

THE ENCHANTED BARN

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They talked about the sunset and a poem he had lately read. He told her bits about his journey, referring to his experience at the mines, touching on some amusing incidents, sketching some of the queer characters he had met. Once he asked her quite abruptly if she thought her mother would be disturbed if he had a cement floor put in the basement of the barn some time soon. He wanted to have it done before cold weather set in, and it would dry better now in the hot days. Of course, if it would be in the least disturbing to any of them it could wait, but he wanted to store a few things there that were being taken out of the office buildings, and he thought they would keep drier if there was a cement floor. When she said it would not disturb any one in the least, would on the contrary be quite interesting for the children to watch, she was sure, he went easily back to California scenery and never referred to it again.

All through the ride, which was across a country she had never seen before, and ended at Glenside approaching from a new direction, there was a subtle something between them, a sympathy and quick understanding as if they were comrades, almost partners in a lot of common interests. Shirley chided herself for it every time she looked up and caught his glance, and felt the thrill of pleasure in this close companionship. Of course it was wholly in her own imagination, and due entirely to the nervous strain through which she had passed that day, she told herself. Of course, he had nothing in his mind but the most ordinary kindly desire to give her a good time out of gratitude for what she had done for him. But nevertheless it was sweet, and Shirley was loath to surrender the joy of it while it lasted, dream though it might be.

It lasted all the way, even up to the very step in front of the barn when he took her hand to help her out, and his fingers lingered on hers with just an instant's pressure, sending a thrill to her heart again, and almost bringing tears to her eyes. Foolishness! She was overwrought. It was a shame that human beings were so made that they had to become weak like that in a time of pleasant rejoicing.

The family came forth noisily to meet them, rejoicing openly at Graham's return, George and Harley vying with each other to shout the news about the garden and the chickens and the doves; Carol demanding to know where was Elizabeth; and Doris earnestly looking in his face and repeating:

"Ickle budie fy away, Mistah Gwaham. All gone! All ickle budies fy away!"

Even Mrs. Hollister came smiling to the door to meet him, and the young man had a warm word of hearty greeting and a hand shake for each one. It was as if he had just got home to a place where he loved to be, and he could not show his joy enough. Shirley stood back for the moment watching him, admiring the way his hair waved away from his temples, thinking how handsome he looked when he smiled, wondering that he could so easily fit himself into 'his group, which must in the nature of things be utterly different from his native element, rejoicing over the deference he paid to her plain, quiet mother, thrilling over the kiss he gave her sweet little sister.

Then Mrs. Hollister did something perfectly unexpected and dreadful—she invited him to stay to dinner! Shirley stood back and gasped. "Of course he would decline, but think of the temerity of inviting the wealthy and cultured Mr. Graham to take dinner in his own barn!"

"Oh! But he wasn't going to decline at all. He was accepting as if it were a great pleasure." Mrs. Hollister was conferring upon him. "Sure, he would stay! He had been wishing all the way out they would ask him. He had wondered whether he dared

Shirley with her cheeks very red hurried in to see that the table cloth was put on straight, and look after one or two little things; but behold, he followed her out, and, gently insisting and assisting, literally compelled her to come and lie down on the

couch while he told the family what she had been through that day. Shirley was so happy she almost cried right there before them all. It was so wonderful to have some one take care of her that way. Of course it was only gratitude—but she had been taking care of other people so long that it completely broke her down to have some one take care of her.

The dinner went much more easily than she had supposed it could with those cracked plates, and the forks from which the silver was all worn off. Doris insisted that the guest sit next to her and butter her bread for her, and she occasionally caressed his coat-sleeve with a sticky little hand, but he didn't seem to mind it in the least, and smiled down on her in quite a brotherly way, arranging her bib when it got tangled in her curls, and seeing that she had plenty of jelly on her bread.

It was a beautiful dinner. Mother Hollister had known what she was about when she selected that particular night to invite unexpected company. There was stewed chicken on little round biscuits, with plenty of gravy and currant jelly, mashed potatoes, green peas, little new beets, and the most delicious custard pie for dessert, all rich, velvety yellow with a golden-brown top. The guest ate as if he enjoyed it, and asked for a second piece of pie, just as if he were one of them. It was unbelievable.

He helped clear off the table too, and insisted on Carol's giving him a wiping-towel to help with the dishes. It was just like a dream.

The young man tore himself reluctantly away about 9 o'clock and went home, but before he left he took Shirley's hand and looked into her eyes with another of those deep understanding glances, and Shirley watched him whirling away in the moonlight, and wondered if there ever would be another day as beautiful and exciting and wonderful as this had been, and whether she could come down to sensible, every-day living again by morning.

Then there was the story of the day to tell all over again after he was gone, and put in the little family touches that had been left out when the guest was there, and there was: "Oh, did you notice how admiring he looked when he told mother Shirley had a remarkably keen mind?" and "He said his father thought Shirley was the most unspoiled-looking girl he had ever seen!" and a lot of other things that Shirley hadn't heard before.

Shirley told her mother what the senior Mr. Graham had said about giving her a reward, and her mother agreed that she had done just right in declining anything for so simple a service, but she looked after Shirley with a sigh as she went to put Doris to bed, and wondered if for this service the poor child was to get a broken heart. It could hardly be possible that a girl could be given much attention such as Shirley had received that day, from as attractive a young man as Graham, without feeling it keenly not to have it continue. And of course it was out of the question that it should continue. Mrs. Hollister decided that she had done wrong to invite the young man to stay to supper, and resolved never to offend in that way again. It was a wrong to Shirley to put him on so intimate a footing in the household, and it could not but bring her sadness. He was a most unusual young man to have even wanted to stay, but one must not take that for more than a passing whim, and Shirley must be protected at all hazards.

"Now," said the elder Graham the next morning, when the business of the day was well under way and he had time to send for his son to come into his office, "now, I want you to tell me all about that little girl, and what you think we ought to give her. What did she mean by 'obligations' yesterday? Have you been doing anything for her, son? I meant to ask you last night, but you came home so late I couldn't sit up."

And then Sidney Graham told his father the whole story. It was different from telling his mother. He knew no barn would have the power to prejudice his father.

"And you say that girl lives in the old barn!" exclaimed the father when the story was finished. "Why, the nery little kid! And she looks as if she came out of a handbox! Well, she's a bully little girl and no mistake! Well, now, son, what can we do for her? We ought to do something pretty nice. You see it wasn't just the money we might have lost. That would have been a mere trifle beside getting all those other folks balled up in the mess. Why, I'd have given every cent I own before I'd have had Fuller and Browning and Barnard and Wilts get entangled. I tell you, son, it was a great escape!"

"Yes, father, and it was a great lesson for me. I'll never be uncooed as easily again. But about Miss Hollister, I don't know what to say. She's very proud and sensitive. I had an awful time doing the little things I just had to do to that barn without her suspecting I was doing it especially for her. Father, you ought to go out there and meet the family; then you'd understand. They're not ordinary people. Their father was a college professor and wrote things. They're cultured people."

"Well, I want to meet them. Why don't we go out there and call today? I think the must be worth knowing."

So late that afternoon the father and son rode out to Glenside, and when Shirley and George reached home they found the car standing in front of their place, and the Grahams comfortably seated in the great open doorway, enjoying the late afternoon breeze, and seemingly perfectly at home in their own barn.

"I'm not going to swarm here every day, Miss Shirley," said the son, rising and coming out to meet her. "You see father hadn't heard about the transformation of the old barn, and the minute I told him about it he had to come right out and see it."

"Yes," said the father, smiling contentedly, "I had to come and see what you'd done out here. I've played in the hay up in that loft many a day in my time, and I love the old barn. It's great to see it all fixed up so cozy. But we're going home now, and let you have your dinner. We just wanted to say 'Howdy' to you before we left."

They stayed a few minutes longer, however, and the senior Graham talked with Shirley while he held Doris on his knee and stroked her silky hair, and she nestled in his arms quite content.

Then, although young Graham was quite loath to leave so soon, they went, for he could not in conscience, expect an invitation to dinner two days in succession.

They rode away into the sunset, going across country to their home without going back to town, and Doris, as she stood with the others watching them away, murmured softly:

"Nice faver-man! Nie Gwaham faver man!"

The "nice Graham father man" was at that moment remarking to his son in very decided tones, as he turned to get a last glimpse of the old barn:

"That old barn door ought to come down right away, Sid, and a nice big old-fashioned door with glass around the sides made to fill the space. That door is an eyesore on the place, and they need a piazza. People like those can't live with a great door like that to open and shut every day."

"Yes, father, I've thought of that, but I don't just know how to manage it. You see they're not objects of charity. I've been thinking about some way to fix up a heating arrangement without hurting their feelings, so they could stay there all winter. I know they hate to go back to the city, and they're only paying \$10 a month. It's all they can afford. What could they get in the city for that?"

"Great Scott! A girl like that living in a house she could get for \$10, when some of these feather brained baby-dolls we know can't get on with less than three or four house that cost from \$50,000 to \$100,000 apiece! Say, son, that's a peach of a girl, do you know it? A peach of a girl! I've been talking with her, and she has a very superior mind."

"I know she has, father," answered the son humbly.

"I say, Sid, why don't you marry her? That would solve the whole problem. Then you could fix up the old barn into a regular house for her folks."

"Well, father, that's just what I've made up my mind to do— if she'll have me," said the son with a gleam of triumph in his eyes.

"Bully for you, Sid! Bully for you!" and the father gave his son's broad shoulder a resounding slap. "Why, Sid, I didn't think you had that much sense. Your mother gave me to understand that you were philtering around with that dolly-faced Harriet Hale, and I couldn't see what you saw in her. But if you mean it, son, I'm with you every time. That girl's a peach, and you couldn't get a finer if you searched the world over."

"Yes, I'm afraid mother's got her heart set on Harriet Hale," said the son dubiously, "but I can't see it that way."

"H'm! Your mother likes show," sighed the father comically, "but she's got a good heart and she'll bowl over all right and make the best of it. You know neither your mother nor I were such high and mighties when we were young, and we married for love. But now, if you really mean business, I don't see why we can't do something right away. When does that girl have her vacation? Of course she gets one sometime. Why couldn't your mother just invite the whole family to occupy the shore cottage for a little while—get up some excuse or other—ask 'em to take care of it? You know it's lying idle all this summer, and two servants down there growing fat with nothing to do. We might ship Elizabeth down there and let 'em be company for her. They seem like a fine set of children. It would do Elizabeth good to know them."

"Oh, she's crazy about them. She's been out a number of times with me, and don't you remember she had Carol out to stay with her?"

"Was that the black eyed, sensible girl? Well, I declare! I didn't recognize her. She was all dolled up out at our house. I suppose Elizabeth loaned 'em to her, eh? Well, I'm glad. She's got sense, too. That's the kind of people I like my children to know. Now if that vacation could only be arranged to come when your mother and I take that western trip, why, it would be just the thing for Elizabeth, work right all around. Now, the thing for you to do is to find out about that vacation, and begin to work things. Then you could be done by the time they came back."

So the two conspirators plotted, while all unconscious of their interest Shirley was trying to get herself in hand and not think how Graham's eyes had looked when he said good night to her.

CHAPTER XIX.

Since the pastor from the village had called upon them, the young people of the stone barn had been identified with the little white church in the valley. Shirley had taken a class of boys in the Sunday school and was playing the organ, as George had once predicted. Carol was helping the primary teacher, George was assistant librarian and secretary, Harley was in Shirley's class, and Doris was one of the primaries.

Shirley had at once identified herself with the struggling little Christian Endeavor society and was putting new life into it, with her enthusiasm, her new ideas about getting hold of the young people of the community, and her wonderful knack of getting the silent ones to take part in the meetings. She had suggested new committees, had invited the music committee to meet her at her home some evening to plan out special music, and to cooperate with the social committee in planning for music at the socials. She always carried a few appropriate clippings or neatly written verses or other quotations to meeting to slip into the hands of some who had not prepared to speak, and she saw to it that her brothers and sisters were always ready to say something. Withal, she did her part so unobtrusively that none of the old members could think she was trying to usurp power or make herself prominent. She became a quiet power behind the powers, to whom the president and all the other officers came for advice, and who seemed always ready to help in any work, or to find a way out of any difficulty. Christian Endeavor in the little white church at once took great strides after the advent of the Hollisters, and even the idlers on the street corners were moved with curiosity to drop into the twilight service of the young people and see what went on, and why everybody seemed so interested. But the secret of it all,

(To Be Continued Next Week)

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B10

WATER FROM ARTESIAN WELL. HONORS RESTED WITH CHOATE

Why Method of Bringing It to Surface Is Only Successful in Certain Localities.

Possibly Because He Had the Last Word in Witty Duel With Chauncey M. Depew.

Artesian wells are possible only in certain localities. When there are pervious strata lying between impervious beds the water percolating through will be imprisoned; lying upon the lowest, and rising to some point in the highest, when a previous stratum brings it to the surface and it escapes in the form of spring. If, however, a shaft can be sunk to the lowest point, the water of the whole basin will pass upward for escape and will rise to a level corresponding to the greatest height to which the imprisoned strata reaches. The wells were named from one at Artois, France, which was the first sunk with full knowledge of the principle involved. The Chinese from time immemorial have used these wells, and they have also been used for centuries in the neighborhood of Vienna. The artesian well at Grenoble, near Paris, throws water to a height of 32 feet above the surface at the rate of more than 500 gallons a minute.—Boston Globe.

New Yorkers agree that either Joseph Choate or Chauncey M. Depew was the finest after-dinner speaker on earth. Some one says: "At an annual dinner of the St. Nicholas society Choate was down for the toast 'The Navy,' while Depew was to respond to 'The Army.' Depew began by saying: 'It's well to have a specialist; that's why Choate is here to speak about the navy. We met at the wharf once and I never saw him again until we reached Liverpool. When I asked how he felt he said he thought he would have enjoyed the trip over if he had had any ocean air. Yes, you want to hear Choate on the navy!'"

"Choate responded: 'I've heard Depew hailed as the greatest after-dinner speaker. If after-dinner speaking, as I have heard it described and as I believe it to be, is the art of saying nothing at all, then Doctor Depew is the most marvelous speaker in the universe.'"—Washington Star.

Lines to Be Remembered.

The origin of all mankind was the same; it is only a clear and good conscience that makes a man noble, for that is derived from heaven itself.—Seneca.

The young man who gets a good start in life doesn't always make a satisfactory finish.

No man is so peaceful that he isn't proud of his ancestors that fought in the wars.

Do you know what constitutes a strong constitution?

To have sound, healthy nerves, completely under control, digestive organs that are capable of absorbing a hearty meal, means you have a strong constitution! Your general attitude is one of optimism and energy.

But an irritable disposition, frequent attacks of indigestion, and a languid depression, indicate your system is not in correct working order.

Probably you are not eating the proper food. Probably the nutritious elements are not being supplied to your system in the proper way.

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