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When Grandma Came

C. B. LEWIS

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Young Lucien Davis, son of the village builder, had been courting Tilly Spooner, daughter of the village miller, for six months or more when Grandma Whitbeck came on a visit. She was mother to Mrs. Davis, and although over sixty years old it was her boast that she could still make things hum. Lucien was her favorite grandchild, and she made no secret of the fact that she had made her will in his favor. In her modest home she had heard that he was "keeping company" with a girl and that he would probably be a married man before he was twenty-one, and that nothing, never, can any miller, brought her out in indignation.

Grandma Davis arrived in Sunny side at an unfortunate hour. The river running through the village was frozen two feet thick and was being used as a boulevard and race course by every villager who had a horse and cutter. There were some good horses and some drivers who were anxious to beat the procession, and among the latter was Lucien Davis. It was a natural thing that Tilly Spooner should be with him as he drove and that she would clap her hands in glee when the cutter crossed the line fifty feet ahead of the next best horse for ten miles around. Grandma happened to be crossing the bridge during one of the trials of speed and saw it all, and as she continued to gaze her jaw began to set.

"The idea of it—the idea!" she muttered to herself. "My favorite grandson has not only turned to hoss racin', but that gal he is as good as engaged to is sickin' him on the best she knows how. I've got to see about this thing right away."

She did. She hadn't got her bonnet off before she was saying to her daughter:

"Sarah Davis, it seems as if Providence had sent me here at this time. Do you know what Lucien is doin' at this very minit?"

"He's driving on the ice, I believe," was the reply.

"Drivin'! Why, he's hoss racin', that's what he's doin—goin' up and down ickety split—and that Spooner gal, about who you've all been writin' so much, is in the cutter with him and a-sickin' him on. I stopped on the bridge and saw it all, and I'm goin' to tell you right out plain that I'm ashamed of you. I never spected to live to see the day when you and James would see Lucien become a hoss racer and a gambler and a murderer and never even advise him agin it."

"Come, come, Mother!" chided the daughter. "They may be driving fast,

"LUCIEN DAVIS, MAKE YOUR HOSS GIT UP AND GIT!"

and one horse may come out ahead of the other, but it's not horse racing. There are people driving on the ice who belong to the church. It's simply recreation. I was driving with Lucien myself yesterday, and I enjoyed it immensely."

"Don't talk to me, Sarah Davis! I know a hoss race when I see one, and I know that hoss racin' leads to gamblin' and murder. If folks around here think they can be Christians and hoss race at the same time let 'em go ahead, but I can tell 'em where they'll end up. I was in hopes I should take a likin' to that Spooner gal, but I never, never can. Any gal who will urge a young man on to his doom ought to be sent to jail, and I'll tell her, so whenever I see her."

When Lucien came home he got a bad roasting from grandma. He tried to explain, but it was no go. Grandma had her opinion, and it was:

"It ain't a bit of use to waste your breath, Lucien. I'm disapp'inted in your father and mother and in you. When I was here last you was splittin' wood and studyin' your Sunday school lesson all the time. When I come this time I find you hoss racin' and on your way to state's prison. I feel it my duty to save you if I can, and I'm goin' to try and think up a way to do it."

The idea was to propitiate grandma as much as possible, and yet Lucien did not cease to "hoss race" now and then and to take Tilly Spooner along, as before. The family would have liked to bring about an introduction between the girl and the old lady, but it was looked upon as too risky. Little was said after the first two or three days, but grandma kept up a great thinking, with the result that one day, two weeks later, she slipped out of the house and made a call at Spooner's. It was a call that left its mark. She reproved Mrs. Spooner, wondered what sort of a man Mr. Spooner was and wound up by calling Tilly an impertinent minx. Of course, there were results, and those results made at least two hearts ache. Lucien was informed in plain English that if he didn't "drop that gal" he would be dropped out of grandma's will, and, though he refused to be bluffed, the situation became strained and anything but pleasant. It was Tilly herself who solved the problem where others failed to see a glimmer of light.

One day Lucien had business over toward Liverpool, and as it was a bright February day he asked grandma to go along. She was glad to get out and see the country, and she meant to take advantage of the occasion to have a long private talk with the young man. After a drive of two miles and a halt at a farmhouse for a moment Lucien headed the horse back home, and before grandma knew where she was the cutter was on the ice also, with twenty others.

"Lucien, what does this mean?" she demanded.

"It's our nearest way home, grandma."

The horse started off at a good pace, but after a couple of minutes two or three others began to draw up to him. In five minutes Grandma Whitbeck began to wriggle around. In six or seven she felt me so nervous that she asked:

"Lucien, what do them fellers back there want?"

"They want to pass me and crow over it," he replied.

Just then two of the cutters did pass, and the drivers looked back and grinned. Lucien held his horse down, however, and he pretended not to mind it when he was passed by two or three others.

"You see, I'm just out for a drive," he explained to grandma.

"Yes, I know. Could they pass you if you didn't want 'em to?"

"Hardly. I hate to be grinned at and crowed over, but I know it's wicked to speed horses."

"Yes, of course it is, but—"

Just then an old snowbank attached to a home made sled came up and passed the cutter at a jog, and the half dozen men on the sled had some cutting remarks to make. Grandma did some more wriggling, but she didn't say anything until the mark was reached and the horse had been turned around for a straight mile course to the bridge. Then she observed:

"Lucien, I don't like to be made a laughing stock of."

"Nor I, either."

"Then if any more crowbaits come up you might shake on the lines a leetle."

"But there are five or six men with good horses who will surely try to beat us."

"Then shake a leetle hard."

One of the good horses presently came pounding up behind, but Lucien seemed oblivious.

"I said shake the lines," remarked grandma.

The young man shook, but the horse still gained, and others were heard coming up.

"Shake harder!"

Lucien clucked, but he did not draw away from the danger. Grandma waited until the nose of a horse was level with her arm and then said:

"Lucien Davis, if you let one be laughed at you are no grandson of mine. Make your hoss git up and git."

Three seconds later she was riding at a 2:40 clip and holding on to her breath and her bonnet, and three minutes later the bridge was passed and she knew that she had led by a hundred feet. She hadn't a word to say on the way from the river to the house nor for half an hour later. Then she put her hand on Lucien's shoulder and observed:

"I guess things have changed since I was a gal. I guess that beatin' the other hoss hain't hoss racin' or gamblin' or murder, and you'd better bring Tilly Spooner over here tonight to hear me say so."

Lady Holland's Luncheon Ablutions.

Lady Murster, granddaughter of King William IV. of England, relates in her biography that in 1887 she went with her mother to take luncheon with Lady Holland. "To this day," she says, "I never taste cold turkey and salad without their conjuring up in my mind's eye Holland House dining room, full of brilliant silver and glass, the smart footmen, and, most of all, a most charming looking lady with a very pale face—the palest face, I think, I ever saw and with such a heavenly, sweet smile. She sat in a large armchair, and her occupation seemed to me, even young as I was, strange in a dining room. She was not sitting at the dining room table with every one else, but in a corner of the room. A maid was kneeling by her bathing the pale, sweet, smiling lady's feet—the loveliest white feet—in a large china foot tub! This lady was the famous Lady Holland, and I heard it said that these, to outsiders, peculiar ablutions took place in the dining room of Holland House during luncheon whether there were visitors or not."

The Bloodstone.

"Most persons know very little about the stones of which they so glibly talk," remarked a gem expert. "Very few have any idea of what a bloodstone is, though the red spotted green heliotrope commonly goes by that name. Here are two pieces of real bloodstone, the bloodstone of the ancients. As you see, they are black. By rubbing one on the other I draw what looks to be blood. Touching it to my hand it leaves a bloodlike stain. No, there's no trick about it. These bits of black stone are simply hematite, and hematite is the real bloodstone. Not one person in 10,000 seems to know this."—Philadelphia Record.

Humor and Philosophy

By DUNCAN M. SMITH

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THE PICNIC.

Away
With care, let joy have sway.
Put aside your labors,
Leave trouble at home to quarrel with the neighbors.
Please
Fling business to the breeze;
Spoil
Not the day by thinking of toil.
Lock up your goods
And to the woods.
Take your family in one hand, dear brother,
Your lunch basket in the other,
Your awkward shanks unlimber
And break for the tall timber
Leave your books on the shelves
To pack after themselves.
And
Go where you can wallow for nature at first hand.
In other words, make a quick
Connection with the plant
What though mixed with the charms on every view
Are a few
Disagreeable features—
Crawling creatures,
Bugs, bees,
Plants
With stickers and things
With stings
But contact with that sort
Is part of the sport.
Then hie
Away where you can sit down in the pie-field
The spot where you may fall in the creek,
Drink water from the slough
And do a few
Other restful things)
It brings
Back youth again,
Or at least makes you feel the
Years younger. So haste away,
Don't delay,
For, dear,
Mr. glorious comes but thirty or forty times a year.

Willing to Wait.

"What is the matter with your wife?"

"Her tongue is paralyzed. Cure her as slowly as you can, doctor, because her system will not stand a shock."

Cheaper Way.

"Mrs. Blakley must have the servant girl problem on the brain. She talks about it all the time."

"She is only trying to make folks think she keeps a servant. I happen to know a woman who visits at her home."

Such Cooking.

The queen of hearts she made some tarts
All on a summer's day.
The king of hearts he ate those tarts
And had dyspepsia.

No Other Explanation.

"Bilfkins has sat for an hour and let old Borus tell about the smart tricks of his children."

"Must want to borrow money from him."

Patriotism Not Rewarded.

"Republics are indeed ungrateful."

"What has the country done to you?"

"Got a thumb shot off Fourth of July and can't get a pension on it."

Nothing New.

At phonographs man marvels not,
Though wondrous it appears,
For he has children cast his lot
With woman, in these years.

Cousin to It.

"From the way you are all scratched up you must have had a fight with a wildcat."

"No, with a barb wire fence."

Has a Way.

"Pa, can straw talk?"

"Certainly not."

"Then how can it tell you how the wind blows?"

Once Should Do.

The man who fights and runs away
May live to fight another day,
But any man who runs from a fight
When there's a chance to arbitrate,
Is a fool.

PERT PARAGRAPHS.

Thousands of men who don't do it know how to organize a steel trust.

The air feels a great deal colder when you have a new jacket than it feels if you haven't one.

A man feels more comfortable if he locks his conscience in his trunk while making out his expense account.

Some people are always drawing the line and then stepping over it themselves.

One of the tricks of the devil is the trick of never getting tricked himself.

When things are coming our way, everything seems dead easy.

We like lots of frills and furbelows when some one else is putting the crimps in.

When a woman cannot manage her husband she does not call on his typewriter for assistance.

No self respecting baby ever wants anything that you want him to have.

Humor and Philosophy

By DUNCAN M. SMITH

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PERT PARAGRAPHS.

A woman feels ten years younger every time she gets a new hat.

When a man marries he thinks he knows a lot more than he thinks he knows when he numerates.

It doesn't take a woman long at a shopping expedition long to see the limits of herself and her pocketbook.

Don't try to know the hired girl, she knows you can't cook.

A baby in the cradle is more to be dreaded than Man-ila in the pocketbook.

Fine feathers make plucked birds.

Nothing is quite so provoking as to see strawberries so cheap that you don't want to eat them.

Some people are so unskillful that they can't use an egg without breaking it.

For the purpose of advertising fame a man might almost as well be called for some patent medicine as to accept a nomination for president from one of the minor parties.

Sometimes there quite a difference between being foolishly simple and simply foolish.

It is quite noticeable that hard luck gets monotonous very quickly.

Chastened.

Far from city glare and bustle
Quietly I stole away
To the place where song birds rustle
Through the branches all the day.

In my boyhood long I lingered
Where the rivers ripples spoke
Where the sunbeams danced and frolicked
And the sucker's gathered in.

Now, I linger by the river
Musing by its rippling tide
But no baited hellbender quiver
Near the water fills my side.

I'm not losing now for why
Thing the waters dark conceal;
I've been taken in by guys,
I know how the suckers feel.

Bereaved.

"I am taking up a collection, boys, for a poor orphan what ain't got no father and no mother."

"Here is a dime. I am always glad to help the unfortunate. How old is the poor orphan."

"Only seventy-nine boys."

Couldn't Notice It.

"The lawn mower must be a great improvement over the old fashioned scythe," said the city man who was trying to talk wise to the suburbanite.

"You wouldn't consider it such a good thing if you had to push it along," said the other dryly.

A Sure Sign.

You know that summer without doubt
At last has struck the land
When on the city streets breaks out
The little German band.

The Only Successful Kind.

"Poor man, I fear he is a little off. He thinks he has invented an airship."

"I guess he is hardly a candidate for the bughouse. He has capitalized the idea and is selling stock."

Evidence.

"Would you call her a woman of tact?"

"Well, she is engaged to a bashful man and he thinks he did the proposing."

Needs a Little Cash.

"Will you spend the summer at the seashore?"

"I would if the summer was the only thing one was obliged to spend there."

Little, but Active.

It isn't always size that wins,
For quality counts more than freight.
The small mosquito takes a man
All of ten thousand times his weight.

Called Both Ways.

"What did the boss want when he called you up on the phone?"

"To call me down."

It Was Fixed.

"What a fair skin Mabel has!"

"She has indeed. Still, it isn't as white as it is painted."

Have to Use It.

"What is a good way to cultivate faith?"

"Eat hash."

Knew the Father.

"Little Willie takes after his father."

"Is it possible he is flirting already?"

They Are Human.

Lives of great men oft remind us,
When the inside facts we get,
That they go and leave behind them
Oftentimes a bunch of debt.

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