

# Mrs. Betty Was Outwitted

There was a hint—merely a hint—of disorder in the old-fashioned sitting-room where the McGillivray were wont to take their ease in straight-backed chairs. Mrs. Betty McGillivray was distressed, since the joy of her life was to know that she was the pattern wife of the whole neighborhood. She boasted to none, yet always was the sense of her own importance as a shining example to matrons, young and old; before her, Mrs. Betty straightened a rug and flung a grain of dust from the rungs of a mahogany chair.

"Ladies have more provoking ways nowadays than was allowable when I was young," she muttered, "and this Joan has had her own way all her life with that foolish brother of mine, who must needs spoil his only daughter. And she must take it into her head to come down here on a visit, as if I haven't enough on my hands!"

When Mrs. Betty added that last clause she looked over at a pale, listless young woman stretched out on a lounge in the gloomiest corner of the room. When Mrs. Betty alluded to the troubles of life, and the crosses you'll get well I haven't a doubt of it," she said so strongly of purpose, so thrilling with life and vitality, and above all, "so sure that health and happiness tarried for her cousin's wife, no one could resist the influence. The first thrill of hope which had stirred Grace's bosom for more long and dreary months than she cared to count stirred it now, woke such desire and determination that her face shone.

"Joan," she said, "do you think I can do it? Tell me the truth."

"I know you can do it," was that dark-eyed maiden's firm reply. "If you promise to have as much faith in yourself as I have in you the thing is done. You've been taking for granted that your case was hopeless and haven't made half an effort. Remember this, impressively, "once you make up your mind firmly to get back all you've lost you're on the highroad to recovery."

"Do you believe in faith cures?" asked Grace, somewhat feebly.

—Joan laughed. "To a certain extent, yes," she said.

"But you spoke of having that great doctor see me, and—"

"I believe in doctors, too, to a certain extent. We'll get the benefit of both. You remember my cousin's cousin's reply to the universalist who assailed the good old Presbyterian doctrine and couched the idea of future punishment: 'Ye may be right, but again ye may be wrong. If there should be no bottomless well I'll be agreeably surprised, but I'll keep on the safe side, anyway.' That laugh of yours is music to my ears, Grace. And now for home and the hair-dressing."

Malcolm McGillivray, coming into the sitting room as the lamps were being lighted, glanced toward the couch in the idea of a pale, apathetic Grace, a gently fading flower. The doctor said she might never be better; his mother said of a surety she never would be better. They likely knew. It was hard. Nobody knew what he suffered, though his mother guessed at times. For one thing, he was devoutly thankful his poor Grace had all that love and care could give, for was she not in his mother's hands? Oh, blessed, blind belief of love!

"Here I am, Malcolm, in the big chair." Yes, it was his wife's voice, and surely that was her fair head with the little curls running over it in the old way, her face with something of the old brightness in it.

"Well, our little girl is better," he cried, and bent and kissed her.

"She was so worn out with excitement that she had to be carried to her room immediately after dinner, whereat Mrs. Betty shook her head knowingly, and remarked to Malcolm: "Grace can't stand much, poor girl! Unless she keeps quiet, than she has kept today I wouldn't be surprised to see her go out like a flash of a candle."

The fates were kind to Joan. Mrs. Betty's only sister, a wealthy spinster, took ill with inflammatory rheumatism, and Mrs. Betty received a summons to the bedside. It was a summons she felt she could not afford to disobey; besides, she had an affection for her own kith and kin. So, with many injunctions to her household, many dire prophecies that every thing would go to rack and ruin without her watchful eye, she set forth.

Then began the reign of Joan the strong-willed.

Her first care was to get the opinion of Dr. Robinette, the specialist from the orthopedic hospital. He was a little old man, with wonderful eyes, and a skill past understanding to ordinary mortals. He would not say that Grace's recovery was an assured thing, but he would do his best for her. But where was Mr. McGillivray? The doctor would like, before taking up the case, to talk things over with that gentleman.

"That is precisely what you mustn't do," cried Joan. "Dr. Robinette says the case is hopeless, the other village doctor says the case is hopeless, and poor old Cousin Malcolm hasn't a grain of faith left. We want, to appointing creatures," would-up Joan.

Malcolm unlocked the door and en-

tered. He came through the darkened hall without noting anything, found himself in a room heavy with the breath of American beauty roses, flooded with sunshine. This was some trick of Joan's. Yes, there she stood with a smile on her lips, and mischief in every dimple. He was angry in a moment.

"Joan," and his voice was stern, "what fool's play is this?"

"It's no fool's play," returned that pretty little dame, "it's a surprise party. The table is ready in the dining room, come."

He strode forward.

"Now for your little speech, Grace," prompted Joan, but Grace had forgotten all the pretty speech of welcome over which they had labored. She stood up trembling.

"I—I can walk again," she cried, and went towards him with outstretched hands. He took her to his heart. His face was white with emotion. "Can it be true, Grace?" he whispered. "Then they both looked at the familiar surroundings, the cozy, beautiful place, so dear to them, looked till their eyes glistened.

"Malcolm," she cried, clinging to him. "I've been so homesick—so homesick!"

"Please God, you will never be homesick again, darling," he answered. "Where is that blessed Joan? I want her to sing the doxology."

"We owe her so much, Malcolm, we cannot thank her enough," said Grace and called, "Joan! Joan!" but no answer came.

Joan was wending her way to the homestead with a light heart. The sun was shining, the autumn gold was everywhere, and Aunt Betty would be home the morning the morning the conversation would run on this wise.

"How do, Joan? Where is Malcolm?"

"Malcolm is at the house on the hill."

"And what might he be doing there at this hour?"

"Keeping his wife company. I knew from what you said when I first came that you had too much to do, so during your absence I took it in hand to cure Grace up and send her home to keep her own house."

"And this?"—Joan smiles to herself—"will be surprise party number two"—Joan Brewitt.

As for Grace, she grows more unlike herself every day. "It muttered "I don't know how it is, but a wall seems built up between us. She cares so little for anything—or anybody—nowadays. Then Joan is always with her."

During the next months Grace progressed slowly, but oh, so surely. She could stand on her feet, could take steps with the aid of a crutch, finally could walk alone. She was growing daily so like her old self that Malcolm must have noticed it had been less absorbed. Health began to glow in her eyes and on her cheeks—the long-lost vitality to assert itself. Joan was so happy her song rang out through the homestead all the long, sun-filled days of the late summer.

The illness of Mrs. Betty's sister was a lengthy one, but one morning came the word that she was well enough to travel, and would accompany Mrs. Betty home in something less than a week.

Joan sought out her cousin that evening as he sat alone in the library, his head bent on his hand, an expression almost bitter on his handsome face.

"A penny for your thoughts," she said, with the friendly, confidential smile so few could resist. "You look as though you had been at a funeral."

"And so I have, little coz," he answered, "so I have, the funeral of some high hopes and happy hours. This afternoon I had an errand to the house on the hill."

"Oh, the pretty house on the hill! When will you be going there again?" Joan's voice was eager.

"Not for weeks perhaps. The visit today has given me a fit of the blues. I won't shake off for a while, Joan," with sudden earnestness. "It's a little hard—a little hard. I drew the plan of the house myself, and the days that saw it being built are the best in my remembrance, and now I'm contemplating the sale of it."

"You don't mean it?" cried Joan. "Why, if you had a bit of sentiment in your nature you wouldn't dream of such a thing."

"Business is business," he retorted. "But you are well off, Cousin Malcolm. Why—think so much about money? You have no son to heap up wealth for."

"Not the hope of one," with a grim laugh.

"May I have the key of the place? I'd like to go over, it once more."

He handed her the key without question or comment.

The following days were busy ones for Joan, and for sturdy Bridget, the domestic, sweeping, dusting, airing, washing, ironing, baking. The musty smell crept away before the sun, and wind that went flying through the long-shut house on the hill, cobwebs fell before vigorous onslaughts from Bridget's broom. It was glorious doing all this by stealth, and with the knowledge that the sound of Aunt Betty's wrath would soon be heard in the land. The place was so sweet and clean and homelike the day Grace was brought over that for very joy of seeing it again she cried all the while Joan was laying the cloth and arranging a dainty lunch.

"I've sent Malcolm word that a person who would like to live in the house on the hill desires an appointment here at one. He will come. The McGillivrays have strong business instincts."

"Here he is," cried Grace, turning pale. "I—I'm afraid, Joan. Do you think he will be glad?"

"Let him come, the surprise party is all ready for him. As for being glad, of course he will, though he mayn't let, on—Scotchmen are disapproving creatures," would-up Joan.

Referee Geogan announced that both men tipped the beam at 135 pounds.

## THE HAWKINS-QUEENAN GO

In Seattle Was a Delight From a Pugilistic Standpoint.

Seattle, Jan. 11.—Dal Hawkins won from Perry Queenan last night in a fight at the Seattle theatre that tried better's' soul. It is acknowledged by every member of the sporting fraternity present that the battle between these two clever exponents of the manly art was the cleanest and hardest that ever took place in a local ring.

The fight set in vibration many emotions. There were times when a part of the vast audience filling the theatre was yelling and cheering in the delight and others as silent as the tomb; times when both sides were urging the men on, times when not a sound was heard except the in-bred breath of some ardent supporter, hoping for the best, but fearing the worst. There were cheers and groans, whistles and cat-calls, cries of "foul" and answering howls to keep quiet. At the finish pandemonium reigned.

It was a thrilling contest, and Hawkins won purely on account of gameness and superior science and agility. He was up against the hardest proposition of his ring career, and before the fight was half finished he realized it. Defeat stared him in the face more than once, and today as memories of the conflict he has a sprained wrist, a puffed jaw and a cut lip.

There were a few who thought that a draw would have been fairer decision. Under the agreement of the principals, however, that in case both should be on their feet at the end of the twentieth round a decision should be given, the referee could not decide the battle a draw. He was forced to make a decision, and those most familiar with Queensberry rules are convinced that it was a just one, the same opinion being held by a large majority of those who witnessed the contest.

The fight was preceded by a vaudeville staid given by Edward O'Brien and his wife and daughter. They served to keep the audience in good humor until the principals entered the ring. Afterward Fisker Barnett, the "master of ceremonies" announced that James Geogan had been selected as referee, and Sam Robinette as official time-keeper. Jack O'Brien, of San Francisco, he said, sent a challenge to the winner of the contest.

Hawkins entered the ring at 9:30 o'clock. His seconds were Ed Barry, Nick Burley and Harry Monahan. Queenan did not make his appearance until ten minutes later. He was escorted by Larry Gleason, Mark Shaughnessy and Ed Dillon. Both men looked in the pink of condition, though Queenan's flesh appeared the harder. The Milwaukee man's face resembles nothing so much as that of a wooden Indian, and the change is so slight when he is fighting that it was a difficult matter to determine after the fight had begun when he was hurt by Hawkins' blows and when they produced little effect.

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