

But at last came the wonderful day, and everything was in readiness.

First, a forenoon of small explosive delights for the children—then, as the day waned, a dinner eaten outdoors, picnic-fashion on the grass, under the spreading trees, beneath the shadows of the mighty mountain-tops.

What difference if Ma's cake, crowning a perfect feast, had suffered a little in the frosting and its touching sentiment, traced in snowy lettering upon a bridal-white ground, *did* read

FIFTEEN YEARS OF MARRED LIFE.

It is sometimes one's ill-luck to misspell a word, and though a wedding-cake is usually large and this was no exception, the space was limited, and, besides, no one but Sam senior and Miss Lang noticed it anyhow.

A quizzical light in his eye, Mr. Slawson scrawled on a scrap of paper which he passed to Claire (with apologies for the liberty) the words:

"She'd been nearer the truth if she'd left out the two *rrs* while she was about it, and had it:

FIFTEEN YEARS OF MA'D LIFE."

Then came Cora's *piece*.

Her courtesy, right foot back, knees suddenly bent, right hand on left side (presumably over