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Two New Year's Resolutions

By A. N. JONES

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Jack Carmody couldn't meet a girl without making love to her, to the terror of his father and mother, who were always in dread that he would marry some one far beneath his social status.

Jack woke up one New Year's morning, and the first words he said were these:

"I solemnly resolve on this first day of the new year not to pay the slightest attention to any girl for the whole twelve months. But," here comes a saving clause, "if I do pay any attention to any girl it will be only such person as my mother shall approve."

How pleasant one feels upon making a resolution! It seems as if all past weaknesses are dead and buried and a new pure life has opened up before the resolver. Jack had especial reasons to feel thus, for the night before he had seen the old year out with a party none of whom would have been admitted to his paternal domicile. One of them, a girl with whom he had been training for months, Moll Dugan, had been lying in wait for him and during the festivities had induced another girl to suggest a wedding with Moll as the bride and Jack Carmody as the groom. Having imbibed more than was good for him, he consented, but was saved by a friend, who put him into a closet and locked the door.

It was the serious contemplation of this escape that led Jack, waking up at 11 o'clock on New Year's morning, to make the resolve mentioned.

To one who makes a resolution with a saving clause, the moment temptation comes the clause looms up splendidly. Jack found it dull associating only with men, so he looked about him for some nice girl of his own class with whom he might pass an occasional idle hour. Miss Gwendolin Kingsbury was a very ladylike young woman to whom Jack's mother had introduced him, trusting that the two might make a match. It made very little difference to Jack who was the girl, and he became—much to his mother's joy—quite devoted to Miss Kingsbury. But just as Mrs. Carmody was congratulating herself that her son was about to close the deal with her favorite her husband took it into his head to buy a ranch. Thereupon Jack announced his determination to go west and become a ranchman.

Mrs. Carmody was in despair, and Miss Kingsbury was both miffed and disappointed. But Jack comforted his mother by reminding her of his resolution not to devote himself to any girl of whom she would not approve and to return before the end of the year and "fix it up" with Gwendolin. "You see, mother," he said, "where a man thinks of marrying a girl he should be sure she is going to be constant. If Gwen is fancy free, except for me, when I come back I'll lead her to the altar and you can give us a bang-up wedding."

Jack had no sooner got settled as a ranchman than, cantering along a road, he met a little greaser girl cantering in an opposite direction. She was about sixteen years old and pretty. When she came to be twenty-five she would probably be a hag, but beauty is not what it will be, but what it is. Her costume was tawdry, but calculated to catch an eye that had begun already to miss seeing feminine apparel. Jack doffed his hat and joined the greaser girl.

Unfortunately or fortunately, as the

case may be, the greaser girl had a greaser lover. Nevertheless month by month Jack became more and more enraptured with her, and the greaser lover became more and more dangerous so far as Jack was concerned. The girl was really true to the man of her own class, but her parents did not propose that she should throw away the chance of a lifetime and insisted that she should throw over the man of her choice for a gentleman and a fortune.

In November Jack wrote a letter of twelve pages to his mother, stating that he was about to marry the daughter of a Spanish grandee and explaining in detail why the match was a very advantageous one for him. The missive threw his mother into a fever, but she wisely said nothing about the matter to Miss Kingsbury.

The next letter Mrs. Carmody received from her son stated that the match with the Spanish girl was off and he would be at home by the end of the year.

Something had intervened. It was this: One morning the greaser lover met Jack riding with the "daughter of the Spanish grandee." Love and jealousy long pent up burst their bounds, and the greaser opened fire on Jack. Jack drew and wounded the greaser, whereupon the girl pulled a pistol from her holster and opened fire on Jack. In the scrimmage all three were wounded, though none of them dangerously. Since the girl preferred the greaser Jack was disenthralled.

Jack arrived at home on New Year's eve, went to bed at 10 o'clock and woke up the next morning at 7. His arm was in a sling and a scalp wound was bandaged. He made the following resolution:

"I solemnly resolve that I will today propose to Gwendolin Kingsbury and that if she accepts me I will ask mother to lock me up till we are married."

He kept the first part of this resolution, and since his mother watched him carefully till the wedding the second was not necessary.

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