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**MISS PELINA**

By MABEL KNIFE.

Miss Pelina Rogers laid down her crochet hook as she heard a gay young voice call: "Are you home, auntie?" "To be sure I'm home this time of morning," replied Miss Pelina in her brisk manner, but with a fond look in her keen old eyes as they rested on pretty Mary Harvey.

"What is your mother doing this morning?" she asked as the bright-haired, bright-eyed girl dropped a kiss on her wintry old cheek.

"She's making a new girldie for my yellow party dress. There's a dance at Elliott's tonight. "And"—almost timidly—"I came to borrow your little gold chain, if you don't mind."

"Surely, surely. Who is going to take you?"

"Good old Joe, auntie."

"Fool old Joe, I'd call him," snapped Miss Pelina. "Any man that will let a little chit like you make him miserable and still won't marry him is a fool for lack of sense."

The "little chit" threw her head back and laughed delightedly.

"Who's going to take Cora Davis?" Miss Pelina asked shrewdly.

Cora Davis was Mary's dearest enemy and the girl's face darkened a trifle as she replied, "Mr. Brown, I think." "The one who came here a few months ago to open his real estate office. Old Joel Brown's grandson? Hum—well, if he's anything like his sporty old granddad he'll soon have you girls quarreling over him."

Mary's face flamed consciously as she replied:

"He really is very exclusive, auntie. He hasn't called on any of us girls except Cora."

"She's the only one whose father has an oil well," drily commented Miss Pelina.

"Auntie, you're unfair," burst out the girl.

"There, there," soothed Miss Pelina. "You look just like your Aunt Sallie when you are angry. Poor, poor, Sallie, how I did love that child!"

"Someone is always saying I'm like her," pouted Mary. "And they're always prophesying some kind of bad luck for me just because she eloped with that cheap actor and made such a mess of things."

After the girl had gone, Miss Pelina shook her head sadly. "I mustn't let the poor, contrary child muddle her life as Sallie did," she mused aloud.

A few minutes later, she was at the telephone asking Mr. Brown if he could call at her house that afternoon.

It was a very pleasant-faced young man who waited in the old-fashioned parlor at the hour she had set. Too pleasant, Miss Pelina considered him, as she took a swift, appraising glance at his too-candid blue eyes and his too-smiling full lips.

"Smirky," she whispered disgustedly to herself.

"Let us get down to business. I hear you have the selling of the lots in the new city addition."

The young man's eyes gleamed shrewdly as he volubly explained the desirability of the lots.

Miss Pelina casually remarked: "I wouldn't want Mary to have any trouble with my investments after I'm gone—Mary Harvey, my niece, I mean."

When the young man went, he carried with him the conviction that Mary Harvey was to inherit her great-aunt's wealth, which was exactly the impression Miss Pelina wished him to have.

Early the next morning, Mary came running in.

"Auntie dear," she cried, "you were unjust to Mr. Brown. He didn't look twice at Cora Davis last night, and he was perfectly devoted to me. And everybody knows her father has ever so much more money than blessed old dad."

"How did 'good old Joe' appreciate his devotion?"

Mary tossed her head. "I gave Joe to understand that he cannot dictate to me. And I'm going driving with Mr. Brown this afternoon."

Miss Pelina nodded her head, as if this were no surprise to her.

The afternoon seemed very long to the nervous little old spinster, and she sighed with relief when she heard Mary burst in at the front door.

"Auntie," she cried, "I'm upset."

"What upset you?" asked Miss Pelina jocularly. "Not the automobile, I hope."

"Don't joke, please," begged Mary. "It was that odious toad I was driving with."

"What did he do?" asked her aunt.

"Oh, he didn't do anything. He just looked, and he was so soft, and—and, oh, auntie, I can't explain it, but his hands seemed to paw over me so, even when he helped me into the car. I never could bear to have a man's hands touch me. I'd like to slap his silly, smirky face," she fumed.

"Exactly as I thought," commented Miss Pelina. "But you never would have believed he was cheap and repulsive if anyone had told you. You needed to make your own discoveries. There's the bell, I told a man to stop here. Go let him in, honey."

As Mary threw open the door, she gasped. "The man" was Joe.

"Did you want me, Mary?" he asked in his kind voice, which sounded a trifle tired.

"Yes, Joe," with the tears very near, and her sweet face uplifted. "I want you all the time."

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**The HOME BEAUTIFUL**  
Flowers and Shrubbages  
Their Care and Cultivation



Orchids.

**THE PEONY AND ITS CULTURE**

By C. BESTCHER.

Few people know the wealth of beauty and perfume of the peony. Quite everyone knows the brilliant old red peony or "piny" of the old-time garden. But from that to the modern peony is a great evolution. The modern peony is superior in size, perfume and finish to the chrysanthemum, with less care and more certain results for labor expended.

The requirements of the peony are simple, yet at a few periods they are very easily damaged. We have large areas to handle and cannot give them the same care one could give a few plants.

We give the soil a thorough dressing of fresh manure early in the fall and sow to rye. In April we plow the ground deeply and plant potatoes, corn or other crops that will have good culture.

We prefer to plant any time during September, but planting may be done at any time (if well watered for a few days) from September 1 to May. We do not approve of lifting plants in the spring after they have begun already to make a rapid and tender growth.

Plants that are kept dormant by being dug in the fall may be planted until June with fine success. We have planted big clumps when in full bloom and they grew well, but we do not advise it except when absolutely necessary.

When planting peonies in clayey ground, they should be set about four inches deep, but in light, sandy or loamy soil, five or six inches deep. Old clumps I plant a bit deeper, leaving the crown covered lightly until late when more soil is drawn over them to make the surface level.

Never use much manure the first year on newly planted peonies and care should always be exercised not to overmanure them. The best way is to cultivate them about three inches deep, then apply about one inch of any manure, working the ground several times before winter sets in, or they may be manured after the ground freezes and the manure worked into the soil in the spring.

Keep all the weeds out of the peonies and do not dig over three inches deep from October until the buds are as large as acorns. Many persons have complained about their peonies not blooming, and upon investigation and from observations from my own experience I found that whenever we dug deeply around plants at the time above stated the plants either came up blind or bore a very small

percentage of good blooms, so we learned to employ shallow cultivation.

Plant peonies in the bright sunshine away from trees that are liable to shade them or whose roots may sap the plant food in the soil where they are planted.

In lawns where peonies are planted they should be kept well cultivated to a radius of about two feet. Watering is unnecessary except in severe dry weather. Never plant peonies where the crowns are likely to be covered, with water longer than a very short time. Peonies under water for several days are likely to be very quickly spoiled.

Peonies are grown from a division of old plants and also from seed. From seed they require from five to eight years to come into full bloom. The following is a short list of very choice sorts:

Officialis tenuifolia, very early crimson; officialis rubra, old early red; La France, La France rose color; festiva maximi, paper white, center petals edged crimson; delachei, deep dark crimson; M. DuPont, late white, shows yellow stamens; Felix Drouse, fine late red; D. de Nemours, pure white; P. Duchartre, salmon-pink, very extra; M. M. Chausse, nearly black, very exceptional; Jenny Lind, fine salmon-pink; Grandiflora, grand violet salmon-pink; Dorchester, grand soft pink; Marie Stuart, creamy white, extra; Edulis Supera, early pink.

**GROW YOUR ROSES FROM CUTTINGS**

A good way to increase your stock of roses is from cuttings. Select a branch of half-hardened wood from a thrifty bush; cut into four or five-inch pieces; see that each of these has several eyes from which growth can start; trim off the leaves except a few near the top of the cutting.

Keep the cuttings in a glass of water for a couple of days.

Select a sunny place in the garden, which has excellent soil. Dig it up well and put in the slips about half their length. Press the soil tightly about the cuttings, water well, and cover with a glass jar or a large tumbler. Keep the ground moist by pouring water around the glass without lifting it up.

Growth should show through the glass in a few weeks, when the plants may be gradually accustomed to the air. Cuttings can be taken as late as mid-October, put down in this way and when cold weather comes just heap the earth high over them, glasses and all. In the spring you will find that more than half have survived.



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