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"PRETTY EYES."

Symptoms—Proud possessor of a printing press and equipment, the gift of Uncle Joseph to his nephew, Herbert Hingsworth, a young man, aged thirty-three, the fortunate youth, with his cousin, Henry Rooter, about the same age, began the publication of a full-fledged newspaper, the North End Daily Oriole. Herbert's small cousin, Florence Atwater, being barred from any kind of participation in the enterprise on account of her intense and natural feminine desire to "boon," in a friendly manner, and not at all backward in saying so. However, a person she has written is accepted for insertion in the Oriole, on a strictly commercial basis—cash in advance. The poem, written by Florence, is a tribute to the youthful publishers in the "art preservation." It is not altogether unreasonable demand for republication of the masterpiece, with its beauty unmarred, is secured, and the break between Miss Atwater and the publishers of the Oriole is healed. The Sunday following Florence's particular chum, Patty Fairchild, pays her a visit. They are joined, despite Florence's open expressed disapproval, by Herbert and Henry. The visitors indulge in a series of innocent Sunday afternoon teas. Among them is a "truth," the feature of which is a contract to write a question and answer, both to be kept a profound secret. The agreement is duly carried out.

PART II—Continued.

"I say you want speak of Julia's engagement outside the family, will you, Florence?"

"Papa," she gasped. "Did Aunt Julia write she was engaged?"

"Yes."

"It would seem so."

"To whom?"

"To whom? Florence," her mother suggested proudly.

"Mama," the daughter cried. "Who's Aunt Julia engaged to get married to?"

"Good gracious, no?" Mrs. Atwater exclaimed. "What an absurd idea! It's to a young man in the place she's visiting—a stranger to all of us, Julia only met him a few weeks ago." Here she forgot Florence, and turned again to her husband, wearing her former expression of experienced forbearance.

"It's just as I said," she exactly like Julia to do such a reckless thing!"

"But we don't know anything at all about the young man," he remonstrated.

"How do you even know he's young?" Mrs. Atwater asked crisply.

"All in the world she said about him."

"How can you tell him, since she doesn't know it herself?"

"Well—perhaps she ought to know it, so that she could tell him. Some body ought to tell him, and it ought to be done with the greatest tact. It ought to be broken to him with the most delicate care and sympathy, or the consequences."

"Nobility could forestall the consequences," her husband interrupted; "no matter how tactfully it's broken to him."

"No," she said. "I suppose that's true. I think he's likely to lose his reason unless it is done very tactfully, though."

"Do you think we really ought to tell Mrs. Dill, Mother? I mean, seriously? Do you?"

"For some moments she considered his question; then answered, 'No. It's possible we'd be following a Christian course in doing it; but still we're rather bound not to speak of it outside the family, and when it does get outside the family I think we'd better not be the ones responsible—especially since it might easily be traced to us. I think it's usually better to keep out of things when there's any doubt.'"

"Yes," he said, meditating. "I never knew any harm to come of people's sticking to their own affairs."

But as he and his wife became silent for a time, turning to the firelight, their daughter's special convictions were far from coinciding with theirs; although she, likewise, was silent—a sympathy in her which they should have observed. But so far from them from a true comprehension of her, they were unaware that she had more than a casual, young-consciously interest in Julia Atwater's engagement, and in those possible consequences. Mrs. Dill, which they had shared with some intentional exasperation, and decidedly without the staggering seriousness attributed to their predictions by their daughter. They did not even notice her expression when Mr. Atwater snapped on the light, in order to read, and she went quietly out of the library and up to her own room.

On this floor, near her bed, where Patty Fairchild had left her coat and hat, Florence made her second discovery. Two small, folded slips of paper lay there, dropped by Miss Fairchild when she put on her coat in the darkening room. They were the re-

plies to Patty's whispering questions, in the game on the steps—the pledged truth, written by Henry Rooter and Herbert a water on their sacred words and honors. The frustrated pair had either overestimated Patty's caution, or else each had it right she would so prize this little intangible that she would treasure it in a tender safety, perhaps pinned upon her blouse (at the first opportunity) over the heart. It is positively safe to say that neither of the two venturists would ever have been set upon paper had Herbert and Henry (and) foreboding that Patty might be careless, and the partners would have been seized with the utmost horror could they have conceived the possibility of their trustful messages ever falling into the hands of the relentless creature who now, without an instant's honorable hesitation, unfolded and read them.

"Yes, I got to tell the truth. I know I have got pretty eyes," Herbert had unfortunately written. "I am glad you think so, too, Patty, because your eyes are too." Herbert Hingsworth Atwater, Jr.

And Mr. Henry Rooter had likewise ruined himself in a capital manner.

"Well, Patty, my eyes are pretty, but suppose I would like to trade with

"She won't do either."

"Why, how could she get out of it?"

His wife smiled pityingly. "She hasn't set a time for coming home, has she? Don't you know enough of Julia's ways to know she'll never in the world stand up to the music? She writes that all the family can be told, because she knows the news will leak out here and there, in confidence, by little and by little she gets home they'll all have been through their first spasm, and after that she hopes they'll just send her some forgiving flowers and greet her with merrily handclapping—and get ready to usher at the wedding."

"Well," said Mr. Atwater, "I'm afraid you're right. It does seem rather like Julia to stay away till the first of the worst is over. I'm ready sorry for some of her love-lovers. I suppose it will get whispered about, and they'll hear it; and there are some of a poor things that might take it pretty hard."

"Take it pretty hard!" she echoed faintly. "There's one of 'em, at least, who will just merely lose his reason."

"Which one?"

"Noble Dill."

At this, the slender form of Florence underwent a spasmodic seizure, in her chair, but as the fit was short, and also noiseless, it passed without being noticed.

"Yes," said Mr. Atwater, thoughtfully, "I suppose he will."

"He certainly will!" Mrs. Atwater declared. "Noble's mother told me last week that he'd gotten so he was just as liable to drop a foun-

tain on his coffee as a lump of sugar, and when any one speaks to him he either doesn't know it, or else jumps: When he says anything, himself, she says they can scarcely ever make out what he's talking about. He was trying enough before Julia went away; but since she's been gone Mrs. Dill says he's like nothing in her experience. She says he doesn't inherit it; Mr. Dill wasn't anything like this about her."

Mr. Atwater smiled faintly. "Mrs. Dill wasn't anything like Julia."

"No," said his wife. "She was quite a sensible girl. I'll hate to be her place, now, though, when she tells Noble about this."

"How can Mrs. Dill tell him, since she doesn't know it herself?"

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