

Meadow Brook

MARY J. HOLMES

(Sunny Bank Farm)

CHAPTER XXIII.—(Continued.)

But Bill's exclamations were all in vain, and his distress was at its height when fortunately his thoughts were diverted to another channel. At a sudden turn of the road a gust of wind lifted the old palm-leaf from his woolly head, and carried it far away. "Now, dear nurse," said Bill, laying his hand on that of Mr. Delafield, "you'll aint let 'em breathe while I picks up my hat, 'cause you see how'll you look gwine into town wid me bareheaded."

Glancing over his shoulder, Mr. Delafield saw the hat away over the fields, and quietly taking a bill from his pocket and placing it in the negro's hand, he replied, "That will buy you five such hats."

"Yes, but de bosses, de bosses!" exclaimed Bill, almost frantically. "Don't you see Ferd is gwine to tin out?"

Mr. Delafield feared so, too, and more to himself than to his servant, he said, "perhaps the cars will be behind time—they usually are."

Without considering the consequences, Bill answered, "No, they won't; 'case I hear how they hired an engineer who drives all afore him—gits ahead of de time an' all dat."

The next minute he repeated a speech whose disastrous effects he foresaw, and he was about to deny it as a fabrication of his own brain, when his master, who really saw signs of lagging in the nervous, fiery Ferd, said, "Bill, you have a peculiar whistle with which you spur up the horses. Make it now; Ferd has run himself almost down."

As they approached the town, they heard a heavy, rumbling sound. It was the roll of the cars in the distance. A few more mad plunges and the horses reached the depot, covered with foam and frothing at the mouth, just as the train was moving slowly away. With one pitying farewell glance at his dying grays, Mr. Delafield exclaimed, "Cut the harness instantly," and then with a bound bound sprang upon the platform, which he reached just as Bill called after him in mournful accents, "Ferd's dead, mars'r, Ferd is."

But little cared he for that. Rosa Lee was to be overtaken, and to accomplish this, he would willingly have sacrificed every horse of which he was owner, even were they twice as valuable as the dappled grays.

Mr. Delafield, with closely knit brows and compressed lips, sat musing in the car of the time when Rosa Lee would be his wife. They were about half way between Augusta and Charleston and going at great speed, when suddenly at a short curve there was a violent commotion—the passengers were pitched forward and backward, while the engine plunged down a steep embankment, throwing the train from the track, and dragging after it the baggage car, which in some way became detached from the rest. Fortunately no one was seriously hurt except Mr. Delafield, whose injuries were simply mental, as he knew this accident would probably detain them for many hours.

The sun had long been set and the stars were shining brightly ere they were able to proceed, and it was after midnight when they at last reached Charleston. Driving immediately to the landing, Mr. Delafield, to his great joy, found that the steamer bound for New York still lay at the wharf and would not start until morning. But was Rosa Lee on board? That was a question which puzzled him, and as there was no way of satisfying himself until morning, he sat down in one of the staterooms and rather impatiently awaited the dawn of day.

The hurry, the confusion and the excitement of starting was over. We were out upon the deep blue sea, and from the window of my state room I watched the distant shore as it slowly receded from view, and felt that I was leaving the land of sunlight and flowers. Notwithstanding the fatiguing journey of the previous day, I was better this morning than I had been for many months before, for I had slept quietly through the night.

An hour or two after breakfast Charlie came to me with a very peculiar expression in his face, and asked me to go upon deck, saying the fresh breeze would do me good. I consented willingly, and throwing on my shawl and a simple Leghorn hat which had been of much service to me at Cedar Grove, and which Mr. Delafield had often said was very becoming, I went out with Charlie, who led me to the rear of the boat, where he said we were not so liable to be disturbed. Seating me upon a small settee, he asked to be excused for a few moments, saying I should not be long alone. The motion of the boat produced a slight dizziness in my head, and leaning my elbow upon the arm of the settee, I shaded my eyes with my hand and sat lost in thought until I heard the sound of a footstep.

"It was Charlie," I said, so I did not look up, even when he sat down by my side and wound his arm round me, wrapping my shawl closer together, oh, so gently! "Charlie is very tender of me since my sickness," I thought, and much I loved that he should thus care for me. It thrilled me strangely, bringing back to my mind the night when I sat in the vine-wreathed arbor, where I should never sit again.

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with his arm round me, was its owner—my husband.

"You tremble, Rosa," said he, as we drew near the house, and he bade me be calmer, saying the meeting between myself and his sister would soon be over.

But it was not that which I dreaded. It was the presentation to his servants, to whom I bore the formidable relation of mistress, and for whose good opinion I cared far more than I did for that of the haughty Mrs. Lansing. Something like this I said to Richard, who assured me that his household would love me because I was his wife, if for no other reason, and thus I found it to be. As we drove into the yard, we were surprised at seeing the house brilliantly lighted, while through the open windows a group of many persons were seen moving to and fro.

In a displeased tone of voice Richard said, "It is Angelina's work, and I do not like it, for you need rest, and are too much fatigued to see any one to-night, but I suppose it cannot be avoided. Ho, Bill," he called to the driver, "who is here?"

"Some ob de quality," answered Bill, adding that "Miss Angelina done 'vite 'em to see de bride."

"She might at least have consulted my wishes," said Richard, while my heart sunk within me at being obliged to meet strangers in my jaded condition.

Mrs. Lansing, it seems, had in her mind a new piano for Lina, their present one being rather old-fashioned, and as the surest means of procuring out, she thought to please her brother by noticing the bride.

In his zeal she rather overdid the matter, inviting many of the villagers, some of whom were friendly to me and some were not, though all, I believe, felt curious to see how the "plebeian"—thus Ada termed me—would demean herself as the wife of a Southern planter.

Dusky faces, with white, shining eyes, peered round the corner of the building as the carriage stopped before the door, and more than one whisper reached me. "Dat's she—de new miss, dat mars'r's liftin' 'em so keerfully."

Upon the piazza stood Mrs. Lansing, her face wreathed in smiles, while at her side, in flowing white muslin, were Ada and Lina, the former of whom sprang gaily down the steps, and with well-feigned joy threw herself into the arms of her guardian, who, after kissing her affectionately, presented her to me, saying, "Will Ada be a sister to my wife?"

"Anything for your sake," answered Ada, with rather more emphasis on your than was quite pleasing to me.

Mrs. Lansing came next, and there was something of hauteur in her manner as she advanced, for much as she desired to please her brother, she was not yet fully prepared to meet me as an equal.

But Richard knew the avenue to her heart, and as he placed my hand in hers he said, "For the sake of Jessie you will love my bride, I am sure."

This party was followed by many more, and ere I was aware of it, Mrs. Richard Delafield was quite a belle—what she said, what she did, and what she wore being pronounced an fait by the fashionable of Chester.

Upon all this Ada looked jealously, never allowing an opportunity to pass without speaking slightly of me, though always careful that Richard should not know of it. In his presence she was a very kind, sitting at my feet, calling me "sunny," and treating me as if I had been twenty years her senior.

Toward the middle of August, invitations came for us to attend a large wedding in Charleston. I was exceedingly anxious to go, having heard much of the bride, who was a distant relative of my husband, and though both he and Mrs. Lansing raised every conceivable objection to my leaving home, I adroitly put aside all their arguments, and ere Richard fully realized that he had been coaxed into doing something he had fully determined not to do, we were rattling along in a dusty Charleston omnibus toward one of the largest hotels, where rooms had been engaged for us.

The morning after our arrival, I went into the public parlor, and as I seated myself at the piano I saw just across the room, near an open window, a quiet, intelligent looking lady, apparently twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age, and near her, sporting upon the carpet, was a beautiful little girl, with flowing curls and soft, dark eyes, which instantly riveted my attention, they were so like something I had seen before.

At the sound of the music she came to my side, listened attentively, and when I had finished, she laid one white, chubby hand on my lap and the other on the keys, saying, "Please play again; Rosa like to hear you."

"And so your name is Rosa?" I answered; "Rosa what?"

"Rosa Lee Clayton, and that's my new ma," she replied, pointing toward the lady, whose usually pale cheek was for an instant suffused with a blush such as brides only wear.

I knew now why I had felt interested in the child. It was the father whom I saw looking at me through the eyes of brown, and taking the little creature in my arms, I was about to question her of her sire, when an increasing glow on the lady's cheek and a footstep in the hall told me he was coming.

OUR BUDGET OF FUN.

HUMOROUS SAYINGS AND DOINGS HERE AND THERE.

Jokes and Jokelets that Are Supposed to Have Been Recently Born—Sayings and Doings that Are Old, Curious and Laughable—The Week's Humor.

"I can't see what you find in me to admire," said the lovelorn youth who had recently blown himself for a \$37.50 engagement ring.

"Why," gurgled the fluffy-haired angel of his domestic dreams, "that's just what everybody else says."

And immediately the silence became oppressive.

As Corrected.

Mrs. O'Hoolihan—P'f what koid av a job is yes old man after hovin' now?

Mrs. McGarigle—Job, is it? Shure an' it be an illigant situation as t'le-graph operater he's after hovin'!

It is confessed that the native Camembert and Brie are not so good as the foreign article, but the cheesemakers of New York and New Jersey have come at length to produce admirable Roquefort and good imitations, if they may be so called, of many other famous foreign cheeses.

The Brie cheese from abroad, for example, comes in a large disk, that puts it beyond any but those who consume it in large quantities, whereas the native Brie is made in small cakes, that may be purchased for family use.

The sale of Gorgonzola cheese, which is still imported, is much less than it would otherwise be if made in smaller parcels.

Only two or three English cheeses are now imported in large quantities, and the so-called English dairy cheese is a native product. Meanwhile, enormous quantities of American cheeses are exported to Great Britain. Some English cheesemakers have taken to putting up their products in jars instead of bladders, in this way making them more easily preserved.

German and Swiss cheeses are imitated here, though less successfully than some others. As to the Italian cheeses, they are made without any pretense of concealment wherever there is a considerable Italian quarter, though the imitations are not liked by the Italians themselves, and cheap Italian cheeses are imported in great quantities. Parmesan is a great favorite with Italians, since it is cheap and in various ways useful. Limburger is imitated here, as is Neufchatel.

According to local tradition, the earliest maker of "foreign" cream cheese in this region, was a Frenchman, whose first customers were a few fashionable restaurateurs. He produced in small quantities almost perfect imitations of French cheeses, and delivered them to his customers himself. The manufacturer of these cheeses has now so extended that many grocers make no effort to keep a stock of foreign cheeses. As yet, however, the conservatism of the commercial world seems to make it necessary to stick to old names and foreign labels.

"No Kick Coming."

A railroad engineer who has been in the service so many years that his hair has grown iron gray and his visage as stern as a warrior's while he has driven his iron monster over the parallels of iron, recently experienced his first collision. He came out of it with a badly demolished engine and a sufficiently smashed-up leg for any occasion.

The surgeons took him in charge and by dint of splints, bandages, skill and patience saved his injured limb and got it on the road to recovery.

The other day he walked out for the first time, and as he hobbled along on crutches, the injured member looking very unwell indeed, a friend hailed him with: "Hello, Jim; how's that leg of yours getting along?"

The veteran has gray eyes, as clear and penetrating as a youth's, and they twinkled with a tonic effect as he said, laconically: "Oh, I can't kick."—New York Times.

Not Reassuring.

"Do you know what precautions the proprietor of this hotel has taken against fire?" asked the nervous old lady as the bellboy escorted her to a room on the fifth floor.

"Sure I do," replied the knowing youth. "De boss has got de jobs in shoord' fer two times de worth uv it. See?"

Magistrate—It will be either \$10 or thirty days, Uncle Rastus. You can have your choice.

Uncle Rastus—Ah's much arblige, yo' honnah, an' Ah reckon yo' all had bettah gib me de money, sah.

Farmer—Right yew air, stranger. I 'low as it be one o' de finest in them parts.

Stranger—You have a fine farm here.

Farmer—Summer boarders—Chicago New.

Professional Advice.

"Doctor," said the timid patient, "I'm fond of the water, but I don't want to risk taking cold. What shall I do?"

"Take it hot," replied the wise pill compiler. "Two dollars, please."

In the Puppy Class.

He—But I am willing to wait if you will give me some hope.

She—Well, suppose you wait nine days; perhaps your eyes will be open then.

'Twas Ever Thus.

"The world is backward about coming forward with its appreciation," mused the Irish philosopher. "We never think of strewing flowers on a man's grave until after he is dead."

Backed to Win.

She (after the engagement)—Why were you so nervous when you proposed?

He—Oh, I was merely acting a part, I didn't want you to know how sure I was of your answer.

Affluence.

"Rich? Why, she never has to think of the matter of cost at all."

"No?"

"Not for a moment. She can afford to wear what she likes, even though it is something cheap."

Automobility.

"Steam, eh? Isn't it rather noisy?"

"Oh, no. Except for a slight puffing when it is climbing a very steep hill or running over an extraordinarily large person, quite noiseless."

Reduced Rate.

"My plea," said the young lawyer, who had just won his first case, "seemed to strongly affect the jury."

"Yes," replied the judge, "I was afraid at one time that you would succeed in getting your client convicted in spite of his innocence."

Not So Reckless.

"Do you take this internally?" asked the customer as he put the bottle in his pocket and took his change.

"No," said the druggist's new assistant. "Great Scott, no! I sell it."—Stray Stories.

An Accommodating Clerk.

The following order was received a few days ago by a Chicago grocery firm:

"Please ship at once by freight, one bag salt, fourteen lb sugar. The stock brought us a baby last night and box crackers, also one barrel soap. It weighed nine lb."

The Vagaries of Fashion.

Mrs. Commonben—Don't mind her, my dear. Long skirts are doomed. It will soon be our turn.

Circumstantial Evidence.

Tommy—Was that your mother I saw with you yesterday?

Willie—I guess so; 't any rate she's the one who carries the key to the jam closet at our house.—Boston Transcript.

Vain.

"Did you find the Chinese a vain people?"

"Very. To hear a Chinese brag you could almost believe an American was talking."

Self-Approval.

"Well," said the detective, "there is one thing upon which we may congratulate ourselves in this case."

"Why, you haven't even found an important clue."

"That's just it. We can rest assured that no innocent person is going to suffer."—Washington Star.



Wife of New Minister—Now, Davie, you'll have to look after the church better than this or we will have to think about getting a new bundle.

Davie (beadle of long standing, severely)—Miss Nicholson, we whites change our minister, but we never change our beadle.

He Never Worried.

A lady waited for hours at a wayside station of the Midland Great Western Railway. The train came along and she got in. The hours dragged by, and at each stoppage she asked if it was Sligo. Finally the guard became irritated. "Don't worry, madam; I'll let you know when we reach Sligo." "But I've been nearly all day on my journey," "Well, madam, I've been on this railway three years, and I'm not worrying." "Poor man," she retorted, "you must have started the next station beyond mine."

His Plea.

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