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An Old Maid's Diary.

CHAPTER II.

WELL, I did laugh in my sleeve when Deacon Trim drove up to our door. I knew he'd been hangin' round widow Jones for a spell last winter, and folks did begin to say he was wantin' to finger her money, for he gets the name of bein' rather fond of money. Well, my sister-in-law, she jest showed him right into my settin' room when he asked for me, and of course, I couldn't help showin' him a chair, and she soon run off saying her baby was a-

cryin' and so I talked about the weather a bit. He was mighty good-natured, and admired my flowers, for I had fuchsias and geraniums in the windows, and sweet Williams, and roses and peonies outside.

"You seem so comfortable here, Miss Benjamin, there's no need of you gettin' married," he says.

"Who said I was gettin' married?" I asked

"No one," he said, "but it's not impossible. Such a smart woman as you, might get a husband any day."

"I a'pose so, if I was lookin' for one and would take any leavin'," says I.

Deacon looked confused and said, "'Twouldn't be necessary in my case," and tried to change the

subject, but I had something on my mind and watched a chance to come at it.

"Are you fond of strawberries, Miss Benjamin?" I had to say "yes," and he chimed in, "Well, my Lottie thinks a heap of you for a Sunday school teacher, and she's set on havin' you come out to tea while strawberries are ripe. Little Minta has asked her school-teacher to come over and Lottie said you should come too. Any day you set, I suppose 'll do."



"Well," said I, "its very good of Lottie, for the child's got more'n she can do in that big house."

"Well, we've got Sally Brown you know, and she's a tarer to work."

"Yes, but there's too much responsibility for such a young girl as Lottie."

"I suppose there is," with a big sigh.

Then it struck me he might think I was speakin' for myself, instead of his sister-in-law, so I said.

"Yes, if she had an aunt that could overlook things for her 'twould be only right."

"Yes, I've been thinkin' of findin' some suitable person," he said.

I thought of widow Jones, and felt things gettin' serious, so I said: "Well, Deacon, you may tell Lottie I'll come this week. Let's see—to-day's Monday, washin' day; Tuesday is ironin' day I suppose, and perhaps Wednesday is bakin' day."

"I don't know," he said.

"But I do, you see. I don't want to make things inconvenient for them young girls. I'll come a Thursday if that'll suit."

"That'll suit," he said, and then I thought 'twas he and not Lottie as wanted me, but not to be uncharitable I held my tongue and went.

Well, I'd no more'n got my things off and walked round the garden with Lottie, than we saw Miss Davis coming across the pasture with Minta. I was just telling Lottie she could have a root of my peony in the fall, and that I had a young fuchsia rooted that she might have for the window. I saw

MASSEY'S ILLUSTRATED:

"WHY DON'T YOU ASK YOUR BROTHER'S WIDOW?"