

### Grandma's Christmas Dinner at The Hotel.

Grandma Simpson had been sick a very long while; so long that they had to change doctors more than twice; and once, after a consultation, all hope was given up. But, grandma pulled through.

Of course, she wasn't as spry as she was before, but when it came along about the holidays, Grandma Simpson began to perk up. And the first thing you knew she was in a terrible stew as to how she would spend Christmas.

Would she go to Carrie's and John's, or would she go to Aunt Mary Johnson's? Or, where would she go? That's what bothered Grandma Simpson.

"Oh, leave it to us, mother," said Jim, her son, and Jane, her daughter. The rest of the brood were scattered. "We'll see you spend Christmas all right!"

Still Grandma Simpson stewed, after the fashion of all good old grandmothers who have led an active and useful life and find themselves suddenly shorn of their former vigor and strength. But Grandma Simpson just wouldn't give in. She was going to spend Christmas, if it was the last thing she ever did. And some of the grand-children said; "Oh, gran-ma ain't going to die yet for a long while to come."

When it came three days before Christmas, Grandma Simpson gave up fretting and began to fume. "It's a wonder," said she "that somebody don't say something definite! If somebody don't say something in a hurry, I'll spend Christmas, as the old woman said, "accordin' to her own taste!"

So Grandma Simpson bundled up and went over to Aunt Mary Johnson's and said: "Mary, I didn't like this putting off things. My mind is made up to spend Christmas, and I'm going to spend it. Now, if you don't ask me here I'm going to the hotel and tell them to set me a Christmas dinner, and send the hack for me when it's ready!"

"Well, Martha," answered Aunt Mary Johnson, without cracking a smile: "I'm sure you're welcome here to whatever I have. But, you know Christmas is going to be a mighty busy day at the express company's office, and son Ellis don't know when he'll get home. So, I'm not going to prepare much dinner. Still, you're welcome to pot-luck, if you care to risk it."

Grandma Simpson thought a full minute. Then she said: "Mary, come to the hotel to Christmas dinner with me!"

"Thanks, Martha, I'll be glad to," said Aunt Mary Johnson without cracking a smile. And Grandma Simpson departed for the little house she called home.

Grandma Simpson was an independent old lady. She would neither live with her son, Jim nor her daughter Jane; nor at Carrie's and John's. She kept house with old black Aunt Sallie for "help" and a Wesleyan student for a "man around the house."

Came Christmas morn. The Wesleyan student took the early morning train to Towanda to spend the day with his folks. Aunt Sallie prepared breakfast and grandma ate alone. After breakfast Aunt Sallie begged off for the day to attend her "grand daughter Jinnie's weddin'." And grandma was alone. How would she dress? What would she put on? For many years she had stuck fast to black and white. But this Christmas morning there came along with the spirit of independence a corresponding desire for some bit of apparel more bright and cheerful. Nothing gaudy, of course; but some-

thing just to brighten up things. So, grandma added a bit of lavender to her throat and wrists, and for the first time in years donned her gold-mounted tortoise comb. Then she took a look at herself in the glass and setted down to wait for the hack to come.

When the hack came Aunt Mary Johnson was in it. Aunt Mary Johnson never cracked a smile. She simply remarked how pretty grandma looked and added: "I always did say, Martha, you were the prettiest bride I ever saw." And grandma's happy Christmas had begun.

Now, whether it was on account of the early breakfast, so the Wesleyan student could catch his train and Aunt Sallie could get away in time for "Jinnie's weddin'," may never be known. But, anyhow, grandma right after entering the hack and settling down in the cushions began to nod, then to doze, and shortly was asleep. Then Aunt Mary Johnson cracked a smile. "Things couldn't come better!" she whispered to herself. "If she'll only stay that way for a little while."

Not towards the hotel did the hack go. It pulled up in the east end of the town in front of Jane's home and stopped. With the stop grandma awoke. Jane's husband was opening the door. And, the first thing grandma knew her things were being taken off in the reception hall, and she and Aunt Mary Johnson were hustled into the library and the doors closed upon them.

"Why, what does this mean?" indignantly spluttered Grandma Simpson. That was as far as she got. For just then there came a burst of music and the sound of joyful voices lifted in song. The doors were thrown open between the library and the great adjoining room, and there-in Grandma Simpson beheld all of her living descendants from far and near ranged in loving welcome style. Two little tots she had never seen before, brought her a bunch of roses.

"I don't believe we will go to the hotel," said Grandma Simpson. "Tel the hackman he can go."

And Aunt Mary Johnson cracked a smile.

### Do They Think of Me at Home?

Do they think of me at home—  
Do they ever think of me—  
I who shared their every grief,  
I who mingled in their glee?  
Are their hearts grown cold and strange  
To the one now doomed to roam?  
I would give the world to know—  
Do they think of me at home?  
I would give the world to know—  
Do they think of me at home?  
Do they think of me at eve,  
Of the songs I used to sing?  
Is the harp I struck untouched?  
Does a stranger wake the string?  
Will no kind, forgiving word  
Come across the raging foam?  
Shall I never cease to sigh,  
Do they think of me at home?  
Shall I never cease to sigh,  
Do they think of me at home?  
Do they think of how I loved  
In my happy early days?  
Do they think of him who came,  
But could never win their praise?  
I am happy by his side,  
And from mine he'll never roam,  
But my heart will sadly ask,  
Do they think of me at home?  
But my heart will sadly ask,  
Do they think of me at home?

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