

MY WIFE AND I—

By T-bone Slim.

Just as I was about to doze off to sleep my wife jabbed me in the ribs: "Say T," says she, "I see by the paper the miners still have money." — "Maybe they don't know any better," I growled.

"But it says here, twenty dollar bills are plentiful among them."

"What of it — what business had the government, to print them, in the first place — whose fault is it if the miners can't get rid of them — If the business men wont take them?"

"Why, T-bone Slim, what are you saying — surely they could get rid of them in a company store." (My wife has confidence in human nature.)

She seemed very peaceable tonight so I thought I'd move in on a few winks sleep but hardly had I started snoring in my best vein, now and then running into sulphur when she poked me in the ribs again — "Say T, it says here, when they work they make \$8 to \$25 a day — why don't you get a job in the mines instead of depending on the capitalist system to support us?"

"For the love of Mike, Claraminta", I pleaded, "will you let me sleep, and go to sleep yourself. The operators are not handing out twenty-five dollars a day; nor eight dollars a day; nor five dollars a day. — Twenty five dollars a day makes \$7,500 per year, enough to live on, in these days, but the miners are not getting that much; nor are they getting \$3,000; nor \$1,000 — in fact the coal miners, are getting about the same as ore miners (which is little if anything) with this distinction: The coal miners are asking for more.

"Now, dear Claraminta, you want me to get a Job in the mines. — Have you noticed that black stuff I'm spitting up every morning? you have? — Well that is some of the finest Pennsylvania bituminous bottom-coal —

"I collected it twelve years ago.

"You want me to go back into the mines — Claraminta, believe you want to get rid of me, quick—

"Why, even the mine mules know the dangers lurking there.

"I remember, when I was young, and the mule I was driving, in a mine, would get lazy or tired; all I had to do was to reach behind me, get a hand full of fine coal from the car I was riding . . toss it against the roof over the mules back.

"The mule would jump, three times its length . . . thinking the roof was coming down. And they did 'use to come down.'

"Many of the women you see now days, Claraminta, come from the ribs of miners injured in the mines, when the roof came down; and that, Claraminta, is the reason so many women are good fighters. Altho you understand, my dear, women as a rule, do not fight the cause of a thing, but the result of it."

Right here I must introduce my wife to the readers of this periodical—

I have every reason to say women are brave, and good fighters — my experience has taught me this and altho I, and my wife, are not on a peace basis, (we are living under a truce) she has agreed not to mar my looks, too severely.

But she wants the world to know that it is not because of any infatuation she has for said looks. — We have certain proscribed lines of deportment over which either must advance and it is my firm conviction the only reason doesn't lay hands upon me is because she fears publicity.

"Now go to sleep Claraminta," I coaxed but she was obdurate, whatever that means, and soon was at it again.

— "It says here in the Tribune: — They buy the best of everything — the most expensive porterhouse, (and you know, dear T, you are so fond of porterhouse steak.) — 'Fine clothes, and automobiles.' Those that are at all thrifty are property owners."

"Now listen here, Minnie, (I always call her Minnie, (Just before a battle) in memory to the minnows I had to live on during the last coal strike I was in) listen here. The coal miners may be property owners but it is because property owners only can afford to work in mines — those who must needs pay rent, gradually starve out . . . They buy automobiles? Not on you tin-type, Minnie. — If they have automobiles, they have them when they go there — to get there with, and in some places they have to have air ships if the

company wont hire 'em . . . knowing they couldn't climb the hills. . . as to porter house steak, they raise their own 'steak' in the hollows between the hills which Jehovah donated to the operators."

When I mentioned Jehovah, something happened (my wife, like myself, is very religious) — I thought the roof had come down.

When I came to, it was broad daylight — my wife was bathing my fevered brow with vinegar — my 59 ct shirt was wet with the tears of repentance of my wife.

I forgave her and altho I will recover never will I be the same.

P. S. I will venture to say that not one man in all United States will go on strike if given food, clothing and shelter in abundance — Those are the things for which men strike and to which they are entitled.