



⚠ Speak wisely may not always be easy, but not to speak ill, requires only silence.

## A New Year's Resolution

(New England Homestead)

IT was the last day of the Old Year, and Ethel and Alice Addison were on their way to the village, where the former taught in the grammar school, and the latter attended the Academy. They were pretty, well-dressed, vivacious girls, popular in the community, in constant request for church and neighborhood service, and having a very good opinion of themselves and their powers. This morning they were exulting in the fact that the morrow was a holiday, and therefore they would be free to carry out various plans of their own.

"What do you think?" said Ethel, as they walked along. "Dorina has been to father again about leaving home and getting married!"

"She has?" cried Alice. "What did he say?"

"What could he say?" replied her sister. "He told her that neither you nor I was able to take up the house-keeping now, and he couldn't possibly get along without her. It seems queer that she will persist in bringing up this subject over and over, when she can see, as well as anybody, how things are. It is very selfish of her, I think, to keep stirring things up this way, just for her own pleasure and Andrew's."

"I don't know about that!" said Alice thoughtfully. "She's kept house ever since she was eighteen—eight years, Ethel—and she's been just as good to us, and given us as much as mother could have done, if she'd lived, and I think if I were in her place, I should feel as if it was about time for somebody else to step into the gap, and give me a chance to do as I want to myself."

"I'm sure I don't see who there is to do it!" said Ethel sharply. "I certainly can't give up my teaching to keep house for father, and you aren't out of high school yet."

"I shall be this spring," returned Alice, "and—and Ethel, I can't see why it's any worse for you to give up a few of your years than it is for Dorina to have spent so many for us, or than it would be for me to give up everything, and tie myself down to housework at my age."

"If you feel it your duty to keep house for father, so Dorina can leave home, do it!" snapped Ethel. "I don't have my own life to live, and I don't propose to spend the best years of it drudging in a farmhouse kitchen. Neither, if you'll take my advice, will you! Dorina is just fitted for the place she's filling, and she will never be able to fill any higher position. She is much better off in father's house than married to Andrew Burns, and living in his shabby little cottage, and it would be a real kindness to help her to leave it!"

Alice was silenced, but not convinced. Ethel's superiority in years and learning, and her confident manner often cowed the younger girl

when she instinctively knew that selfishness was the real animating motive which controlled her sister. Moreover, her own self-interest was touched, since it was not only possible, but highly probable that if Dorina resigned her position, Ethel would rebel flatly against taking the vacant place, and she herself might be forced into it—and Alice loved good times and freedom, and hated hard work and responsibility! So she said no more on the subject, and they were soon chatting about something else.

### Dorina's Case

Meantime in the big farmhouse kitchen, Dorina, the older sister, was doing up the morning's work with swift, practiced movements, and as she worked, she was thinking bitterly of her father's refusal to permit her to lay down her home burden, and to marry her lover, Andrew, who had

already waited three years for her, and who seemed apt to continue to wait indefinitely. She had tried to give her motherless sisters a mother's love and care, and she had succeeded only too well. They had grown to feel that it didn't matter whether Dorina was disappointed or not, whether she got her share of happiness for what she put into the family, or not. It was the attitude which many mothers have to meet, in their children, but it was doubly unjust in this case, since Dorina had just the same girlish tastes as her sisters, and the same right to happiness that they had.

Her father's reason for refusing to release her was as selfish as those of her sisters. He knew that Dorina was far more capable than either of his other children, and he also knew that either girl to assume Dorina's duties, it would be a hard thing to persuade, so he took the easiest way, and clung to Dorina, and because she was meek and unselfish thus far he had prevailed.

"It isn't fair!" she murmured stormingly. "It isn't fair! the others ought to take their turn now; I've done my part! I've a good mind to tell them so. Not that it would do any good—her voice trailed off into silence, but the light in her eyes grew stronger and brighter as she worked on.

She and Andrew had waited patiently, perhaps far too patiently. Were they not entitled as well as the rest of the family to be a little selfish concerning themselves?

That night the entire family attended the watch-meeting held in the church vestry, the two younger girls going with their father, and Dorina, according to custom, with Andrew. On the way to the church, he was naturally eager to know how his sweetheart's request, which he had known she was about to make, had

prospered. When she reported the result, to his great surprise he burst out laughing.

"Why do you laugh?" he asked reproachfully.

"Mixed Associations."

"At something I was thinking," rejoined Andrew. "Let me tell you. The telling consumed the rest of the day, and all the night. I went the way to the church, and all the journey home, and kept Dorina standing fully ten minutes at the doorstep after they reached the farmhouse. When she entered the house, at length it was to find the two girls weeping over the base-burner in the living-room."

"I'm frozen and starved to death!" cried Ethel pettishly. "Can't you make some cocoa, Dorina, and give us a little lunch, before we go to bed?"

Dorina had anticipated the request, and had made some preparations to grant it before in the cocoa and cookies tempting supply of cakes and cookies and her sisters and their father gathered round to do them justice.

One of Dorina's talents, which was much appreciated by her family, though not properly even given credit, was her ability to cook extremely well. Neither of the other girls cared to practice that very important art, but left it to the older sister.

"What an inspiring meeting!" exclaimed Ethel, as she nibbled and sipped. "How ably Mr. Noble spoke, and how clearly he proved that every one of us should make New Year's resolutions, and then keep them! I resolved as he was speaking to be more unselfish and thoughtful for others this year, than ever before."

"What he said about being just to others impressed me most," chimed in her father. "I resolved to try to be more just to those with whom I have to do; to try to see the other side of things, as we say."

"I've resolved to be more hard-working and faithful in my school-work and at home," added Alice. "Dorina, have you made any resolutions?"

Dorina looked up from her cup of cocoa. If she had not been so over-shadowed and almost effaced socially by her younger sisters, she would have been called a pretty girl. Even as it was, there was something about her Quakerish demureness which attracted some discriminating observers more than the showier qualities of Ethel or Alice.

"I usually don't bother to make resolutions at New Year's, especially," she returned. "Every day I resolve to make it the best I've ever lived right through the year, but this year, I have made one brand new resolution."

"What is it?" asked Ethel interestedly. "For Dorina seldom spoke of matters."

"The older sister smilingly refused to tell and all their urging could not beguile the secret from her. They were finally obliged to retire for what remained of the night, none the wiser on the subject."

The next morning when, rather than usual, Mr. Addison awoke late, he was astounded to see a note tied upon the tea kettle handle, and he lost no time in untying it, and tearing it open. It was addressed to him, and the writing was Dorina's.

"Dear Folks:

"I wouldn't tell you what my new resolution was, last night, because it would have sounded so awful after the splendid things you had determined to do, and still, I really believe that my resolution will do more to actually help you to keep yours, than if I had said I meant to be more unselfish and faithful too."

"I can see how I have spoiled Ethel and Alice, and encouraged them to think of themselves first, by always being at hand to do whatever they didn't want to do themselves, and how I have prevented you, father,



In the Grip of the Frost King.

"The snow had begun in the gloaming, And busily all the night, Had been heaping fall and highway With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock Were crusted to their tips with snow, And the poorest twig on the elm tree Was ridged thin deep with pearl."

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