

The Forward continued his dissertation, remarking, among other things, that if it were not for certain weak spots in the rear, the team might easily look for the Western Basket Ball Championship. The Girl replied absent-mindedly. Her preoccupation seemed to him to have a shade of sarcasm in it, and he resented it.

"You don't seem to take much interest in the game," he said at last.

"Yes, I do. You know I do."

He could not understand this girl. Here was the best game of the season, the swellest crowd, and himself devoting his time and glory to her alone. And yet she seemed unsatisfied. Perhaps, he thought, she was "the woman who never could understand."

So the Majestic One rose, and said he needed some courtplaster on his elbow. And she smiled sweetly upon him before he went for the plaster.

When he was gone she bit her lip and frowned delicately, thinking of what he had said about the weak spots in the rear. She also recalled his wish that Wines might be in his old place, just for tonight. She knew that the Left Guard had once been a fellow named Wines. But that was before she took an interest in the game.

The second half started with a rush. The men came into it under intense strain, and they were not yet sufficiently tired to become indifferent.

But the play was too fast for the Left Guard. He told himself he was doing his best. The crowd and the score told him that was not good enough. Then, because he was tired, he asked himself what was the use. And because in the midst of strife no answer came, his man made two baskets—both of which he should have blocked.

Then he asked himself the same question once more, and tripped a man hard by way of showing that there was no answer. The man fell, and the Right Forward swooped down on the ball and threw a goal from the farther end of the Gymnasium. The Guard's reasoning failed at that point. For he could not see why the Forward should be given credit for winning the series—the throw was the one which decided the game—merely because *he* had tripped a man. His conscience smote him for tripping; on this subject his conscience was generally silent.

Then the Guard decided that there really was no use; and he jabbed his man sharply in the ribs to prove it. The game was slower now, and more strictly watched. The man protested with what breath he had left (a sharp

