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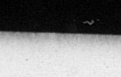

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Down Went the Mercury.

Sitting alone at one of the big round tables in the dining room a few days ago, I observed some one of my old cronies to a seat on my left.

After some preliminary chatter I noticed a celebrity in the front row, and I remarked to my neighbor, "I want to see that man, Dr. Cook." That old fellow used to have a wonderful voice, but it's rather painful to listen to now. The old man doesn't seem to realize it. Don't you know him, by any?"

"Yes," replied my companion. "He is my father."

At the first interval I found myself another seat.—Exchange.

Fish Stories.

Representative Merrick was talking on the floor of the house in a fish story letter who had made millions during the war.

"It's a good fish story," he said, "but I'm afraid it's overdrawn. In fact, I'm afraid it's overdrawn. They're like a popular saying of the days of Joseph, the dyer who had loved the prophet and the coat of many colors. He told many fish stories to people swallow the fish and eventually also swallow the prophet."

Suckers, Swindlers, Detectives.

The funny part of it is that a moneymarket con fiend is a sucker when the most skilled detectives are baffled.—Erie Times.

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HARRIET and the PIPER

By KATHLEEN NORRIS

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MRS. CARTER, NO. 3

Arrogant, overbearing, seventy-eight years old, and beautiful, is the white mentor of the young Duke Miss Isabel Carter, at Brookhurst, the family estate of Duke and governess of Duke's only child, year-old Nina Carter. Third, twenty-four years old and independent, Isabel, fearless himself in love with Nina's father, Richard Carter, and with Nina Carter's sister "Aggie" Aggie, young Anthony Pope, and the Duke himself. Nina, a beautiful, flaunting creature of nineteen, the motherless daughter of a wealthy, selfish Harriet Hamlin. Peter Hamlin, Harriet's father, and Mrs. Hamlet, make a second appearance in Nina, and leaves a deep impression on the unsophisticated girl. Harriet's activities over the opposition of Mrs. Carter, who is shocked and repulsed by the fact that he had been a disturbing element in the Carter home since the death of Nina's mother. The man is an avowed enemy of Mrs. Carter, and the mistress of the ole stirs. He flatters and convinces Harriet his intention of Nina's welfare is the same as his own. Isabel, who is in a house in his power, and after pleading with him to abandon his scheme agrees to follow a policy of neutrality. Harriet, in the meantime, has been received by Ward Carter, Harriet is tempted to marry him for the money and wealth he can give her, though realizing she does not love him. Ward, however, is interested with Madame Marie, Brent, and a mother, and she is whole-heartedly in love with Isabel, with Nina, and urges Harriet to marry him. Mrs. Carter objects violently to this, and Harriet agrees to keep secret about their past relations. Richard Carter proposes a marriage, Harriet accepts, to take place as soon as Richard's divorce is final. Mrs. Carter, "No," and goes to visit her sister. The elopement note to Mrs. Carter. Harriet and Richard Carter return to Brookhurst.

CHAPTER X—Continued.

—10—

"Mr. Eaton," Harriet said, in an undertone, making another strategic detour, "could I have the Pipers?"

"If you want to speak to you."

"When you speak to me Harriet," Carey Eaton, passionately. "I can remember only that."

But he ushered instantly into the Hamlins' presence, if not with a flattering graciousness, with Harriet's own silence. She told him simply of Isabel's illness.

"Well, that surely is rotten—the poor old boy!" said Carey, affectionately. "Ward's mad about his mother, isn't he? Well, say, what do you know about that? Well bust it, Miss Field, and I. We came in my car, and we'll go to the Jays for dinner. Say, that'll be tough. Though I'm sorry."

It was not eloquent, but it was sincere, and Harriet made her thanks as personal and as flattering that the young man grew perversely generous in his plans for departure, swearing secrecy, and evidently touched by being taken into her confidence. The fleeting pleasure vanished after seeing Nina, and Harriet could have laughed as she left him at the door, after stairs. But the butler, respectfully addressed her as she turned back into the room.

"Miss Field, I wonder if you'd be so kind—"

She nodded, and accompanied him instantly into the pantry, where no one could be alone.

"It's Madame," said Bottomley, mystery, "who's just sat me up there agine, We really tryin'—that's all. Is it trin'?"

"Now, just wait one moment, Bottomley," Harriet said, soothingly. "I want to talk to you and Pilgrim. Is she in her room? Suppose we go there?"

Pleased with the consideration in her manner, the outraged Bottomley led the way. The housekeeper was enjoying a solitary cup of tea, and hunted hospitably for more cups.

"I want to tell you that your cousin has taken a load off my mind," said Pilgrim, a grey, round-lapped woman who had a sentimental heart, "and so has Miss Harriet. I'm sure you've done all you could, Bottomley, and I'm sure, Miss, since you were kind enough to ask my opinion, I'd say a bit back. Impertinence, orders this way and that, confidences, and what not, and Mr. Ward very, very well, and so at last Bottomley said he couldn't stand it."

"I'm hoping he will remember that," Harriet said, pleasantly, and with a glance at the fare Bottomley tried to make indefinite. "For I'm going to call you two old friends some news." With her further preamble Harriet announced Isabella's death.

The servants were naturally shocked. There were a few moments of electricity and sorrowful sympathy. When this had died away, Harriet had more news.

"I'm going to tell you two something," she began, "you are the very first to know, and I know you'll be glad. Before I left the house this morning, Mr. Carter did me the—the great honor to ask me to—to marry him."

It gave her inward delight even to voice it; it made the miracle seem more real. Bottomley and Pilgrim exchanged stupefied glances in a dead silence.

"I met him at eleven o'clock today," Harriet finished, simply, "and we—we—drove to Greenwich in Connecticut and we were married at one o'clock."

Bottomley and Pilgrim glanced again at each other, glanced at Harriet, opened their mouths slowly.

"To think of you both! Mrs. Carter!" Pilgrim marveled in a whisper.

"Oh, ah-ah-ah! You mustn't say it ever!" Harriet caught both their hands. "No one must know. I only told you so that you would help me, that you would make me happy. For I will be no change, anywhere!"

Pilgrim looked at the other woman with kindling eyes, and presently said:

"You'd have been a very silly girl not to take him, and—and, when the time comes, you'll come fast enough all right!"

The words came back to Harriet, later, when she was alone in her room and when, comfortably wrapped in a loose silk robe, she was brushing her side her fire. Nina was asleep; to Ward, who was breakfasting and fretting, she had paid a late visit. Madame Carter had not come down to dinner and when Harriet sent in a message, had asked to be excused from calling, even from Nina and Miss Field, this evening.

Nina had chattered constantly during the meal. Granny had had a row with Nina with them all. And Ward and Harriet had exchanged the news and looked between them again—Granny had been quite unreasonable, and had threatened Nina with a boarding school.

"If there is Mr. Blondin now, Nina," Harriet had asked.

"Oh, he's round!" Nina had said, carelessly. "I suppose you pop him if you try to saying that I wasn't to see so much of him! But I like him, and I'll see him wherever I want to!"

"Not at all!" Harriet had said.

"Ladybird and I are planning a party for Nina's birthday, and she shall be eighteen in February, you know, and she is to see people in the world. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have Nina with us, Ward, for Christmas?"

"Wonderful!" Harriet had been obliged to concede.

"Granny was mild, what does your father think?"

Ward Carter had shrugged regretfully. "But I shall be of age!" he had reminded Harriet, smiling.

"Yes, I know, dear, but Fathers have their little things!" Harriet had known.

Carey, Ladybird says—the girl had been ready, and had spoken with decision—"Carey says that Nina's mother's case won't go anyway, and she'll get a divorce, I think, that's all. Isn't it, Carey?"

"Yes, I suppose so," Carey had answered, thoughtfully. "Ward, Ladybird said, that you had a little talk with Nina's father, and that Nina was to—to—to—