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CYNTHIA'S WOOERS.

The old lady drew her chair a little closer to the old man.

"I sent for you to come over, Brother Ned," she said, in carefully modulated tones, "to have a little family consultation. I want to talk to you about Cynthia."

"Oh, Cynthia. What about Cynthia? Ain't comin' down with anything, is she?"

"No, no. She's got two beaux."

"Well, ain't that enough?"

"Wait, Ned. Both of 'em are in dead earnest. And what I'm scared about is that she may marry one of 'em."

The old man's face suddenly wrinkled.

"Well, that's all the law allows, ain't it?" he chuckled.

"Come, Ned, we've got to look at this matter in a serious light. It's our duty to do the best we can for Cynthia. We promised brother James we would. If there's danger of Cynthia makin' a poor choice it's our duty to try to set her right."

"Then you don't think much o' these two fellers?"

"One of 'em I don't. The other is Cy Hobson."

"Yes. He's a sewing-machine agent. Doing real well, too."

"He comes of good money-making stock."

"That's right. And he ain't going to peddle sewing machines forever. He's promised a chance to be the agent of the comp'ny over at Bruceville."

"Who's the other feller?"

"He's a choofer. He drives an auty-mobel."

"You mean a chuffer. Well, what about him?"

"I don't know. He's just a young fellow that's runnin' some rich man's auty, and he happened to see Cynthia outside one day, when he broke down, and he asked her if he couldn't have some water, and he's broke down right in front of the house three times since. And every time he's wanted somethin'."

The old man looked thoughtful. "And Cynthia is always round in time for the accidents, is she?"

"She has been, so far."

"And you think a chuffer is good enough for Cynthia, eh?"

"No, I don't. But I've known Cy Hobson since he was a boy, and I don't think Cynthia could do better."

"And what does Cynthia think?"

"She'd be all right if this choofer hadn't come around."

The sound of a mellow horn came from the highway.

"It's that choofer," said the old lady.

"There he's stoppin'. Broke down again, I s'pose. And there's Cynthia comin' down the driveway. See him laughin'. I tell you this ain't a goin' to do, Ned. That girl's got to finish her churrin'. Well, well, look at that! He's backing that machine up the driveway."

"That's a fine car," said the old man.

"See there; Cynthia's bringing him a rope. He's fastenin' it to the machine.

There, he's gone back with the other end of it. Now they're both out of sight."

"Don't get excited, Jane."

"Well, I don't like these mysterious doings. There they are. I declare if Cynthia isn't getting into the seat!"

"Hark!" cried the old man.

They could hear the soft rumble of the engine, and then, mingled with it, came a steady splash, splash, splash.

The old man suddenly chuckled. "Well, if that ain't blamed clever," he cried.

"The boy has harnessed up the dog treadmill to the auty-mobel, and he's makin' it do the churrin'! What do you think of that?"

The old lady sniffed.

"I don't think much of it, and I guess the man that owns the auty-mobel ain't goin' to think much of it, either." She suddenly turned on the old man. "See here, Brother Ned, you've got to assert yourself. If Cynthia's going to marry Cy Hobson this other thing's got to stop—and I as good as promised Cy he could have her."

The old man suddenly frowned. "Tell you what I'll do, Jane. I'll invite Cynthia to come over to our house and stay a week or ten days. That'll keep her out o' the way." Then he added, "I want you to leave all this to me, Jane."

The next morning Cynthia departed for

her Uncle Ned's comfortable farmhouse, a dozen miles away. Scarcely an hour after Cynthia's departure, the mellow horn was heard in the highway. But there was no Cynthia to answer the summons.

A few hours later there was another caller, a young man with a self-assured air, a light-blue necktie and a broad-rimmed, gray hat.

"Howdy, Aunt Jane," he cried, as she opened the door. "Where's Cynthia?"

"She's gone to her Uncle Ned's to spend a few days."

The young man's face clouded a little.

"That's too bad," he said. "I wanted to ask her to go to the spellin' bee at Henry Thompson's next Friday night."

"That is too bad," said Aunt Jane.

"Can't you drive over and ask her?"

"Nope," the young man replied as he backed across the porch. "Too busy. Sold three machines last week. Got one in my wagon now that I'm deliverin' to Aunt Truly Grimston. Tell Cynthia I was sorry I couldn't see her. Good-bye."

Four days later Aunt Jane was surprised to receive another call from Cy Hobson.

"Cynthia ain't home yet, Cy," she called.

"I didn't s'pose she was," he answered.

There was a moment's silence.

"Business pretty good, Cy?"

"I can't complain."

"It takes a good head to tend to your business, Cy. Been over to see Cynthia yet?"

"No, I hain't." He paused and slowly shook his head. "I saw her though."

"Saw Cynthia? Where?"

"Bout three miles 'tother side of the village, in an automobile."

Aunt Jane drew a quick breath. "I wonder what Brother Ned will say to that!" she cried.

"Well, he seemed to be taking it pretty coolly, on the back seat of the car behind Cynthia. They were all laughing when I passed by. Guess they didn't see me."

Aunt Jane nodded with slow dignity. "I can't understand about Ned's behavior. Why, he seemed to favor you right along. Well, I'm going to drive over to my brother's this very afternoon, and I'll bring Cynthia back with me."

Early that afternoon an erect old lady driving a stout horse attached to a phaeton was halted at a turn in the road by a big touring car. The horse arose on his hind legs, but before he could leap the driver of the car jumped down, caught the scared brute and quieted him. The old lady sat bolt upright during the performance. Now she spoke.

"I've come to bring you home, Cynthia," she said.

The girl in the car waved her hand.

"I'm on my way, aunty."

Aunt Jane noted that there were three persons in the car. One was her niece, one her brother, the third was a handsomely gowned and cloaked lady.

"If you will kindly turn my horse around, sir," she said to the young man.

"I will be obliged to you."

"Certainly," he answered. "But I think it will be safer for you to alight. He seems strongly disposed to bolt."

With great dignity Aunt Jane stepped into the roadway, while the young man turned the horse about.

"And now," he gently suggested, "I think it would be well for me to drive your horse back to the house. He still seems inclined to make trouble. I'm familiar with horses. And I want you to take a seat in the car. My sister here has something to say to you, Mrs. Gardner Burt, Miss Radford, Miss Cynthia, will you kindly assist your aunt?"

And before she knew it Aunt Jane was bundled into the big car. As she took her seat, Cynthia ran forward and stepped into the phaeton, and an instant later the young man and she drove ahead. Aunt Jane had no time to protest.

Then the lady moved a lever and the car started at a discreet pace.

"How do you do, Jane?" a voice from the rear seat inquired.

"I'm quite well, Edward," she replied with freezing dignity.

Then the lady spoke.

"Miss Radford," she said, "I call this a fortunate meeting. We were on our way to your home. Miss Radford, as my brother's only immediate relative, and as the head of the family, I ask the hand of your niece for him. You will find George an exemplary young man, I