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SYD'S FISH.

Tom put his head into the little back parlor, where sat the ladies of the family. Syd—who had been growing sleepy over her sewing for the last half hour, with Belle writing a love-letter in the bay-window; her mother yawning over her account-book; and Grandma Greyson, nodding over her knitting by the fire—hailed his advent with delight.

"Syd!"

"Here, Tom! Whither bound?" queried Syd, rising and putting her work away.

"To the lake," waving his fishing-tackle before her longing eyes. "Proper cloudy day for fishing. Come along, sis!"

"All right, I will. Good-bye, grandma, and here's a kiss. Don't worry, mother. You needn't look so shocked, Belle, for I've been an angel all summer—haven't whistled for a fortnight. I will to-day, though!" muttered Syd, rebelliously, as she drew on her rubber boots and buttoned her waterproof in the hall.

"Girls didn't go trapsin' off so when I was young!" and grandma shook her head wisely over her knitting-needles.

"Seventeen years old," sighed Mrs. Greyson, "and such a romp!"

"Too bad, for she can be a little lady when she tries!" added Belle.

Meanwhile Syd, at once the pride and torment of the family, with fishing-rod over shoulder, was dashing through the wet fields, in the direction of the lake.

"How that girl does go!" muttered Tom, who brought up the rear panting and out of breath. "Syd! Hold on! It's a-going to rain. Here's the umbrel! Hold on, I say!"

Syd "held on" accordingly, her cheeks flushed, her eyes sparkling, her hair hopelessly down. Very pretty was Syd, especially with all that shining hair over her shoulders, and not at all "fast" looking either, though she could fish, swim, play ball, row, ride and shoot, as well as her brother Tom. The two "sports" aimed for a favorite fishing station, a sort of plateau, with a fringe of sturdy shrubs along the edge over-hanging a narrow strip of sandy shore. Just beyond was a deep hole, where the big fishes of the lake lay concealed.

"Stay here and fish, Syd, while I get some more grubs. There ain't half enough bait."

Syd nodded, and Tom darted away.

The fair fisher viewed the wriggling mass of worms in Tom's tin cup with evident disgust, took a thick brown paper from her pocket, opened it, disclosing fragments of fresh pork, and then baited her hook, whistling "Ye banks and braes" with all her might during the operation.

A fine-looking young fellow, sitting on a camp-stool beneath Syd's perch, looked up at the sound. It evidently disturbed him, for he frowned angrily up at the bushes that concealed the unconscious offender; but seeing no one, went on with his work. This was not fishing, however. An easel stood before him; he held palette and brushes in his hand. He was an amateur artist, probably. He had been trying in vain that afternoon to catch the effect of rain on water, and his failure had put him out of sorts apparently, for as the unseen whistler went from "Bonnie Doon" to "Captain Jenks," he contracted his brow and muttered something ill natured about "confounded boys."

But he was destined to a worse doom than this, for as the line, which had lain still in the water a few minutes, was jerked sharply up, a monstrous fish dropped off, and the hook, relieved of its weight, swung suddenly round, burying itself on the back of the artist's hand. He started up, uttering an exclamation more expressive than polite.

"Deuce take that boy!" said he with an emphasis so energetic that it reached unlucky Syd.

"Oh, my soul!" she exclaimed, and darted down the rocks.

Meanwhile the artist, holding his jackknife in his left hand, was endeavoring to open it with his teeth.

"Good heavens! What have I done?"

He looked up in astonishment, to see a lovely young lady with a mass of bright hair around her shoulders, and great, startled violet eyes, bending over him, looking very pale and anxious.

"Oh, I am so sorry! I didn't mean to! Please do forgive me? Are you very much hurt?" all in a breath.

So surprised was he at the unexpected apparition, that he didn't hear half she said.

"Nothing serious. Pray don't be alarmed. Nothing, upon my word! Only some confounded boy up above there, who has been distracting me for a half hour with his whistling, sent me this favor—by way of climax, I suppose."

Then he showed his hand to Syd.

"Oh, sir, it was I! I'm Syd. I didn't know—I never—I—can I help you, sir?"

"Thank you, you can if your nerves are strong. I can't cut this out with my left hand. If you'd be so kind—"

"I'll try, sir. It's no more than I deserve as punishment."

Syd set her teeth and went to work. Calm and collected, her hand did not shake once, while she cut out the offending fish-hook, washed the wound, and bound it up with her handkerchief. But when the operation was over she was paler than her patient.

"Now, sir, we must go home—it's going to rain. And if you will only stop at our house a moment, mother will give you some wonderful salve that never fails to cure. You must let me do something for you, or I shall never forgive myself—"

"Don't apologize, pray. I ought to beg your pardon instead of having spoken so slightingly of your whistling. I think now it was a very creditable performance, full of spirit and grace. But if you must make some amends for your misdeeds, I'll burden you with this camp-stool to carry by way of penance. My paint-box and canvass will be all I can manage. Never mind the easel; that will be all right here."

"Tom can carry it, sir. Tom!"

That individual, who had been enjoying the dramatic scene from behind the bushes, now descended and followed the couple from afar, bearing the easel, and stopping only twice to stand on his head by way of expressing his hilarity.

In the middle of the afternoon, as Belle was looking listlessly out of the window at the driving rain, she gave a start.

"Mother, see here!"

Syd was at the gate, her splendid hair down, carrying a camp-stool in one hand, and with the other holding an umbrella protectingly over a tall young gentleman, one of whose hands seemed to be somehow disabled.

"Mr. Lester, Bessie Grant's New York consin! He's a distinguished artist, and is visiting at the Grant's during his summer vacation. What will he think of that wild girl of ours? Why, he's coming in, as I live!"

He was coming in, for Syd had said in an earnest tone,—

"Please stop, and let mother do something for your hand! Beside, I shall have to 'fess my wrong-doing, and shall want your protection."

"With pleasure, Miss Geyson. Only don't, Topsy-like, 'fess anything you haven't done."

"You think me bad enough without," said Syd, with a laugh, as they stood on the steps. "I have brought you a patient, mother," she continued, as soon as she had introduced them properly.

"I beg pardon, madam, for intruding upon you unceremoniously, but Miss Sydney tells me of some magical medicine you have. I was so unfortunate as to hurt my hand."

"I hurt it, you mean," interposed Syd.

"Well, yes, Mrs. Greyson," said Godfrey Lester, laughing, "I believe your daughter did mistake me for a fish." Here he bowed to grandma, who had advanced from her corner. "I assure you she found me a troublesome one, and had hard work to get me off her hook."

"How do you do, Mr. Fish?" said grandma, very politely.

She was a little deaf and had not got the run of the story. Poor Syd, in spite of her patience, was boiling over with suppressed laughter, and Tom stood on his head in the hall.

Mrs. Greyson bustled around, bringing lint, ointment and bandages, to bind up the wound, while Belle scolded Syd in an undertone.

"That Mr. Fish seems to be a very fine young man," said grandma, at supper, after Mr. Lester had departed. "But I didn't quite understand how he came to hurt his hand so."

Syd bit her lips; Tom choked, and was sent from the table in disgrace.

Mr. Lester came every day for a renewal of the ointment. He might have taken some with him, and thus saved so many journeys, but he never seemed to think of that.

After a little, a great change came over Miss Sydney Greyson.

"Syd's getting too poky for anything," said Tom. "She won't fish or shoot, and she says things are 'very nice' instead of 'joll.'"

"What a little lady Sydne is getting to be!" said her mother.

"It's high time!" from grandma.

"I know why," said Belle the sentimental, "Syd is in love!"

"Ah!" said grandma; "with Mr. Fish?"

For grandma would persist in calling Godfrey Lester Mr. Fish, to Syd's deep disgust and to Master Tom's infinite delight.

Long after the lacerated hand recovered, Mr. Lester continued his visits, probably because he had got into the habit of going to the Greysons', and habits are notorious tyrants. Syd suddenly took a contrary fit, indulged in freaks unaccountable, and was wilder than ever. Mr. Lester seemed to like her none the less for this. I think he understood it. Don't you?

One night, at a party, Syd was enjoying herself hugely in her own way; that was, by horrifying a group of interested listeners with accounts of her many escapades. To shock the dainty bells and effeminate dandies by her bold disclosures, delighted the wicked little creature.

She did not look like a hoyden, in her fleecy white dress, looped with purple panises, and pansies just the color of her eyes in her bright hair.

"You look like an angel, Syd dear," Belle had said. "Be one to-night, and let Mr. Lester see that you can be a lady."

This was well-meant, but mistaken advice, and had the effect, of course, of making Syd resolve to behave her very worst. And she kept her word.

"I really think I have been too angelic for anything this summer. It worries me to think of it. I fear I shall die young like the story-book seraphs, for I'm getting quite heavenly. Just think! I've been fishing only once this season. But that time I caught such a large fish—enormous! In fact—"

"Did you take him home, Sydney?" asked Bessie Grant.

"Of course I did!" replied Syd. "And—Mrs. Greyson doctored him up, and now he's entirely recovered."

And then Syd went on to tell how many birds she had "bagged" in yesterday's sport, and how she had drowned six kittens that morning.

"Oh! how could you, Syd?" cried Bessie.

"Because Tom wouldn't. Boys are too tender-hearted for that sort of thing," in a most matter-of-fact tone.

This was bad enough, but she went on from bad to worse, saying the most extraordinary things in the quietest, most ladylike way, and in the sweetest of voices.

"I've finished the business now," she said to herself, as she took down her hair that night. "I did my worst, and he's doubtless so disgusted that he'll never want to see me again. I don't care!"

But she sobbed herself to sleep.

The next morning Mr. Lester called, and found Syd alone in the little parlor. She was pale, but greeted him very composedly.

"This is a farewell visit, Miss Sydney; the last, probably of many pleasant ones. My business calls me back, and I leave this afternoon."

Syd's voice was very cool, but she dropped her work and stooped to regain it.

Goodfrey bent also, and as both rose, he looked straight into her face.

"Your eyes are full of tears, Syd darling! Why what's the matter?"

"My great grandfather is dead!" said Syd, in a doleful tone.

* * * * * * *

Two years afterward, a gentleman and lady were strolling along the banks of the Danube, where a number of sturdy little peasant lads were engaged with hook and line.

"Look at those little chaps, Mrs. Lester! Don't you envy them? Wouldn't you like to try it again, yourself?"

"No, indeed, Godfrey!" laughed Syd, prettier than ever, and quite as saucy. "My last exploit in that line cured me entirely and forever of my mania for fishing."

"Why so, Mrs. Lester? Were you disappointed in the fish you caught on that occasion? Are you dissatisfied with me, dear?"

I shall not tell you what Syd said; but I should say—judging from the tender light in her violet eyes, and the rapturous expression on the face of her "fish" at her answer—that she was not dissatisfied.

Why Whiskers Could Grow.

'Here's another lie,' said Mrs. Smith, who was reading a newspaper.

'What is it, my dear?' asked her husband.'

'Why, this newspaper says an Indiana woman was disinterred the other day, after being buried two years, and that whiskers four inches long had grown on her face since her burial. I don't believe a word of it.'

'I do,' said Smith.'

'Well, I don't. How could whiskers grow on a woman's face after she is dead?'

'Easy enough, Jane. She would hold her chin still long enough to give the whiskers a chance.' — *Newman Independent.*

Receipted the Bill.

How a Sharp Collector Suffered Loss Through His Shrewdness.

Mr. Kurry Kombs, the acute and astute collector of the Gas Company, strolled into the office yesterday, laughing as if his ribs had been tickled with a horse-radish grater.

'Oh, you should have been with me down at old Solomon Levi's just now,' he gasped, as he sank exhausted into a chair.

'Why, what's the matter with old Solomon?' inquired the obituary editor, as he leaned back and clasped his hands around the back of his neck.

'Oh, it's altogether too rich,' responded Mr. Kombs, when he had recovered his breath. 'You see I had a gas bill to collect amounting to $30, and when I presented it the old galoot said: 'All right, Mr. Gomps,' and going to the safe, he brought out a $100 bill and stuck it at me, saying: 'May be you can shange dot bill, Mr. Gomps.' I looked at the bill and saw at once that it was a counterfeit. I was going to lamn the old son of a gun, but an idea struck me like a pile driver. I had a lot of bogus coin in my pocket that I had been stuck on a day or two before, so I just receipted the bill and took his $100 bill and gave him the change in counterfeit coin. Oh, ho, ho, he, he, he,'—yelled Mr. Kombs, as he fairly rolled on the floor in the excess of his merriment, 'how the old sucker will kick when he tumbles to the sell.'

'Well?' said the obituary editor.

'Well,' said Mr. Kombs, 'don't you see how I played it on him? You are about as thick-headed as old Levi, it strikes me.'

'You say you gave him counterfeit money in change?' said the obituary editor.

'Yes, that's where I got ahead of him,' responded Mr. Kombs.

'And you took his counterfeit money?' said the obituary editor.'

'Why, certainly, and gave him the same kind of change,' Mr. Kombs replied.

'And you say that you gave him a receipt in full?' persisted the obituary editor.

'Why, of course, what's the matter with you anyway,' said Mr. Kombs, with a shade of irritation in his voice, 'didn't I do him up slick?'

'Well, perhaps that's a good way of doing business,' said the obituary editor, 'but I must admit that I am a little puzzled to see how the Gas Company got its bill paid in the deal. However, you slick collectors are a little above the comprehension of an ordinary newspaper man.'

Mr. Kombs slowly arose from his seat with a dazed expression upon his countenance. 'Well, by the shades of Jack China,' he ejaculated. 'I never thought of that. There's another thirty dollars gone out of my salary, and I thought I was just too smart to live.' And he wended his way sadly and pensively down stairs.

Advice to Young Married People.

"Drive gently over the stones!" This piece of advice, which is frequently given to inexperienced whips, may be respectfully suggested to the newly married. There are stony places on the road to happineess, which if not carefully driven over, may upset the domestic coach. The first rock ahead which should be marked "dangerous" is the first year of married life. Here, especially is the first step that costs; as a rule, the first year either mars or makes a marriage. During this period errors may be committed which will cast a shadow over every year that follows. On awakening suddenly from sleep we feel put out and rather cross. May not the young husband and wife experience feelings not entirely different when they awake to reality from the dreams of courtship and the fascination of the honeymoon? Everything must once more be contemplated after the ordinary manner of the world, once more with subdued feelings spoken of, considered and settled. For the first time husband and wife see each other as they actually are. Each brings certain peculiarities into the married state to which the other has to grow accustomed. They have now to live no longer for themselves, but for each other, and the lesson is not learned in a moment. In all things indifferent the husband and wife must be willing to yield, however new it may be to them, however different from what they themselves thought. Self must be sacrificed in order thereby to gain the help of another beloved existence. A lady once asked Dr. Johnson how in his dictionary he came to define pastern the knee of a horse; he immediately answered: "Ignorance, madam; pure ignorance." This is the simple explanation of many an accident that takes place at the commencement of the matrimonial journey. The young couple have not yet learned the dangerous places of the road, and, as a consequence, they drive carelessly over them.—*The Quiver.*

OLD JASPER'S LUCK.

The Astonishing Revolution a Lottery Prize Wrought.

Henry Christian, Cuba's partner in the barber business, tells a story on a venerable relative of his who lived down in Mississippi. Jasper was his name and a few years ago he drew a $5,000 cash price in a lottery. The sum was measureless wealth. The word millions conveyed to the guileless mind of old Jasper no idea of greater wealth than did the sight of his $5,000. He was a wood-sawyer by occupation, and his first act after getting possession of his money was to throw away his sawbuck and saw. He next placed $3,000 in the hands of a trusty white man of business, and with the remaining $2,000 he resolved to buy the universe—the earth alone being quite too insignificant to engage his attention more than a passing moment.

'Well, sah,' said Chris, 'de way dat old man did lope and frow hisself beat all. De fus' thing he did was to buy his ole woman a silk dress an' a red woolen shawl. Then he went fishin'—wouldn't carry no wums, in his mouf no mo' but got a box to tote 'em in. I never did hear sech doin's—never did shu'. Didn't have no good luck fishin,' no how, so he hired a double team from a livery man and went out ridin'. Co'se he took his ole woman 'long, and when he got back he jest give de hull rig away to a feller he seen comin' long de street and paid de livery man out-an'-out full value, an' didn't never see it no mo.'

'Nex'day he bought a dawg and then bought a collar for it, an' de collar was so heavy and big it choked the dawg to death.'

'On 'count of dat unlucky play he took his ole sow an' tied her to a pos' an' walloped her till he couldn't res'. Every time he'd fetch down de rawhide he'd say, 'I'll show whose yo' boss—who's yo' mas'r. I'll let yo' know I own yo', I does. Didn' I pay fo' yo'?'

'But the po' ole man got lef' soon after dat. Yo' see he bought a yacht and went out salin' on Mobile Bay. His ole woman tried to get him to let up on sailin'—tole him a squall was comin' an' he'd go down.

'"Never you mind, honey,' says Jasper, 'I pay for de squall, an' I'se gwine to hab it, an' no niggah ain't gwine to stop me.'

'He went, and shu' 'nough the squall fotched him. Over went his boat in plain sight ob de po' ole woman, and down to de bottom went Uncle Jasper.

'But when his drownded body was toted ashore nobody down Mobile way never did see no sech big funeral as dat ole woman got up fo' her old man.'—*Detroit Free Press.*

An Original Letter.

Just twenty-eight years ago, according to a recently-resurrected diary of a private secretary of the fifteenth president of the United States, Mr. Buchanan received the following letter from a rural postmaster in Illinois, who had just discovered that the regulations of the department required a quarterly report from him:

MISTER JEEMS BUCKCANNIN—*Deer Sur*:—Bein required by the instructions of the Post office to report to you quarterly I heer with foolil that pleasin dooty by reportin as follers: The harvestin has bin goin on kinder peert like and most of the nabers have thare cuttin dun. Weat is hardly a average crop on rolin land, but its all hunk in the hollers. Corn is yallerish and wont turn out more than ten bushels to the aker. The health of the kentry is only tolloble good, and colery has broke out 2 miles around from here. But there is a powerful stur on the subject of religion, and sixty of the bigest sinners in Macoupin county have jined the church. Two of Jack Kisers best settin hens pegged out last week, and the gaps is among the peepies. My health is not good, I got it so in my back. Give my luv to Mrs. Buckcannin and subscribe myself yours truly. All fur this quarter. JACK PLUMER.

Leaving the Farm.

The *Journal of Education* argues that if the young men from the rural districts, after receiving the benefits of education, desert the farms to engage in mercantile and other kinds of business, 'where they can secure for themselves a larger share of this world's comforts and enjoyments, with shorter hours of toil,' the schools ought not to be blamed, but praised, for affording them 'the grand opportunity.' This is a matter about which there is much difference of opinion. The boy ought not to get the impression that all the 'grand opportunities' are to be found in the cities. There are 'opportunities' quite as 'grand' in rural life, and the boy ought to be made to see them in order that he may not mistake his proper course. The disposition of young men to leave the farm does not need any special encouragement.

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How He Bribed Him.

How a Texas Army Contractor Made Money.

Col. McCracken, U. S. A., was the chief quartermaster, stationed at San Antonio, Texas. He had advertised for bids to supply the post with corn, and the contract was to be awarded on a certain day. Col. McCracken was believed to be an honorable and conscientious officer who would not take a bribe under any circumstance.

Tom Rowell, of the firm of Rowell & Smith, was a sharp, shrewd business man, who was very anxious to get the contract to supply the post of San Antonio with corn, but he did not think it was quite safe to offer the quartermaster a bribe, as he had on previous occasions with other quartermasters. After thinking over the matter for some time, he adopted the following plan to carry out his purpose.

He called at quartermaster McCracken's office, and asked that officer in an insinuating manner to see that he got fair play when the bids were opened. Col. McCracken replied in a very dignified manner:

"The contract, sir, will be awarded to the lowest bidder."

Tom Rowell took up his hat and bowed himself out. In so doing he dropped on the floor an envelope containing five one thousand dollar bills, the name of the firm of Rowell & Smith being on the envelope.

Rowell immediately went to the office of the chief of police and notified him that he had lost an addressed envelope containing five one thousand dollar bills.

Rowell argued in this way:

"If Col. McCracken keeps the money, I'll get the contract, and I can well afford to let him keep the $5,000. If he, on the other hand, thinks I am trying to bribe him, and gets mad about it, I will simply say I dropped the envelope on the floor accidentally, and had no intention of bribing him, and that I didn't know where I had lost the money."

Rowell had scarcely returned to his office from notifying the police of his loss when in rushed Col. McCracken, his face flushed, very much excited, and holding the envelope in his hand.

"What do you mean, sir?" he exclaimed, "by trying to bribe a United States officer. This is an insult, sir," and he slammed the envelope down on the table.

Rowell made out that he was very angry at the insinuation. He pounded on the desk with his fist and roared out:

'And what do you mean, sir, by charging me with attempting to bribe anybody. I merely asked you to see that my bid was properly considered. I dropped that envelope without knowing it, and have been hunting all over town for it. I want you to understand, sir, that I am a gentleman even if I am only a civilian."

"Now, that's just a little thin," retorted Col. McCracken.

"Well, sir, I'll prove to you that you are mistaken, and then I shall expect an apology," replied Rowell, and going to the telephone he requested the chief of police to come immediately to the office of Rowell & Smith. That official was there in a few minutes, and fully confirmed Rowell's statement that he had notified the police of the loss of the money as soon as he missed it.

Col. McCracken was overwhelmed with mortification at having unjustly accused an innocent man of having attempted to bribe him. He was profuse in his apologies, which Rowell at length accepted.

The bids were opened next day, and it was found that Rowell's bid was not the lowest, but Col. McCracken, feeling he owed Rowell some reparation, decided that the lower bidders were not good, and gave the contract to Rowell, who cleared upwards of $25,000 out of it, without having to spend a cent to lubricate anybody.

Greenbacks are said to be so popular in Cuba as to command a large premium over any other money, whether gold or silver.

—Gospel Hymns, No. 1 2 & 3 combined, with or without music—at the Journal store. tf

WANTED.—One or two nice Shoats Inquire of D. S. Kauffman & Co.