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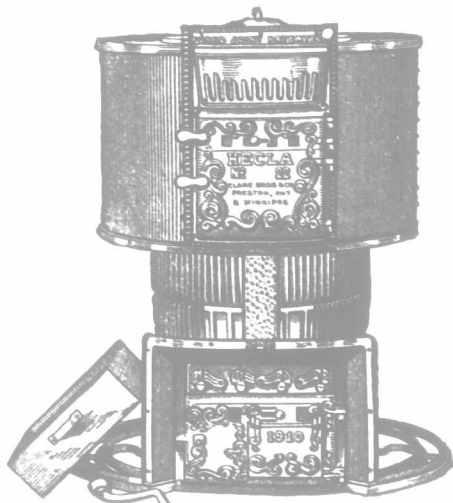
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WHEN WRITING ADVERTISERS MENTION THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

"I say give her a chance," said Rhoda Norcross quickly.

Rhoda never despaired of anyone. She said it was because she "realized herself."

"We'll put it to vote," said the president.

The vote showed a majority of three in favor of giving Bland Foyle a chance.

"Then," said the president, "some one must delicately but firmly make her understand that a club is not an institution for the glorification of one, but for the sharing of ideas and experiences and good times."

"There's only one way—to draw lots!" said Perley French. "That leaves the matter to Providence in a way, and you do feel the need of a special providence if you're going to try to help Bland Foyle?"

There was a dead, apprehensive silence as the secretary prepared a little bunch of slips of paper, one for each member of the club. On one paper, Alice Clay, the artist of the club, had hastily sketched a head; any one would have recognized Bland Foyle's head, tousled pompadour, aggressive mouth, and "tip-tilted" nose.

The girl who drew the sketch from the papers in the secretary's hand must perform the unpleasant duty of telling Miss Bland Foyle "delicately" that her ego must be subdued before she could become one of the Upper Tennessees.

There was a hush in the room as breathless as if the fate of nations depended upon the drawing. Everyone except those girls themselves was hoping that the lot would fall to Alice Towne or Rhoda Norcross, or to the president, whose social tact was unquestionable.

Sylvia was the fourth to draw, and after she had drawn proceedings came to an end, for the strip of paper with the sketch upon it was in her hand.

Sylvia of all girls! Some of the club looked simply relieved; some laughed; some looked deeply troubled; there are always such varieties of human nature to be found where there are fourteen girls.

It was always understood that the drawing of lots was a finality. The girl chosen by destiny must not even complain. But there was blank dismay upon Sylvia's face, and tears rushed to her eyes.

"I can't make her understand; she sees things so differently from other people," she faltered.

"And she has exasperated me so that I can't be sympathetic. You can't be sympathetic when you feel superior, and I can't help feeling superior to Bland Foyle."

"And the lot did fall on Jon-iah; O Lord, send me light!"

Minna Gage sang, with only half-mocking fervor.

"I know you won't hurt her any more than you can help," said the president more cheerfully than she felt. She wished that the lot had fallen to almost any girl rather than to Sylvia—down-right, outspoken Sylvia, with her hatred of shame.

Forwardly she echoed Sarah Endicott's assertion: "It's as bad, or as good—as blackballing her to have Sylvia for an emissary. This club will never be bothered with her."

Sylvia procrastinated a very unusual thing for her. It was within a day of the next weekly meeting of the club when she set out in the late afternoon for the ostentatious, old-fashioned house, with uncarved, once elaborate grounds, where Bland Foyle lived with her aunt.

Bland had gone out on an errand to the village, and Sylvia overtook and walked along with her.

"I'm the messenger from the Upper Ten Club," Sylvia said, plunging in desperately. "They—"

"I hope they understand that I never form intimacies," interrupted the other girl quickly. "I've just had a letter from an old friend who adored mamma so much. My sister is a great beauty, too. I think she is the most beautiful creature I ever saw except her own child."

Sylvia had been deceived several times a photograph of the girl, a commonplace little woman, shrank in plain than Bland, with a nose, not a large-eyed little girl. "I can't imagine any one so people. I hope the girls are not going to."

I went to see some people who used to live next door to us. The woman was an invalid, and I wanted to help her. But it was hard for me. I think they only cared for me because of my social position. Whether the pitcher goes to the stone or the stone to the pitcher it is always the pitcher that suffers. But my mission children are dear! I do so love children!"

"Does she?" or is it only a pose like the rest?" reflected Sylvia, while the weak chatter went on and on.

Two or three times Sylvia made a futile effort to stem the ceaseless tide of vainglorious talk. How was one to tell this self-satisfied little being that the girls could not fellowship her unless she reformed?

Sylvia observed, half-absently, a small colored boy with a little hand-cart in the middle of the street. He was apparently carrying home a weekly washing, and had perched his sister, a mite of happy humanity, upon the bundle in the cart. Dashing around the corner came an automobile, which the boy, his back turned for the moment, did not see.

Sylvia and the other woman screamed. Bland Foyle dashed into the street, thrust the dazed boy and the cart out of the way, and was knocked down by the automobile.

In scarcely more than a breathing-space it had all happened. The frightened, crying children picked themselves up unharmed; a crowd collected, as if out of space, as crowds will do, and Bland was taken up unconscious.

Sylvia went with her in the ambulance that carried her home. Her aunt was a collapsing woman, and Sylvia sent word to her own home, and stayed with Bland.

The doctors were grave over a fracture of the thigh-bone. She would be lame for life.

"Don't—don't cry! I'm so glad I saved the children!" she said, looking wistfully into Sylvia's face. The operation was over, and she had come to herself, weak and white and peaceful. "It didn't cost too much to save them, do you think it did? I'm small, anyway. I've heard the girls say so. But perhaps small things go when great things come; some philosophers say that. I know that if you girls do think I'm ignorant and uncultivated—O, yes, you do. I—I've had hard things in my life—more than you know. Sometimes people—proud people—try too hard not to show that, and—make mistakes. Mamma was—a very poor girl when she married papa, and she wouldn't let herself be put down by papa's mother; she just determined to be like—like what grand-mamma was, and more—more exclusive. It was pretty hard sometimes, but we never never let ourselves drop out and do things like poor people. By myself—well, I think I might have cared only for children and to live simply. But I've done as I was brought up."

"Then you were brought up to be brave?" interrupted Sylvia, for the doctor had said the patient must not talk. "May I bring the girls to see you? And I know they'll—they'll wish you to do us the honor of joining the club."

Sylvia's voice shook with feeling. The old, disagreeable, aggressive look came around the girl's mouth.

"I don't know about the club. I don't care to form intimacies," she began. Then suddenly she looked into Sylvia's tear-wet face, and her own changed, softening wonderfully. "Ask the girls to come," she said gently. "But I don't want their feelings to be hurt; tell them I shan't mind the crutches at all."

From her full heart Sylvia poured out the story upon the Upper Ten Club.

For a while not a girl spoke. Then Sarah Endicott was heard to murmur: "Human nature is very complex."

"Mine doesn't seem to be so," said Sylvia, shortly. "I was simply a coward! It didn't even occur to me to do anything while she risked her life. And the first impulse wasn't all; she is so strong and brave now. I don't believe there is one of us—not one—who would bear being crippled as she is bearing it."

"I think we'd better vote to admit her without conditions," said the president dryly, "and maybe we'd better not have 'Notless, oblige' for the club motto, after all. How would it do to have 'To understand is to forgive'?" Christian Echoes World.