

# The Sound of Wedding Bells

## Won After Great Perseverance!

CHAPTER XX.  
"Please tell Sir Hugh, your client, that I distinctly refuse to accept any money from him," she says, with a flash in her eyes.

The two lawyers look at one another with an indescribable look, made up of amazement, dismay and pity.

"Not one penny," says Dulcie, calmly--too calmly.

"But," says Mr. Scobell, gravely, "do you thoroughly understand the spirit in which my client makes this offer? It seems to me that you need not scruple to accept it, my dear young lady, considering that it was under your uncle's will that Sir Hugh benefits so largely. He merely offers you what he considers is yours in mere justice and equity."

"There comes a faint dash of color into the pale face.

"It is his money," she says, "or he would not be able to offer it, and I cannot accept any money from Sir Hugh. Please thank him, and let him understand that, once, for all. It is impossible."

The two lawyers exchange glances, shake their heads, and cough, in emphatic surprise at such a specimen of unusual self-denial, and then take their leave; Mr. Scobell saying one more word as he goes.

"You may think better of this, perhaps, Miss Dormimore; if you do, and I sincerely hope you will, perhaps you will communicate with us?"

"My decision is made," said Dulcie, with a sad smile. "I shall not change it. Sir Hugh will know me better than to expect me to do what you advise."

So they go, and she is left alone to face the future, and she sets about it at once. She gets together the jewelry that she bought in Paris, and arranges it on a table, and puts the money that she has left beside it. When the worst comes to the worst, she can sell these jewels, and meanwhile must make the money run as far as it will.

"Poor things!" she says, with a weary smile, as she takes up the glittering gems; "our acquaintance will be a very short one. Like Wolsey, I can say, 'Farewell to greatness!'"

Then she ponders over the prospect before her. There are debts to be paid, small and few, but still almost large and many enough to swallow up half her capital; what remains, even with the money produced by the sale of the jewels, will soon go, and--then!

"Is there not anything I could do?" she murmurs, hopelessly. "But there is nothing! Now, if Maud Falconer were placed in my position, she would be able to earn her own living--fancy Maud Falconer earning her own living!--and she laughs. "She could teach music or fancy work, or go out as governess. Is there nothing I can do?"

She takes a week to ask the question, and the answer seems to be "nothing!" Meanwhile the little stock of money has decreased with a rapidity that astounds poor Dulcie, who never had the management of the exchequer, and was unaware of the frightful growth of butchers' and bakers' bills.

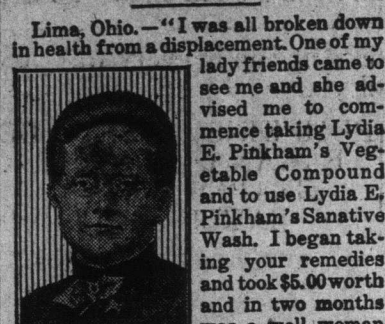
But, at the end of the week, she grows desperate. In her frequent wanderings over the advertisement sheet--that awful advertisement sheet!--in which young ladies are required with every accomplishment,

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to teach from four to six children for the wages of plain cook, in which the great world makes known its pitiable poverty and cruel wealth--she has noticed the advertisement of a certain registry office, which undertakes to procure situations for every kind of individual; and, in a moment of despair, she puts on a plain black bonnet and jacket, and drawing her veil close over her face, goes out.

It is almost the first time she has been out since she came home, and the streets seem very large and formidable, and the fancies, in her nervous state, that everybody is looking at her and remarking her; but she screws up her courage and enters the registry office.

It is a bare-looking place, with hard horse-hair chairs, upon which is seated a mournful row of similar applicants, most of them in black, and all of them looking hopeless and despairing.

At the end of the room a space is divided off, in which sits a lank-haired young man, writing with a scratchy quill pen, and apparently utterly oblivious of the other occupants of the room.

Dulcie looks round eagerly and nervously, and then approaches the mechanical individual.

The scratchy pen ceases for a moment, and the lank-haired one lifts a pair of watery eyes, with vacant inquiry in them.

Dulcie feels an awful lump rising in her throat, but she forces it down and says hurriedly:

"I saw an advertisement--"

"Quite right," breaks in the youth, in a lifeless kind of way. "Looking for a situation. Please fill in this form," and he hands a printed paper to her; points to a pen and ink, and a sort of desk fastened to the wall beside her, and falls to work again with the scratchy quill.

Dulcie looks at the paper. It is a cool and impertinently inquisitive composition; demanding to know where she was born, whether she has any parents, who and what they are, what kind of situation she requires, how many languages she knows, if she can sing and play, and if the latter, how many instruments? What her age is, and if she is prepared to supply a cash deposit, what references she can give, and lastly, as if this was a matter of the least importance, the amount of salary she requires.

She reads the lengthy list of questions down to the last, but she does not rush to the desk and fill in the form. If she wrote "No," "No" to all the inquiries as to her capabilities,

she would have to write "Nothing" as to the amount of salary she required; and she could scarcely hand such a paper back to the lank-haired one. So she stands, not pondering, but bewildered and overwhelmed for a moment; then she goes back to the table and lays the paper down.

"I am afraid it would be of little use," she says. "Thank you. Good-morning," and she turns to beat a hasty retreat.

As she reaches the door it opens from the outside, and a lady enters. She is a little, fashionably dressed old lady, with a palpable wig, and a beautiful color, as palpably artificial as her hair; and she wears a gold eyeglass, which barely conceals a pair of sharp gray eyes that seem to take in the whole office at a glance. A footman has opened the door for her, and out in the street stands a handsome carriage and pair.

The entrance of this lady gives Dulcie time to think. After all, perhaps, she is unwise in beating so hasty a retreat. There are other positions than that of a governess. She will wait until the fashionable individual has done her business, and attack the clerk again. And she sits down on one of the horse-hair chairs. Just at this moment a change seems to have come over him, effected apparently by the appearance of the new-comer; for he lays down his pen, rises with greater celerity than Dulcie would have thought possible, and unbends his stiff neck with a series of bows, accompanied by a sickly smile.

"Oh, good-morning," says the lady. "I've come about the last young person--young lady, I suppose she'd call herself! She wouldn't do at all--not at all!"

"I am very sorry, my lady," says the clerk with remorse and grief depicted on his countenance. "Er--"

"What was the matter with her, you mean?" says the lady sharply. "Well, a good many things, but the worst was a habit she had of reading through her nose. If there is one thing I detest more than another it is to read to with a twang."

"Indeed! Dear me, did she really, my lady?" commiserates the youth. "We are very sorry. If we had known--"

"But you don't know; that's just it," says her ladyship, adjusting her eyeglass and peering at him sharply, and with something like a sarcastic triumph. "You don't know anything about it. You wouldn't know if they were blind, or had a wooden leg. The one you sent me before the last had a wooden leg, you know."

As she speaks she looks round the room, and down the row of dismal faces, and as she comes to Dulcie's she is in time to catch the half sad, half-amused smile which, for a moment, flickers on the beautiful face.

Her sharp, piercing eyes catch the smile in an instant, and they rest on her face with a look of inquiry. But she turns to the desk again, where the clerk is examining the list of applicants.

"Well?" she says.

"I am afraid, my lady," he begins, apologetically.

"You haven't any one to suit me," says her ladyship. "Very well, I daresay I shall manage to exist without one for a time," and without a farewell of any description she walks away; but to Dulcie's sudden alarm, stops right in front of her, and examines her keenly through her glasses.

The examination does not take a second, but it is long enough to fetch the crimson to Dulcie's face, and to cause her to draw her veil still more closely over it.

But the little haughty action, instead of daunting the examiner, seems to gratify her, for she says:

"I beg your pardon, my dear; I am afraid I was very rude."

This is enough for Dulcie, whom a kind word melts in a moment. With a quick movement of the hand she puts up her veil and smiles up at the keen eyes.

"Do not apologise," she says; "I don't think you meant to be rude." As the veil rises, the old lady utters a little exclamation of surprise and admiration, which she tries to conceal with a cough.

"No, I didn't, my dear," she says;

"I'm very near-sighted and very absent-minded."

"I suppose," says Dulcie, with a faint little flush of her old spirit, "you thought you were at Madame Tussaud's, and that I was a wax figure."

A smile of appreciation lights the keen eyes, and she nods. "That is very good, and it serves you right. And, my dear, you are rather like a wax figure, or you were until you blushed. There, don't be offended with an old woman who addresses a pretty face! And what are you looking for--governess or companion? It's no-use, my dear," with a shake of the head. "You'll never find one to satisfy you. Take my word for it. Go home, and teach your own children, or--with a quick glance at the girlish form--"be your own companion; it's the best way, and will save you a great deal of disappointment."

The idea that she seeks either a governess or companion is so ludicrous that it curves Dulcie's lips with a smile.

"I came here to seek a situation," she says, in a low voice, "not to offer one."

The old lady stares; then she beckons her out of hearing of the others. "You are not joking, my dear?" she says. "Remember, you have made a mistake!" and she holds up her finger.

Dulcie laughs softly. "Unfortunately, I am only too serious!"

"What situation do you want?" asks the old lady, after a pause. Dulcie looks puzzled.

"You want a governess, I suppose? You know all the languages and the rest of it."

Dulcie shakes her head. "I am looking for some one who wants a young lady who knows--nothing!" says Dulcie; with a smile of self-mockery. "I am afraid you will all me that I shall look in vain."

"You don't know French, or play the piano?" says the old lady, in a quick tone.

Dulcie shakes her head. "I suppose," with a pause, "you can read?"

"Yes," Dulcie smiles. "Yes, I can read, and that is about all!"

"My dear!" exclaims the old lady, taking her arm. "You are the very person I want. I hate the foreign languages, and I detest the piano. And if you can read--"

"And without doing so through my nose," says Dulcie.

The old lady grins and nods. (To be Continued.)

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St. John's, Oct. 27. Editor Evening Telegram.  
Dear Sir,--Through the columns of your esteemed paper on behalf of the Boot & Shoe Workers' Union, I desire to lay before the public the reasons which caused the members of the Union employed at the Newfoundland Boot & Shoe Factory to go on strike. We can assure you that for no light or trivial reason these men resolved to quit work this period of the year, and at a time when the common necessities were almost beyond their reach, was nothing less than a condition affairs bordering on insubordination--that compelled us to resort to other means to effect an improvement in our condition. We therefore pose to lay before the general public the facts and figures which support our cause for better treatment of the hands of the Company. We are confident that we have the sympathy and good will of the public on our side in our fight for fair treatment, for a wage that will enable us to support those dependent on us, and bring up our children as decent, self-reliant members of the community. It has long been an old proverb that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and modern reformers have embodied the principle that every worker should receive such a remuneration

## And the Work

