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A SHREWD WIFE

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CONTINUED FROM SECTION ONE

debts, of course, some complications, and then young Charlton made another mistake—the crowning one. When his fortunes were at their lowest ebb he married his own model. The elder Charlton when he heard of this step promptly stopped the allowance and cut his son's name out of his will.

After this sort of thing had been going on for a couple of years, Charlton, who had been best man at the wedding of the Amorys, went out to their modest little cottage at Scarborough, and seemed to be in a most depressed and somber mood.

But, if all that was reported was true, she found the temptations to lead a free and easy life too great to overcome. Charlton was asked to leave his studio, where he had difficulty to meet the rent, and all on account of the visits paid him by a boisterous wife.

That might have been endured, but the marriage itself was most unhappy. Nobody ever said a kind word about the young wife, but she may have been driven to it by poverty. At all events, she went on in the chorus of musical comedy and as her figure had grown too blowsy to serve any longer for an artist's model it was perhaps the only thing she could do.

"I'm going to cut the whole thing, and try Paris for a year," he said to his friends. "I have a chance to get across on a cattle ship, and perhaps over there I'll learn how to draw. Everybody criticizes my drawing."

"Are you going alone?" queried Rose Amory, tremulously, for she hoped he was cutting his disgraceful wife as well.

"Oh, yes," said Charlton.

He spent the afternoon with the pair and remained to dinner. At its close he handed John Amory a small package, like a jeweler's box, and said:

"This is my only treasure, and, as you two are my old friends, I'm going to ask you to take charge of it. Keep it safely from me for a year, will you? If at the end of that time I haven't reclaimed the box, destroy it."

John and Rose promised, and soon after Charlton took his leave and his sympathetic friends had a chance to talk over his wasted life.

Rose's curiosity about the treasure was very great, and she fairly tingled to open the box and see what it contained; but John solemnly locked it up in a drawer in the tiny library table, and there it reposed for a year.

During the twelve months nothing was heard from Charlton, although his friends

wondered sadly if he was getting on or growing poorer and more hopeless all the time. But toward the close of the year great events happened.

First the newspapers published accounts of the sad ending in Bellevue Hospital of Mabel Charlton, a once prom-

"I will have the article printed in the newspapers," said the lawyer. Greatly rejoicing, John went home to Rose.

"Isn't it splendid, John?" she cried. "I don't know any one I'd like to see happy more than poor Charlie Charlton." Then she thought for a moment and finally said:

"The year is up. Can't we look at his treasure now?"

"But he will probably soon return now," replied the husband. "Hadn't we better wait until he does?"

"John Amory," said Rose, tragically. "I've waited a year to see what that box holds, and I can't contain my curiosity any longer."

The upshot of the argument was that in a few minutes Rose held the little

few moments. When she spoke again it was to say:

"I'll give Charlie Charlton a piece of my mind for fooling me so. If he does not return soon without knowing anything of his good fortune, I mean to tease him by keeping him in suspense. Promise me, John, that you will let me tell about the money his father left him. Promise you won't tell first."

John promised, and the treasure (?) was repacked and again locked up in the library drawer.

Next day, while Rose was out marketing, who should come in to John but Charlie Charlton, but looking so shabby, so old and worn that his friend was shocked.

"Its no use," said the traveler, "I can't have a chance. I've tried everything and cannot earn enough to more than keep body and soul together. I'm a derelict."

John smiled to think that Charlie little knew his chance had come at last. He prayed for Rose to return, and tell the glad news, for as he had promised to let her tell it he meant to keep his word.

"Did you know your wife was dead?" he asked. Charlie on smiled bitterly.

"A man must have sunk pretty low," he said, "when even that is good news. But I come for another purpose. I come for my box—my treasure. Have you got it still?"

"Yes," said John, unlocking the drawer and handing it to Charlie, who unwrapped it, took out the lump of sugar, and solemnly swallowed it.

"Good-by, old man," he said to John. "I must be going; I don't want to die in the house."

"Die!" gasped John. "Then that was poison."

"Yes," said Charlie. "a deadly poison; I will be gone in an hour; through forever with this miserable failure of a life. I wanted to take it a year ago, but I promised myself another trial. I've had it and failed. Good-by!"

"You shan't go," shouted John. "Is there no antidote? Why, man, your father is dead; he left you all his money!"

Charlie Charlton's face turned livid.

"Oh, if you had told me that a few minutes before—"

"I would, but I had promised Rose—"

Rose—who is talking to me?" said that young woman, running into the room.

"Rose, Rose," cried her husband, "he has eaten that lump of sugar!"

"Well, what of it?"

"It's poison!"

"Nonsense," said Rose. "it's not poison. Perhaps the one Charlie left here was; but this is out of my own sugar bowl. When I saw that lump of sugar I suspected something like this, so I just threw it into the fire and substituted another."

Charlie Charlton's color returned slowly. He drew a long breath and cried devoutly:

"Thank Heaven!"

"You had better thank Rose," said her husband.



When Grace Goes to a Mission Tea

By C. A. DOLSON

When Grace goes to a Mission Tea
She leaves a picked-up lunch for me
But that, of course, I do not mind,
Since 'tis for good of heathen-kind.
When Grace comes back at set of sun,
Her loving work for missions done,

She sits across from me to chat,
Nor waits to put away her hat,
And all the news she tells to me,
Of what she learned at Mission Tea.
The programme that they carried out,
The cakes, the meats, they passed about;

And of the dainty ice-cream, too,
They had when all the rest was through,
And how the Secretary spelled,
And when the next tea will be held.
For, oh! the news Grace brings to me,
When she has been to Mission Tea!

using soubrette, and John and Rose knew, if few other people did, that one of the fetters of their friend had been broken by death.

Then they saw an advertisement for Charlton, or knowledge of his whereabouts, in one of the daily papers. About the same date they learned that old Mr. Charlton had died. They put the two facts together and came to the conclusion that the elder Charlton had forgiven his son on his deathbed.

Next day John Amory called at the lawyer's address, which had been given in the newspaper, and told about Charlton's intention to go abroad. He learned that what he had surmised was true, and a goodly inheritance had fallen to Charlie Charlton from his father.

package in her hand.

"Do you suppose it contains a jewel?" she asked.

"Nonsense," said John. "If Charlie had owned a jewel of price it would have gone to the pawnbroker's long ago."

The outside wrapping was taken off and a small jeweler's box was revealed. On opening it, inside was found, reposing in cotton, what looked like an ordinary lump of sugar.

"It's a hoax!" cried Rose. "So it looks," said John, "but why should Charlie have spoken so solemnly about it?"

"John," cried Rose, suddenly. "I wonder if it can be—?" Then she paused. "What is it you are wondering?" asked John.

But Rose only looked thoughtful for a

moment.

"Well, what of it?"

"Nonsense," said Rose. "it's not poison. Perhaps the one Charlie left here was; but this is out of my own sugar bowl. When I saw that lump of sugar I suspected something like this, so I just threw it into the fire and substituted another."

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