

Old Lady Number 31

By LOUISE FORSSLUND

Author of "The Story of Sarah" "The Ship of Dreams" Etc.

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SYNOPSIS.

Captain Abraham Rose and Angelina, his wife, have lost their little home through Abe's unwise purchase of Twenty Gold mining stock. Their household goods sold, the \$100 auction money, all they have left, will place Abe in the Old Man's home, or Angy in the Old Lady's home. Both are self-sacrificing but Abe decides: "My dear, this is the first time I've had a chance to take the rest of it." The old couple bid good-by to the little house. Terror of "what folks will say" sends them along by paths to the gate of the Old Ladies' home. Miss Abigail, matron of the Old Ladies' home, hears of the ill fortune of the old couple. She tells the other old ladies, and Blossy, who has paid a double fee for the only double bed-chamber, voices the unanimous verdict that Abe must be taken in with his wife. Abe awakens next morning to find that he is "Old Lady No. 31." The old ladies give him such a warm welcome that he is made to feel at home at once. "Brother Abe" expands under the warm reception of the sisters, and a reign of peace begins in the Old Ladies' home. Abe is the center of the community. The semi-annual visit of Blossy's aged lover, Capt. Samuel Darby, is due. Abe advises her to marry him. For the first time the captain falls to appear. Blossy consults Abe so often regarding Darby, his old captain in the life-saving service, that gossip begins to buzz. At the feast in celebration of the anniversary of the Rose's arrival at the home, Abe lauds Blossy in his speech, and Angy is sent from the room.

CHAPTER IX.

A Winter Butterfly.

"Cap'n Rose," began Aunt Nancy. Brother Abe pricked up his ears at the formal address. "Cap'n Rose," she repeated, deliberately dwelling on the title. "I never believe in callin' a man tew account in front of his wife. It gives him somebody handy ter blame things on tew jest like ole Adam. Naw, look a-here! What I want is ter ask yew jest one question: Whar, whar on 'arth kin we look fer a decent behavin' ole man of not in a Old Ladies' hum? Would yew—?" she exhorted earnestly, pointing her crooked forefinger at him. "Would yew—?"

Abraham caught his breath. Beads of sweat had appeared on his brow. He broke in huskily:

"Wait a minute, Aunt Nancy. Jest tell me what I've been an' done."

The ladies glanced at one another, contemptuous, incredulous smiles on their faces, while Aunt Nancy almost wept at his deceitfulness.

"Cap'n Rose," she vowed mournfully, "I've lived in this house fer many, many years, an' all the while I been here I never heard tell of a breath o' scandal ag'in the place until yew come an' commenced ter kick up yer heels."

Lazy Daisy, who had long been an inmate, also nodded her unwieldy head in confirmation, while a low murmur of assent arose from the others. Abraham could only pass his hand over his brow, uneasily shuffle his maligned heels over the floor and await further developments; for he did not have the slightest conception as to "what they were driving at."

"Cap'n Rose," the matriarch proceeded, as in the earnestness of her indignation she arose, trembling, in her seat and stood with her palsied and shaking hands on the board, "Cap'n Rose, yer conduct with this here Miss Betsy Ann Blossom has been some-thin' reedicalous! It's been disgrace-ful!"

Aunt Nancy sat down, inconspicuously disreputable in appearance, her pink bow having slipped down over her right ear during the harangue. Over the culprit's countenance light had dawned, but, shame to tell! It was a light not wholly remorseful. Then silent laughter shook the old man's shoulders, and then—could it be?—there crept about his lips and eyes a smile of superbly masculine conceit. The sisters were fighting over him. Wouldn't mother be amused when he should tell her what all this fuss was about.

"Now, kindly, short-sighted Miss Abigail determined that it was time for the matron's voice to be heard."

"Of course, Brother Abe, we understand perfectly that yew never stopped ter take inter consideration how susceptible some folks is made."

There being plain evidence from Abe's blank expression that he did not understand the meaning of the word, Ruby Lee hastened to explain.

"Susceptible is the same as flighty-headed. Blossy allers was a fool over anything that wore breeches."

Abe pushed his chair back from the table and crossed his legs comfortably. For him all the chill had gone out of the air. Suppose that there was something in this? An old, old devil of vanity came back to the aged husband's heart. He recalled that he had been somewhat of a beau before he learned the joy of loving Angy. More than one Long Island lassie had thrown herself at his head. Of course Blossy would "get over" this; and Angy knew that his heart was hers as much as it had been the day he purchased his wedding-beaver; but Abe could not refrain from a chuckle of complacent amusement as he stroked his beard.

His very evident hardness of heart so horrified the old ladies that they all began to attack him at once.

"Seems ter me I'd have the decency ter show some shame!" grimly avowed Sarah Jane.

Abe could not help it. He sputtered. Even Miss Abigail's, "Yew were a stranger an' we took yew in" did not sober him.

"Ef any one o' my husbands had acted the way yew've acted, Abe Rose," began Mrs. Homan.

"Poor leetle Angy," broke in the gentle Miss Ellie pityingly. "She must 'a' lost six pounds."

Abraham's mobile face clouded over. "Angy?" he faltered. "Yew don't mean that Angy—?" Silence again fell on the group, while every glance was fastened on Abraham. "See here," he flashed his faded blue eye, "Angy's got more sense than that!"

No one answered, but there was a significant shrugging of shoulders and lifting of eyebrows. Abraham was distressed and concerned enough now. Rising from his place he besought the sisters:

"Yew don't think Angy's feelin's have been hurt—dew yew, gals?"

Their faces softened, their figures relaxed, the tide of feeling changed in Abraham's favor. Miss Ellie spoke very softly:

"Yew know that even 'the Lord thy God is a jealous God.'"

Abraham grasped the back of his chair for support, his figure growing limp with astonishment. "Mother, jealous of me?" he whispered to himself, the memory of all the years and all the great happenings of all the years coming back to him. "Mother jealous of me?" He remembered how he had once been tormented by jealousy in the long, the ever-so-long ago, and of a sudden he hastened into the hall and went half-running up the stairs. He took hold of the latch of his bedroom door. It did not open. The door was locked.

"Angy!" he called, a fear of he knew not what gripping at his heart. "Angy!" he repeated as she did not answer.

The little old wife had locked herself in out of very shame of the rare tears which had been brought to the surface by the sisters' cruel treatment of Abraham. When she heard his call she hastened to the blue wash-basin and began hurriedly to dab her eyes. He would be alarmed if he saw the traces of her weeping. Whatever had happened to him, for his sake she must face it valiantly. He called again. Again she did not answer, knowing that her voice would be full of the tell-tale tears. Abe waited. He heard the tramp of feet passing out of the dining room into the hall. He heard Blossy emerge from her room at the end of the passage and go tripping down the stairs. The time to Angy, guiltily bathing her face, was short; the time to her anxious husband unaccountably long. The sound of wheels driving up to the front door came to Abe's ears. Still Angy made him no response.

"Angy!" he raised his voice in piteous pleading. What mattered if the sisters gathered in the lower hall heard him? What mattered if the chance guest who had just arrived heard him also? He had his peace to make with his wife and he would make it. "Angy!"

She flung the door open hastily. The signs of the tears had not been obliterated, and her face was drawn and old. Straightway she put her hand on his arm and searched his face inquiringly.

"What did the gals say ter yew?" she whispered. "Abe, yew made a mistake when yew picked out Bl—"

"Poor leetle mother!" he interrupted. "Poor leetle mother!" a world of remorseful pity in his tone. "So yew been jealous of yer ole man?"

Angelina, astonished and indignant, withdrew her hand sharply, demanding to know if he had lost his senses; but the blinded old gentleman slipped his arm around her and, bending, brushed his lips against her cheek.

"Thar, thar," he murmured soothingly, "I didn't mean no harm. I can't help it ef all the gals git stuck on me!"

Before Angy could make any reply, Blossy called to the couple softly but insistently from the foot of the stairs; and Angy, wrenching herself free, hastened down the steps, for once in her life glad to get away from Abe. He lost no time in following. No matter where Angy went, he would follow until all was well between her and him again.

But what was this? At the landing, Angy halted and so did Abe, for in the center of the sisters stood Blossy with her Sunday bonnet perched on her silver-gold hair and her white India shawl over her shoulders, and beside Blossy stood Capt. Samuel Darby with a countenance exceedingly radiant, his hand clasped fast in that of the aged beauty.

"Oh, hurry, Sister Angy and Brother Abe!" called Blossy. "We were waiting for you, and I've got some news for all my friends." She waited smilingly for them to join the others; then with a gesture which included every member of the household, she proceeded: "The pink tea, I want you all to know, had a double significance, and first, of course, it was to celebrate the anniversary of Brother Abe's sojourn with us; but next it was my farewell to the Home." Here Blossy gurgled and gave the man at her right so coy a glance that Samuel's face flamed red and he hung his head lower to one side than usual, like a little boy that had been caught stealing apples. "I left the tea a trife early—yew must forgive me, Brother Abe, but I heard the train-whistle." Abe stood beside Angelina, rooted in astonishment, while Blossy continued to ad-

dress him directly. "Yew gave Samus so many good recommendations, dear brother, that when the time approached for his June visit, I felt that I simply could not let him miss it as he did in December. Last year, on the day yew entered, he was here through no desire of mine. Today he is here at my request. My friends," again she included the entire home in her glance, "we'll come back a little later to say good-by. Now, we're on the way to the minister's."

The pair, Samuel tongue-tied and bewildered by the joy of his finally won success, moved toward the door. On the threshold of the home Blossy turned and waved farewell to the companions of her widowhood, while Samuel bowed in a dazed fashion, his face still red as it was blissful. Then quickly the two passed out upon the porch. No one moved to see them off. Abe looked everywhere yet nowhere at all. Not a word was spoken even when the carriage was heard rolling down the drive; but the sound of the wheels seemed to arouse Angy from her stupor of amazement; and presently Abraham became conscious of a touch—a touch sympathetic, tender and true—a touch all-understanding—the touch of Angy's hand within his own.

CHAPTER X.

The Turn of the Tide.

From time immemorial the history of the popular hero has ever been the same. To king and patriot, to the favorite girl at school and the small boy who is leader of the "gang," to politician, to preacher, to actor and author, comes first worship then eclipse. The great Napoleon did not escape this common fate; and the public idol who was kissed only yesterday for his gallant deeds is scorned today for having permitted the kissing. Oh, caprice of the human heart! Oh, cry of the race for the unaccommodated!

From that first anniversary of his entrance into the home, Abraham felt his popularity decrease—in fact more than decrease. He saw the weather-vane go square about, and where he had known for three hundred and sixty-five days the gentle, balmy feel of the southwest zephyr, he found himself standing of a sudden in a cold, bleak northeast wind. The change bewildered the old man, and reacted on his disposition. As he had blossomed in the sunshine, so now he began to droop in the shade. Feeling that he was suspected and criticized, he began to grow suspicious and fault-finding himself. His old notion that he had no right to take a woman's place in the institution came back to his brain, and he would brood over it for hours at a time, sitting out on the porch with his pipe and Angy.

The old wife grieved to think that father was growing old and beginning to show his years. She made him some tansy tea, but neither her persuasions nor those of the whole household could induce him to take it. He had never liked "doctoring" anyway, although he had submitted to it more or less during the past year in unconscious subservience to his desire to increase his popularity; but now he fancied that where once he had been served as a king by all these female attendants, he was simply being "pestered" as a punishment for his past behavior with Blossy. Ah, with its surprising ending that had been a humiliating affair; and he felt too that he would be long in forgiving Mrs. Darby for not having confided to him her actual intentions. Now he was afraid to be decently courteous to one of the sisters for fear that they might accuse him of light dalliance again; and he scarcely ever addressed the new member who came to take Blossy's little room, for he had been cut to the quick by her look of astonishment when she was told that he belonged there.

In his mental ferment the old man began to nag at Angy. Sad though it is to confess of a hero honestly loved, Abraham had nagged a little all his married life when things went wrong. And Angelina, fretted and nervous, herself worried almost sick over father's condition, was guilty once in a while out of the depths of her anxiety of nagging back again. So do we hurt those whom we love best as we would and could hurt no other.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Disaster of a Century Ago.

Several lives were lost and much property destroyed by an explosion of gunpowder which occurred at Woolwich 100 years ago. Woolwich is the most ancient military and naval arsenal in England. In its dockyard men-of-war were built as long ago as the beginning of the sixteenth century. The royal arsenal contains a factory for the making of shells and cartridges and a mammoth foundry for casting armor and ordnance, in addition to vast magazines of great guns, powder and other warlike stores. The Royal Military academy, where officers are trained for the British army, also is a part of the institution. During the centuries of its existence the arsenal has been the scene of many disastrous fires and fatal explosions. One of the most recent of the explosions occurred in 1903 and resulted in the death or serious injury of more than thirty persons.

Peerages Lacking in Permanence.

British peerages have little of the permanence of pyramids. Forty years ago a careful calculation was made which showed that of 217 peerages created during the preceding 45 years only 133 remained upon the rolls. Of the Plantagenet peerages only 14 survived; of the Tudor, 11; of the Stuart, 46. During the reign of George III more than 400 peers were created, of which in 1876, 379 had disappeared.

PLAN FOR CONSTRUCTING CONCRETE SILO



Well-Constructed Silos.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

A well-constructed home-made silo will last indefinitely, and there is no danger of its blowing down, rotting out or being attacked by vermin, says Farmers' Bulletin 589 of the United States department of agriculture.

The cost of the home-made silo depends so much on the size of the silo and on the local price of materials that no definite amount can be assigned which would be applicable to all conditions. Recently collected data on the cost of home-made silos show an average cost of concrete silos to be \$2.58 per ton capacity. The stave silos cost \$1.63 and the modified Wisconsin \$1.61 per ton capacity. Silos of small diameters cost more per ton capacity than silos of large diameters.

There are some features which are essential to the construction of all silos and without which silage will not be kept in perfect condition.

1. The walls should be air-tight. Since the keeping of silage depends upon the exclusion of air it is imperative that the walls of the silo be built in such a way as to keep out the air. The lumber should be well matched, and that containing large knots should be rejected. In concrete silos a wash on the inside with cement or with raw coal tar thinned with gasoline is effective in making the walls impervious to air. Care should be taken that the doors fit closely into their frames.

2. The walls should be smooth and plumb so that the silage will not adhere to them in settling and thus cause air spaces in the outer edge of the silage. Furthermore, the walls should be capable of standing considerable lateral strain without cracking or bulging. This is one reason why rectangular silos are unsuccessful.

3. The silo must be deep enough so that the pressure from above will thoroughly pack the silage and force out the air. The greater the pressure the less air in the silo and the less will be the loss of nutrition materials by fermentation.

4. The only form of silo to be recommended is one which is round. This form is the cheapest, capacity consid-

be more than five feet below the lowest door.

The Size and Capacity of the Silo.

The diameter of the silo will depend upon the amount of silage to be fed daily. The silage should be removed from the top at the rate of 1 1/2 to 3 inches per day, depending upon climatic conditions. The warmer the weather the more silage must be removed from the surface daily in order to prevent spoiling. For the winter feeding season it is safer to figure upon removing two inches daily rather than a smaller amount. A common error in building is to make the diameter too large for the size of the herd. The weight of a cubic foot of silage varies according to the pressure to which it is subjected, but in a silo 30 feet deep it will average about forty pounds. So, by knowing the amount of silage to be fed daily, it is possible to estimate what the diameter of the silo should be to permit the removal of a certain number of inches in depth each day.

The following table will prove of interest to those contemplating building silos:

Relation of size of herd to diameter of silo for winter feeding, on basis of 40 pounds of silage per cubic foot:

Diameter of silo, feet	Quantity of silage in depth of 3 in., pounds	Number of animals that may be fed allowing—				
		20 lbs. per head	30 lbs. per head	40 lbs. per head	50 lbs. per head	60 lbs. per head
10	524	13	17	26	35	42
11	634	16	21	31	41	49
12	754	19	25	37	49	59
13	885	22	29	44	58	69
14	1,025	25	34	51	68	81
15	1,178	29	39	59	78	93
16	1,340	33	44	67	89	106
17	1,513	38	50	75	101	121
18	1,696	42	56	85	113	135
19	1,894	47	62	94	126	151

INFLUENCES TOUCHING SOIL

Thorough Pulverization of Soil Following Drought Tends to Increase Yields—Frost is Factor.

Big crops usually follow a year of drought, in the main due to the thorough pulverization of soil from that agency. Frost is another factor that gives big crops whenever it enters the ground deeply, and either of these agencies will till the soil deeper than any tools can reach.

There is yet another agency which should never be neglected, deep-rooting plants, which, beside their mechanical and acid action on the soil, bring to the surface again fertility that has leached or that which is out of reach of the shallower rooted plants, or those with less subsoil penetration. Wheat or oats will attack the subsoil to a limited extent. Alfalfa and sweet clover will work with us and for us all the time.

While we work the top soil free of weeds, and retain the soil mulch, which will enable the alfalfa to survive, the plant roots are doing an infinitely greater work below, besides adding bacteria, bringing a soil to life that has lain practically dead, except at the very top, for all the ages that have gone.

Gain From Use of Manure.

The net return realized from a ton of yard manure under general farming conditions depends upon the soil, method of cultivation and crops grown.

The Ohio experiment station has obtained an increase amounting to \$4.60 per ton from yard manure used at the rate of eight tons per acre in a five-year rotation of corn, oats, wheat, clover and timothy. Four tons being supplied to corn and four tons to wheat, this return being the average for the third five-year period, the average return from the yard manure used in all tests in which rotation is practiced has been \$2.97 per ton for the whole time.

Green Cabbage Worm.

For the green cabbage worm use dry paris green dusted on the cabbage when wet, or a spray made by mixing three pounds of paris green with 50 gallons of water, and adding two or three pounds of soap. For cauliflower white hellebore should be used instead of paris green.



Small-Sized Silo.

ered, and the walls are more rigid than those of the rectangular or octagonal forms. This results in more perfect preservation of the silage.

The silo should be placed outside rather than inside the barn. As a silo ordinarily does not need the protection of a barn, it is not economical to use barn space for this purpose. An exception to this rule may be made in the case of the round barn. A silo in the middle of a round barn serves to support the superstructure as well as to place the silage in a position for convenient feeding. A silo so placed, however, is liable to be very inconvenient to fill. The most popular location is not more than a few feet from the barn and opening into a separate feeding room. The door of the barn can then be closed and the silage odors kept out of the stable at milking time.

The silo should not be built in the ground so deeply as to make it necessary to lift the silage more than five feet in getting it out from the bottom. In other words, the bottom should not

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The Naughty One.

The telephone in a physician's office rang madly, the other day, relates Current Opinion, and the following conversation took place:

"We want the doctor, quick!"

"Who's sick at your house?"

"Everybody except me. I'd been naughty, so they wouldn't give me any of the nice mushrooms papa picked in the woods."

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