

coming this way, Ella. I couldn't afford to board, and—well, folks can't die just because there's no place for them in this big, crowding world.'

Mrs. Lee put both arms round her cousin. 'There is a place for you here, dear. My boys are planning to make your visit a pleasant one.'

Again Miss Davis gasped. What did it mean? Ella knew she detested boys. Just then Mr. Lee entered.

'It seems good to see you two women sitting together,' he said, as he shook hands. 'Ella is planning to live over her girlhood again. Rebecca, we will show you that farm life, even in the winter, has a sunny side.'

Miss Davis ate her supper in silence. Speech was not needed, for the Lees all talked, and the conversation was of the good times they were planning to enjoy with their guest.

It was not until she was alone in her room that Rebecca tried to solve the problem. She looked round. The room was warmed from the furnace and tastefully furnished. On a little stand was a thrifty geranium, loaded with buds and great trusses of scarlet blossoms. Had Huldah remembered her liking for red flowers?

'I don't understand,' and, walking to the window, she gazed out into the night. 'It is not alone that they are polite and kind. There is something else.'

She pressed her face against the cold glass and peered into the darkness. 'It's just this way. They treat me as if I was a person whom they might be glad to have visit them. I know I'm ugly, but—well, it's pleasant to be treated so.'

The next morning, however, she roused herself. 'I must be natural,' she murmured while making her toilet. 'I must show them their mistake.'

It was easier said than done.

At breakfast her tastes were remembered. Mrs. Lee would persist in laughing over old times. Huldah asked the guest to help her select the shades of embroidery silk for her new carnation centrepiece in such a way that there was nothing to do but to comply with the request and enjoy doing so. Clinton asked the privilege of taking his mother and cousin for a drive. They went, and when they returned Miss Davis found that Hubert had brought a spray of bitter-sweet from the woods for her, while Ralph hastened to bring her a plate of apples he had polished.

Miss Davis was honest. She tried to be her own carping, unpleasant self. It was useless. The entire family expected her to be gracious and gentle. They took it for granted that she would be pleased with them and their efforts to entertain her. They saw only the good in her, passing over her cross words as if they failed to understand them.

It was a losing battle that she waged. Little by little she yielded to the demands made upon her. Gradually the gracious, agreeable woman whom Huldah had 'imagined' came to be a reality.

No one knew just how it came about. The Lees found it easier, day by day, to see Cousin Rebecca's good qualities. She came to be a friend and companion. The boys were no longer 'a bother.' Instead, she grew fond of them, and delighted in contributing to their happiness.

One evening in April they were again

seated around the table, enjoying the mail. Miss Davis sighed so profoundly over the letter she was reading that they all looked up.

'From the business manager of the factory. He says I can have my old place back in two weeks.'

'Will you go?' Hubert asked. 'I hope not.'

'Thank you, Hubert. I think I must go. I am much better now and feel that I ought to be at work. I have so enjoyed my stay here; it has been the best part of my life.'

'Why, we won't know what to do without you, Cousin Rebecca!' Clinton cried. 'I don't know who will go riding with me or mend my mittens or listen to the stories of what I am going to do.'

Cousin Rebecca smiled, albeit her lips quivered. How had it come about that this outspoken, fun-loving Clinton had become her favorite?

Huldah looked proudly over at the little spinster. She was transformed, not only her inner self, but there was a change visible to the eye. Cousin Rebecca's dark hair was waved and arranged in a becoming manner. A pretty red stock collar brightened her black dress, and there was the gleam of the rings which had been her mother's on her hands.

It was Mrs. Lee who spoke. 'Charles and I were talking of this last night. Stay with us, Rebecca. We will pay you the two and a half dollars a week we always pay a girl in the summer. That is more than you save in the city, and the work is no harder. Stay and be one of us, as you are now.'

Tears prevented Miss Davis from replying for a time. At last she managed to say: 'I will be so glad to stay. Somehow your goodness has changed me.'

Huldah nodded her brown head. They had succeeded; Cousin Rebecca was transformed.

'The Secret of Long Life.'

Mr. T. Sidney Cooper, R.A., the father of English painters, says: 'Now, in my ninety-sixth year, I can paint four or five hours a day, and walk slowly a mile daily in fine weather, or take a carriage drive if not fine. I rise at seven o'clock, go into my study, set my palette, take my breakfast at eight, then my Bible, then I paint till twelve-thirty. Then lunch and Bible, and paint till three o'clock. This is my day's work, and then I take my walk, write letters, and dine at six o'clock. I take no wine. I generally sleep well, and am not much troubled with illness. Of course, I have the infirmities of old age, but now enjoy the cheerful effects of a temperate life.'

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How Shag Won His Medal

(Caroline K. Herrick, in 'Wellspring.')

'Momsey! O Momsey!' shouted Neil, bounding up three stairs at a time.

'Neil, dear, please remember that I do not like to be shouted at,' said Mrs. Herkomer.

'Beg pardon, momsey,' and Neil dropped his voice to a loud, hoarse whisper—very, like the sound of the sea breeze that was growling in the chimney. 'Perhaps I'm getting a habit of talking loud because—you see—Uncle Dan's growing so deaf that I have to shout to make him hear. What I wanted to say is that—if Rob comes over this afternoon—I wish you'd tell him I can't play golf to-morrow. I'm going shooting—early.'

'O Neil! Going out before light? I thought you were not going to do that again this fall,' said his mother.

'I did think I'd stop for this year; but—just think, momsey, I may get some black duck!' This was said with the air of presenting a perfectly convincing argument. 'Uncle Dan says he saw a flight of black duck over the Big Pond yesterday. I haven't had a real chance at black duck this reason. They're such crafty old birds! It seems as if they must know the game laws, they manage so to keep out of the way. So—you see, I must go, just this once more.'

'Well, if you must go, bring me your shooting jacket, that I may mend it. You wore it last with one sleeve ripped half out of the armhole.'

'Will when I come in to lunch do?' asked Neil.

'You're so forgetful, Neil. You'd better get it now.'

'I'll be sure to remember this time. Good-by, momsey, dear,' and he was away down the stairs in long leaps.

Neil went to bed early that evening in anticipation of his early rising. About nine o'clock his mother remembered the torn coat.

'I could not get it now,' she thought, 'without waking him. He ought not to be disturbed.' So the coat was not mended.

The house was silent and dark when Neil Herkomer stole down the stairs and groped his way to the pantry, where Rose—the good-natured maid—had set a cold breakfast and a parcel of luncheon to be eaten at the regular breakfast time. Having hastily eaten, Neil crept noiselessly out of the house. Presently the silence was broken by a loud cackling and quacking in the fowl yard and a chorus of dismal howls from the dogs, of which the most pitiful was in the voice of Shag, Neil's big English setter, who knew that his master must be going shooting, and was deeply grieved at being left behind.

The cackling ceased, the howls died down in wistful whining, and a queer figure wheeled out from the Herkomer place and turned into the road that led to the meadows and the seashore. It was Neil on his bicycle, so loaded that it was a wonder how he kept his balance. Over his right shoulder hung a bag of large dimensions and lumpy appearance; the lumps were wooden decoy ducks. Over the left shoulder, another bag, not so full, of which the load constantly shifted from side to side. It was two live black ducks that had been reared in captivity and were now