



"LET US HAVE PEACE."

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The Mysterious Stranger; or, my Husband's Brother.

She was a fresh, fair, blue-eyed thing; and as her young husband clasped her tiny waist, and raised her till her lips touched his bearded ones; he thought what a delicious estate was "Fool's Paradise," and what very unnecessary attributes were experience and common sense in such a pretty little wife as the one of whom he had been the happy possessor about three months.

"Oh, Fred I nearly two whole days! What shall I do?"

And the azure eyes became suffused with tears.

Fred was a manly fellow; and therefore, though an adoring husband, averse to scenes.

"My darling pet," said he, "don't be silly. One would think I was going to see the Antipodes. Men often have to take these little journeys. Don't be a goose, Ellie, but just sit down and put a button on that shirt of mine, and mend the holes in my gloves, and I shall be back before you can say 'Jack Robinson'."

With this playful speech the husband tore himself away from those tender, encircling arms, and was waving his bride a cheerful farewell from the knife-board of a suburban omnibus, before sentiment had culminated to flooding point. Indeed, there was little demand for sympathy; Fred Wilson being merely a clerk in a banking-house, who was off to Southampton to meet a brother returning to England, after ten years' absence.

Elizabeth, or "Ellie"—as her young brothers and sisters, and subsequently her husband, more endearingly styled her—was of too volatile a temperament to grieve long after the rumble of the wheels had died away; but I'm sorry to say that, having an especial aversion to the use of woman's weapon, the needle, she postponed the repairs of shirt and gloves, for the more agreeable consideration of what nice little pudding she should order for dinner, and whether their somewhat limited income would justify her in any extra indulgence in the shape of a piece of salmon or some early peas, as a consolation. No, Ellie was not greedy; but, dear reader, did you never try the wonderful potency of "creature comforts," under those mock sorrows for ourselves? Ellie was not a sensualist in any extraordinary degree; neither was she anything of a heroine who would starve herself for love, or pine away in absence. She was soon singing merrily, as she ran down the stairs of their little Coekney villa, and then remembering her grievance, despatching upon it somewhat too freely in

the kitchen to the general servant employed, who had to wash her hands after blacking the boots and grates, to concoct the puddings; but as "poverty makes strange bed fellows," so must it rule and regulate those who are its subjects everywhere.

A clerk, on a salary of hundred a year, added to the interest of a thousand pounds left him by his maternal grandmother, with a childish, portionless girl-bride, cannot afford to be squeamish; and Fred and Ellie never dreamt of being so, or of quarreling with Betsey, their maid-of-all-work, when she left the imprint of a black thumb on their dinner plates.

"Lor, man," the aforesaid damsel is saying to her young mistress, "I'd never be a frettin' after master already! Think o' me and my Bill, as is on the high seas, and has never met three yer come next Michaelmas. There was some lovely mackerel cried just now, and I'll be bound the man ain't got far!"

Ellie ceased her plaints at the suggestion, and awoke to the realities of life. After she had just stepped out to one or two shops, gossiped, with her next neighbor over the paling, sewn on the shirt-button and forgotten the gloves, the morning had slipped away.

Betsey's lovely mackerel at dinner, and a nap after it, were great consolers; but, as the shades of evening gathered round, Ellie's spirits flagged again, and a nervous dread seized on her. She took up a book, and tried to read; but Mrs. Fred Wilson was, at the best of times, far from literary, and, in her present desolate condition, she was utterly unable to fix her mind upon the pages before her; so she wandered round the room, and took up some cases of photographs, which seemed companions to her in her solitude.

There was her husband in every phase, from infancy to manhood; but the one that most arrested her gaze was a double picture of himself and a youth two years his senior. There was just enough resemblance to tell them to be brothers, not enough to make the likeness striking; and this brother of Fred's, a clerk in a mercantile house in China, and whom she had never seen, was on his homeward voyage, and might even now be setting foot on English ground—no doubt as manly looking as Fred—utterly unlike the ruddy, smooth-faced Charlie in the photograph she held. Then came the natural speculation, "Shall I like him?—will he like me?" when she started, and nearly dropped the case, for a loud, double knock at the front door almost shook the little house.

"It is Fred come back!" was her only thought; and she rushed to open the door, forgetting in a wife's eagerness, all nervous tremors. Yes; there was the black leather bag, the umbrella, the tall, manly form, which rushed in at once; but the large whiskers did not approach her face—only the large hands seized here, and, as the hat was put familiarly on the hall slab, she saw it was not her husband, nor any one at all like him, except in height and color of hair. She trembled and flushed, and would have called "Betsey," had she dared, when all her fears were dispelled by the stranger's address, and she reflected how silly she had been.

"Well, my dear sister, I'm afraid I've surprised you. Where's Fred?"

"Oh, Charlie, is it you? I'm so glad—come in!" and then she welcomed the traveler into a snug little parlor, called Betsey to bring a pair of Fred's slippers, and otherwise cosseted the great big fellow.

Of course it was Charlie Wilson, her husband's brother; and, as such, she could not make too much of him.

"Only think, how unlucky! And Fred has gone to Southampton to meet you," she said.

"Dey villish unlucky! Ah, well, the ship came in a day sooner!" Puff, puff. And Ellie having assured him she didn't mind smoking, the clouds wreathed up from his meerselann. Then he took a long pull at the tumbler of stiff braddy and water, and

stretched out his legs upon an opposite chair.

"It's very jolly to be in England, again," he vouchsafed, and then relapsed into silence.

Ellie found her new brother-in-law neither affectionate nor communicative; and, kindly disposed as she had been towards him, before the evening was half over she had stigmatized him, mentally as a thorough snob, utterly unlike dear Fred. But, then, living abroad does alter men so. Tumbler after tumbler of brandy and water were mixed, and disappeared down his capacious throat; and a choice ham which she had ordered in for his repast, looked very foolish indeed which when carried out.

Still, Ellie would have forgiven this to Fred's brother, but she did not see why he should wink so familiarly at Betsey when she came in for the tray, or weigh the spoons and forks superciliously on his fingers, while he criticise the mark, to see if they were silver, as if he did not know that a bank clerk could not so well afford plate as a Chinese merchant. Then, too, he seemed to care so little to hear or ask about Fred, or any of the family.

Poor Ellie was fairly heart-sick, and ready to cry with disappointment and the wearisome task of entertaining this great rough stranger, who appeared to grow more taciturn and sulky as she made more advances; so, about eleven o'clock, as he seemed to be smoking himself into a doze, aided by the quantity of spirit he had consumed, she ventured to suggest that she would retire to rest.

"Ah, yes, do, to be sure," he replied, promptly, as if relieved; "don't let me keep you up. I sometimes sit and smoke all night."

"What a brute!" thought Ellie. "I showed you your room, Mr. Wilson." (No, she could not say "Charlie" now. He was so different to the "Charlie" Fred had portrayed.)

"Yes, yes; all right, but—ahem—I've been thinking if I were to run down to Southampton early to-morrow morning before you're up, I might bring my brother back a few hours sooner, you see. He'll perhaps be waiting about, thinking the ship isn't in."

"To be sure," cried Ellie, eagerly, "that is a kind thought! Go by all means. He's not such a bad fellow, after all—and I shall get rid of him to-morrow," was her double congratulation.

"There's only one difficulty; I've nothing but this confounded Chinese draft," and he took a dirty piece of paper from his pocket and flourished it.

"A foreign house will cash it for you—it's a tenner; but I've lots of tin, and you may buy a wedding present with the rest, if you'll advance me five upon it."

Ellie was only too happy, she never stopped to examine the document—probably would have been no wiser if she had, for the little woman was not over gifted with brains—but just glancing at some apparently Chinese hieroglyphics, she popped it in her portmanteau, and ran up stairs to her dressing-case to fetch a precious five-pound note which had been given her as dowry by "poor papa" (a hard-worked, ill-paid curate, with eleven children) on her wedding day.

Here she went to sleep that night she had bought many imaginary articles with the five pounds her brother-in-law had so generously presented, and awoke in the morning with a horrid nightmare that she had purchased an ornamental clock for the mantle-piece, and when she would have paid for it the "Chinese draft" crumbled in her fingers, and she was rudely given into the custody of two policemen as an impostor, when she awoke, screaming to Fred to save her.

The morning sun was streaming on her face, and to the horrid dreams succeeded the pleasant reality that the odious "brother-in-law" was certainly gone, and the dear husband would return to her in a few hours.

Poor Ellie had never passed such a wretched day in her young life as the preceding one, and so she confided to Betsey, in the course of the morning,

The strangers bed had evidently not been slept in, and the only trace of his visit having been rather *spirituous* and *spiritual*, was the empty brandy bottle and reeking atmosphere of the usually pure little apartment, sacred to love and Ellie.

She flung open the windows, and with Betsey's aid hastily removed all trace of the intruder's recent presence, half-shocked with herself for the repugnance with which "Brother Charlie" had inspired her, so different to the sisterly affection Fred had assured her she would feel for him.

In the course of the morning the gloves were mended; and all the afternoon Ellie sat and watched for the absent husband. It must have been nearly five when wheels were heard approaching, and a cab with weather-beaten portmanteau on the top drew up. Two gentlemen sprang out, but Ellie had only eyes for one.

"Oh, Fred, dearest, I am so glad!"

"Ellie, my darling, how are you? Charlie, come here, old fellow. This is my little wife. You may give him a sister's kiss, pet, and think yours, if a lanky dog, my boy."

It was dreadful to poor Ellie to be pushed into the arms of that horrible man, but disgust was merged into astonishment at the heartiness of the fraternal salute, the pleasant, genial tone of the voice that acknowledged her favor. Then she summoned courage to look up. What did it mean?

"Why, Ellie?" laughed her husband, "you seem thunderstruck! What's the matter, child? Isn't he like what you expected?"

"Y-e-e-s—no, no," stammered Ellie, as she gazed spell-bound at the bright face, smiling with just Fred's smile, at her persistent scrutiny, and with a beating heart and a few tears, followed the tale of her visitor of the preceding evening, not omitting the smallest detail, even to her own dream.

At first, her husband seemed perplexed, afterwards a little angry; and finally, catching his newly restored brother's twinkling eye, they both gave way to a burst of merriment.

Then spoke Fred, "My darling little wife, you've done a hundred and one foolish things since we were married, but this beats all. You've positively allowed a swindler to get into the house under false pretense, and do you out of a five pound note, to say nothing of a bottle of brandy, &c. Charlie, shall we ever make this little woman fit to govern a household, or fill any post of responsibility, think you?"

Ellie would have pouted, only her husband's arm was round her, and the tone of his voice so gentle and kind. How many would have scolded and stormed under similar circumstances—for 25 notes were by no means common articles to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Wilson; and it appeared on subsequent inquiry that the teaspoon— which happened to be silver—with which the bearded adventurer had stirred his grog, had mysteriously parted company with the glass (like the gentleman himself), and was never more seen.

"Well, all I can say is, it's the nearest case of swindle I ever heard of!" said Charlie, dryly; "and does the casual infinite credit. Of course, he ascertained from the servants or waiters, people whom you had gone, and all main points, and traced upon the information. I thought when I left England the London swindler had attained a pitch of perfection not to be surpassed; but I find in ten years, the 'march of intellect' has taken rapid strides, with these clever claps. Never mind, my dear sister, we live and learn, even from thieves. The excellent idea of my 'doppel ganger,' or double self, shall be carried out, and you and Fred must invest in a wedding gift from your unworthy but veritable brother, a 'tenner, which I promise you shall not crumble to pieces, but resoly, itself into hard cash, and a substantial reminder of the piece of experience and worldly wisdom you have gained from your husband's Brother."

Now—Should any one scoff at this tale as improbable, the author

begs to assure his readers that if they will take the trouble to search the London Times of June, 1866, they will find a similar fraud practiced upon which this little story is founded.

DON'T ADVERTISE.—Don't do it. Don't advertise your business; it's paying out money to accommodate other people; if they want to buy your goods, let them hunt you up.

Don't advertise, for it gets your name abroad, and you are apt to be flooded with circulars from business houses, and to be bored with "drummers" from the wholesale establishments, all of which also results in soliciting your order for new goods, and money to pay for them, which is very annoying to one of a dyspeptic temperament.

Don't advertise, for it brings people in from the country, (country folks, you know are of an enquiring turn of mind,) and they will ask you many astonishing questions about prices, try your temper with showing them goods, and even vex you with the request to tie them up; which puts you to an additional trouble of buying more.

Don't advertise; it gives people abroad a knowledge of your town, and they come and settle in it; it will grow, and other business will be induced to come in and thus increase your competition.

In short, if you would have a quiet town, not too large; if you would not be harassed by multitudinous cares and perplexities of business; if you would avoid being bothered with paying for and losing time to read a great cumbersome newspaper, just remain quiet; don't let the people know five miles away where you are, nor what you are doing, and you will be severely let alone to enjoy the bliss of undisturbed repose.—*Gazette*, Redwood City, Cal.

A QUEER SPEECH.—Governor Walker, of Virginia, delivered an extraordinary speech at Farmville, the other day, in reply to a toast to "Our honored guest." Remember that the "honored guest" had just been "banqueted in the style," and that water was probably not the only beverage in which he indulged. After some preliminary remarks, the governor said: "It is indeed my good fortune to be the chief executive officer of our commonwealth, and it is a good fortune that Caesar himself might have been proud of, but yet I feel deeply my own feebleness in that exalted position—my own unworthiness of its honors. There is no higher position on earth, my friends, than the governorship of Virginia. We have some people among us, my fellow citizens, who should not be among us—a class of people who to-day are sowing the seeds of discontent broadcast over the State. They are the owls of society. Hang 'em up, my friends, to the first lamp-post; scalp 'em; say to them, 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' and put them away from you. I hope we shall hear no more of this talk about Virginia retrograding. I can whip the man who says Virginia is retrograding." (Loud laughter and applause.)

The governor, somewhat embarrassed, resumed: "I crave your pardon, gentlemen. In the excitement of the moment I said more than I meant. I desired to say that I felt as if I could whip any man, etc."

A STORY FOR LAWYERS.—The Valley of the Hackensack contains still a certain number of old people (descendants of the old Hollandish settlers; people who still speak Dutch in their homes, and who are reported to jog on faithfully adhering to old styles of living and to old ideas.

One of these "old Dutchmen," as they are irreverently called, riding on the Northern Railroad the other day, noticed at Englewood a handsome carriage, and asked a gentleman sitting not far from him, a well-known New York lawyer, whose it was.

"It belongs to Colonel Rank," replied the lawyer.

"He must be a rich man," observed the settler.

"Yes," replied the lawyer, "he is a rich man, and a good honest man, too."

"He is a banker and broker?"

"A broker," said the old man with surprise, a banker and broker, and an honest man?"

"Oh, yes," replied the lawyer, "there are honest bankers and brokers."

"Well," said the old man, in a doubtful voice, "I dunno 'bout it; I class 'em all with lawyers."

Mock-turtle, kissing before company, and fighting afterwards.

A SINGULAR LAW SUIT.—An interesting horse case was tried on Saturday, at Florissant, before Justice Charles Castello. Mr. John E. Aubuchon sued Henry Pohlman for two hundred dollars damages for breach of contract. Mr. Aubuchon is the owner of a fine blood mare, from which he ardently desired to raise a mule. Mr. Pohlman, who owns a splendid jack, agreed to gratify the wish of Mr. Aubuchon, and accordingly took the usual steps for producing the desired result. Mr. Aubuchon watched his mare with great tenderness, feeding her on the sweetest-scented hay, the fattest oats, and giving her clear spring water to drink. At length the time came when the promised mule was to see the light of day. Mr. Aubuchon walked proudly to the lot where the mare was confined, never doubting for a moment that a fine, long-eared mule could greet his delighted vision. What was his astonishment on seeing a miserable, shriveled, short-eared, stumpy, pony built colt, not much bigger in body than a bull terrier, drawing the lacteal fluid from the distended dam. There was nothing of the mule about the foal. It was, on the contrary, all horse, what there was of it, and was the image of a scruffy stallion pony belonging to Mr. Pohlman. This was three years ago, and the wrath of Mr. Aubuchon has been waxing hotter and hotter and hotter ever since, until it culminated in a lawsuit. A St. Louis lawyer—Mr. J. M. Loring—was sent for to prosecute the case on the part of Mr. Aubuchon, and so well did he depict the difference between a pony horse colt and a genuine mule colt that the jury gave Mr. Aubuchon judgment for the whole amount claimed. Justice Naucke appeared as counsel for Pohlman.—(*St. Louis Democrat*, 1871.)

A VALUABLE DISCOVERY.—F. F. Huddleson, Esq., a prominent lawyer and well-posted citizen of Purdy, McNairy county, Tenn., informs us that the people of that place, after a series of careful tests and experiments, have become fully satisfied that the *Allanthus* or "Tree of Heaven" (*Allanthus glandulosa*) is a sure preventive to murrain in cattle. He says the cattle commence eating the leaves of the tree about the time in the season when the murrain would appear, and that none having access to it have ever been known to take the disease, while others all around have been seriously afflicted. As proof positive, he refers to a case where a gentleman living in Purdy had, under the impression that it injured the milk, stopped his cattle from feeding on the *Allanthus* by keeping them closely penned at night, and driving them beyond the range of its growth each morning. As a consequence, they all sickened and died of murrain, while the cattle of his less fastidious neighbors escaped.

This thing is well worth looking into. It is said that nothing has been created in vain, but we have long been of the opinion that an exception should be made in the case of the *Allanthus*. Now we hope, however, that no exception will be necessary, and that all people of good taste will be permitted to view it in the light of a disagreeable medicine, rather than a disagreeable nuisance.

The great professors who can find the battery of a thousand eyes than on the rostrum, are frequently the diffident of men when taken away from their regular sphere of labor. There was Prof. Aytoun, who was too timid to ask papa for his wife. When Jane Emily Wilson suggested to him that before the could give her absolute consent it would be necessary that he should obtain her father's approval—"You must speak for me," said the actor, "for I could not summon courage to speak to the professor on this subject." "Papa is in the library," said the lady. "Then you had better go to him," said the actor, "and I'll wait till you return. The lady proceeded to the library and, taking her father affectionately by the hand, mentioned that Prof. Aytoun had asked her to marry him. She added, "Shall I accept his offer, papa? He is so excellent, that he, you'll speak to get about it himself?" "Then we must deal tenderly with his feelings," said the hearty old Christopher. "I'll write my reply on a slip of paper, and pin it to your back." "Papa's answer is on the back of my dress," said Miss Jane, as she entered the drawing-room. Turning round, the delighted actor read these words: "With the author's compliments."

A disappointed lover applied at a drug store in Enginaw, Mo., a day or two since for morphine, alleging that his girl had "gone back" on him, and there was no use of living "no more." The hard-hearted druggist refused to accommodate him, whereupon he declared that he did not know what he should do, as the water was too cold to make drowning pleasant.