “'Ere!”

I sez. “Now, I don't care

'Oo left it there!”

“Uv course you don't!” she gits me back.

“You never care a bit!

An' it ain't right fer a woman to 'ave  
kin'lin' wood to split;

While there's a man about the 'ouse!”

I sees the tears is near,

An' pats 'er 'air. “Now, let it drop,” I  
sez. “Don't worry, dear.”

“'Ow can I let it drop?” she sobs. “You  
said you didn't care

'Oo left it there.”

“I do!” I yells. “I mean — I don't —

I. . . .” Oh, Gaw spare me days!

When you argue wiv a woman she 'as got  
you either ways!

## LOGIC AND SPOTTED DOG

You 'ave to do it in the end; an' so I  
licks the dirt,

An' sez, "Dear, I apolergise. I'm —  
sorry — if I 'urt."

Yes, I'm marri'd to a woman. An' she  
smiles, an' strokes me 'air,  
An'— leaves it there.

## VI'LITS

**I** WUS pickin' gipsy vi'lits fer to try  
an' square Doreen.

We 'ad words . . . about pianners  
— fer she wants one awful  
keen —

'Igh words, about 'igh-toned idears —  
an', like a love-sick fool,

'Ere I'm pickin' gipsy vi'lits when the kid  
come 'ome frum school.

'E started school a month ago, an' ain't  
got very far;

But, judgin' be the scraps 'e 'as, 'e's takin'  
after Par.

I tips there's somethin' wrong, the way 'e  
sneaks around the 'ouse.

An' then I seen 'is eye. Oh, strike! 'E  
'ad a bonzer mouse! —

A reel black-eye, that, in me day, I would  
'a' worn wiv pride.

## VI'LITS

But I'm a father now, an' sez, "'Ere,  
son, you git inside  
An' show yer mother that there eye. 'Ow  
did it come about?"  
Sez 'e, "A big bloke gimme that. I  
knocked the beggar out!"

I looks fer 'arf a second at the fambily  
disgrace,  
Then I picks another vi'let so 'e couldn't  
see me face.

I wus grinnin' most unfatherlike, an'  
feelin' good inside.

"You show yer Mar that eye uv yours.  
I'm 'shamed uv you!" I lied.

I watch 'im creep inside the 'ouse, an' 'ear  
'is mother's yell.

An' then I straightens up me face an' goes  
inside as well.

'Twus raw beef-steak an' vinegar, an' tears,  
before she's done.

An' the sort uv look she gimme sez, "Yeh  
see 'ow 'e's begun!"

I don't disturb the rites excep' to give  
some kind advice.

## VI'LITS

In younger days I've caught black-eyes,  
an' give 'em once or twice.  
"That big boy should be punished," sez  
Doreen, "'oo 'it our Bill."  
I pats the 'ero's bandages, an' answers 'er,  
"'E will."

That ev'nin', down be'ind the shed, near  
where the scrub grows dense,  
I gives young Bill a lesson in the art uv  
self-defence.

I teaches 'im an uppercut that Ginger  
Mick tort me

In ole days, down in Spadger's Lane. I  
gits down on me knee  
To show 'im 'ow to time 'is 'it. 'E sneaks  
beneath me guard  
Quite sudden, while I'm yappin', an' 'e  
cracks me one reel 'ard.

Did it please me Wot do *you* think?  
Strike! That kid 'as got the  
knack!

An' it pleased me all to pieces 'ow the ole  
game all came back;

## VILITS

Left-swings an' jolts an' short-arm jabs  
— the 'ole dash box uv tricks,  
Sich as we used down in the Lane when  
we wus short uv bricks.  
I'm showin' 'im a fancy 'it, a reel ole ding-  
dong clout,  
When the murderin' young savage tries to  
knock me front teeth out!

Uv course, 'e 'urt 'is little 'and, an' fetches  
out a yell  
That brings Doreen down double quick.  
An' then — 'twus merry 'ell.  
She grabs the kid up in 'er arms, an' gives  
me sich a look  
As I ain't seen since years ago, when I  
done — somethin' crook.  
“ You'll 'ave 'im like *you* wus!” she cries,  
“ I'd sooner see 'im dead!.  
You want to make 'im. . . .” “ Don't,”  
I sez. “ We'll take the rest as  
said.”

It 'urt to see 'er shieldin' 'im as tho' I wus  
a plague.



## VILITS

An' ain't 'e mine as much as 'ers? Yet,  
I seen, sort o' vague,

The woman's way she looked at it, the  
picters that she 'ad

Uv young Bill goin' to the pack, an' fol-  
lerin' 'is dad.

I tries me 'ardest to explain, an' made some  
fool icxuse;

But I'm marri'd to a woman, an'—Aw,  
wot's the flamin' use?

I tells 'er if we'd 'ave young Bill keep up  
'is end at school

'E will 'ave to use 'is flippers; but I sez it  
like a fool.

I sez it like I was ashamed to 'ave 'im  
learn to fight.

When all the time, down in me 'eart, I  
knoo that I was right.

She just gives me another look, an' goes  
in wiv the kid.

An' me? I picks them vi'lits up, not  
knowin' wot I did.

I 'as them fool things in me 'and when I  
lobs in the 'ouse,

## VILITS

An' makes bets wiv meself about the  
chances that she'll rouse.

But 'er, she comes the calm an' cold.

Think's I, "'Ere's where I fall

Fer a forty-quid pianner, if I want to  
square it all,

Goo'-bye to forty lovely quid — time-pay-  
mint, fifty-three —

Then all at once she smiles an' sez, "Did  
you pick *those* fer me?"

"Did you pick those fer *me*," she sez.

"Oh, Bill!" 'an then, "Oh, *Bill!*"

I 'ints I 'ad idears to leave 'em to 'er in me  
will.

She grabs them dilly vi'lits, an' she 'olds  
'em to 'er nose.

"Oh, Bill!" she smiles, "You alwus  
knoo 'ow fond I wus uv those!

Oh, Bill! You *dear!*" She 'ugs me then,  
jist in the same ole way.

'Struth! I'm marri'd to a woman, an' . . .  
I'll learn young Bill some day!

## POSSUM

**J**IST 'ere it gripped me, on a sudden,  
like a red-'ot knife.  
I wus diggin' in the garden, talkin'  
pleasant to me wife,  
When it got me good an' solid, an' I  
fetches out a yell,  
An' curses soft down in me neck, an'  
breathes 'ard fer a spell.  
Then, when I tries to straighten up, it stabs  
me ten times worse.  
I think per'aps I'm dyin', an' chokes back a  
reel 'ot curse.

"I've worked too fast," I tells Doreen.  
"Me backbone's runnin' 'ot.  
I'm sick! I've got — Oo, 'oly wars! I  
dunno *wot* I've got!  
Jist 'ere — *Don't touch!* — Jist round  
back 'ere, a blazin' little pain  
Is clawin' up me spinal cord an' slidin'  
down again."

## POSSUM

“ You come inside,” she sez. “ Per’aps it’s  
stoopin’ in the sun.  
Does it ’urt much?” I sez, “ Oh, no; I’m  
’avin’ lots o’ fun.”

Then, cooin’ to me, woman-like, she pilots  
me inside.  
It stabs me every step I takes; I thort I  
would ’a’ died.

“ There now,” she sez. “ Men can’t  
stand pain, it’s alwus understood.”  
“ Stand pain?” I ’owls. Then, Jumpin’  
Jakes! It gits me reely good!  
So I gets to bed in sections, fer it give me  
beans to bend,  
An’ shuts me eyes, an’ groans again, an’  
jist waits fer the end.

“ Now, you lie still,” she orders me, “ until  
I think wot’s best.  
Per’aps ’ot bran, or poultices. You jist lie  
still, an’ rest,”  
Rest? ’Oly Gosh! I clinched me teeth,  
an’ clawed the bloomin’ bunk;  
Fer a red-’ot poker jabbed me ev’ry time  
I much as wunk.

## POSSUM

I couldn't corf, I couldn't move, I couldn't  
git me breath.

"Look after Bill," I tells Doreen. "I feels  
that . . . this is . . . death."

"Death, fiddlesticks," she laughs at me.

"You jist turn over now."

I 'owls, "'Ere! Don't you *touch* me, or  
there'll be a blazin' row!

I want to die jist as I am," She sez,

"Now, Bill, 'ave sense.

This 'as to go on while it's 'ot." I  
groans, "I've no defence."

An' so she 'as 'er way wiv me. An', tho'  
I'm suff'rin' bad,

I couldn't 'elp but noticin' the gentle touch  
she 'ad.

That ev'nin', when the doctor come, sez 'e,

"Ah! 'Urtin' much?

Where is the trouble?" I sez, "Where you  
ain't allowed to touch!"

'E mauls an' prods me while I 'owls to  
beat the bloomin' band.

Gawbli'me! I'd 'a' cracked 'im if I'd  
strength to lift me 'and.

## POSSUM

“Discribe yer symtims now,” sez ’e. I  
fills meself wiv wind,  
An’ slung ’im out a catalog while ’e jist  
stood and grinned.

“Ah, har!” ’e sez. “Sciatiker! Oh,  
we’ll soon ’ave yeh well.”

“Sciatiker?” sez I. “Yer sure yeh don’t  
mean Jumpin’ ’Ell?”

It ain’t no privit devil wiv a little jagged  
knife?”

“Tut, tut,” ’e grins. “You’ll soon be  
right. I leaves yeh to yer wife.”

I looks at ’er, she smiles at me, an’ when I  
seen that smile:

“Aw, poultices!” I groans. An’ she in-  
joys it all the while!

But I’m marri’d to a woman; an’, I gives  
yeh my straight tip,

It makes a man feel glad uv it when sick-  
ness gits a grip.

’Er looks is full uv tenderness ’er ways  
is full uv love,

An’ ’er touch is like a blessin’ as she  
gently bends above.

## POSSUM

'Er speech is firm, but motherin'; 'er man-  
ners strict, but mild:  
Yer 'er 'usban', an' 'er patient, an' 'er little  
orphin child.

When yer marri'd to a woman an' yer  
feelin' well an' right;  
When yer frame is full uv ginger an' yer  
mouth is full uv skite,  
Then yeh tork about the "missus" in an  
'orf'and sort uv way;  
She's 'andy in the 'ouse if she don't 'ave  
too much to say.  
But when Ole Man Sciatiker, 'e does yeh  
up reel neat,  
Then she's yer own reel mate, she is, an'  
all yer 'ands an' feet.

An' so Doreen, she nurses me while I lie  
there an' grouch;  
Fer I'm snarky when I tumble that it ain't  
me dyin' couch.  
I barks at 'er, an' snarls at 'er, an' orders  
'er about,  
An' nearly wears the feet orf 'er wiv  
trottin' in an' out.

## POSSUM

An' while Ole Man Sciatiker, 'e 'as me in  
'is sway  
Doreen, she jist gives in to me — an' alwus  
gits 'er way.

Three solid days I 'as uv it, an' then the  
pain lets out.

I'm feelin' fit fer graft again, an' wants to  
git about.

It's then she lets me see 'er 'and, an'  
orders, " You stay there

Until yeh gits yer 'ealth an' strength to  
sit up in a chair."

" But there's that stove-wood," I begins.  
Sez she, " Now, don't you fret.

I'm very sparin' wiv it, an' there's tons an'  
tons there yet."

Tell yeh straight; I got to like it. It's a  
crook thing to confess,

But to 'ave 'er fussin' round me gives me  
chunks uv 'appiness.

So I gits out in the garden wiv an arm-  
chair an' a rug,

An' I comes the floppin' invaleed, an'  
makes meself reel snug.



## POSSUM

I droops me eyes an' 'angs me 'ands, an'  
looks dead crook an' ill;  
An' wriggles ev'ry time she sez, "Wot  
would yeh like now, Bill?"

An' then, one day, I 'ears the axe down  
there be'ind the 'ouse;  
An' I sees meself a loafer, an' me con-  
science starts to rouse.

I 'eaves me frame out uv the chair, an'  
wanders down the yard.

She's beltin' at a knotty log, an' beltin'  
good an' 'ard.

I grabs the axe. "Give up," I sez. "I  
ain't no shattered wreck.

This 'ere's my job." An' then Gawstruth!  
I gits it in the neck!

"Am I yer wife?" she asks me straight.

"Why can't yeh trust me, Bill?

Am I not fit to see to things when you are  
weak an' ill?"

I tries to say I'm possumin', an' reely  
well an' strong;

But ev'ry time I starts to tork she's got  
me in the wrong.



## POSSUM

“Yeh can’t deceive me, Bill,” she sez.

“Yeh ’ealth is fur frum good.

Ye jist can’t trust yer wife to chop a little  
bit uv wood!

“Yeh got to come out in the cold,” she  
sez, “wivout yer wraps.

An’ now I’ll ’ave yeh on me ’ands fer days  
wiv a relapse!”

“I been pretendin’,” I iexplains. She  
sez, “Am I yer wife?

Yet sooner than yeh’d trust to me yeh go  
an’ risk yer life,”

Well, I’m marri’d to a woman, an’—it  
might seem sort uv meek—

I goes back into bed again . . . an’ ’ates  
it . . . fer a week!

THE END







LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 675 129 5



Hollinger Corp.  
pH 8.5