

A Day at the Atelier

“GOOD morning, men.” This from the newly elected “Massier” or “Mace-bearer,” as he enters the Atelier about 10:30, and proceeds to start work for the day. His arrival brings assurance that the day is already well along, and that lunch time will soon be there.

“Good morning, Mosseer,” “Good morning, Mr. Messiah,” are the various return greetings from the aforesaid “men,” and the day is commenced.

“Say, who stole my thumb-tack?” shouts Cook, looking around the floor for the precious metal disk, and not forgetting to keep a sharp lookout on the boards of his next door neighbors—“Fritz” Anderson and the “Massier.” At this, “Wrinkles,” scenting trouble, tugs at his chain, which slips, and he makes for the door, with the evident intention of copying his master, in seeking the society of congenial friends of the fair sex in the basement.

“Say, Cook, who are your friends? Introduce me, will you?” is heard from the corner, where “Dame” Fortune smiles. “Shorty” Truesdell talks parrot talk, “Jerry” Cerny says nothing, J. “Carrie” Johnson “piffles” at anything, and Jack Travnicek sings:

*“Katrine, Katrine, you’re a picture so fine,
That I couldn’t paint it like you are, ain’t it,
My sweet Katrine!”*

“Orville, oh, Orville! Can’t you come over and play in my back yard?” pipes Cookie, in a childish treble. “I’ll ask my ma if I can come over and play in your back yard,” shrills “Shorty” in reply, and this starts a song and clog dance by “Al” Becker, to the tune of:

*“My, but I feel blue,
For I really don’t know what to do—”*

he having decided to relax for a moment.

“Come and look at my house a minute,” calls “Fritz” to Matthes. “Yah, mein freund,” exclaims “Shark” Matthes, “du bist ein donner wetternochmalschafskopfseselthier, Du!” which precipitates a wrestling bout between the two, during which a drawing board falls over, to say nothing of an easel or two, and finally one of the stools strikes the floor with a heavy thud. Each one bends industriously over his board as the door opens, and a gentlemanly guard appears, with the reasonable request that “We make a little less noise, as it sounds very loud underneath.”

After he goes, all is quiet for a while, and Reily, the “Fighting Conductor,” gets another nap; but soon our irrepressible singer, Becker, strikes up again:

*“Let’s all go up to Maud’s,
We’ll have a jubilee.
Make love to all her sisters, boys,
But please leave Maud to me.”*