



**AS SUGGESTED BY NORAH.**

By Matilda Henderson Wheelock.

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Ordinarily the merry clatter of pans and kettles and the cheerful swish of soapuds as Norah's dexterous hands manipulated the dishcloth formed an enlivening accompaniment to the tender strains of "Kathleen Mavourneen" or the rollicking melody of "Rory O'More."

But this morning no fresh young Irish voice caroled forth through the open window above her kitchen table, and the corners of Norah's wide red mouth had a pathetic droop, wholly out of keeping with a nativity which unequivocally proclaimed itself in every feature.

Even the clatter and swish had a subdued sound, as though the pots and kettles and the soapuds, realizing that sorrow had invaded their domain, were thus tendering a seemly acknowledgment.

This explains how it came about that another sound, also subdued and likewise indicative of acquaintance with sorrow, came floating in through the window and fell suddenly on Norah's ears.

This was nothing more nor less than a muffled sob, and a single glance through the window sufficed to show that it had proceeded from the hammock swung in the shade of the big crab apple tree in the back yard.

This hammock, supposed to be Norah's own particular retreat in her hours of leisure, was now occupied by a tumbled heap of pink gingham, which lay with face forlornly buried in a weather beaten pillow.

Norah watched for a wondering moment the ebullition of childish woe, then dried her hands, wiped her eyes with a corner of her apron and hastened down the kitchen steps in the direction of the hammock.

A deeper burrowing of the head into the pillow, a louder and more soulful sob and a more vicious output of the long, black leg rewarded her initial inquiry as to the cause of anguish so acute.

But presently the story came out—Aunt Beth had broken her promise!

Norah knew of the picnic this afternoon at Watson's grove.

Norah did and furtively wiped away two fresh tears as she made a sad little sound in her throat indicative of assent. For was there not to be a dance in the evening, and wasn't she herself to have gone?

And now—well, now she wasn't going, and something that she knew in her heart would have been said tonight would never be said now!

Well, after promising positively more than a week ago that she, the aggrieved one, should go to this picnic in Uncle Larry's machine along with Uncle Larry and Aunt Beth herself she, the aforementioned untrustworthy Aunt Beth, had calmly announced not half an hour ago that, so far as she and the aggrieved one were concerned, there was to be not only no picnic, but no Uncle Larry!

Now, the aggrieved one knew that "uncle" had been up to date merely an honorary title and that not for some months yet was Uncle Larry to have come into full possession of the aggrieved one as a really and truly niece.

This had been a matter of minor import, since it hardly seemed possible that the emoluments ensuing from the possession of a truly uncle could be greater than were those of one so privileged as to own an Uncle Larry in prospect.

Supplies of candy and motor rides could scarcely in any case be more steady. There hadn't as yet been any picnics, for this was the first of the season. And now there wasn't ever going to be any picnic and no truly Uncle Larry!

As this edict of Aunt Beth, with all its potential consequences, came back to her afresh the aggrieved one, emitting a particularly vociferous wail and giving muscular vent to her despair in a final vicious kick, flung herself out of the hammock upon Norah's own grief burdened breast.

"Why, Norah, you're crying too!" The aggrieved one's sobs underwent a sudden cessation as she became aware of this heretofore unheard of lachrymal proceeding on the part of happy Norah.

"I—I can't help it, miss. I'm so—so sorry—for Miss Beth," sobbed Norah, making a futile attempt to stanch the flow of tears on the corner of the long suffering apron.

Sorry for Aunt Beth! This was an entirely new and rather absurd view of the situation.

"Why, Norah! What are you sorry for Aunt Beth for?"

"Because—oh, miss, because she don't mane it! She don't fver in the world mane a word av it!"

More wonders! Not mean it! Why, if this were true and Aunt Beth really didn't mean it, then there wasn't anybody to be sorry for. The aggrieved one's voice had a sudden joyful note of hope.

"Oh, do you think she didn't really mean it, Norah? Then whatever made her say it?"

"Och, belike 'twas jist a foolish quarrel—jist a foolish, foolish quarrel—an' now she's like to ruin her whole loife be not givin' in! That's the way gurrils be—they'll be dyin' to make oop, but it's die they will before they'll give in! An' the men be jist as bad, for they'll tak' her word for it an' sthaye away, whin if they had anny sinse at all they'd know the poor gurril was givin' the lie to her own heart an'

they'd mak' her own oop to it! Och, poor Miss Beth! All she wants is for him to mak' her own oop—an' it's cryin' her purty eyes out she is this minute, I'll be wagherin'!"

The aggrieved one slid to the ground and stared for a moment in open eyed amazement at the expanse of green gingham flung in an abandon of misery over Norah's bowed head. Then she turned, scurried around to the front and tiptoed softly up the stairs.

It was indeed as Norah had predicted. Aunt Beth was crying her eyes out. A big brown eye applied to the keyhole corroborated the small ear's testimony. Aunt Beth must certainly be very, very sorry indeed if her present apparent misery were any indication of the depth of her penitence.

Having fully satisfied herself upon this point, the aggrieved one, again on tiptoe, retraced her way to the lower hall, listened at the farther end until the rattle of pans and kettles proclaimed the resumption of Norah's interrupted duties, then sped swiftly down the path to the barn and through a passageway into the alley. Nor did she stop until she had traversed a distance of some blocks.

The door of the ornate garage which was her destination stood open. Uncle Larry and the chauffeur were doing something to the big machine.

"She didn't mean it, Uncle Larry! She truly didn't mean it!"

Uncle Larry brought a gloomy gaze to bear upon the small panting figure which confronted him.

Presently the gloom gave partial way to a look of bewilderment, and this in turn to the dawn of a half comprehension, which kaleidoscopic point being reached he stooped, caught the aggrieved one in his arms and set her in the tonneau of the machine.

"Now tell me all about it," he said. "Who doesn't mean what, and what authority have you for supposing she doesn't mean it?"

"Aunt Beth, Norah said she didn't mean it."

The big wrench in the hands of the chauffeur suddenly ceased manipulations, an intricate part of the machinery seeming at the moment to demand close and silent scrutiny.

"Norah said girls were all like that; they'd be dyin' to make up, she said, and wouldn't. An' she said the men ought to make 'em, an' if they had anny sense they would. She said she knew Aunt Beth would be crying her eyes out, an' she was, Uncle Larry, for I slipped upstairs an' she was on the bed with her handkerchief up to her eyes, an' she was crying like anything. An' Norah cried so hard herself you'd 'most think she was the one that had quarreled with you an' wanted to make up an' wouldn't. An' please, Uncle Larry, won't you make Aunt Beth let you keep on being my uncle? An' she'll go to the picnic, too, if you'll make her, Norah says that's all she wants—just to have you make her!"

Master and man exchanged a darting glance, a sudden illumination on the face of each.

"I'll drive the big car myself this afternoon, Nolan," said Uncle Larry. "And if you care to come over to the picnic later in the evening you may take the runabout."

Sparring.

"Will you take me to the theater tonight?"

"Yes, if you want to go."

"Do you want to go?"

"I wouldn't go unless you really wanted to go."

"Don't you want to go?"

"Of course, if you want!"

"But I wouldn't think of taking you unless you want to see the play."

"And I will not go unless you want to go."

"But you are the one to say whether you want to go."

"Of course I see now that you do not want to go, and in that case we will stay at!"

"I do want to go, though, if you want to go."

"Then, of course, you won't say whether you want to take me, so I suppose we shall stay at home."

"On the contrary, if you want to go, we go. If you don't want to go, we don't go. Now what do you say?"

"I say that if you want to go with me I want to go."

About this time he looked at his watch and found that they could not possibly reach the theater before the beginning of the third act—Lippincott's.

Clever Thought.

When a certain country storekeeper, who was also the postmaster of the borough, began the transaction of business one morning about a year ago he found that the safe in which were kept the postage stamps had been robbed during the night and promptly reported the matter to the proper authorities. The latter decided, after an investigation, that restitution should be made for the stolen stamps, but that the expense of repairing the damage to the safe would have to be borne by the storekeeper, which was accordingly done.

Some time later a second robbery was committed and reported, as before, as the result of which there was another investigation, which disclosed the fact that the stamps had been abstracted on this occasion without any violence to the safe.

"But how was it done?" asked the inspector, somewhat puzzled. "The safe does not seem to be injured at all."

"I made up my mind I would not be caught again," replied the postmaster slyly. "I left it open."

Closed.

"Are you going to the same hotel at Palm Beach this winter?"

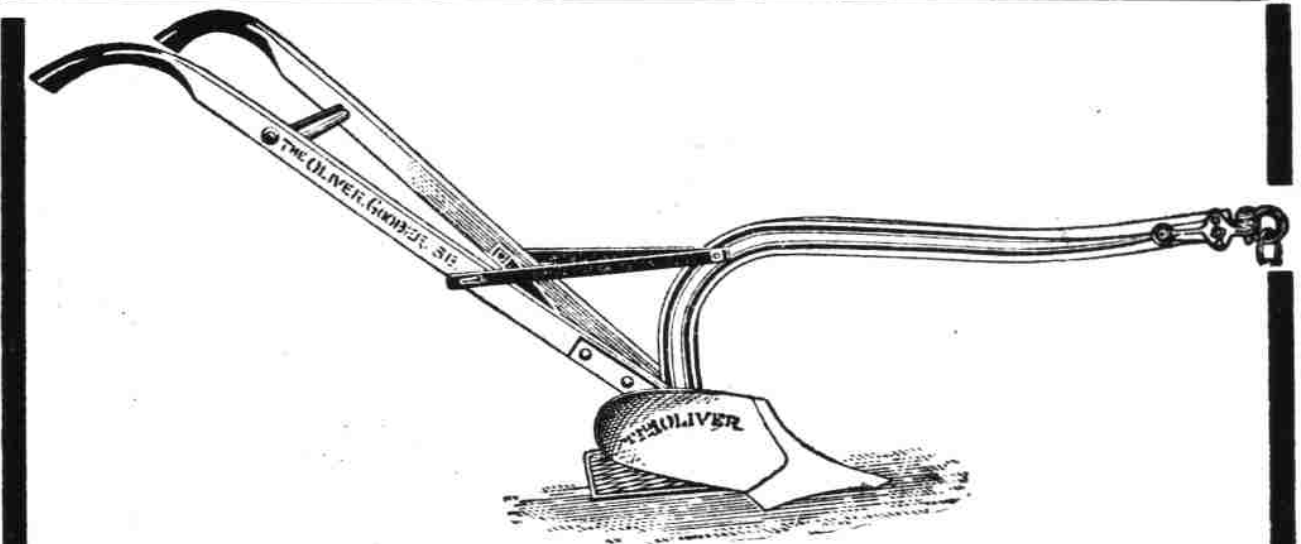
"Good Lord, no! I came away last year and forgot to tip the head waiter."—Cleveland Leader.

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