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Peter-Peter Marries Ruth

By SARAH C. NEELY.

PART II.

The rooms were small but bright and homelike, the sun bringing out the rich tones of the oak. Ruth and Peter gazed curiously as she led them from room to room and finally into the library.

Peter saw there many things that he remembered as belonging to his father, and that he knew had been in his mother's room these past five years and must have been removed so recently that Peter had not noticed it. Aline Sanford, seating herself at the desk, smiled up at the picture and motioned to Ruth and Peter to sit on the couch facing her.

"But, Mother," Peter began, "who is going to live here? It can't be for us. We have ours all ready."

"I know, stupid Peter!" Ruth broke in on his confused amazement. "It's for Mother. She wants a home all to herself. But O Peter's Mother, I did think we could make you happy with us! I've dreamed and dreamed of it—the things that I could do for you—different things that maybe no one else had ever thought of, things just for you because you are you. I thought I could make you happy."

Peter went over and sat on his father's desk, swinging his long legs restlessly.

"This isn't fair, Mother. You let me think you were going to live with us." Reproach was in Peter's voice, the first reproach for her that Aline Sanford had ever heard from him. It was sweet to her for it showed surely how Peter loved her.

"Peter, I had to do it this way. Could I ever have persuaded you to let me rent this dear little house and make a home for myself?"

"No, you could not," Peter answered stubbornly.

"So I had to go ahead and have it over and done with before I told you, Peter."

Peter was silent. No one searching his face would have believed that Peter's broad smile lay hidden there.

"Did you ever see my rose over the porch, Peter?" she asked him coaxingly.

But still no smile from Peter.

"Take your long legs off my desk and go sit by Ruth, Peter-Peter," she commanded. "You're behaving like a naughty child."

For a moment she paused and the calm eyes sought the portrait over the desk and rested there. Drawing to her the strength of the man's face, she forgot the two on the couch before her. She had gone back to those first days when she and Henry started life together.

"Can't you see, children," she began, "that I must have a home of my own? Do you think I could bear never to sit waiting for you to come to see me? Never to have you come home to Mother's for high days and holidays? Never to have Ruth come and stay with me when Peter must be away overnight? Never to have the joy of hearing my own door open and Peter call out, 'Where are you, Mother?' You dear, foolish children, do you think I could miss all that?"

"Don't you see that this way there will be two lives for me? When I am hungry for folk, there will be your home for me to go to and mine for you to come to; and when I am hungry to be alone, I have my own little home. Then you two will begin your life together, just you two as you should."

"That's what made you do it, Mother. You know it is," Peter accused her.

"Hush, Peter-Peter," she said. "Never for one moment did I think that you and Ruth would feel that I was in the way. But I remembered when your father and I began life together, our joy and wonder, our struggles and heartaches and raptures.

"Even now, with other exquisite memories, that memory is one of my best rewards for work faithfully accomplished. I sit down to rest and say to myself, 'Now I may play back to those days when we were alone together before Peter came.' I even like to shut you out, Peter-Peter.

"When the years have gone on into middle age for you and Ruth, I want you to have memories of those first days together as I have mine, with never a third to dim their precious together-ness. As you grow older you will come to see what a vital part our memories play in our lives. Whatever else goes, nothing can take them from you.

"If it were necessary, Peter, if material things could not be arranged otherwise, then I would let you prove yourselves to me and I would try to prove myself to you. We would show all the world how gloriously happy such a trio as we could be. But I am glad it need not be. Disillusionment might creep in, little misunderstandings, needle-pricks that might mar the beauty of our love. This way I do not fear.

"I need a home of my own. Out of school hours I can potter about the house and do the homely everyday duties that keep a woman sane and happy. Living thus, I can almost dream myself back to the old life with your father."

At last Peter smiled his same broad smile but with new, thoughtful, understanding lines in it.

As they walked down the street to Peter's house, his mother's step was light and youthful. Peter was on one side, Ruth on the other. A week ahead gleamed the day when Ruth would call her "Mother." Would she love it as well as the dear "Peter's Mother" that Ruth used now?

Wondering over this, she smiled down into Ruth's face, and Ruth, caught in the same maze of that wonderful coming day, smiled back and, forgetful, breathed a low, sweet note that reached the ears of Aline Sanford in that one exquisite word, "Mother!"

Peter's mother answered the sweetness that reached her ears with that other exquisite, component note, "Daughter!"

For once Peter-Peter was not in the dialogue. He, the mighty Sum of the Universe to these two women, was marching exultantly toward the dreamed-of day and heard nothing of the magic words passing between the two at his side.

(The End.)

Dust shelves with red pepper and borax or powdered lime to destroy red ants.

"Father, didn't you tell me it was wrong to strike anyone smaller than yourself?" "Yes, Willie, that's what I said." "Well, I wish you'd write my teacher a note. I don't think she knows about it."

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Build for To-morrow.

"I would like to see the twelve-year-old boy I couldn't handle," the large, important-looking woman drew the attention of the entire car as she sniffed at her thin companion. "Catch me waiting till my man comes home at night to tattle on the children. I manage them myself."

"Yes, but you're big and strong. I never could lick Tom and he knows it."

"That's where you made your mistake in letting him know it." commented her companion. "You should'a kept him scared. My kids know they got to jump when I speak, and I never have any trouble."

The little woman sighed enviously as she gathered up her packages. "Seems as if they've all got out from under my control," she said. "I wish I knew what to do."

It seemed too bad that someone had not told her what to do years ago, so she wouldn't to-day be envying her friend who ruled through fear of "the broomstick." Needless to say, the twelve-year-old child who obeys only through fear of corporal puinshment in four more years is going to be incorrigible. And the mother who prides herself on the fact that her children fear her, is due for some pretty rough sledding in a very short while. For of all incentives to good behavior, fear is the least to be depended upon. Love is far more dependable, and self-respect even better. For the child who goes right because he would despise himself if he didn't, is headed straight for all time.

I sometimes wonder why it is that so many women seem ashamed to admit they do not know just what to do with the problems that come up to every mother. Certainly we are not all-wise, and why not admit that we are frequently puzzled as to just what is best to do in many cases. If it were only a question for to-day we could easily solve it by insisting on the child's doing the thing which would make us all most comfortable right at this moment. But all too often the most comfortable thing to do is the very worst possible thing, while the course which means most unpleasantness is the one to take if we are to avoid future complications. It would be an easy matter, for instance, to keep the furniture nice and unscratched, by making the children spend all the time in the kitchen or driving them outdoors to spend their time bothering the neighbors. But either course is not at all calculated to make them stick closely at home a few years from now, so the problem of unmarred furniture and children using it comes up for solution.

This is only one of the hundred and one things which puzzle the hearts of conscientious mothers. How to avoid the constant bickerings of brothers and sisters has turned many a mother's hair gray. Of course, you can peremptorily order them to be still, and they will for that time and while they are in your presence. But they may only step outside to finish the argument with fists, or an hour later start afresh before you on some other subject. How much better to find some way to work from within them, and get them to avoid the quarrels voluntarily.

Once in a while a solitary child seems to present no particular problem. He will be docile, studious, and thoughtful, obedient, kind—seemingly possessing all the virtues. But even he gives the wise mother thought for his very studious habits make it necessary for her to be constantly watchful that he give more time to play and outdoor life. So, even while allowing for great difference in temperament, the mother who claims that her children give her no anxious moments is either very ignorant of what a well-rounded life needs, or thinks her hearers are. Certainly real, live-wire, normal, healthy, average twelve-year-olds can make even the wisest educators sit up and take notice. How much more, then, must they puzzle a poor, half-prepared mother?

Don't be ashamed to admit that your children are sometimes beyond you. Your very admission may bring you help, by getting your neighbor's experience. But don't let your neighbor's boasting of her wonderful success worry you. He laughs best who laughs last, and child training is not for to-day, but for the many to-morrows. Twenty years from now you may see which of you has been more successful.

This Will Help You to Choose Pictures.

In a dining room the pictures should be conducive to happy thoughts. Cheap pictures and pictures of wooden looking fruit are not effective. Appropriate pictures for the dining room are "Spring," by Corot; "Autumn," by Mauve; "The Ford," by Corot, and "Autumn Gold," by Inness.

Pictures of general interest are appropriate for the living room. Here they should be conducive to deeper thought. Such as Burne-Jones' "Golden Stair," and "Spies," Titian's "Tribute Money," and Van Ruysdael's "Windmill" are desirable. Many of Rembrandt's and Millet's pictures are desirable, as are also Raphael's Madonnas. Landscapes are appropriate.

In the bedroom, one's choice may have free sway so long as the effect produced is restful. Family portraits and photographs of one's friends are appropriate, and any other pictures of which the person is particularly fond.

Pictures in the boy's room should stimulate him to patriotism, chivalry, spirituality, and industry, and should foster kindness to animals. "Hosea," from Sarbent's "Frieze of the Prophets"; "The Forge of Vulcan," by Velasquez; "Oath of Knighthood," by Abbey; "The Sower," by Millet, and "The Charge of the Light Brigade," by Butler are all good. Animal pictures by Bonheur are also desirable.

Pictures suggesting noble womanhood are appropriate for the girl's room. Madonna and mother-and-child pictures are especially fitting. Other desirable pictures are Reynold's "Age of Innocence," "The Strawberry Girl," and "The Broken Pitcher," as well as "The Dance of the Nymphs," by Corot.

Most pictures are best framed without a mat. The exceptions are a small print or etching and Japanese prints.

The color of the frame should harmonize with the color of the picture.

Water colors and oils are usually best in dull gold.

A flat moulding is better than one with a decided height at edge.

Frames should be lighter than darkest part of picture.

A picture with strong action, color, or composition needs a wide frame.

Delicate scenes are better in narrow frames.

Frames of bright gold with much ornament are not good.

Rectangular frames are better than round or oval shapes.

Frames of imitation circassion walnut are in poor taste.

The Reason.

The roses riot by her door
All through the summertide,
And down her garden's fragrant aisles
Uncounted blossoms hide.

(The secret of their growth I know:
It is because she loves them so!)

The childish hearts about her glow
Like flowers in the sun;
Her home is rich with peace like that
Of dusk when day is done.

(The hidden secret I have guessed:
Her home by her great love is blessed!)

THE HUMMING BIRD

Ecuador, in South America, Abounds With "Feathered Jewels."

Not far from the northwest corner of South America is the small triangular republic of Ecuador. It comes pretty near to being the least important country in that continent, but in one respect it is the most remarkable. Nowhere else in the world are there so many humming birds.

Humming birds mostly prefer high altitudes, and some of them are found nowhere else than along a belt of the Andes close to the snow line. Certain species are restricted to single mountain peaks.

The Indians of Ecuador, Colombia and Brazil make profitable business of hunting humming birds, shooting them with small pellets of clay discharged from "blowguns." These latter are weapons of great precision—long reeds deprived of pith—and do no damage to the delicate plumage of the tiny feathered creatures.

It is necessary for the hunter to know how to skin the birds; and he must understand the art of preserving the skins in order that they may reach the dealer in first class condition. They are sold to agents, who ship them to Guayaquil and other seaports, where they are exported to Europe.

London is the principal market, and in that city 400,000 humming bird skins have been sold at auction in a single week. But they are mostly prepared for millinery and other ornamental uses in France and Belgium—though in the latter country the industry has been interrupted by the war.

No white man ever saw a humming bird until after Columbus discovered America, this feathered tribe being unknown to the Old World. Tropical America has at least 500 species. The closer one gets to the equator the more numerous do humming birds become.

They are unlike any other birds in several respects. Their mode of flight is like that of a bee, their wings vibrating so rapidly (the rate is estimated at 500 times per minute) as to make a blur to the eye. Practically, they are unable to walk, relying wholly upon their wings for locomotion.

Their nests are built chiefly of plantdown, interwoven and strengthened with spiders' webs. In the forests of Brazil the "hermit" humming birds fasten their nests to the ends of long leaves, so that monkeys cannot get at them. The nests of other species resemble tiny hammocks attached to the face of rock or cliff with spider webs.

CLEANING BY DRY METHOD

A Simple Process That Can Be Done Cheaply at Home.

In earlier days every trade had its secrets. They were even called "mysteries," and were commonly handed down from father to son, generation after generation.

Nowadays there are relatively few of these, but among them is the process known as "dry cleaning." Odd, too, because it is perfectly well understood—except by the average housewife, who might gain much convenience and save herself no little expense by knowledge of it.

There are some things that will not stand washing with water. They have, therefore, to be "dry cleaned." Among them are furs, delicate laces and many other articles.

Mistress Housekeeper sends them off to a shop, whence they are returned beautifully "done up," but at a fancy price. The price is high chiefly for the reason that she is known to be ignorant of the inexpensiveness of the process.

Why should she not do her own dry cleaning? She can, if she wishes. All she needs is the very simple "know how."

A gallon of gasoline with four tablespoonfuls of benzine, soap and two quarts of flour, will furnish the essentials. Stir thoroughly and work the mixture well into the fabric, giving special attention to spots. Let the dirty gasoline drain off; then rinse in clean gasoline and shake well until dry, brushing out all the flour. She will then have a "dry-cleaned" garment (or other article), as satisfactorily treated as if she had sent it to a shop. But beware of fire. Strike no match and permit no open flame where the operation is going on.

Habit of Decision.

Most people who have succeeded in any direction of activity can trace the measure of their success to the habit of deciding things for themselves. One of the greatest temptations we have is to confide in others. By yielding to it we not only become a nuisance to our friends, but keep on lowering our own powers of resistance.

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