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is alta the party; and can be more utterly wretched? ta the people who have sty-especially when, like my they are of quiet going nderate means, and must let dance in the dining room and in the biggest bed-reem.

is after the party, and every the house was miserable. the party had not been for comfort, but they at least with the radiance of hope sticipation, while new nething at" dregs and bitterness," and of and get the house into order shwould have seemed rather a h any circumstances, I dare greatly aggravated by the were all in very low spirits, is henestly, in dreadfully bad arlog each and all a special Jour own.

palier and household consisted of himsy and, Mr. and Mrs. Gibse, first skipp pas, Christopher and Peter, daughters, Lattle and Saphy, Meg Merton, the orphan of vision my aunt's only sister. My died when I was eight years father, whese habits were by d's domestic kind, sent me to staring at me. ad all wed me to apend all my tohell lyin iny aunts; and, when he died bank of a lly turned good days were ever, my temperide in the became a permanent one. This pass quite naturally, and was t, in another inatter of course by my kindher balloen guins; and aunt Charlette, who ter it was regarded me as one of her own gerer seemed to suppose that she ering any particular favour upon Some one ting me a happy home amongst But I appreciated it, and ento preve my gratitude in every file. I was elder than Lottle and as the b ad left school before they did; wime very useful in the house. wlotte was of a nervous timid errer that and, as I happened to be selfand cool and decided, she seen or that the riy entirely on my judgment and and in a year or twe I was housenith uncome schief, and my advice was asked Hewever, m generally taken en matters beth great-indeed "Meg's advice" preverbial in the household. grew a little dictatorial, for wondered what they could have mout me. Chris was the only one at manage. the others as much as you like,'

iny, "but you shall never bully d semehow or other I never felt

eccurred amongst us now and nt on the whole, we were a very anily until the day after the party, "I have said, we were each and all My uncle was confined to his the billous attack, where he lay gad and the matising "that cham-My aust leoked very haggard se first came down in the morning, ther head ached badly; and her medid not brighten as she and I nted the state of the creckery,

nil never give a party again," she detly, but it was the quietness of "Nine champagne glasses breken, eries, and three of the best china ada great stain on the drawingrpet! We might have been enter-

is set of barbarians ." t to interfe a middle-as meepher and Peter, usually the mest aute of brothers, were now not en terms with each other, as my adlat breakfast time; and, instead g to business together, Peter linger-Thris had gone, and then started ive minutes afterwards. This uniness arese, as I well knew, because splish disagreeable Lendon belle, seme friends of eurs had brought tem to the party, and who had te-perately, but with maddening their coldness towards each

mity, with coth my deluded cousins. this morning. As for Lettie per, I wished, before the went, that they were not on speaki, ier they were nagging at each the time and finished just before with a dewnright spiteful quarrel; Their grievance two brothers, Tom and Harry Lier Little liked Harry best, and Last Tom ; and, with the usual conei mankini, Harry was desperate-1978 with Sopny and Tom with soit was usual, after every merrywe might have, for Lattle and twill out about them. I felt vexed handseme strybody ; bat I think I was quite married to being so, for they would all eday pre sin celieving-er saying they believat I was in love with ridiculous lawarth, just because he happened blive with me, and took care that see should knew he was too! I did teme of them at least might have and now this fine Landon isi appeared on the scens-sh, I exped to break another best china and all the remaining sherry-glasses Eight about it! And, if aunt had Dewn the state of mind I was in, she tever have trusted me to wash them put them away. Even our Newinideg seemed to share the general ld, nene diaction, and kept coming from his as far as his chain would permit mering leng and dismal howls. The tald that it was the sign of a death; te housemaid pers sted that it ferewedding I did net feel as if I cared which it was or what happened-

> and I had been up as early as this merning—we had tee much to lie in bed. Caris and Peter wanted their dinner at the usual and their luncheons-which they alwish them, and ate in a little back queruleusly. the chice—put up; and then when tarted fer business, we commenced investigations through the house. dined at six e'cleck, and it was that heur before we had succeeded the house to anything like order, and Sophy had their quarrel, better before merning,"

think I felt more inclined for a

than a wedding, especially if the

entailed a breakfast and another

in the midst of which Chris and Peter arrived. and we went to dinner

Caris felded his arms and put on a degged and determined look as be took his place at

"I breakfasted off cold fowl," he said gleemily-"I lunched off cold fewl-I refase to dine off it."

My aunt grew tearful again. "This is not cold fowl," she answered; "It is turkey, and you might eat it. Cold beef will keep a day or twe-fewls and turkeys, with sauce ever them, will not. But" -turning to me resignedly-"ring for the beef to be brought in Meg; we have had eneugh unpleasantness fer ene day."

"How is it there is a whole turkey left?" inquired Chris, somewhat melified as the beef appeared. "It was Meg's fault," replied aunt Char-

lette. "She put it en that dark shelf behind the cellar door, and I found it there this morning quite forgetten. But I wender Meg, you did not notice that there were only two turkeys at supper; this would have been eaten if it had been there."

"I did not have any supper," I said, "for I thought there would not be reem." "That is merely an excuse," interpesed Lettie; "you were spooning with John Howarth in the conservatory all supper-

I meant to look defiant, but I may have looked guilty.

John Howarth?" I said determinedly. "You shall all know exactly how the case stands and then there will be ne further display for stale wit at our expense. As Sophy suppeses Mr. Hewarth did prepese to me last

"Oh, Chris," Interrupted .ottle, "hew could you hit my cat in such a savage way? Come here Tip-poor pussy !"

"You should teach your cat not to stick his claws into one's legs at dinner time," reterted Caris; "then he weuldn't get hit." "He was not touching you!" returned Lottle warmly. He was begging quite inoffensively."

"He was sticking his claws into my leg," refterated Chris, with quiet and most aggravating obstinacy.

"New den't you two begin quarreling," said Sophy impatiently, "But let Mag tell us about Mr. Hewarth. I have eften read about proposals in tales, but I have never heard a real bona fide one described. Do tell us every word he said, Meg !"

"Did he ge dewn upon his knees? asked Chris. "Fer, if he did, I wish I had been

there to see him." "I shall not tell you whether he went down upon his knees or not," I answered calmly; "nor shall I tell you what he said. But," I added with sentimental meditation, "he said seme very nice things indeed to me-me-nicer than you could put tegether Chris if you tried for a hundred years."

"I can assure you I am not going to try, even for a minute," answered Chris giving ms a most savage look.

My aunt suddenly burst into tears. "This is the finishing blow," she sebbed -" Meg going to be married! I will never give another party as long as I live ! It was this time. I did it to please you all, and this is the result—furniture ruined, estables | am going to look at it." wasted, your father ill, you all quarrelling like this, and Meg going to be married! No, never another party in this house!"

"What-net even when Meg marries John Howarth?" sneered Chris.

"Ne, net even then," replied aunt redeubling her sebs.

"Well, den't ory, auntie," I interpesed, "for I am not going to marry him. I gave him a very decided 'Ne.'

Chris here gives a quick covert glance in my direction; after which his assumption of perfect indifference seemed to me a trifle

everacted. why the poer fellew ate trifle instead of appealing glance at Chris. fewl with his beiled ham, and never found out the difference. I thought what a curi-

ous taste he had." reached that state of mind when troubles | acted as any other man --- ' Here Peter

are positively preferred to blessings. "Saying 'No' to Mr. Hewarth will not | it after him, other wise the hat brush would buy a new drawing room carpet," she said, "or eat up all the tarts and custards and cakes. I am sure "-warming to her subject-" the waste has been shameful! When the confectioner's man came this merniag, I had not a single cake or jelly or blancmange to send back, for every one had been broken into! And I saw you, Chris, take just a speenful out of that expensive percupine, when a plainer cake already commenced was close by you."

"Oh, den't blame Caris for that auntie!" I exclaimed. "It was dene for Miss Jones, If he had the power, Chris would cut a bit off the Keh i neer itself if she asked him." "I would," said Chris; "she is worth a

hundred Keh-i neers." "Really!" observed Peter, aroused at last from the gloomy lethargy that had possessed him all dinner-time, and addressing Chris. "What a pity she dees not regard you in the same light! She teld me last night how she hated dancing with you, saying that you were so clumsy you were con-

stantly getting your feet on her dress." "Indeed!" retorted Caris. "She teld me the same thing about you

"I den't believe it," said Peter, "De you mean to say I am talling lies?" demanded Chris.

"Another quarrel ! cried my aunt. "Oh dear, dear, what will be the end of it all?" "The end of it all might be pleasant eneugh," I replied with energy, "if only every one of you would display a little commen-sense. I am out of patience with you

all I" "Well, Meg," said Lottie calmly, " you generally seem to consider yourself capable of setting the world to rights; se can you set our little world straight? It seems to me we are all miserable. What can you sug-

ges to make us all happy?" "Cemmen sense," I repeated—"enly common-sense. Take my advice and peace will be restered at ence.

"Let us have it then," said my aunt "Oh, let us have 'Meg's advice' at ence!"

net thought of this panacea earlier?" "I will commence with my uncle," I began firmly. " Let him-at least, make him -see the doctor te-night, and he will be

"That is good advice enough," said aunt, "and I will tell him."

"As for you aunt-go to bed at once and forget your worries. We will start a subscription-list for you, which I will head with five shillings; and, if the others give with equal liberality according to their means, you will be able to replace all the breken creckery and have the white hearthrug cleaned also.

"That is good advice too, and I will do my part by going to bed immediately," said aunt meekly. "I am much ebliged to yeu, Meg."

"As fer yeu, Peter," I centinued severe ly, "I think, instead of quarrelling with Chris about Miss Jones, you had better turn your attention nearer home. I knew poor

little Kitty Raynelds would nearly cry her eyes out when she get home last night, or rather this merning."

"You know more than I de then," returned Peter.

"Yes, I do; fer I am in Kitty's confidence, and you are not; and I know what Kitty said to me when she was going home, and you do not. And my advice to you, Peter. is make it up with Kitty, and leave Miss Jones for those who want her."

"Capital advice! But I never asked you for it, you see; so I don't consider myself bound to take it ;" and he went on eating tarte.

"Did he prepese to you?" asked Sophy at Lattie and Sophy, "make up your lities, which can be cured by Dr. Pierce's minds to the inevitable, and change levers. "I will put a step to this nensense about | They are twins, and so much alike you cannot always tell which is which; and I think it must be merely contrariness in you two to pretend you like either one better than the other; and "-with just a careless glance at Chris-" centrariness never pays in the end. So take my advice -transfer your affections quietly, and say no more about it."

Then I helped myself to some blancmange, and went on eating my dinner. "But you have fergetten me," observed

Chris; " pray have you no advice for me?" I hesitated a mement, then leeked at him defiantly.

"Well," I said, "I think the advice I have given Peter might also apply to you; instead of making yourself ridiculous about Miss Jenes, I think you might find some one to admire nearer home."

Then, owing to Peter's delighted "Brave Meg!" and Chris's steady stare I had a sensation that I had never experienced in all my self-pessessed life before-I think it was embarrassment—and I rese hastily from the table and left the room, presumably to see "why that deg hewled so." And Chris must have felt curious en the point too, for he also left the table and fellowed me to Nere's kennel.

When we came in again, Peter was standing in the hall with his top coat on, brushing his hat very carefully.

"Why, Peter," I exclaimed, "where are you going? I should have thought you would have been more inclined for bed than a walk. Where are you going?"

Peter leeked at us with a curious mixture of defiance and sheepishness in his ex pression,

"I am going to see Frank Reynelds," he said. "He teld me last night that he has again my better judgment that I yielded | a little terrier he thinks I shall like, and he said he would let me have it cheap; se I

"But," remarked Chris pitilessly, "you know that Frank has gone away from home to day, and wen't be back until Menday; and your journey will be utterly fruitless, will it not, if you find only Kitty in?"

"I shall see the terrier," muttered Peter, putting on his hat, " and shall leave word whether I will have him or not."

"Oh, I have no doubt it will be all right!" I remarked, with an innocent air. Peter looked at me, and then said-"What we the matter with Nere?"

"Oh—his chain—I think—his cellar!" I stammered, taken aback by the sudden-"Oh," laughed Lettie, "that explains | ness of his question, and ending by an

"Never mind, never mind!" cried Peter, waving his hands. "As you said, Meg, have no doubt it will be all right; it's But aunt refused to be pacified; she had | leap-year, you know, and Chris has only darted through the hall deer, and slammed

> have struck him. When Chris and I entered the diningroom, aunt was there,

"Your uncle has just seen the dector," she said, smiling a little as she kissed me before saying good night; "and, if any of the ethers have been as ready to act upon your advice, you can let us know in the merning I think we are all ready for bed te night."

"I shall have to sit up for Peter," said

"One of the servants can de that," said "No, they are all tired out," answered

Chris; "and I shall like to sit up, just to see poor Peter's bawilderment when I ask him what is the colour of the terrier."

"Oh, he wen't be bewildered at all !" I put in. "He'll answer in all simplicity, 'Plum-celored' er 'Navy-blue,' and then wender why you look surprised."

When aunt had retired, I neticed that Lettie and Sophy were busy doing something to their photograph albums, and, ebserving them quietly, I saw them exchange two photographs, I said nothing; but, when we all went up stairs tegether, they were merrier than usual, and quite friendly again.

Thus the day begun so dismally ended right happily; and its results were happier still-fer Peter and Kitty are married and happy new; Lettie and Sephy are whispering together about a forthcoming "doublewedding; and Chris-having also cendescended to take " Meg's advice " fer ence -has a wife who werships the very ground he treads on and he deserves it too.

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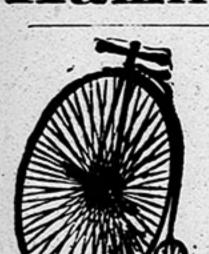
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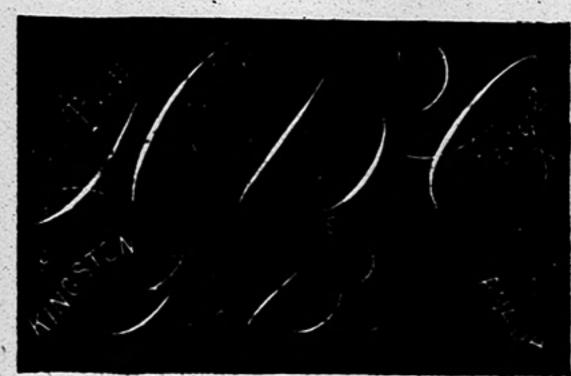
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