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AN OLD BALLAD--DARBY AND JOAN.

The famous ballad of "Darby and Joan" having been called for by a learned pundit, and others, I present a copy, furnished from an old Almanac of 1819:

When Darby saw the setting sun, He swung his scythe and home he ran, Sat down, drank off his quart and said: "My work is done, I'll go to bed!"

"My work is done," he repeated, "I'll go to bed!" "My work is done," he repeated, "I'll go to bed!"

"I know your meaning," Joan replied, "But, sir, my tongue shall not be tied, I will go on, and let you know

What work poor women have to do: First, in the morning, though we feel As sick as stragkards at the mill-- Yes, feel such pains in head or breast As would confine you men to bed--

We ply the brush, we wield the broom, We sweep the beds and wash the room; We wash the dishes, and we wash the floor, We get the breakfast for the poor. Ere this is done, with whimpering cries And bristling hair, the children rise And bid us--and all because of you And bid us--and all because of you

We next--here Darby scratched his head And stole off grumbling to his bed; And only said, as he lay in bed, "Zounds! woman's claim is never done."

At early dawn, ere plain's first rose, Old Joan resumed her tale of woe; When Darby thus--"I'll end the strife, Let me catch that boy with her daughter again!"

"Content!" quoth Joan, "give me my suit;" This Darby did, and out she went; Old Darby gave her the scolding, And whittled the dirt around the room; Which having done, he scarce knew how, He hid it to walk the lewdie down.

The bridle-eve whiskered round her fall To Darby's eyes, and kicked the wall; The clown perched on the chimney, and swore, He'd never try to walk again; When turning round, in sad amazement, He saw his cottage in a blaze-- For as he chased the scolding dame, In careless haste he fired the room. The fire at last subdued, he swore The broom and he should meet no more, Press'd by misfortune and perplexed, Darby propped for breakfast next; But what to get he scarcely knew-- The bread was spent, and the butter too; His hands belabored with paste and flour, Old Darby labored half an hour; But luckless sight, though combs not make The bread take form of loaf or cake.

As every door well open stood, In push of the sun, in quest of food, And, stumbling onward, with her snout O'er the chimney, he saw the cat; As Darby turned, the boy to best, The slippery cream betrayed his feet; He caught the bread through in his fall, And caught the dame, too, in the wall. The children, wakened by the clatter, Start up and cry, "What's the matter?" Old Lower barked and toby mew'd, And hapless Darby bawled aloud-- "Fustian, my Joan, I'll not be cheated, I'll pay the housewife's part no more; Since now, by sad experience taught, Compared to thine my wife is sought, Content, the plough, the scythe, the rake, And never more transgress the line Our fates have marked, while thou art maid; Then Joan returned, as before, and said, "Oh vex your head with no more; Let each our proper task attend-- Forget the past, and strive to mend."

DR. HURLBUT'S PRESCRIPTION.

"It's no use to talk about my being your wife, Charley. Your father will never consent, and mother will never even let me see you--if she can help it--without his consent. You mustn't come a step further!"

And pretty Rose Carter drew her arm out of Charley Hurlbut's very decidedly, when they reached the end of the village common. "You know it almost breaks my heart to say it, Charley, but I don't think I can ever meet you again. Mother would be sure to find it out, and it would vex her so. And she has had enough trouble without my giving her any--poor mamma!"

"Your mother comes before me, of course. It is no matter how I feel; you say coolly that you can never meet me again; that means, I suppose, that we are never to see each other again."

"Why, no, Charley, if you will only have patience to wait. Everything may come out right."

"Wait! You have been telling me to wait for the last two years, and things are no nearer coming out right than they ever were."

"I can't think why your father should dislike my mother so. I think mother knows, but she will never let me. Miss Esther Wagg says they were lovers once, and had a quarrel which your father can never forget. But one can't believe all Miss Esther's gossip."

"I don't think it's anything more than a notion he has got into his head. He's a crotchety, set old fellow, but he's got a good, big heart. I love, if one can, the wife he would be sure to come round and think the world of you. If you would only marry me, Rose! At the worst--if he wouldn't come round--he could only disinherit me, and I have a pair of good, strong arms, and some passable brains to fight my way--our way--through the world."

The moonlight showed him her face, and he fancied there was a little shadow of hesitation on it. But she shook her head firmly after a moment.

"Now, Rose, darling, don't tell me again to wait."

"The rest of the sentence was never spoken, for a heavy hand was laid on the young man's shoulder, and an angry voice mimicked his tender tones.

"Rose, darling! I'll teach you to 'darling' her, young man!"

And there was Dr. Hurlbut's face, red with anger, looking over Charley's shoulder. Rose, at the first glimpse of it, turned and ran, like a little coward as she was.

"Haven't I forbidden you seeing that young woman? What do you mean by sneaking round here with her, like a thief in the night?" pursued the doctor furiously.

"It is not my fault that I do not walk with her openly; it is not my fault that she is not my wife. It is only because she will not consent to be so," answered Charley, stoutly.

"Won't consent to be your wife, eh? It doesn't seem to me she treats you ex-

actly like a rejected lover!" answered the doctor.

"She would marry me, if she were allowed to choose," answered Charley, trying hard to keep his temper. "Her mother will not consent."

"Humph! not consent? That's pretty well!" growled the doctor. "So she thinks my son is not good enough for her daughter?"

"She does not object to me. If you would give your consent to our marriage she would give hers."

"Ah, that's it! Well, my consent you'll never have, young man, you may rely upon that. And if I ever hear of your being with that young woman again, I'll turn you out of doors, sir. Not a penny of my money shall you ever have, sir. Remember that! I am not the one to make idle threats."

Charley was about to reply, but they had reached the house by this time, and the doctor went into the office, and shut the door behind him with a bang. So there was nothing for poor Charley to do but to take his way disconsolately up stairs to bed.

In the meantime, the doctor seized the poker and stirred up the dying fire in his grate savagely.

"Won't consent, eh? That's like Rose Shepard! she always was a proud piece. Let me catch that boy with her daughter again!" And he walked up and down the room, brandishing the poker, and with a scowl still on his face, looking not unlike a midnight assassin, in spite of the venerable aspect which his gray hair gave him.

But he cooled down soon, sufficient to carry the poker back to its place, and begin a long search for dressing-gown and slippers, a search which proved long, and served to turn his anger from Charley to another.

"Of all the miserable housekeepers I ever had, this dame was in the worst," he grumbled, jerking himself at last into the dilapidated and comfortable looking dressing-gown, and the slippers trodden down at the heel.

"Not a drop of warm water, or anything to eat in the house, I'll warrant!" And he strode into the dining-room, which indeed was cold and void of cheer.

He went into the pantry and munched a hard, very dark-colored doughnut savagely.

"I'll turn her away to-morrow, she and her husband, too, only that the next day I don't decide whether one was worse than the housekeeper or not. It was a question he had been revolving in his mind for two years, without coming to any definite conclusion.

"Better bear the ills we have, than fly to others we know not of," the poet says. But then a man can't bear this state of things long; he might as well live in a cave in the woods! Some time or other I shall have to marry, and I might as well make up my mind to it at once. I said to Miss Esther Wagg, the other day, 'the widow Zilpha Thomas is a fine woman; and a capital manager, too, isn't she?'"

"I'll drive around and see the widow Thomas next week; I don't think it likely that she could manage me."

And having made up his mind, Doctor Hurlbut took himself to his chamber. But his face was not that of a man who is quite satisfied with his decision; and he stood for a long time at the window, and looked down to the foot of the hill, where the widow Carter's house was plainly visible in the moonlight.

"No, no; once is enough for a man to be made a fool of. And that silly boy shall never marry her daughter if I can help it!" he said, turning away, with a decided shake of the head. From which signs an observer would have supposed Miss Esther Wagg to be right, and that Hurlbut took himself to his chamber with a "sneak" of foot of him."

Rose Carter, with pale cheeks and down-cast eyes, sat demurely sewing beside her mother the next morning, when her uncle, old Squire Carter came in. The pale cheeks had been observed, but not commented on by her mother, but the squire was not so delicate.

"Bless me! what has become of the red cheeks? Why, they are white as snow-balls! Too much sewing and moping, and not enough air and exercise--or has it's sweetest deserted it, poor little Rose?"

Upon which Rose's cheeks grew scarlet of course. But the Squire was not satisfied.

"The child looks really ill, and something must be done," he said to Mrs. Carter as he went away. "She hasn't looked like herself for months."

And the Squire, haunted by Rosa's pale face, betook himself directly to Dr. Hurlbut's office.

"I want you to go and see my niece, little Rose Carter, or prescribe something for her. She says nothing ails her, but she looks pale and moped. I suppose it's nothing but want of exercise; if these girls would only do as their grand-uncle would only do as their grand-uncle, written suddenly, in haste and irritation.

Let her take a desert spoonful of extract of valerian, night and morning for her nerves, common sense in as large doses as she can get it, and stop gadding about evenings."

EDWARD HURLBUT.

The widow's black eyes snapped so that the doctor, if he had been there to see, would have liked them less than

And Doctor Hurlbut, feeling even less amiable than on the previous night, sat down at his desk and wrote a prescription for Miss Rose Carter.

Just as he finished his man Barnes brought him a note. It was from the man who took care of the doctor's farm on the outskirts of the town, near the widow Thomas's wood lot.

"The Widow Thomas's man Jake wants to know if you will let the widow take Black Bess, to go down to Sango to the quarterly conference meeting to-night. She told him to say particular that she didn't feel very well, and thought the ride would do her good, if you would be so kind as to let her take Black Bess, which is so very gentle."

SAMUEL HODGKINS.

The doctor's face cleared as he read. "Little Sam Hodgkins is waiting for the answer, if you please, sir," said Barnes.

And the doctor wrote a few words hurriedly, in answer to Samuel Hodgkins, not without grumbling at the man's stupidity in not letting the widow have the horse without applying to him.

But no matter! the widow wouldn't have to ask for Black Bess again. "With all my worldly goods I'll endow," he meant to say to her very soon.

Barnes was entrusted with the two notes--one for Miss Rose Carter, and the other for little Sam Hodgkins to carry to his father.

In the meantime Charley had come to a new resolve. He would see Mrs. Carter once more, and try to gain her consent to his marriage with Rose. Without her consent, Rose would never be his wife.

It was evidently a hopeless task to try to overcome his father's prejudices; but he was determined that they should not be allowed to destroy his happiness, and Rose's, too, for life. Mrs. Carter liked him; she would give Rose to him willingly, she had told him, if it were not for his father's objections; she might be persuaded to, in spite of them.

And there was no time to lose, for in two days he was going to a distant city to establish himself in business. He had hoped to carry Rose with him, but all his pleading had been of no avail to induce her to marry against her mother's will. All his hopes now lay in influencing Mrs. Carter's mind. So early that morning, he took his way to the cottage at the foot of the hill. Squire Carter had just left, and Mrs. Carter's mind was still filled with anxiety regarding Rose's health which he had aroused; so perhaps Charley could not have found a better time for trying to win her over to his side.

But, though she did hesitate for a moment, his pleading was in vain.

"You know there is no one I would rather have for a son than you, Charley," she said, "but I know your father, and he will never relent. He would never forgive you for marrying against his will. I cannot consent to your ruining all your prospects in life. You and Rose are very young; you may change. The time might come, Charley, when you would regret disobeying your father's wish. You are his only son, and so dear to him; and before this, you say he has never thwarted your slightest wish. You ought not to disobey him hastily. To be sure, his prejudices seem unreasonable. 'Unreasonable! It is absurd!' interrupted Charley, hotly. "Why he has never so much as seen you, to my knowledge!"

Mrs. Carter's cheek flushed faintly. "I lived here when I was a girl, you know. I knew your father then. He has some reasons for disliking me which I don't understand."

"It is only a prejudice, a notion, I am sure," said Charley. "And he has no right to dictate me in such a matter."

And he was beginning his eager pleading over again, when Barnes appeared with a note. There was no address on the outside and Mrs. Carter opened it, while Charley waited in a fever of suspense to know what his father could have to say to Mrs. Carter.

It was a picture of amazement as she read, but pleasure shown through it as she handed the note to Charley. "It is brief and to the point."

"Let him have her."

"I always told Rose he had a heart if one could only get at it," cried Charley in a transport of delight. "Now you can have no objection; we have your promise! And I am going away the day after to-morrow, you know, and I must take my wife with me."

"The day after to-morrow! My dear boy, you are beside yourself!" exclaimed Mrs. Carter. "You have said wait to me for so long, that you can't have the heart to say it longer, now that there is no reason for waiting. I shall coax Rose over to my side, and then you can't refuse."

And he did coax them both over to his side after countless arguments and objections. It was arranged that there should be a very quiet wedding, to which only a few intimate friends were to be invited, the next evening.

Then Charley hurried home to express his gratitude to his father, who he began to think he had misjudged.

While this scene was transpiring at the cottage, Samuel Hodgkins had received Dr. Hurlbut's answer to his note, and being somewhat surprised and puzzled by it, had transmitted it directly to the Widow Thomas, thus relieving himself of all responsibility in the matter.

So the widow, who was adorning her best cap with new cherry ribbons, in anticipation of the doctor's taking her gentle hint and coming to the quarterly conference meeting with a dash in her eyes, was called from that pleasing occupation to read the following note, a mere scrawl, written suddenly, in haste and irritation.

Let her take a desert spoonful of extract of valerian, night and morning for her nerves, common sense in as large doses as she can get it, and stop gadding about evenings."

EDWARD HURLBUT.

The widow's black eyes snapped so that the doctor, if he had been there to see, would have liked them less than

ever, and the roses that had deserted his cheeks, he thought forever, reappeared in full bloom.

She had been angry often in her life--the departed Tom had been very easy to manage--but never before had she felt any thing like the warmth she felt that moment.

"The impertinent old scoundrel! Gadding about evenings, indeed! Valerian for my nerves, as if I were some fidgety old maid! Common sense in as large doses as I can find! How dare he write such a note! Well I have had a lucky escape! Stupid, cross old wretch! a life of it I should lead with him!"

And the widow put on her cherry-ribbed cap upside down and fell to dusting the portrait of her deceased husband with a vim. With all his faults, Tom had not been the worst man ever lived.

Charley was obliged to repress his gratitude for a while, for when he returned home he found his father had gone to a neighboring town to attend a medical convention, and he would not return home until the following day.

When the doctor returned the next afternoon Charley was absent, busied with preparations for the approaching wedding. Dr. Hurlbut, finding a leisurely afternoon upon his hands, made an unusually careful toilet, and drove out