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A Chance to Begin Again

PART II.

During the afternoon she had a glimpse of poverty and hardship such as never before had come into her easy and well-sheltered life. She found that this elderly woman and the young girl were carrying on their little farm with only the occasional help of a hired man.

"No wonder the poor thing's hands are red and rough!" she thought, as she watched Alvira hoeing in the potato field.

The supper was simple, but well cooked and neatly served. When it was over, the elder woman hurried the dishes from the table to the sink.

"I'll do them alone to-night, Alvira," she said. "You get your dress and finish it up. Perhaps Miss Grafton will give you a few hints. You see," she added by way of explanation to Ethel, "there's to be a picnic to-morrow, and the dress and hat are for that. Alvira has been preserving and doing all jobs for the neighbors and saving the money for it. She's bought a beautiful muslin dress and—where are you going, Alvira? Aren't you going to finish your dress first?"

The girl had put on her hat and was walking resolutely toward the side door.

"No," she answered listlessly, "I'm not going to the picnic. I'm not going anywhere again. I'm going to lie and die right here."

The girl was expressless above the kitchen for some minutes. Through the open door Ethel saw Alvira cross to an apple tree, lean her head on one of its low branches and hide her face upon them, but she did not see the hot tears that were burning in the girl's eyes.

Miss Judd went on, mechanically with her work.

"Alvira is queer at times," she apologetically, "but there isn't a better girl anywhere. She's tired out, I guess. She's worked too hard earning that money. The reason she wanted to look nice at the picnic is that Miss Foss, who keeps the big dressmaking establishment over at Denton, has half engaged her to go to work for her. She has the name of being very particular how the girls look. She always likes to have them dressed stylishly, because it means customers for her. Miss Foss is going to be at the picnic, and she's to let Alvira know then whether she will want her or not."

"It would be a great chance for her," she went on wistfully, after a pause. "She can't stand this rough work. It'll kill her. She's the last of four sisters, and all the rest of them broke down and faded away, one after the other. If Alvira could get this place and learn the trade—" She turned again to the sink, with a sigh.

"Mrs. Judd," said Ethel eagerly, "I can finish that dress for her. Do let me! I sew very well, really. It's in the little room at the head of the stairs, isn't it? I can find it." And in a moment she was gone.

The room she entered was small and bare, and she looked about her with pitying eyes, for the poor little attempts at girlish decoration touched her keenly. There were a few bright pictures cut from illustrated papers and magazines. Some faded flowers held back the bit of muslin that served as drapery for the window. A cluster of white thistle puffs hung over the cracked mirror. The half-finished gown of snowy muslin was spread out on the bed, and beside it lay the new hat and a pair of cotton gloves.

Ethel promptly fell to work, and it was not long before the gown, under her skilful fingers, had become quite model of fashion in a simple way.

"It ought to have a broad frill of lace to finish the neck properly," she said at last. "I believe I've got some that will do." And she ran down to the lower hall, where the driver had left her trunk.

In a few minutes she returned with a mass of soft, dainty lace in one hand and a delicate, rose-colored sash in the other.

"There," she said with satisfaction, as she laid them beside the dress, "if Alvira doesn't get that situation, I shall think Miss Foss doesn't know her business. As for myself, I guess I had better go to bed."

Half an hour later, as she was brushing out her long hair before the little mirror, the door was flung open and Alvira stood on the threshold staring at her with wide eyes. In her arms she carried the dress, the hat and the sash. Without any apology for the unceremonious way in which she had entered, she crossed the room and held out a roll of bank notes and a crumpled ticket.

"Here!" she said huskily. "This is yours. I found it at the station just after you dropped it. I picked it up, and then I saw you and knew you must have dropped it, because you were the only person except the station master and me who had been there during the morning. But I didn't want to admit it. I kept saying to myself, 'Perhaps she didn't. I'm not obliged to ask.' And so I kept it."

Ethel was too thoroughly surprised to find words, and Alvira went on in a dew, hopeless voice:

"You see, I'm no better than a common thief. No Judd ever stole before, though we've always been poor. I don't know what made me do it. I suppose it was because I wanted the money so awfully bad. I don't mind going to jail myself, but it's Aunt Helen."

But Ethel had found her voice at last.

"You poor child!" she said, and throwing her arms around the other girl, led her gently to a chair. "Don't talk of jail or any such nonsense as that. There has been no harm done, and we'll never say another word about it to each other or to anyone else."

"It won't make any difference," Alvira interrupted, "if no one ever hears of it. I stole the money just as much as if I had gone into your room and taken it out of your purse. I heard you tell about losing it, and I said to myself, 'Well, what if it is hers? She's got a father who will give her all the money she wants, and she hasn't any aunt who is getting old and worn-out and who oughtn't to work much longer.' So I said to myself that I'd keep it. Then I came back here to the house and saw how you had been working to help me, and then it all came up before me how bad I was, and how nothing will wipe it out now, no matter what I do."

Ethel was an only child. She had always been tended and petted and was perhaps a little spoiled, but her heart taught her what to say to this other girl. It was nearly midnight when Ethel's door opened and closed again softly and Alvira went back to her own room, with the hat and dress on her arm and a new light in her eyes.

Five years later the small gilt sign that so long had borne the words, "Miss Foss, Dressmaking," was replaced with a large one that reads, "Foss & Co., Modistes." And Alvira is the "Co." Draped above the glass in the trying-on room is a faded, rose-colored sash.

"There's nothing in the world I prize as I do that ribbon," Alvira tells Ethel, who always manages to stop over for a day whenever she comes anywhere near Denton. "I'd taken the first step downhill, and your giving me that in the way you did was what pulled me back again."

LOOK FOR THE BEST

Talk happiness. The world is sad enough
Without your woes. No path is wholly rough,
Look for the places that are smooth and clear
And speak of those to rest the weary ear
Of earth, so hurt by one continuous strain
Of human discontent and grief and pain.

Talk faith. The world is better off without
Your uttered ignorance and morbid doubt.
If you have faith in God, or man, or self,
Say so; if not, push back upon the shelf
Of silence all your thoughts till faith shall come;
No one shall grieve because your lips are dumb.

Talk health. The dreary never-changing tale
Of mortal maladies is worn and stale.
You cannot charm or interest or please,
By harping on that one minor chord, disease;
Say you are well, or all is well with you,
And God shall hear your words and make them true.

—Ella W. Wilcox.

"The Woman Who Understands"

She makes no plan for you to fulfill,
The woman who understands;
She sends no unwished grist to your mill,
The woman who understands.
'Tis the thought she brings
That sings and sings
Into the heart of you,
Till it flows and glows
And finally grows
Into visions of dreams come true.

She sits and smiles from her easy chair,
The woman who understands,
And as she listens your plans grow clear,
The woman who understands,
She lays no claim
For heart or brain
To what she is giving you,
'Tis her soul's fine grace
Gives you strength for the race,
The race that makes dreams come true.

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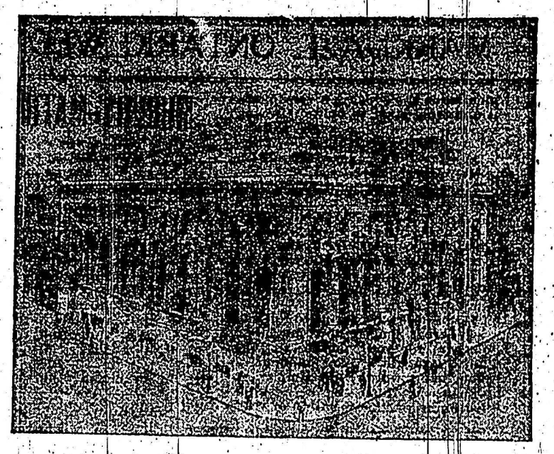

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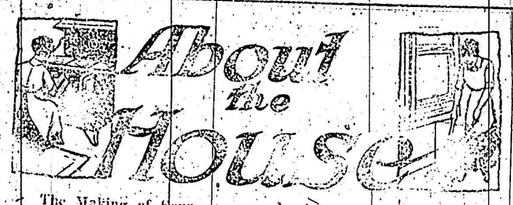

The Making of Soup.

"Have a plate of soup?" How often have you asked the family if it would have a plate of soup, after you had spent some time and material making it. Now I am going to tell you that the secret of true economy is the serving of a plate of good, palatable soup at the beginning of dinner.

When properly made, soup is a stimulating and wholesome dish that will add elegance to the frugal meal. It stimulates and promotes the digestion and prepares the stomach for the food that follows.

Each household, no matter how small, should have its stock pot, and into this pot should go all the bits of meat, trimmings and bones, together with the left-over gravies. A plate of soup should be served daily during the fall and winter, and at a cost but a few cents each week to make it.

How to prepare a stock pot—Get a pot that has a close-fitting lid and keep it for this purpose. The usual proportion is a one-gallon pot for a family of six. You will require one pound of bones to every quart of water, and one large onion, one medium sized carrot, one medium sized turnip, one fagot of soup herbs to every four quarts of water or less. Have the butcher crack the bones well, and then rinse them under cold water and place in a pot together with the seasoning. Add the required amount of cold water and bring to a boil. Cook very slowly for three and a half hours. Strain the liquid and return the bones and vegetables to the kettle. Set the liquid aside to cool and remove the cake of fat when it hardens. Now place this liquid in a saucepan and boil for one hour. It may now be used for stock, soups, broths, gravies and sauces.

Cover the bones in the kettle with cold water again and add any left-over gravies, bits of meat, trimmings and bones that you may have on hand. Cook slowly on the back of the range for four hours, and then strain, and to two quarts of this stock add one can of tomatoes, one cupful of diced carrots, one-half cupful of diced onions, one-half cupful of barley, one cupful of diced potatoes, one-half cupful of diced turnips, one-quarter teaspoonful of powdered thyme, two tablespoonfuls of finely chopped parsley, one tablespoon of dried celery leaves. Cook slowly for one hour for a good tasty vegetable soup.

How to prepare a fagot of soup herbs—Divide one leek into three parts and cut from the stem up. To this piece of leek add four branches of thyme, two branches of parsley, one piece of carrot, cut in a strip three inches long, two branches of celery, one small pepper pod.

Tie with a string and dry in a warm place. When dry put in a glass jar to be used as needed.

Many varieties of soups may be made from the plain stock with just a few minutes' work.

Clear tomato soup: To one quart of stock add one cupful of canned tomatoes, rubbed through a fine sieve. Noodles, macaroni, or any other vegetable may be added.

For clear soup: Add one cupful of kitchen bouquet and any desired sized vegetables to each quart of stock. When making cream soups you will add one cupful of potato to each cupful of milk and you will have a delicious flavored soup.

Stock may be made, filled in stoneware jars and then the jars, with lid adjusted, the soup may be processed for three hours in a hot water bath. Remove from the bath, fasten the lids securely and then to be stored in a cool, dry place. Where there is a fire burning in the kitchen it will not add to the success of soups, stocks, etc., for home use.

Watch the Pantry Shelves

This was seen recently on the pantry shelves of a patriotic housekeeper: One quart can with about a cupful of chow chow in it, not longer fit to eat, and one jelly glass with a few spoonfuls of jelly left to dry up and be wasted! All they on your pantry shelf?

This may have been a common sight a few years ago when all sorts of things were wanted and threw the remnants out, but now when every spoonful of food must be put to use to save humanity, not even a drop of jelly can be wasted.

The housekeeper argues that she canned so much fruit and vegetables she just couldn't find enough pint cans and small jelly and jam glasses. Her family is so small they grew tired of one kind of chow chow, or sauce, so

vegetable, before the can and just a little was wasted each time.

Here are a few suggestions:

Because you can, may be undoubtedly open the can. This will leave small portion, which you can reserve for a day or vegetable you the family will tire of being served.

Or you might carry extra tomatoes or peaches to be when you have to open part can. Some day perhaps with a [illegible] So it is not anxious to say, "Under no circumstances should canned fruit or vegetables be left to spoil."

Money was spent in canning, and when there are hungry mouths to feed.

Save the spoonfuls, it is worth it.

Plants in bloom [illegible] than those in leaf.

A pastured [illegible] about twelve gallons of [illegible] per cent. of which is average tree will yield over [illegible] sugar or syrup, and will do so for 125 years.

In planning for settling the need of screen [illegible] ractive objects should be in mind. On every farm buildings which tend to shabby or cluttered appearance, corn cribbs, the hog pens, [illegible] ery and repair shops, and of rubbish, manure and any

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