

FICTION

Carolyn Wells

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# The Rubaiyat of Bridge

A PUBLIC DOMAIN BOOK

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# The Rubaiyat of Bridge

by

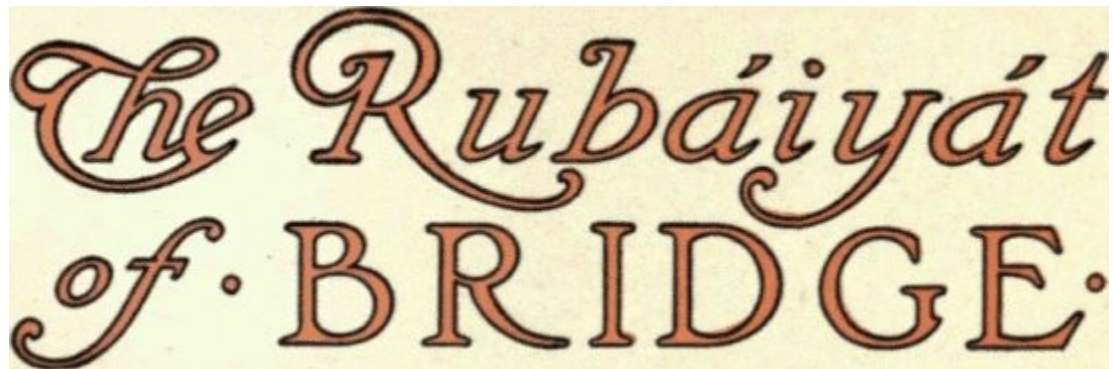
CAROLYN WELLS

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The title 'The Rubaiyat of BRIDGE' is written in a decorative, calligraphic font. 'The Rubaiyat' is in a flowing script, while 'of BRIDGE' is in a bold, blocky font. The text is set against a light yellow background.

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Now the new Rubber rousing new Desires,  
The Thoughtful Soul to Doubling Hearts aspires.  
=When the Red Hand of Dummy is laid down,  
And even Hope of the Odd Trick expires!



Ah, make the Most of what We yet may Take,  
Before we lose the Lead, and let Them make  
=Trick after Trick! While we throw down High Cards,  
Sans Lead, sans Score, sans Honor, and sans Stake!



A Book of Bridge Rules underneath the Bough,  
A Score Card, Two new Packs of Cards, and Thou  
=With Two Good Players sitting opposite,  
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!



The Card no Question makes of ayes or noes,  
But High or Low, as suits the Player shows;  
=But he who Stands Beside you, Looking On,--  
He knows about it all! He Knows!! **He Knows!!!**



I sometimes think there's never such Tirade  
As where some Bridge Game has been badly Played.  
=When Some One thinks you should have made no Trump,  
And you have thriftily declared a Spade!



Myself, when Young, did eagerly frequent  
Bridge Tournaments, and heard Great Argument  
=About this Point and That. Yet, after all,  
Came out no Better Player than I went.



For I remember stopping by the Way  
To watch Four Celebrated Champions play.  
=They Differed on the Discard, Make, and Lead.  
Whatever One Said,--Said The Others, "Nay!"





Why, if a Soul can fling the Rules aside,  
And let his Card=Sense be his Only Guide,  
=Were't not a Shame, were't not a Shame for him  
By Street and Elwell tamely to abide?



And if the Card you hopefully Finesse  
Capture the Trick,--your Partner Smiles! Oh yes!  
=And you smile Broadly! But, if it be Caught  
By the Fourth Hand,--your Smiles are somewhat Less!



But if in Vain down on the Stubborn Score  
You gaze; and make it No Trumps, just once more,--  
=With Strength in Every Suit, but with No Ace,--  
How then,--when Dummy calmly Lays down Four!



To Them the Heart Convention did I show,  
And with Mine Own Hand tried to make it go.  
=But this is all the Wisdom that I reaped,--  
"With more than Three Hearts, always lead the Low!"



For, Trump or No=Trump, though with all the Rules,  
Of different Masters and of different Schools,  
=I've played with Players of all Sorts,--but I  
Have never beaten anything,--but Fools!



Indeed, indeed--to Quit It oft Before  
I swore,--but did I mean it when I swore?  
=And then,--and then came Three, and, Cards in Hand,  
I Joined them, and they made me keep the Score!



Alas, how Subtle Bridge alluring Woos!  
And robs me of my Nightly Beauty=Snooze.  
=I often Wonder what Bridge Players gain  
One=half so Precious as the Sleep they Lose.



Oh, Threats of Loss, and Hopes of Golden Store,  
One thing in Bridge is Certain,—'tis not Lore!  
=One thing is Certain, and the Rest is Chance:  
The Hand that holds the Cards will win the Score!





Some for the Gain of Penny Points, and Some  
Sigh for the Lovely Prizes yet to come.  
=Oh, take the Prize and let the Pennies go,  
Nor heed the winning of a Paltry Sum.



When You and I our Last Bridge Game have played,  
The Games will go right on by Those who've Stayed,  
=Who of Our Coming and Départure heed  
As the Heart Ace should heed a little Spade.



We are no other than a Moving Row  
Of Magic Dummy Hands that Come and Go.  
=Played to the Last Trump by the Hand of Fate,  
By whom our Hearts are Shuffled To and Fro.



The End.