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Aug. 4, 1900. KENNEDYVILLE, MD.

DOROTHY MEETS THE SAINT.

BY EDWARD BOLTWOOD.

Whenever his business allowed Mr. Laring to lunch up town, he always took pains to notify his daughter beforehand, and his daughter always took pains to meet him. Such occasions, which were invariably celebrated at home, the old gentleman enjoyed after the manner of a boy who runs away from school, and as Miss Dolly thought her handsome father the most delightful company, many a mid-day engagement was summarily broken at the telephoned summons of Mr. Loring's private secretary. People, however, were accustomed to excuse these lapses of etiquette, and to understand them for the sake of the wondrously loverlike attachment which existed between Mr. Loring and his motherless child. "Such sentiment," as Jimmy Van Brent remarked, "makes Romeo and Juliet look like deadly enemies."

On this fogy day in February, Mr. Loring leaned back contentedly in his dining-room chair and said:

"Dorothy, I am growing old. The temptations of your table are too attractive. I should have never left the bank at all, and I only hope I won't be discharged in the morning."

Mr. Loring wss the active president of a world-famous institution of credit, and his name and connection were of deep financial significance.

"My dear," he continued, holding up his glass of Madeira, "I drink to your health and happiness."

He could hardly have had a more lovely toast. Miss Dolly Loring was twenty; she was wholesomely and healthily beautiful; she was happy and high-spirited. She nodded gaily at the old-fashioned ceremony, which had been observed daily ever since she, as a little girl, had taken her mother's place at the head of the table; then she swung her coffee cup towards her father, saying:

"And I return your toast, sir. Here's to the day and to its saint, and to my darling Valentine—the best and handsomest and dearest man in all the world." She smiled at her father, and blew a kiss across the centre-piece of roses.

"St. Valentine's day—bless my soul! so it is," said he. "I'm thinking, Dorothy, that 'twould be better for you and better for him if some other man could share that toast with me."

"Father," she said, severely, "you are extremely disagreeable And you are going to talk about Jack."

Jack was the very desirable man whom Miss Dorothy would not allow to propose to her. Jack was a fine fellow; Jack's father was Mr. Loring's oldest friend; Jack was devotedly in love. But Miss Dolly was—well, Miss Dolly; and how Jack could imagine such things she could not understand.

"I wonder," said Mr. Loring, almost wistfully, "if some day you will know what a man's love means to a woman? Tell me, dear, how have you celebrated the festival?"

"Oh, such a morning!" she replied, delighted at the subject's change. "I went to Mrs. Aldrich's for the Church Aid meeting. There were twenty of us there, and we talked over things, and did a lot of good."

"Were all of you in need of church aid?"

"Of course not, but we took a hansom—"

"Twenty in one cab? I should think—"

"*Papa!* Jane Haight and I took a hansom and drove down town to ask about a poor woman in a tenement. It was the queerest place I ever saw."

"Not *too* queer I hope. You must be careful, Dorothy, of church aid in hansoms. Where was it?"

"On Bleecker street, I think, or some unknown wilderness. Why, it was below Fourteenth!"

Mr. Loring laughed as he thought of the pleasant Sunday afternoons when he used to walk "'way up town" to take the country air in Washing Park, and he said, "The next time you go, take some one more valiant than Jennie Haight." He was going to suggest Jack, but hesitated.

"Who could be more warlike than Jane, Wilmot?" Wilmot was lighting Mr. Loring's cigar, and smiled respectfully. "Or you, father?" she went on. "You would be the very one. I promised to go this afternoon and leave some grapes. Will you come?"

"I may as well make a day of it, I suppose," said Mr. Loring, complacently. "Where does the woman live?"

"In Bleecker street, near the Bowery," said the girl, with a little clap of the hands at the prospect of having her father for the afternoon. "Do you know where I mean?"

"Yes," he replied, rising and looking down into the fire—"yes, I know where you mean. Your mother used to live near there, Dolly."

He seldom spoke of his wife, or of the perfect happiness of their life together. Dorothy had learned little of it, the subject had come to be regarded as a sacred one between them, and whenever her father alluded to it she made no answer, but simply went to him and let her hand rest in his, in token of her sympathy for his loss of some great thing beyond her comprehension. She did so now, and, after a moment's silence, fastened a rose in his coat.

"There!" she said, patting it affectionately, "now we are ready—that is, if you really care to go."

"Of course I care to go," said her father, briskly. "Order the carriage, by all means, and I will carry out the grape basket."

They drove slowly down the gray shining avenue and crossed the tumult of Broadway at Bleecker street. At that time in the afternoon the chief inhabitants of the district seemed to be children; the chief visible industry seemed to be the gathering of kindling wood from the gateways of towering warehouses. The clattering rumble of endless lines of truck-wagons made conversation in the Loring carriage impossible; but Mr. Loring, with a great show of interest, pointed out to his daughter some battered houses which they passed—the mansions of the fashionable quarter of fifty years ago.

The coachman stopped before he reached the Bowery, and the groom jumped down and stood ready on the curb. Mr. Loring leaned forward and looked out. The brick house in front of which the carriage stood was the familiar type of the old-fashioned New York dwelling. Its narrow doorway was surrounded by masses of weather-beaten carving and scaling stucco, with a broken and dusty fan-light above, and the stone steps were worn almost crescent-shaped. There were three stories with little dormer windows at the top, the small panes of glass were dingy and dark. A Chinese laundry was established in the basement, and the lower part of the street front was covered with signs of cloak-makers and workers in feathers.

"Good Lord! Dolly," the old gentleman asked under his breath and slowly, "this isn't the place, is it?"

"Indeed it is," Miss Loring replied, highly satisfied at her father's apparent consternation, "and isn't it frightful?"

"I can't see anything particularly frightful—but it's mighty strange, mighty strange!"

Dorothy was out first with the basket. As they climbed the steps, Miss Loring thought she saw a curious expression of bewilderment and uncertainity upon her father's face, and she could not understand it.

"You needn't come in, dear," she said. "I can get along quite well by myself."

"Oh no," her father replied; "we will both go."

But his voice faltered the least bit, it seemed to her, and he stood for a while outside the open door and looked about him searchingly, his hand resting upon the rusty iron scroll-work which formed the railing. Then he took off his hat with unconscious formalty, and together they passed into the house.

"Mrs. Colin lives in the back room," said Miss Loring. "Look at the stairs—are't they splendid?".

The old solid wood-work still remained in the narrow hall, and the heavy panelled doors continued to do service. Dorothy knocked on one of these at the end of the passage, and, receiving the consent of a quivering voice, they entered a dark chamber, where a woman lay sick upon a bed. The windows opened upon a sunless reeking court, and the air of the low-celinged room was stifling.

Dorothy resolved to make haste with her mission. She left the fruit with an agreement to call often again, and promise of a hospital bed unless a change for the better came; and then she turned and saw her father leaning against the crumbling mantel of the boarded fireplace.

"Come here, Dolly," he said, in a trembling but eager undertone. "Stand here by my side. There!" He put her arm in his. "A long time ago, Dolly," said he, very softly, "your mother and I were married here."

Puzzled and amazed, she did not speak at first, but put a hand on his shoulder and drew closer to him. An indefinable sweetness of association touched her heart, even as it had touched his, and they both in silence looked about the gloomy room with moistening eyes. In some mysterious way it seemed to her that she was sharing her father's vision of his youth, and her heart vibrated with sympathy as he spoke to her.

"It is a great many years since I have been here—so many that I had almost forgotten where it was, for I meant never to come here again. This used to be the back drawing-room. I asked her to be my wife here, too—over by that window. There were rose bushes outside of it then."

"An' where's the beef bone, darlin', for me soup?" inquired Mrs. Colin, who had been busy with the contents of the basket.

"We'll send you some more supplies as soon as possible, madame," Mr. Loring replied, bowing politely. "I hope my daughter may succeed in making you comfortable and well. We took the liberty of looking about your room for a moment."

"'Tis an onfit hole," said Mrs. Colin, "for a dacint woman."

As they went away, Dolly noticed a flower upon the mantel. It was her father's rose.

In front of his library fire that afternoon, enveloped as they both were with the tender sentiment of the old house and the old room, he told Dorothy at her bidding the story of his courtship—how her mother could not believe in his love at first, how the cruelly false barrier which had foolishly raised itself between them was broken down, and how they found in each other their life's happiness. For the first time he told his

(Continued on Third Page.)

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