



BY M. G. DAVIS:

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**MISCELLANEOUS.**

**Kitty Dean's Offer.**

'You know, Aunt Lizzie, the silly speeches I made before I went away about having an offer. Well, though I knew it was silly, I could not help hoping that I might have one to tell the girls about when I came back. I thought that it would be so nice to be knealt to on the beach in the moonlight, and some one beg me to love him, and pity his misery, and all that; and then I had made up what I thought the prettiest speech in reply, telling him that I was very sorry, but I could never love him; would always think of him as a friend, and closing by asking if I had ever led him to think I would give him a different reply. And I thought of this so much, that when I reached East Hampton, I looked eagerly around the table when we first came down to breakfast at Mr. J's, to see what young gentlemen there were. But there was not one—not a single one. So at last I began to think of—of Mr. Murray.

John Murray, child! Why—  
'Auntie, auntie, please, wait; I can't bear it now. I did not think of Mr. Murray till he began to be with me a good deal, to walk with me, and sit under the trees with me after dinner. And he was so pleasant and agreeable, and there wasn't any one else, and I liked him; so it was easier to make him think I liked him better than I did. So I never declined any of his attentions; and I used to talk and sing, and walk with him, till at last we were together nearly all the time. It was so pleasant to have him like me so much, prefer me to all the other ladies, that I really forgot all about the offer—indeed I did, and did not try to lead him to make it. But at last it came. O, Aunt Lizzie, I had never dreamed it would be like that. He was sent for to New York, and the evening before he went he made up a party to drive down to the beach and see the moon rise. There was quite a wagon load of us from J's, Orson's, and the other houses. When we reached the beach, we separated and went off in different parties. Some set on the benches under the 'bower,' some outside on the sand, while others walked off up the beach. Mr. Murray and I wandered away from the rest, and soon found ourselves quite out of the sight of all the others. Then he spread his shawl on the sand, and we sat down to watch for the moon. I knew what he was going to say; I felt it was coming; and I was a little frightened, but somewhat vain and glad. Foolish, foolish, child that I was! It seems so long ago, as if I had grown old since then. He began in such a low, solemn voice, and told me about the one he loved years ago; how she trifled with and deceived him; how through all the long years since then

he had never breathed her name, or spoke of her till to me. Then he said he did not believe with those who think a man who once loved earnestly, should never love again. He had given all his love to a mere dream—a boy's vision—and it had all come back to his heart; now he should spend it upon a truer, worthier object. And then he told me how he loved me. O, Aunt Lizzie, such words as he spoke then. He told me how, in the short weeks we had been together, this love had come up in his heart, throwing every day an hour, as he saw my simple, guileless nature opening before him. 'Simple, guileless!' when I had been so artful and wicked. Then he stopped a minute, and bending forward to look into my face, he took both my hands in his, and said:

'Will you be my wife.'

'There was my offer. O, how I wished in that minute that I had never met him—that I had never gone to East Hampton. I was trembling and frightened; the story of that other love had made me cry with pity; and now, how could I be the one to make him think all women worthless? I did not say a word. I could not. I only tried to draw away my hands. But he held them tightly, and said again:

'Will you be my wife.'

'Then I tried to remember what I meant to say, and I stammered out something about feeling sorry I could not love him, and hoping he had never thought I meant to encourage his attentions, and—O, I don't know what I said; it was all trifling nonsense. Shall I ever forget his grieved look when I had done? He looked into my eyes a minute, and then said, in a low, sad voice,

'Kitty Dean, if you do not love me, if you will not be my wife, say at once. I am no boy, to have my love played with. In mercy say it quickly, if at all.'

Then I said as firmly as I could:  
'I do not love you, Mr. Murray. I cannot be your wife.'

He turned away then, bowed his face in his hands, and sat so long a time, still and silent. I thought my heart would break, to see that strong, noble man, whom I am not worthy to think of, so bent down with what I had made him suffer. I could not bear it. I crept to him and knelt before him. I clasped my hands and said:

'O, Mr. Murray, I am so sorry!'

He uncovered his face, put his arms around me, and drew me close to his breast, held me there one little minute, whispered 'Good-by, my child!' then put me away and rose up. That was our parting. We walked together to join the rest of the party; but all the time I felt miles away from him. We had parted, and I shall be near him again. He put me out of his heart, just as he put me out of his arms. This is the story. Now, you may talk, Aunt Lizzie—now you may say all the harsh, bitter things you can think of—nothing can be too bad for me.

And then she fell to crying again.

'I cannot scold you to-night Kitty,' I said. 'You are miserable enough as it is; and you must not cry another tear, or we shall have you really sick.'

So I undressed the poor little thing and put her to bed, then left her. Down stairs I found my brother-in-law, anxiously waiting to hear my own opinion of his pet. I quieted his fears, assuring him that Kitty was not seriously ill, only suffering from the effects of the sea air, to which she was not accustomed.

Then I went home thinking very hard.

Notwithstanding Kitty's grief, my heart turned away from her now to John Murray—my poor John. Was there no one in the world for the foolish child to lay her school-girl's pranks on but my boy? I was impatient and could hardly forgive my noise in my heart. To be sure, she was wretched about it now; but it was a mere child-

ish wretchedness, which would soon wear away, while John would suffer on.

But days passed by, and Kitty only looked sadder and paler. She seemed to take no interest in any one or anything. But every day she would steal quietly into my room, as I sit at work, sit down on a cricket at my feet, and lay her head in my lap, scarcely ever speaking unless in reply to some question of mine. And so she would sit by the hour. And there grew such an expression of patient sorrow on the little head, which had always been so bright, that I grew sadly troubled. I had not thought the child had such a tender heart, and now she was really pining away from pity for John Murray.

'You must not be so sad, Kitty,' I said one day, as she sat in her usual place at my feet, 'it makes your father feel so badly. Try to be brighter and happier.'

'Happier! Aunt Lizzie, I can never be happy again,' she said mournfully.

'You must try to be, dear. It is useless to mourn so over the past. You cannot remedy the sorrowing so yourself.'

'If I could only die for him!' she cried passionately.

A new light dawned upon me. Perhaps the girl loved John Murray. If so, I felt sure she did not know it. But I thought it was best that she should make the discovery, otherwise, she might possibly reject John again, if he ever wooed a second time.

'Kitty,' said I, 'what was the true reason for your refusing Mr. Murray's offer?'

'Reason! Why, I was not in love with him.'

'Not then?'

'Never, Aunt Sally!'

'Yet you would die for him?' I said, quietly.

She started up.

'What do you mean, Aunt?'

'That you care far him more than you have owned to yourself yet.'

A sudden blush crimsoned her pale face, she stood before me in an instant her bosom heaving, her eyes like those of a frightened child; then she darted from the house. She must be alone with this new found truth, for truth I knew it was now. I sat alone, thinking now I should help my troublesome pets out of their trouble. Now that they really loved each other, I felt sure it would all come out right.

But I must have a hand in it: they would never come together without me!

Now, John had for some years been my legal adviser, having the charge of my property. I now deterred to send for him, under pretence of wishing him to examine some papers in my possession and thus to contrive a meeting between him and Kitty. So I wrote to him. I did not tell Kitty what I had done. Indeed, I scarcely saw her at all for several days. Now that I knew her secret, she avoided me, and blushed through her paleness every time she met my eye.

When John Murray came he seemed just what he had seemed for years—quiet, grave, reserved, but no more so than when I saw him last. He attended to my business with the same thoughtful care he had always shown. I spoke of Kitty carelessly, that he might not think by my avoiding the subject that I knew his secret asking him if he enjoyed East Hampton, and said my niece had not been very well since her return. To which he replied, absently, that he saw Miss Dean frequently in East Hampton, and that she seemed in good health while there. His manner while saying this, was not all love like; but then I did not expect it to be. John Murray was no boy, to blush and stammer when in love.

The day after his arrival John went out to walk. I was sitting in my little sewing room at my work, when Kitty came in—She was pale, and quiet, as

usual, and after kissing me "Good morning," she sat down silently at the open window. Suddenly I was started by her exclaiming:

"Aunt Lizzie!"

I turned, and seeing her crimsoned face half frightened, half reproachful look, I knew she had seen John Murray coming in. She started towards the door, but I laid my hand on her arm. "You shall not go, Kitty," I said, decidedly. "You shall not trifle with him again—Stay!"

She stood timid, irresolute, and he entered the room. As his eyes fell upon her he started, and a faint color tinged his cheek, but he bowed courteously, and held out his hand to her (that was for my benefit, who was supposed to be ignorant of the affair.) Kitty took his offered hand without looking at him. But now the blushes had left her face, and it was very white. As John glanced at her, he exclaimed involuntarily:

'You have been ill, Miss Dean.'

She looked at him, met his anxious gaze, and covering her face with her hands, burst into tears. Poor child, she had become a perfect Niobe of late. John Murray looked annoyed. His pride would not let him submit to be pitted by the woman who had refused his hand. His face flushed, and holding his head high, looked so proud and handsome, he said:

"I am sorry my presence distresses you, Miss Dean. Let me assure you, if those tears are shed from compassion for me, I do not need them. I need no one's pity!" and he turned to leave the room.

Here was a situation! What should I do. I was in despair; and growing desperate as he opened the door, I whispered hastily, unseen by Kitty, "you foolish boy—she loves you!"

He hesitated, looked incredulously at me, then glanced at Kitty, whose face was still covered with the little hands which had grown so thin since he held them in his own on East Hampton Beach. His expression softened, and I rushed from the room, leaving the two shut up together. So sure was I now of my maneuvering, that I went coolly off to market, and staid away an hour. When I came home Kitty's little straw hat still hung in the hall, and from my sitting room I heard low murmurs issued, which convinced me that the lovers were yet there. So before opening the door, I thoughtfully made a great deal of unnecessary noise with the handle, all the time singing in an unconscious manner.

But when I did open it! There was John—the grave, sad old bachelor—sitting on the sofa with his arms encircling the waist of my niece, Kitty Dean, who, as I entered, looked up with a beaming, blushing face, and glancing at the audacious aunt, said, apologetically:

"He won't take it away."

"I would not indeed!" cried I, as, like a silly old woman, I put my arms about both of them, and fell to crying and laughing.

"Kitty has had offer No. 2, Mrs.—to make up for the first one, which was so unlike what she expected," said John laughing.

"O! don't speak of that folly, please Mr.—, well—John!" murmured Kitty.

And "John," delighted with the sound of his name from those lips, vowed solemnly never to tease her; and as he had no Bible to kiss, to prove the sincerity of his vow, he had to substitute for the volume what happened to be nearest. So he did!

A good story is told of a missionary in Medina, Minnesota, who had become mixed up in land speculation. On entering the pulpit recently he announced to his congregation, at the opening of divine service, that the text would be found in "St. Paul's epistle to the Minnesotians, section 4, range 3, west.

The strength of virtue weakens the power of vice, and prepares the mind for great and useful knowledge.

*What a Gentleman Hates.*—The lady in the omnibus who has the prettiest little hand in the world, and who wears such a thick veil that he can't, for the life of him, tell whether her face corresponds with it. The man who knocks at his office door for "a little subscription" to help toward spreading the Gospel in foreign lands (who by the way, don't need it half as much as he does!) The "dear little creature" at a party who asks as a particular favor, to examine the pattern of his embroidered shirt-bosom, when he knows that there is a button off, and two gigantic rents under the bows of his silk necktie? The seedy gentleman who wants to borrow five dollars, and is quite certain that he shall be able to repay the small loan in a very few days. The exceedingly thoughtless acquaintance who unwittingly mentions to his wife the fact that such a sum of money has been lent, (without her knowledge, of course.)

To have his wife suddenly find out that the night key has somehow got lost, when he wants to remain out a little later than usual at a rail splitting convention. To have his wife discover the end of a cigar in his coat pocket, after he has solemnly declared that he has not smoked for a twelvemonth. To be asked to "hold the baby" at a railroad station, while its mamma gets her baggage checked—and don't he wish he could check that part of it in dimity and long clothes. To have the mamma forget to return until the cars are just starting, so that he is obliged to leap on board in a very undignified haste, and then to become aware that the sweet innocent has been amusing itself by sucking his cravat ends! To hear himself pointed out in the crowd as "that red-haired man," when he has just been flattering himself that his locks are a beautiful auburn! All those things he hates with a perfect hatred, and who blames him for it?

*A Few Remarks to Wives.*—There is no great need of enforcing upon an unmarried lady the necessity of being agreeable; nor is there any great art requisite in a youthful beauty to enable her to please. Nature has multiplied attractions around her. Youth is in itself attractive. The freshness of budding beauty needs no aid to set it off; it pleases merely because it is fresh, and budding, and beautiful. But it is for the married state that a woman needs the most instruction, and in which she should be most on her guard to maintain her powers of pleasing. No woman can expect to be to her husband all that he fancied her when a lover. Men are always duped, not so much by the arts of the sex, as by their own imaginations. They are always wooing goddesses, and marrying mere mortals. A woman should therefore, ascertain what was the charm that rendered her so fascinating when a girl, and endeavor to keep it up when she has become a wife. One great thing undoubtedly was, the chariness of herself and her conduct, which an unmarried female always observes. She should remember that the province of a woman is to be wooed, not to woo; to be caressed, not to caress. Man is an ungrateful being in love; bounty loses rather than wins him.

"She that hath a wise husband," says Jeremy Taylor, "must entice him to an eternal dearness by the veil of modesty and the grave robes of chastity, the ornament of meekness, and the jewels of faith and charity. She must have no painting, but blushings; and she must shine round about with sweetness and friendship; and she shall be pleasant while she lives, and desired when she dies."—*Gleasons Literary Companion.*

An Irishman who had been reduced to a mere shadow by severe illness, was asked by his physician what he thought of a future state?

"Ah doctor," was the answer, "it makes no difference; yees ain't left nough of me for the devil to naturalize, no how."