

There was a boy by the name of Eugene August who wanted me to go to Indiana with him. He had run away from home. He was gone about eight years from home, and he knew that I had run away from home, so he wanted me to go with him and we would have a lot of good times, he said. Said he had a whole lot of sisters.

I told him I would go, but I had to get a pair of boots made, so I went and ordered the boots and they would not have them ready until Saturday night. Well, I think it was about the next day he came to me and told me he would have to go right away. He had got a man in his place and he would have to get back pretty quick. I would not go without my boots.

My brother always kept telling me to put on his boots. He always had nice boots and he kept telling me to put his boots on, so I made up my mind. I did not know if I could wear them. He wore a lot smaller boot than I did, but I said to myself "I will wear them if it kills me."

So I told him I would go but I had to go and get some clothes. I thought an awful sight of my shirt, coat, vest and boots. When I had that on and a paper collar and a neck tie then I was dressed. I could not make enough money to buy underwear. I had to keep that to spend. I had to have enough money to spend. I liked to run around awful well.

So I went up town and I bought a little valise. I bought two nice white shirts, two nice white starched bosom shirts. I bought two boxes of nice paper collars, linen collars, and three different neck ties. You could see those ties a block off. They were flashy; they were pretty nice, I thought. I tried to buy a pair of socks in there but they were all too heavy and thick for me. I knew I had to have a thin pair of socks. I went into two different clothing stores before I found socks that would suit me, and I found two pair of nice, thin, silk socks. Bought them and then I went in a drug store, as I was going home and happened to think of it, and bought two cakes of Castile soap. I knew I would have to use them.

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So I goes down to the boarding house and I takes my brother's boots and takes me in a room and I whittles up one bar of this Castile soap. I shaved it all up in one bunch and then I rubbed the instep and around down close to the heel and leg of the boot, and then I soaped my socks well, the leg, instep and heel, and then I tugged and pulled, and pulled and tugged until I got the boots on. I stood up and looked at my boots, and My Golly what a pretty set of boots I had. I had a nice pair of boots.

Then we got all ready and started for the train. We had to go to Indiana. I did first rate until I got on the train and after I got on the train I was there only a short time until I knew I had a pair of dancing boots on. I could not keep my feet still. They were going all the while and I was wishing to get off that train, and when they sung out "Crow Station" I was tickled to death, because I knew there was where we got off. I had been dancing from Chicago clean out there with my dancing boots on. I could not keep my feet still at all.

There we took a stage out to Cedar Lake. There were two ladies in the Stage and one gentleman, and us two made five. We went on and we had not gone very far, going through the timber and plenty well in the night, until all at once the axle broke. Well, I was tickled to death to get out, on account of dancing all the while in that coach with those dancing boots on my feet. I was dancing all the while and could not help it.

So me and my boy jumped off and helped them unhitch the horses. I was awful tickled to help them unhitch on account it eased my feet walking around. When we got them unhitched the stage driver said, "I got to put a lady on this horse and another lady on this other horse, and this gentleman has to ride this horse and I got to ride this other one, and you can stop here and build a fire and stop in the coach, and I will be back here tomorrow and pick you up."

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I had never been out in the country before, out in the wilds so far west, and I was scared of the bears, tigers and all the other wild animals and so I would not camp, but he wanted to build a fire. He was used to the prairie and wanted to build a fire but I did not. The driver said there was a house ahead, so I picked up my little satchel and made him go, but every step seemed like ten miles. My feet were in such misery with those boots on.

We kept on walking and walking, and I thought we had walked a good many miles, but by rights we had walked only a little ways. He said, "Look, there is someone camping over there. It is a fire. Let us camp here." Said I, "No, let us go and camp with them." So we started and we had not gone only a little ways and we saw that we were looking through a window into a fire place. It was a fire place in place of a camp fire and in a house, so it tickled me and I rushed up to the door and I rapped. They said, "Come in," and opened the door. There was an old man in there, an old woman and two nice looking girls. I asked them if we couldn't have some supper, breakfast and a bed, and they said, "Yes." The driver had come by and told them we would be there pretty soon, so they told us to set down and they would have something ready pretty quick.

As quick as I sat down again my dancing boots began to work and I couldn't keep my feet still. It was no time until they called us in to supper. They had chicken and everything; they had an awful nice supper. I tried to eat because I was awfully hungry. I tried but I couldn't, my feet was dancing too much and I had to wait until they got through eating, and as quick as they did I got away from the table and asked to retire.

He lit a little piece of candle about four inches long and he walked up to a corner that had two poles and ¹²little slats nailed across to make a ladder to get up to the second floor, up to the loft, and he took us up there and at the other end of the room there was a little table and he set the candle on it and went back downstairs.

There were a lot of dresses hanging around the bed and we had a lot of fun about sleeping in the girls' room. I wanted my boots off, so I tugged and pulled until I got them off, and then we went to bed.

We had no more than got to bed a few minutes, I don't think, when "Rap, Rap" came at the door, and the old folks said, "Come in." Two young fellows came in and they talked and said they were glad to see them and everything. They talked there for a while and then the old man excused himself and said that on account of being old, he and the old woman would go to bed.

After they went to bed I began to hear them downstairs. I heard "Choo Choo," and then "Tee, Hee" and then the other, "Choo, Choo", and it was going on for quite a while. This boy with me said, "I may know them young fellows. I will get up and see. They are courting." I said, "What?" "They are courting," he said. I did not know what that courting was, and he said, "I will get up and see if I can tell who they are."

So he gets up and it was nothing but a common board floor and you could look through the cracks. I was in bed and he got up and began looking through the cracks. I noticed the first thing that his head was dodging back and forth, first one way and then the other, and I began to think this courting must be something awful nice, so I thought I would get out and see what courting was.

I gets out of bed and I could look straight down, but I began to look first one way and then the other. So at once I raised my eye up and saw at the far end of the room a big knot hole. I made up my mind if I could get at that knot hole I could see what courting was, and so I put out one hand and as I reached that up the floor would squeak, squeak, and I would put down my other hand and the floor, By Golly, would keep asqueaking and I would hold my breath. But, I kept going on the while to this knot hole. When I got to it, I put out one hand on one side of it and I reached out my other hand and

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put on the other side, and I was down on my hands and knees, and as I reached over to look in the knot hole, up went one of the boards and down I went. I fell right square on my back when I hit the floor below. It knocked the wind out of me. I got up as quick as I could. These boys hollered, "Murder, murder!" They ran out of the house and shut the door, so the girls could not get out. They were awful scared. I guess they thought probably the Devil had fallen through the floor.

So, when I got up I started to hunt the ladder up. They started ahead of me and were running around the house, and I could not find the ladder. They kept hollering, "Murder! Murder!" all the while. This old man ran out of where he was sleeping and we both ran right together. As he come out of the room, I ran right up against him. Said I, "I am used to getting up in my sleep. I must have got up and fell through the floor," and I said "I can't find the ladder." He lit another piece of candle and showed me the way up.

This Eugene August, I was with, had half the sheet shoved in his mouth to keep from laughing.

The next morning I gets up and I had an awful time getting my dancing boots on again, an awful time. I waited until breakfast was called before I put them on. I did not want them on any longer than I could help. So I went down to breakfast and they were all ready to sit down. The two girls sat on one side of the table and me and this boy sat on the other. They were looking at me all the while, and I was pretty hungry, and was eating as fast as I could. They were all watching me and I was eating just as fast as I could eat. Every little while I would throw up my eyes and I could see they were just looking at me, and I was eating.

The old man got talking to this boy and said, "Your partner had quite an accident last night. He got up in his sleep and fell through the floor. He said, "Oh, yes. I heard them boys when they come here and I thought I

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might know them and I got up and was looking through the crack, so he got up and you see that knot hole there, He went over to look through the knot hole and there was where he fell through."

I could not eat my breakfast after that. I could not eat a thing. I could have killed him for telling that. The old man said, "You must have been here before." He said, "Oh, yes." "What is your name?" He did not let him know at all.

We stayed until towards evening again and the stage come along and then we had to go on, and went to Cedar Lake. There we got our supper, bed and breakfast, and this here boy asked the landlord if he could hire a team and driver to go out to August's place. He said, "Yes." He called a driver in and told him to hitch a team up, and By Golly, we would be ready to go out.

We got up in the morning and had breakfast, and after breakfast this young fellow stepped up to the counter to pay his bill and the old fellow took a pencil and went to figuring out what we owed, and he had about figured when the boy told him that he wanted seven pounds of soap put on the bill, and the old fellow jumped clean over the counter, dropped his pencil and hollered, "Mother, Mother, I found Eugene August! I found Eugene August!"

The old fellow would not let the driver go. He said, "I found Eugene August and I got to take him to his father." So he drove the buggy out himself, about eight miles, to his father, and when we got out near his father's place we seen a wagon coming and he said, "There is your mother, father and sisters." They had a regular, big wagon and it was chuck full. We drove up to them and this man stepped out and stopped his team to be sure the old man stopped his and they spoke. The first thing this man said was, "Do you know this young man, Mr. August?" and , "Do you, Mrs. August?" They said, "No, no, I do not." "Do any of your girls know him?" "No, no." He said, "I have fetched seven pounds of soap." They all jumped out of the

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wagon and I have never seen a young fellow kissed so much. His mother, father and sisters all kissed him.

So we had to go to church with them, and oh, I had an awful time in that church. I never was in a church like it before. They would kneel down and stand up and do it again, and at last I could not go through the performance, and the two girls would push me and the old fellow would push me, the same as though they had known me all their life, and when we were kneeling they said, "Get up, they are all looking at you."

Well it was no time until church was out and then we went home. When we got home his mother told the girls to go and smother a hive of bees and fix a room upstairs for our room. They fixed the room up and they put a four quart pan of honey up there in a comb and lots of cake on the table, and this boy we went around. The old man gave me his shoes while I was there; I couldn't wear them dancing boots any more.

We stayed there pretty near a week and the boy said, "Let's go on. You don't know my mother. She is awful mean. She is good now but if we stay she will be mean. If you wait until you found out what my mother is you won't want to come back again, so let's go as I have to get back to Chicago."

We started for Chicago after getting ready. When I got back home I always swore that I would never, never again in the world wear dancing boots, and I know that when I see young girls and boys in a dancing hall they must have dancing boots on like I had that time.