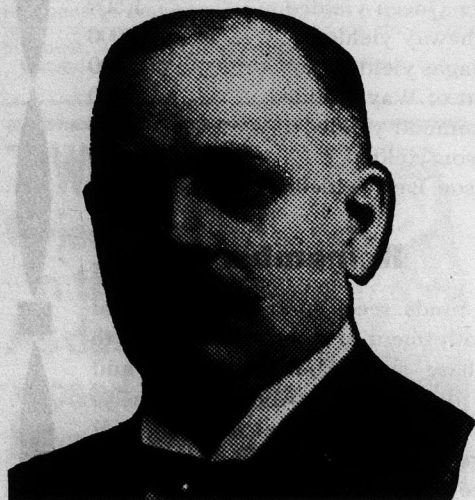


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dying to laugh, but knowing by Carrie's looks 'twas best not to.

"At that Carrie dives her head for the sofa-pillows like a duck after a fish. 'Oh, mother,' says she, 'it was awful, perfectly awful!' Then she commenced to cry, so I had to explain past happenings. 'I hate him, mother,' sobs Carrie. 'The ungentlemanly wretch!'

"Why, dear,' says Harriet, 'it was just thoughtlessness.'

"Thoughtlessness!' says Carrie. 'Well, he'll get over it with some other girl. Suppose it had been his own sister, mother; suppose it had been me, and it was me,' says she, a-ducking for the pillows again.

"But Carrie,' says Harriet, 'he meant it for a joke, John Smith might have done the same.'

"Never!' says Carrie, a-setting up as straight as a pine. 'Jack Smith is too chivalrous to shame any girl like that. It was he who got it, mother, and he couldn't have known it was mine.'

"Harold is so handsome,' says Harriet, kind of meditative-like.

"Handsome!' says Carrie. 'I wish, mother, you could have seen him as he stood there tossing up that bustle.' And with that she run up-stairs.

"Well, when I was in bed, Harriet come in soft-like, and she knelt down by the bed, kind of laughing and crying. 'It's a small thing, Eudora,' says she, 'but small things are what turn the scale in such affairs, for she never really loved him. I was often provoked at the extremes to which Carrie went in dress, but now it seems to have served its purpose.'

"Well, Harold Kent began to call oftener than ever after that. Sometimes Carrie would see him and

sometimes she wouldn't, and most of the time John Smith was there when she did.

"It wasn't long before I see how things was drifting, and one evening Carrie and John Smith went out to walk, and they took Mary Ellen along. When they got back they come into the room where Harriet and me was setting.

"Mother,' says Carrie, a-blushing and dimpling, 'I am Mrs. Smith now.'

"Harriet gets right up and puts her arms around John Smith's neck. 'Jack,' says she, 'I've known you ever since you first opened your eyes, and there ain't a minute of the time I wouldn't have been proud to have you for a son.' Then she and Carrie went out, and having a chance I see no harm in settling a few points that was a-bothering me.

"Mr. Smith,' says I, 'now that you're one of the family, we can talk on more delicate subjects than formerly, and I'm going to ask you a question.'

"Ask anything that you like, Cousin Eudora,' says he.

"Did you get that bustle?' says I, plump out.

"Did you know 'twas Carrie's?' says I.

"Well, now that you ask me,' says he, 'I believe I did.'

"Cousin Eudora,' says he, his eyes a-twinkling, but otherwise looking as sober as a judge, 'in answering that question I must depend on your discretion, for if my wife should know, I mistrust our domestic peace would be ruffled; but the truth is, that bustle was so all-fired big I knew at once it was Carrie's.'

"And now, folkses," said Mrs. Tuttle, laying down her knitting, "we'll have some tea."

Back to Lindy's

I want to go back to 'Lindy's—back to the old farm place,
Where the friends I knew were true as blue and poverty no disgrace;
I want to forget the sighing, the rush and the rattly-bang,
The whistle's toot, the rumbling cart and the car bell's noisy clang.
I'd like to go back a-roving in the drowsy afternoons,
And drown the sounds of the grimy town in an ocean of clover blooms.

I want to go back to 'Lindy's—back to the "Stub-toe land,"
Where it didn't take much of learning to make folks understand;
Where the grasp of a hand was rugged, but the clasp was firm and true,
And the eyes of the man behind them looked honest and frank at you.
I want to steal off at twilight as I did when the sun sank low,
And dream the dreams that were mine to dream in the hazy afterglow.

I want to go back to 'Lindy's—back thro' the stretch of years,
I want to go back to the boyhood track beyond the doubts and fears;
It seems but a step back yonder to the fields and the rose leaf rain—
A step in miles, but ah! the years—they're linked in an endless chain!
What little of spoil I've garnered, what little the world has doled,
I would barter it all, thrice over, to live in its sweet enfold.

I want to go back to 'Lindy's—where the white road winds away
O'er valley and hill and dale and rill to the rim of distant gray;
I want to get out in the open, where a fellow has elbow room—
Where he's never afraid to cross the street for fear he'll meet his doom.
Back to the fragrant orchard and the cool of the grateful sod—
For that was as near, I reckon, as ever I've been to God.



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