

## MAKE FRIENDS WITH YOUR CHILDREN.

Make friends with your children—  
Ne'er let them be strangers,  
For many have thus been made  
Ne'er-do-well rangers;  
The little ones know,  
With their quick intuition,  
The true hearts that sympathize  
With their condition.

Their sorrows are heart-felt,  
Their troubles are many,  
While the tears that they shed  
Are as bitter as any;  
And their joys are as real,  
Their pleasures as glowing,  
As the joys that you know  
With your long years of knowing.

Make friends with your children—  
They can't do without you;  
With game and with story  
Of draw them about you;  
And thus may you fasten  
The bright silken tether  
That, "blow high or blow low,"  
Will e'er bind you together.

Make friends with your children,  
In youth; do not tarry,  
Lest in their young bosoms  
Some secret they carry.  
Make friends with your children.  
Don't trust them to strangers,  
For many have thus been made  
Ne'er-do-well rangers!

## MORELLE'S FLIRTATION

"That was ten years ago—ten?—bless my soul, it was nearer fifteen, for it was before the war, and before I fell in with Madamina over there. Good gracious, Kitty, what old stagers you and I are getting to be!"

Fred Wright shook the ashes out of his cigar and glistened with his brown eyes across the piazza at Mrs. Fred, who was seated sewing under the purple bloom of the wisteria vine, and in some kind of low, wide, wicker chair. I don't know that it signifies specially, but I always remember Mrs. Fred in one of these chairs; also in a white dress, her dimpled face, with its sweet-peppermint, bent above her work, stitching away as demurely as though she had not brought her husband the handsomest fortune and the handsomest children in Marina. The baby, a gorgeous fellow, was tumbling about on a deep red rug, pummeling his mother's slippers. It was a June morning, I was in the hammock, and as for the master of the house, he occupied two chairs. He had divided between them the responsibility of his support—Fred was waxing obese, and such responsibility was becoming a serious matter for any chair—and there was a look in his face which was unmistakable, the look of a man about to favor the world with a story.

"I was clerking it in those days," Fred proceeded, "for a firm on Broadway, Dyce & Dillon—you don't know them, Mantor—for a season. Dillon is dead, and Dyce is gone to Europe. But they were well enough known then, for they did a brisk business, retail, and we fellows behind the counter didn't take naps in working hours, I can tell you. Jove! but we were a jolly set." Fred sent a laugh ringing up among the elm boughs, and set the baby crowing in response. "I say, Mantor, I wonder sometimes if clerks in these days laugh and grow fat the way we used to. It can't be they do. They have too much serious business in the way of kid gloves, plug hats, and silk embroidered braces—the young cubs. But speaking of kids, &c., that's what I was going to tell you about. Our boys were, in the main, common-sense chaps enough. Dyce & Dillon rather made a specialty of common sense. Their clerks were expected to present themselves after a respectable fashion, but it wasn't the thing to look smart. We used more cold water and less patchouli than the counter-jumpers of this day and age of the world, I suppose, and that was the reason why Johnny made such a stir when he lighted down in our midst. (Kit, don't let that boy swallow your foot. It might strangle him, though you do make believe it's so little.)"

"Frederic!" and Mrs. Fred, to whom her spouse's railery was "a deep wherein all her thoughts were drowned." And with an immovable phiz, that worthy man went on.

"He was a small specimen of a fellow, this new clerk of ours. He oiled his curls, and waxed something that he called his moustache. Moreover, he put on a moustache on himself in the shape of a tall hat, indulged in rainbow neckties, and went near to ruin himself and his father's house in light kid gloves. He came to our place in the room of Barney, promoted. Barney had been a family man, grizzled and wrinkled, and a little seedy as to raiment. That made the contrast all the more glaring, when this gorgeous specimen flashed in on us. Dick Cheever said it was like a peacock strutting in among a pack of barn-door fowls, he all sunshine like Solomon in his glory, and we in our business suits staring at him. For we did stare, you may be sure. Johnny hailed from somewhere off on the Sound, Stamford, I believe, and used to come into town every morning on an early train. The governor, too, came on the same. That was Dyce, you know, and he used to walk up from the station, or, on rainy days, take a horse-car, and his magnificence, young Johnny, would charter a carriage. O, that was fun, though, to witness his advent. It was busy time with us clerks, you may be sure, when we

hadn't leisure to crowd to the windows and behold Johnny light down, while the driver grinned and the newsboys cheered.

"But one morning along in the winter, Morelle was late. Morelle—yes—didn't I tell you that was Johnny's other name? Morill it used to be while the family 'made bricks in Egypt,' that is, raised horses in Vermont, but since the pater and mater familias had come back from abroad, they had bloomed out into Morelles. Innocent enough diversion, this Gallicising a man, if he feels good to the—nominees. You remember, Puss"—this to Mrs. Fred, who answered to as many names as a German princess, and never the same one twice consecutively—"the Riddles, who pleased themselves with becoming Ridelle, likewise young Deacon, who developed into Deaconne? Our little cousin Sallie Wright, says she is in daily fear lest some branch of our family shall come back from other lands a 'Riggety.'"

"But to Morelle. 'Where's Johnny?' Dick Cheever inquired of the governor that morning, and it was rare sport to watch the slow kind of smile that woke up on Dyce's sober old face, as he set his umbrella into the rack and pulled off his gray overcoat. 'O, Johnny's chariot-wheels have been delayed this morning,' he said, 'but he'll be along shortly. There he comes,' and the jolly old man took a step towards the window to look. He was a quiet man, but he was more than suspected of enjoying Johnny's daily advent as much as any of us. The sturdy, gray millionaire would walk away after it with a gleam in his eye, and a chuckle to himself that was a richness to any of us youngsters who chanced to be near him. Well, as I said, it rained a trifle this particular morning, so the flourish of trumpets was louder than usual. Cabby descended from his perch, opened the carriage door, also a big umbrella, and Johnny lighted down, and tripped across the sidewalk under it on tiptoe, remembering his boots, while Bert Fletcher the wag of the store, sprang out, and flung down, *à la Raleigh*, a big sheet of wrapping paper, and so our dainty young gentleman was gotten under cover without harm to himself or his habiliments.

"Late this morning, eh, Johnny? Anything up?" queried Dick Cheever. Dick was a bachelor, older than the most of us, and though he was as grave as a judge to all appearance, he lived and moved and had his being on the fun to be derived at Morelle's expense.

"I was detained," replied Johnny solemnly, and then he put his hat lovingly away, and tossed up his curls and smoothed his plumes generally, and admired himself in a long mirror till I expected to see him walk up and kiss his double there represented. He was not bad looking really, only small, and rather of the pink and white cream-candy style.

"Yes, I was detained. There was a lady on the train who seemed to be without a protector—and so—so—"

"So you protected. All right and proper, my son," quoth Dick. "Never omit an opportunity of ministering to the suffering. Was the female old, or infirm, or crippled in any manner?"

"Old? Infirm? Crippled? Why, man alive, she was the most transcendent piece of human flesh I ever saw in my life. Tall and commanding, and oh! such eyes! You should have seen her smile when I put her into the carriage. Ah! and he made a sort of titillation with tongue and lips, as though he was looking at something good to eat.

"Johnny, like many little fellows, admired the regal style of woman. It was a sight to see Morelle gallanting about a girl whose bonnet plume waved over the top of his tall hat; but he could not see it himself. The taller the better for him, and, moreover, he was like Kitolin over there in one thing. She's so sweet on babies that the last one she has seen is always 'The loveliest child she has ever beheld,' and Johnny always swore that his last flame was 'the most magnificent woman under the sun, moon, and stars.' Dick kept drawing him out on the subject of his travelling companion and Morelle was solemnly holding forth on the topic of her hair, when a shadow darkened the door, a slender shape swept down the floor to the lace counter, and I heard a very quiet voice say, 'Valenciennes, please. Two inches in width.' The next instant, Bert, whose place was at that counter, had been hustled aside and Johnny had taken his place. This was outrageous, of course, and out of all precedent, and why on earth Bert bore it I couldn't then conceive, though I found out afterwards. Now he only stepped along to Dick Cheever, and began talking in an undertone. The lace was purchased, the lady left, and Johnny plucked me by the sleeve. 'It's her! it's her!' he cried, in a tragic whisper, and then I looked down and saw him standing there, his mouth wide open, a sight for men and angels. 'Who's her?' I snapped, for Johnny had quite lost sight of his grammar in his rapture. 'Why, she, that exquisite creature? Oh, Wright, I'm done for now. Did you ever see such eyes in any living woman's head? Jove! when she looked at me I felt it in my toes. I did, on my honor.'

"Don't doubt it, Jacky. She is rather a good-looking person."

"Good-looking! Dick Cheever. Confound you for the besotted pagan that you are. Good-looking! you booby. She's divine; I'd give a fortune to know who she is. I wonder what her name can be? I'd suffer torture to find out."

"Bring on your tortures, then, cried Bert, looking not at Morelle, but at Dick. 'I can tell you that I saw the name on her shopping-

"O Bertie!" begged Johnny, 'I'll do anything for you. I'll—'

"Bah! Hush up, Ring, and I'll tell you." 'Ring' was short for 'Ringlets,' a title which Bert had conferred on Johnny by virtue of his curls. These, Morelle's sisters were more than suspected of doing up nightly in papers, the three taking the duty on themselves in turn. "The name was Helena Bristed."

"Of course Johnny went into raptures over the name, and we all, to do ourselves justice, cheered him on. It was a dull day, and we could think of no better sport that morning, nor, in fact, for many mornings after it, than to stir up Johnny and to draw him out on the subject of the magnificent Miss Bristed. Volumes would not hold the written out details of that fellow's love affair. The toilets that he made, the gloves he ruined, and the jewelry that he bought and was going to buy; the letters he wrote and destroyed; the whispered confidences with Dick and Bertie; and after all, the fact that the thing was entirely on one side, for, barring two or three meetings on the train, when Johnny picked up her handkerchief or opened a window for her, and received the shortest words of thanks, Miss Bristed herself appeared not to have figured in the proceedings at all. But at length three came a change. One morning Johnny danced in upon us as if on air, all his pink and white face aglow, and his tongue just frantic in the effort to do the work of ten tongues at once. He had sat beside the beautiful creature all the way into town. 'And she talked, and I know where she lives, a gorgeous place, with lawn and green-houses, and she's a queen, and she should have a palace, and O—' Customers stopped Johnny's tongue. Nothing else could have done it, and that afternoon, in the midst of this ecstasy, Satan put into Bert Fletcher's heart to tempt Johnny to indite some poetry to Miss Bristed. Would you believe it, that goose actually equipped himself with a quire of foolscap, plus a ream of gilt-edge note paper, and went into retirement behind a packing box, and set about it. We agreed to do his work for him, and two hours later the young lover came out with his eyes big and bright, his cheeks burning, his curls like a mouse's nest, and some rhymes about 'love' and 'dove' and 'crown' and 'moon' and 'mourn' and 'forlorn,' and no end of stuff, and which we all swore—mercy on us for the perjury—was poetry. It was actually sent, Bert undertaking to convey it to the post himself, and coming back looking wickeder than ever. Only two days afterwards, if it can be credited, Johnny came flying in with a flutter of note paper, a general flutter, in fact, flourishing the tiny sheet aloft, and summoning all hands to an audience, while he read some very smooth little rhymes over the sign manual of Helena Bristed. The poem of Johnny had actually brought an answer. "That woman hadn't written really to him!" exclaimed Mrs. Fred, looking shocked. "Written? You should have seen the piles of poetry and other effusions that passed between them after that. Morelle waxed more sublime than ever, began to take airs as of a family man elect, and consorted chiefly with Dick Cheever, who was known to be engaged. All this while Bert was running over with fun, and, indeed, he himself darkly hinted to me more than once that there would be richer sport by and by."

"Wright, just you look here." That was one evening when Johnny had dragged me off to a corner, and whispering mysteriously. If people have got anything to tell, they, you see, always take me to tell it to. Don't know why, I'm sure. It's my phiz, I suppose. I must have a receptive air, I think. Anyhow I'm always made the victim of secrets. Now, Johnny's was a box as big as your thumb, and in it, on a velvet cushion, a ring. 'What's that for, Jacky?' says I. 'Can't you think, Wright?' 'Not if I were to die for it,' I said—I lied, of course. "Fred" "Oh, if I could but show you how that little scamp looked, so portentous and solemn. 'Fred, the time has come. I'm 'on the eve of great events.' I think I shall have my crisis to-night." 'To-night?' 'To-night, Frederic. She has promised to meet me in the Laurel Terrace of her home to-night, and walk with me. She has promised.' 'All right. I wish you joy, Johnny, only it's dark as Egypt, and you'll have to imagine each other's beauties; but that you're equal to, I suppose. You're good at imagining. Good night.' So I left Johnny to flirt with his divine Helena, and that evening I had a telegram from Cousin Doty in Baltimore that Aunt Nan was dying, and I set off express for her bedside. She didn't die then, and she hasn't died yet, and I have a premonition that she'll live to wear crape for me and my wife and children. But, anyhow, I was gone a fortnight, and when I came back there was a great to-do at 789 Broadway. Dyce & Dillon proposed to send some one to Paris. Dick Cheever was the man, so he was to be married, and take madame on the wedding tour, and so 'kill two birds with one stone,' as the saying goes. Thus, instead of weeping at Aunt Nan's obsequies, I was bidden to dance at Dick's wedding, I and the rest, and we did it with a will. Of course, we all dressed in our best clothes, and our best tempers, and two of us, Johnny and I, as it chanced were elected to escort the two Varney girls, Dick's Massachusetts cousins. Pretty girls they were too, with hair like yellow floss silk, and long enough to tread on, but Morelle's heart was elsewhere; I could see that. 'Look Fred,' he whispered, and spread out that little paw of his with a seal-ring on the finger. 'Helene Bristed!' And he gazed at his hand as a mother on her first born. I expected to see him tear down the finger of his lavender kid, that he might de-

vour the ring with his eyes all the while. But he didn't.

"It was a church wedding, and an evening one. We'd just got well seated—I must hurry up this long story; it takes forever to tell a thing, but the cream of it is just coming—we'd got seated pretty well up in the church, and the organ was thundering away the Wedding March, and the ushers were flying about like several cats in several fits, when I felt Johnny grasp my arm. 'Look, Fred,' he whispered huskily. 'There she is, sir! Isn't she glorious? Confound that red-whiskered fellow!' I looked, and there, sure enough, all in a shimmer of lace, and with white roses in her black hair and her great slow-moving eyes. (I don't mean roses in her eyes, you know), came Johnny Morelle's divinity up the aisle.

"O Helen Bristed!" signed Johnny, 'What a queen among women you are?'

"The apostrophe was cut short by the entrance of the bride herself, and then the performance began. Morelle had no eyes for any body or thing, save the regal female in lace. I noted the tall Saxon escort alongside of her, thought what a handsome pair they were, and as I was watching Dick and thinking how specially uncomfortable he looked, and as though he'd be jolly glad when he was well out of it. Fact is, I never went to but one decent wedding and that was my own; but now the restor went on with the service, and I heard:

"Helena Bristed, wilt thou have this man, &c? I heard no more. I glanced quick as lightning at Morelle. I expected nothing but he would jump up and forbid the bans; but he was staring with a sort of frozen look at the bride. This Helena Bristed at all events, was not the lady of his love. She was slight and blue-eyed and petite.

"The ceremony over, and we whisking away to the reception. Johnnie, whispered, 'Strange that there should be two.' Strange, I thought; but a stranger thing was coming. At the door I was attacked again. 'Fred, as I'm a living man this is the same house.' 'Do hush up, Johnny.' 'No, but I tell you there's the Laurel Terrace where I walked with Helena.'

"I contrived to suppress Morelle till we got into the dressing room, and the next I remember we were waiting for our ladies in the upper hall. It was well lighted, and there was no end of flowers everywhere, and I was thinking what a fine berth Dick had got into, when I looked at Johnny, and saw the pluck suddenly go out of his smooth cheeks, and his eyes fix at something down the hall. 'There she was coming slowly towards us, sailing along on the arm of her big blond cavalier, calm and smiling. That instant a door somewhere burst open, and a little fellow three years old toddled out, curls flying, and arms raised towards Morelle's divinity; and then straightway, we looking on, the lady left her escort, took a quick step forward and seized the child in her arms, giving a little, low, motherly cry.

"Max is glad to see mamma again?" she cooed, and Johnny grasped my arm, or I verily believe he would have dropped. 'What does it mean?' 'She's a widow,' I answered, snatching at the only hope that came in sight. But no sooner were the words out of my mouth before a low voice, a woman's voice, at our side spoke, so quietly. 'Ah, here is my railroad friend. Aleck, this is Mr. Morelle. (I think I have the name, have I not?) Mr. Morelle, Dr. Ames, my husband.'

"Her husband! How I ever got Johnny decently out of that I never knew, but I had him in a corner of the dressing room in sixty seconds, and there I stood over him comforting him with the firm avowal of my intent to kill him then and there if he didn't behave himself. 'Oh, but Fred, dear Fred, what does it mean?' he whispered, when he found a tongue at last."

"Yes, and what did it mean?" asked Mrs. Fred.

"Bert Fletcher was the one to ask. The truth is, it was all a device of that imp, slightly aided by Dick. 'I tell you, Bert, you ought to be lynched,' I said to him next day. 'Well, it was too bad I suppose, Fred,' he answered. 'Really though, I didn't mean to go quite so deep into it that first day when Mrs. Ames came into the store with her sister's shopping-bag. But I have owed Johnny a grudge ever since he got me left all night in the Hoboken station, last fall.' But the notes, and the poetry? and the ring?—and, Bert, the walk on Laurel Terrace?' 'Wrote 'em all myself, and for the walk I dressed up in my sister Libby's tweed and hat, and it was pitch dark.'

"And you knew all the time who this Mrs. Ames was, Bert? You knew she was married, and not Helen Bristed at all?"

"Knew? I should think I knew, as they are both my cousins; but Johnny is such a coxcomb about ladies—always was. Besides I've bamboozled other people that way. I've always been said to speak like Alice Ames. I've played her part in a tableau twice. Oh, but it was too rich."

"Bert Fletcher, I hope Johnny will make himself even with you some day or other," I said, and when I heard, last year, that Morelle had married Bert's sister, I said to myself that matters had been righted. Kitty, that boy'll be tumbling off into the coleusbed next. Let me take him."

"It is a mystery to me," said Mrs. Fred, "what pleasure you men find in such jokes as that."

"As what? Carrying big, thirty pound babies round the house? That's no joke, I assure you, ma'am," and Fred went laughing down the hall.