

### COONING

Roy Fuller lived down near the depot end of town. Back of the house the family cultivated a few acres. I knew Roy because his older brother was "sweet" on my best friend, Nelly, across the street.

One early evening as we were riding bicycles up and down the uneven wooden sidewalks, Roy paused a moment and said, "How'd you like to go cooning for a melon? I know where there's a dandy."

"Do we dare?" I asked fearfully but hopefully. A little danger on these forays always added zest.

"Scardy-cat!" said Roy. That settled it.

"All right, let's!"

We hid the bicycles behind a fence in an abandoned yard half way down the hill and continued on foot to the railway tracks. Turning up the tracks we traveled some distance and then turned in to a large cornfield. The moon had come up a big golden ball. It brought the corn shocks and surrounding trees into sharp relief. On the ground I could see a maze of green vines, some bearing huge yellow pumpkins and others long green melons.

Roy went straight to the biggest melon in view. I vaguely wondered how he approached it so unerringly! Taking out a huge jack knife, he severed the fruit from the vine and, patting the ground beside him, said, "Come on and have some." The melon was sun ripened, the pulp bright red and deliciously sweet. We ate it all.