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THE CHIEF OFFICE

Her Impulsive Way

"Why, Alice, didn't you go out to lunch today?"

"No, I didn't." The stenographer did not look up from the crocheting, "and what's more, there'll be no rest for me noons, nights, or Sundays, Caroline, until these table mats are done."

"I wasn't aware that you were in any immediate need of table mats," pursued the bookkeeper. "Isn't this rather sudden?"

"They aren't for me, worse luck. When I need household goods I'd let you know, never fear. These mats are for another and they are long overdue." The stenographer laughed bitterly. "Behold in me a victim of the habit of promising in haste to repent when repentance is entirely useless."

"What?"

"I mean that I'm one of those unfortunate impulsive persons who are always gratuitously and recklessly offering to do things for people. Observe these mats. There was really no reason why I should undertake the manufacture of eighteen dollies, six of each of the three sizes, you know, for a person like Mrs. Corwine, but when she told me that Mr. Corwine had bought her a beautiful mahogany dining table I at once said, without considering the matter at all, automatically, you know, that I would make her a set of mats for it. She took me up with a jump and hoped I'd do the pineapple pattern. It's the most difficult stitch I know."

"Now she is probably wondering when I'm ever going to get them done. The truth is that I've only just been able to begin them, for I've been spending every spare minute for the last month on the border of French knots that in a moment of abstraction I promised to embroider on Gertrude Lane's white marquisette dress. She bought it ready made and she thought it looked to plain, so, of course, I suggested the French dots and when she said that she didn't know how to make them, I volunteered to do them for her."

"For four long weeks those knots have haunted me. Every evening that I've wished to read or play cards I've been obliged to stick to the dots, and the worst of it is that my offer to do them was made so casually that Gertrude has no realization of what a Herculean task they were. I wouldn't feel so sorry for myself as I do if I thought I were receiving proper credit for my labor."

"It's the same way with these dollies. Mrs. Corwine thinks that because I said in a light and airy way that I'd make them they're a mere amusement or pastime for me. Did you ever know such a goose as I am—to get myself into doing things and to hate myself for it? I'm one of those who jump in where angels fear to tread."

The bookkeeper laughed, and Alice, continuing to crochet violently, continued:

"You ought to be thankful you haven't the habit. It gets one into all sorts of entanglements. A few weeks ago I met some suburban friends on the street. They appeared so pleased to see me that before I really thought what I was doing I asked them to come to town some day and have lunch with me, and I promised to let them know very soon just what day to come. That luncheon, for which I can neither afford the time nor the money, and which wasn't in the least called for, has hung on my neck like a millstone. The thought of it has worried and depressed me ever since. The event comes tomorrow, and then, after these mats are done, I'm through! I shall not mortgage my time, money and industry any more. Hear me vow!"

"Yes, I hear it." The other young woman assumed an accusing air. "But what about my essay for the Young Women's league that I wanted you to type for me this week?"

"Oh, your essay—certainly I'll type-write that for you, dear. I can do it after hours, just as well as not."

Caroline laughed derisively.

"But that's different," protested Alice guiltily. "Typing for you is quite different from—"

"Yes, of course it's different, kiddo. Everything is different but you. You are just the same dear, reckless promiser as ever, despite your hard hearted, strong minded resolutions. But, anyway, you can't type my essay for I've already hired it done."

"You mean thing! You know I should have loved to do it for you!"

"Talk about helpless cases," laughed Caroline.—Chicago "Daily News."

Carry Your Wagon.

A northern man who had recently taken possession of a southern plantation found that in many ways the people spoke a different language from his own. By mistake a carload of supplies had been left at a railway station seven miles away and he was bothered about getting it to the plantation. "Why don't you carry your wagon up and tote the things down?" a sympathizing southerner asked him. The northern man laughed heartily at this expression and repeated it to others. Instead of laughing they looked at him, wondering where the joke was, and he realized that to "carry" your wagon and tote things back was the proper idiomatic expression. He even heard young men asking young ladies if they might "carry" them to dances.—New York Herald.

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