

CHOOSING A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW.

BY RUTH RANSOM.

"It's of no use," said Mrs. Dashwood plaintively. "I can never learn to like that girl. And if Felix marries her I shall be wretched."

Felix Dashwood, a tall, handsome young man, of three or four-and-twenty, looked in dismay at his mother.

"Dearest mother, what is the trouble with Madeline? I am sure she is all that is sweet and lovable!"

Felix Dashwood had committed a fault that is not uncommon to man. He was trying to make his mother see through the medium of his own eyes.

He had fallen de-perately in love with a young beauty, possessed to her in the fever-heat of the moment, and brought her home to Dashwood Hall to receive the maternal blessing. And Madeline Westford, as thoughtful an inexperienced girl as herself, had never doubted but that Felix's mother would love her as tenderly and devotedly as Felix had done.

She was a pretty, blue-eyed girl, with a deep tinge in her cheek, lips as red as coral, and a profusion of burnished golden hair, which floated over her shoulders like a cascade of yellow brightness.

"May I call you mother?" said Madeline, prettily, when she first came to Dashwood Hall.

"Certainly," said Mrs. Dashwood, stiffly. "But don't you think your hair would be neater put up in a net?"

"All the girls at school wear it so," said Madeline, who was just returned from Madame Estelle's seminary for young ladies. "And nobody sees a net nowadays."

"Those long, trailing dresses, too," said Mrs. Dashwood, critically eyeing the fan-shaped train of Madeline's cream-colored serge dress. "In the country here we mostly wear our skirts of a walking length."

Madeline looked doubtfully down at the lovely dress, with its flounces and fluting.

"I have always worn my flounces," she said; "and doesn't it seem almost a pity to cut them off?"

"Just as you please," said Mrs. Dashwood, chillingly. "I don't mind your going to Dashwood Hall half so much as she had expected; and Mrs. Dashwood inwardly determined that if of all daughters-in-law whom Felix could possibly have selected Miss Westford was the least satisfactory. But it never occurred to her that she did not quite fathom all the depths of a man's character; nor that she was looking for a woman's matured virtues in a girl of seventeen, just out of her teens and school.

"I don't approve," said she stiffly, "of girls who lie on sofas and read poetry all day, instead of trying to learn a little housewifery, and as for needlework, all the Kensington stitch and crewel patterns in creation won't take the place—in my estimation, at least—of good ironing and stocking-making. Madeline Westford and I can never, never become congenial!"

"But, mother—"

To Felix Dashwood's infinite amazement, however, the conversation was here interrupted by Madeline herself in the offending cream serge dress, with the lovely, glowing gold framing her flushed face, and a new glitter in her blue eyes.

"I didn't mean to be a listener," said she, "but I was half asleep in the study drawing-room, and when I heard my own name I couldn't help sitting still for a moment; and perhaps it is just as well. I have feared you for a long time. I am quite certain of it now. You don't like me, Mrs. Dashwood!"

"To be frank," said the frigid matron, "I do not."

"I am sorry," said Madeline, softly. "I should have liked you to love me. And you do not wish me to marry Felix?"

"If you wish me to answer sincerely," said Mrs. Dashwood, "no."

"Then I won't marry him," said Madeline, pulling the little turquoise ring which Felix had slipped on her engagement ring in those bright, sweet days which seemed so long-ago, so long ago. "I will marry no man whose mother does not wish to take me into her heart of hearts!"

So the engagement was broken off, and Madeline went home again.

"Don't fret," said her mother, who she felt a deal better for you, if you can get used to the idea. If ever I have a mother-in-law, I mean that she shall love me—oh, so dearly!"

To Mrs. Dashwood's surprise, Felix took this overthrow of his heart's dearest hope very coolly.

"I had hoped you would learn to love Madeline," he said. "Indeed, I do not know how any one could help it. But if you can't—why, there's an end of the matter!"

Within a few days Mrs. Dashwood received a letter from Cousin Thespia, a young lady from the West. Cousin Thespia was coming to Dashwood Hall, for his expected delectation—ballads that were widely different from poor Madeline's dreary nocturnes and soft sonnets; she openly declared that "she was the very nicest fellow she had met since she crossed the Big River."

Poor Mrs. Dashwood's maternal heart sank within her, as she read.

"Felix," she said, on one of the rare twilights during which Mr. Dashwood was not monopolized by his loud-voiced cousin, "I do suppose you will become interested in Thespia Clifton."

"Felix," she almost screamed, "you are not engaged?"

"Yes, mother, I am engaged. Was not that the very thing for which you wished?"

Mrs. Dashwood burst into tears.

"My girl who laughs like a plover-boy," said she—"a girl who is determined to go on the stage—a girl who suggests improvement in one's very stables, and calls us Eastern ladies 'an awful sight to look at'—Felix, Felix, you will break my heart!"

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"Mrs. Dashwood lifted her hand despairingly, and began to shed a few feeble tears.

"Felix!" she sobbed; "oh, Felix! I have been so foolish! If this girl were only gone, I would be engaged to Madeline—I think I should be quite, quite happy again! For indeed I did not know how wretched, and wretched and perfect Madeline is!"

"Until it was too late," quietly uttered her son. "But here is Thespia. Let her speak for herself."

"My dear mother, I came in like a gust of wind, dragging one of the house dogs by the collar.

"He's lame, I think," said she noisily. "I brought him to look at the foot by the lamplight. Eh? What? Mrs. Dashwood crying! Why, what the dickens is the matter with you all?"

"Thespia," said Felix gravely; "my mother wishes to ask you a few questions."

"The catechism, eh?" said Miss Clifton, brightly, resenting herself. "Well, drive on, cousin Dashwood. A fair field and no favor, eh?"

"Is it true," whispered the old lady, "that you are engaged?"

"Of course I'm engaged," nodded the fair Amazon. "And what more, we are to be married in April."

"Married!" gasped the poor old lady. "How do you know you are engaged to Thespia. Do you never saw him in your life?"

"Never saw him?" echoed Mrs. Dashwood. "Never saw my own son?"

"But it isn't your own son?" said Thespia, indifferently. "It's Major Miles Keatly, of Leadville, Colorado, that I'm engaged to. You Eastern men can't hold a candle to him!"

"Thank heaven!" cried poor Mrs. Dashwood; "thank heaven!"

"So Thespia," remarked Miss Thespia, who was now busied in examining the setter-dog's foot.

"And now," faltered Mrs. Dashwood, with averted face, "Madeline would only love you, dear Felix—"

"I am engaged to Madeline as closely as I ever," said Dashwood. "I loved her too dearly ever to give her up."

"But—but—will she ever pardon me?"

"Try her and see," said Felix, laughing. Madeline came back the next day, all smiles and sunshine, and in the old lady's wide-open arms.

"Dear, dear mother," said she, "I shall be so glad if you will only love me with all your heart."

"Indeed, indeed I will!" said the old lady, joyfully. "Of all daughters in the world, I shall be dearest to me."

For Mrs. Dashwood had arrived at the conclusion that it is a disastrous thing to meddle with the current of true love.

A Mistake.

It happened in a rough mining town in Colorado. There was a grand ball at the ranch of Walsley Jack, a well-known character in the "quiggings," and the "elite" of the district responded to the call in full force. The party was held in a rickety old hall belonging to the host, and with a few strips of flannel, a grotesque accumulation of mountain roses, and a row of dripping candles, the appointments of the place were perfect. My first partner in the giddy dance was the wife of the man who killed the village postmaster because he refused him a letter; and she was a fair, and forty, and danced with the grace of a cow. My next partner was the daughter of this charming lady, a young girl just bursting into the world, and as for needlework, all the Kensington stitch and crewel patterns in creation won't take the place—in my estimation, at least—of good ironing and stocking-making. Madeline Westford and I can never, never become congenial!"

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ALL SORTS.

The Pratt coal mines of Alabama have been sold to a northern company for \$1,000,000.

The privilege-tax paid by the whisky dealers of Mississippi is said to amount to \$220,000.

A company is being formed to develop the Cahaba coal fields on the line of the Selma, Rome and Dalton railroad.

After the city of Worcester, Mass. had expended \$9,000 in erecting an engine-house, it was discovered that the city had no title to the land.

Some Boston capitalists are interested in the Inverness Oil and Land company, of Nova Scotia, which has bought twenty-five thousand acres of oil land in Cape Breton.

At Big Creek, Ark., a huge catamount, chased a stampede among the stock in a large pasture. It followed the leader to the house's last the yard, "cleared out" the dogs, and then went under the house for a rest. A gun was discharged and so was the catamount.

"Water," called Fenderson, at the eating-house, "this is the worst steak I ever encountered; it's just like leather."

"Indeed!" said the waiter, his face lighting up with pleasure, "I'll just hear you say so, sir. There is nothing like leather, you know."

The population of Eureka Springs, Ark., is about fifteen thousand. During the heated summer months it went down probably to twelve thousand, but now it is increasing daily. Brick chimneys and plastered rooms are coming into fashion in Eureka Springs; so are glass windows, in the rural districts of Arkansas.

Sailing against the Emma Mining company in Utah have been compromised, and the working of the mine will probably be resumed. This Emma mine, through certain, remaining operations, became one of the most notorious in the country. English parties lost large sums of money in it, and that it is in the hands of a new company, if any rich man should be discovered, there would be a new howl.

The question who shall administer the estate of the late Mark Hopkins is a striking peculiarity of the Illinois law. Mr. Hopkins was lately named as administrator. The public administrator asks for it. His application is opposed by the late Mr. Hopkins' son, who is represented for the position by Mr. Hopkins, and he is opposed by Samuel F. Hopkins, as incompetent. The property is valued at \$15,000,000.

Cap. Maxwell, a British naval officer, who has been cruising with his ship in the western Pacific, writes home that a striking peculiarity of the Illinois law is the entire absence of arms among them. He did not see a club or spear, or any weapon whatever, either in the hut or house of the natives. At Ponapi, in the Caroline islands, he was greatly impressed with the magnitude and solidity of the residences of the chief, now in ruins. On one island he found four complete squares built one in the other, with walls, some of them thirty-five feet high and twelve thick. By the side of one of these squares, Cook, of the Bonetta, was a monument at Northampton, Mass., of the first settlers of Northampton, who died in 1630. Prof. Cooke, of Harvard, the testator, in compliance has ordered a sarcophagus of pink Quincy granite, seven feet broad and five feet ten inches high. A facsimile of the original stone is graven on the sarcophagus, and the stone itself is laid in the new monument.

Water was being bored for at Woodville, Jefferson county, N. Y., and when forty-seven feet below the surface a fountain of water and gas was reached, and the drill, weighing six hundred pounds, was thrown up, and the water, thick with some mineral solution, was also thrown twenty-five feet in the air, and a large cloud of gas escaped at the same time. A pipe was inserted and the well continues to flow. Six and one-half pounds of water was boiled down to one-fourth pound, which became a solid matter, which has a saline pungent taste, the latter resembling that of sal ammoniac.

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HURRAH! THE OLD BROTHERS! A. G. HATT. JUST OPENED AGAIN. 12th, Clear, First Class Meat Shop, on Main Street, corner of 13th, Plattsburgh, every body on hand for fresh, tender meat.

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KENDALL'S SPAVIN CURE. THE MOST SUCCESSFUL REMEDY FOR SPAVIN, BLOW, AND ALL OTHER AFFECTIONS OF THE JOINTS. Read Proof Below. COL. L. T. FOSTER, Youngstown, Ohio, May 16th, 1888.

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