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Saint Mary's Beacon.
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THEIR DAUGHTER-IN-LAW.

Emma A. Opper in Saturday Night.

"Your last day? Dear, dear, must you go today, Harvey?" said Mrs. Seely, looking across the breakfast table at her son, with affectionate concern.

And her daughters Kitty and Margery echoed her words.

"Couldn't you have got off for another week?" said his father, breaking a hot roll carefully. "Now that you're partner, though—"

"Now that I'm partner, it's hard work getting off," responded Harvey Seely. "It was all I could do—"

He paused suddenly.

"What was all you could do?" inquired Kitty.

"Well," said Harvey, laying down his knife and fork, with a beaming smile, "here goes. Here's the news I've been saving up for you till the last, from natural modesty. It was all I could do to get things arranged so that I could go on my wedding trip a month hence. I am going to be married."

Kitty's spoon fell into her saucer with a clatter, and Mr. Seely dropped his roll hastily.

"Married!" said Margery breathlessly.

Mrs. Seely alone remained calm.

She rolled up her napkin, put it in its ring and looked at her son through her gold-bowed glasses composedly.

She felt, however, that this was an important crisis.

When Harvey, their only son, had, with commendable independence, left his pleasant home to get a start in the neighboring city, they had expected great things of him.

He would be rapidly successful; he would distinguish himself in the profession he had chosen and amass a fortune; and he would woo and win some sweet girl, with a long row of ancestors—the Seelys, being themselves a good old family, were great respectors of blue blood—a host of accomplishments and a heavy dowry.

Their hopes had seemed likely to be fulfilled. Harvey had proved himself possessed of remarkable business qualities; he had risen quickly, and had recently exceeded their wildest ambitions by being made a junior partner of his firm.

All that now remained to be desired was his safe conquest of the beautiful and aristocratic young person of their dreams, with her many talents and substantial inheritance.

It was not to be wondered at therefore, that the girls were trembling with eagerness; that Mr. Seely fumbled with his watch chain in nervous suspense, and that Mrs. Seely opened her lips twice before she found strength to propound the all-important question:

"Who is she?"

"She is a Miss Dora Berdan at present," said Harvey smilingly.

"Berdan?" Mrs. Seely repeated, and raised her brows inquiringly.

"I don't think I have heard of the family."

"Not at all likely," Harvey rejoined. "They are very quiet people."

"Berdan?" Mrs. Seely repeated, musingly. "No; I have not heard of them. Where do they live?"

"In Weyman street," responded Harvey.

Mrs. Seely fell back in her chair with a little gasp; her husband turned a dismayed face upon his son; and Kitty and Margery gave little screams.

Weyman street! It was miles from the region of aristocracy; it was peopled with working girls, and seamstresses and small shopkeepers; with street vendors and old apple women for all the Seelys' knew.

"Not Weyman street, Harvey?" said his father, appealingly.

"Certainly; Weyman street," Harvey repeated.

"But she is not—she cannot be of good family, living in Weyman street!" said Mrs. Seely, anxiously.

"The family is quite respectable," her son responded quietly. "Dora's mother is a widow. She sews for a lace-goods house, and Dora has been assistant bookkeeper in our estab-

lishment; that is how I met her."

Mrs. Seely crossed her arms.

"A bookkeeper's seamstress!" she ejaculated. "Harvey, you could not have done worse!"

"A penniless girl," said his father, solemnly. "After all we have hoped for you! No; it could not be worse."

"A common waiting girl!" said Kitty in a choking voice. "And everybody will know! Oh, Harvey, it could not be worse!"

The young man looked from one to another in astonishment, hurt and half-contemptuous silence.

Margery turned to him, with a gentle sympathy mingling with the dismay in her face.

"Perhaps," she said, hopefully—"perhaps there is something to make up? Perhaps she is a wonderful beauty, or a great genius, or something?"

Harvey gave her a grateful smile.

"I think her pretty, of course," he said. "But I suppose that's because I'm fond of her. I don't think she would be called a beauty. And as for genius—she's very clever at accounts; but she doesn't sing, or paint, or anything of that sort. She's never had the time or money for such things, poor girl!"

But Margery had turned away with an impatient gesture.

"There is nothing then," she said, despairingly. "No; it couldn't be worse!"

Harvey rose from his seat, with an angry which set the bell in the castor jingling.

"This is absurd!" he said indignantly. "It is more than absurd; it is unjust and narrow-minded. How sensible—presumably sensible people," Harvey corrected, rather bitterly "can say, in regard to a person they have never seen, that 'it could not be worse' in their own comprehension!"

"We will not talk of it," said Mrs. Seely, holding up a restraining hand. "Discussing will not mend matters. And you are to be married next month?"

"On the ninth," Harvey rejoined. "Of course you all will be there?" he added, rather dubiously.

"By no means!" said his father, shortly.

"You could hardly expect it," said Mrs. Seely, reproachfully.

"Very well, if Mohammed won't come— You've heard the observation. We shall pay you a visit immediately on our return from our wedding tour, with your kind permission. You must know Dora."

When he left the house, an hour later, he had the required permission.

His mother and the girls had even kissed him good by, in an injured and reproachful way; and his father had shaken hands, coolly.

But his ears still rang with that odious assertion. "It could not be worse!" and he was thoughtful all the way back to the city.

The Seelys were in a state of subdued excitement.

Harvey's wedding tour was completed; and they had received a telegram that afternoon to the effect that he would be 'on hand' tonight with his new wife.

The dining-room table was set for dinner; and Mrs. Seely wandered from one end of it to the other, nervously.

Her husband sat under the chandelier with his evening newspaper; but he was not reading it. Kitty and Margery flattered about uneasily, watching through the window for the carriage from the railroad station.

"I hope," said Margery, with a nervous attempt at cheerfulness, "that she will be barely decent—presentable. Think of the people who will call! I hope she won't be worse than we're prepared to see her."

"She couldn't be," said Mrs. Seely, dismally.

There was a roll of wheels, and the twinkle of the carriage-lamp at the door, and the bell rang sharply.

Kitty and Margery clasped hands in sympathetic agitation; Mr. Seely dropped his newspaper and arose; and Mrs. Seely advanced to-

wards the hall door with dignity.

It opened wide before she could reach it, and Harvey entered, his face suffused with genial, blissful smiles.

"This is my wife," he said, proudly. "My mother, Dora; my father; my sisters Kitty and Margery!"

And, with a caressing touch, he took by the hand and led forward among them—

What?

Mr. Seely gazed with startling eyes; Mrs. Seely dropped the hand she had started to hold out, with her face growing ashy, and Kitty and Margery gasped.

For what they saw was a woman of apparently 40 years, with a face powdered and painted in the most unblushing manner, with thin gray hair crimped over a wrinkled forehead in a sickening affection of youthfulness, and with a diminutive, gaily-trimmed bonnet perched thereon; with an affected, mincing gait and a simpering smile.

"This is my wife," Harvey repeated. "Have you no welcome for her?"

The bride tittered.

"Mebbe they think I ain't good enough for 'em, dear?" she observed, tartly.

"Impossible, my pet," Harvey responded; and patted her falsely-blooming cheek affectionately.

"Besides, if you were but a shadow—a caricature of your beautiful self, they would not have been surprised. They were prepared for the worst."

He looked at his horrified relatives meaningly.

The truth of his words flashed over them.

Yes, they had all said, repeatedly, that "it could not be worse." But this wretched, wrinkled, bearded creature—had they dreamed of this?

Harvey watched them with an undisturbed smile—his father, turning away at last and rubbing his forehead with his handkerchief weakly; Mrs. Seely, gazing at his daughter-in-law with a dreadful fascination, and the girls sinking into chairs in dismayed silence.

"Well, mother," said Harvey, lightly, "of course a new addition to the family is an object of interest; but don't forget that I have an appetite, and getting married has rather improved it. Take off your bonnet, my own. Here Kitty?"

Kitty came forward with a set face and tightly-closed lips, to receive the marvelous combination of beads and silk flowers held out to her with a disgusting air of sprightliness. She was afraid to trust herself to speak.

Poor Mrs. Seely, sick at heart, had made her way to the bell and rang it, and dinner came down presently.

"Turtle soup!" the bride observed, looking round the table with a girlish smile; "ain't nothing I admire so! Just pass that celery, father-in-law. Delicious! ain't it, darling?"

"Extremely, my dear," said the bridegroom, placently.

Ignorant and vulgar! What dreadful things would they discover next?

It was an evening they never forgot. The unfortunate parents sat with pale faces and unsteady hands, staring into their empty plates, or looking at each other with fresh horror at each simpering, senseless, ungrammatical remark of their terrible daughter-in-law.

Kitty and Margery excused themselves during the second course, and flew to their rooms to cry themselves to sleep, in an agony of dismay and mortification.

"I shan't think of setting up," said the bride, rising from the table with an apologetic giggle, and with the last of her desert held aloft. "I'm too worn out. If anybody calls—of course everybody'll call—just tell 'em I'll see 'em tomorrow. Come on, dear!"

And she tripped upstairs, with a juvenile nod over her shoulder, and with her beaming young husband following.

Mrs. Seely wrung her hands despairingly.

"We said it could not be worse,"

she said, faintly. "But this! How shall we endure it?"

"I shall not endure it!" said her husband; his face had grown almost careworn during the last two hours. "I shall send them packing tomorrow, and if ever he enters my house again—"

He brought his hand down on the table threateningly.

"But that will not help matters," said his wife, miserably. "He is ruined; we are disgraced; and everybody will know it."

There was a silence.

"I had pictured her to myself," said Mrs. Seely, beginning to sob, "as a young girl—a person of suitable age for my poor, misguided boy, decently educated, and at least a lady. And even then, when I did not doubt that it was such a one he had chosen, I thought myself the most unhappy creature in the world, because she had not wealth and an old name. Surely it is a judgment upon us. Oh, was there ever so dreadful a thing?"

"Probably not," said her husband grimly.

It was a solemn group which waited in the dining-room next morning, for the appearance of the newly-wedded couple.

There were marks of a toiling night on every face—in troubled brows, swollen lids and pale cheeks—and a general gloom prevailed.

Mr. Seely stood in front of the fire-place, watching the half-door with a stern face. He was master in his own house at least, and he was determined that it should not be disgraced by his son's wife for another hour.

"Please get them away before anybody comes, papa!" said Kitty. "It would be dreadful if anybody were to see her!"

"Dreadful!" Margery repeated with a groan.

There were footsteps on the stairs. Mrs. Seely turned with a shiver, and the girls caught their breath.

The hall door opened.

The waiting group looked up slowly. Would she not be still more terrible in the broad daylight—that artificial, simpering horror?

But it was not the sight they were prepared to see which the open door disclosed; it was not a painted powdered semblance of a woman who came in slowly, with a timid smile and downcast eyes.

It was a slender, sweet-faced young lady, with shining brown hair crowning a charming head, peachy cheeks, in which the color came and went, and soft, dark eyes, which studied the carpet in pretty timidity, with dainty, slipped feet, and a lace-trimmed wrapper, fitting snugly to a perfect form.

"Good morning," she said, gently. Harvey had followed her closely.

"Well, Dora," he said, looking from one to another of his speechless relatives, quizzically, "they don't seem inclined to speak to you."

But Margery had come toward her hastily, and seized both of her hands.

"Was it you all the time?" cried Margery, joyfully. "And the gray hair was false, and the wrinkles were put on, and all that dreadful powder? Oh, Harvey, how could you?"

"I begged him not to," said the pretty bride, raising her dark eyes sweetly. "I told him it was cruel; and such a time as I had, saying all those shocking things he had taught me, and keeping my wig straight and trying not to laugh. Shall you ever forgive me?"

"Forgive you! Oh, my dear!" cried Mrs. Seely, incoherently.

And she hurried forward, with a sob of joy, and embraced her daughter-in-law wildly.

"It was rather rough," said Harvey, gaily. "I felt like a villain when I saw the way you all took it. But you know what you said, every one of you—that it couldn't be worse. I thought I'd demonstrate to you that it could. Dora is 19 instead of 40; she can speak correctly when she makes an effort; and I can heartily recommend her for a 'willing and obliging,' good-tempered and thoroughly capable girl—the sweetest in the world."

Mr. Seely left the fire-place and

came and clasped his daughter-in-law in his arms, with a beaming face, and Kitty kissed her effusively.

It was a dreadful lesson," said Mrs. Seely, looking up with a tearful smile; "but I'm afraid we needed it, my son."

A Turn of Tide.

When the young man went to ask her father if he would consent to his marrying the daughter, the old gentleman was sarcastic and then abusive.

"I know all about you," he roared at the climax of the scene. "I don't believe all the property left you was worth \$5000. Yet here you are driving fast horses, playing golf, keeping a yacht, and pretending to live by speculating in stocks. The first thing you know you'll get on the wrong side of the market and away your money will go. You have no anchor, no back log, no nest egg, or—no nothing. You think I am going to risk my daughter with a man like that you are barking up the wrong tree, young man. I made my money and know how to take care of it. Just you keep mighty scarce around here till you've done something."

This was before the terrific and unprecedented boom on the stock market. Toward the tail end of the storm the daughter telephoned to call at once. "Father is horribly troubled about something and will pay no attention to us," she added.

But she was mistaken, for he no sooner heard the young man's voice than he sent for him, took him to the 'den,' and asked him how he stood on Northern Pacific.

"Got quite a bunch of it," he replied blushing. "It's down in the safety deposit; but they must have got in on the ground floor and bought very cheap. Pretty good thing to have these days. I'm thinking about taking it over to New York tonight and handling it there where you can lend it over night for more than its worth."

"Heavens!" groaned the old man. "Charley, I'm busted. Busted to Smithereens. I don't often dabble in stocks, but I sold short on that stock and it's bound to sink me. I'm the biggest old fool in Detroit."

"That's right," admitted the honest youth without knowing just what he was saying, and the old gentleman showed no resentment. Before the happy family party broke up that night Charley was sitting with his arms about her, and the next day the old gentleman was boasting how he had beaten the stock game.—Detroit Free Press.

PINGREE'S PITHY PHRASES.—Every rascal is an extreme partizan.

Government for bondholder is becoming quite common in the world—nations gone into the hands of a receiver.

Money is taken each year out of the pockets of the producer and goes to swell the corruption fund of the privileged few.

Every agency that is bleeding the country has taken refuge under the wing of the Republican party.

The most difficult thing we have to get are honest laws; and then they must be administered.

There should be a tax upon all incomes of more than \$1000 a year. Congressional legislation against trusts, as State enactments, seems useless.

All candidates for office should be nominated by the direct vote of the people.

All Europeans should be driven from the American Continent.—From Speeches of Hazen S. Pingree.

Unnecessary Loss of Time.

Mr. W. S. Whedon, Cashier of the First National Bank of Winterset, Iowa, in a recent letter gives some experience with a carpenter in his employ, that will be of value to other mechanics. He says: "I had a carpenter working for me who was obliged to stop work for several days on account of being troubled with diarrhea. I mentioned to him that I had been similarly troubled and that Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy had cured me. He bought a bottle of it from the druggist here and informed me that one dose cured him, and he is again at his work."

For sale by William F. Greenwell & Son, Leonardtown.