

BRING MYRTLE.

A number of letters were awaiting Colonel Haldane, commandant of Newry, on his return from parade. He was unamused, rich and rather distinguished looking. It will therefore surprise no one that he was accustomed to receive a great many sweetly-scented, delicately-monogrammed, prettily-worded letters from the various members of the fair sex with whom he was acquainted. Among the little heap which lay before him was one conspicuous for its careless handwriting and rough envelope. Oddly enough, this was the one he selected first for perusal. Scrawled on the lip of the envelope were these words: 'Bring Myrtle.'

He was fidgeting at the gate most awfully, Florence, it seems and look. 'I like that heeded carriage,' said Florence. And then she turned with ready grace to meet Colonel Haldane, who had just entered the room. 'Felicity and I were drawn to the window by the beautiful influence of your charming little carriage,' she said. 'If so admire your 'poke.'

Colonel Haldane put up his gentlemanly eye-glass, and held his head a little on one side; and he twisted his iron gray moustache into a yet more poignant expression as he inspected those cautious words: 'Bring Myrtle.' Who was Myrtle? What was Myrtle? How many times he read and re-read that message he was perhaps unaware. But it was useless. 'Bring Myrtle' remained on the lip of the envelope, an unsolved enigma.

Slowly he opened the letter. It was an invitation to afternoon tea at the Whites—people he knew slightly, as he knew so many in the heavily-garrisoned naval and military town close to the barracks at Newry.

The letter was from Miss Florence White, who writes in her mother's name. He called up a vision of Florence White. Tall and stately, a girl with a mass of golden brown hair, rolled off her forehead, a girl he had greatly admired, as one admires a serene and lovely landscape; a girl who made him feel provokingly 'foggy.' Other young ladies rattled away at him, as if he were a sub, asked him to play tennis with them, and treated him like a mere youngster. But this young lady had placed him, with due regard to his complexion, in a shadowy corner of the drawing room on one or two occasions when he had taken 'tea' there, and had introduced him to some deep-eyed matrons, as if in that direction lay his natural bias, and now this stately young lady sends him the jocular postscript bidding him 'Bring Myrtle.'

Colonel Haldane sat down in the comfortable red velvet chair which faced the parlor-ground, and commanded a fine view of the ever-companionable sea. The little rippling waves had an expression of infant smiles to-day, and the buoyant clouds were chasing one another like school-boys on a common. How innocent and fair was the world of nature! He sat dreaming over his problem 'Bring Myrtle' quite happily.

A knock with the knob of a stick on the door broke into his reflections, and Captain Hilton enters with his customary air of family familiarity.

'Well, old fellow, what's up! Sea and sentiment, eh! It's fatal to sit in that attitude, looking at the sea. What's up, I ask you!'

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