

UNCLE DAN'S PRESENT.

From the very beginning of our acquaintance Uncle Dan seemed to dislike me. You know he was Jack's own uncle, and when I was introduced as his nephew's wife he took my hand gingerly, muttered something about a butterfly and refused to congratulate my proud husband. That was directly after our marriage. I was dressed then as prettily as my means would allow, for having used my own hard-earned money for my trousseau I thought I had a right to wear the gay things that Uncle Dan appeared to scorn.

But the strongest material will wear out, and mine was no exception to the rule. Jack was unfortunate in business and I was compelled to be so economical that I could purchase only the plainest of dresses. As time went on things were worse; the family grew larger and our income smaller; we were forced sometimes to deny ourselves substantial food. Uncle Dan must have known how reduced we were, and, although he was a wealthy man, he never rendered us the slightest assistance. On the contrary, he often helped us to eat our last loaf of bread. But we did not expect anything from Uncle Dan while he lived. We knew that he loved to hoard his gold. Yet the fact that he was his nearest kin, coupled with the one that he spent considerable time at our humble home, led us to believe that we would be the heirs to his vast wealth.

One day Uncle Dan surprised me by asking if I would take a walk with him. I consented. Then he took me to a dressmaker's, who, without any orders from him at the time, cut to my measure a beautiful black silk dress. I submitted, carefully hiding the astonishment that I felt, but when we left the house I questioned Uncle Dan as to his reason for presenting me with so suitable a gift. "I want you to have one decent dress," he said, testily, "and I expect you always to keep it. Do not part with it under any consideration or I shall never again make you a present. Now get through with the trying on, and when the thing is done bring it home and talk no more about it."

In a few days the dress was finished and was really very handsome. Had it come in happier times I should have rejoiced in its possession. As it was Jack and I felt that it was incompatible with our surroundings. Uncle Dan always insisted on my wearing it on Sunday afternoons when he was around, and thus I grew to hate the pretty thing with its abundance of frills and flounces.

To our intense relief the old man one day decided to take a trip to Europe for his health. No sooner had he made this startling announcement than I resolved to sell that dress the moment he had really gone. And I did dispose of it, realizing more for it than I had expected.

In six months Uncle Dan returned more miserable than before, and shortly afterwards died suddenly at our house. Among his effects was found a will, and we learned from this that he had bequeathed all he possessed to a distant cousin, a person without a family and who already owned considerable property. My husband and I were sadly disappointed. Jack was worn out from anxiety and overwork, and we counted on something that would at least pay for the board and lodging that Uncle Dan had taken at our expense. The latter declared that he had drawn up a later will in our favor, but as no other will could be found, even though a thorough search was instituted, the property was turned over to a distant cousin.

A few weeks later a lady called on me. At first I did not recognize her, but she proved to be the seamstress who had made that black dress.

"Don't you remember the dress I made for you?" she asked excitedly. "Well, that later will is sewn up in the drapery. He got me to do it for him and made me promise not to tell you while he lived. He said if you cared anything about him you would never part with the only thing he ever gave you. If you did you would be the loser thereby."

Imagine my feelings! The dress had been sold to a dealer in second-hand clothing and was now probably beyond my reach. I took the lady into my confidence, bound her to secrecy and hastened to the shop in which I had left the silk dress. It had been sold and to whom the dealer could not remember. I had nothing to do but to hope that the purchaser was an honest person who would find the will and restore it to me. How distinctly I now remembered that Uncle Dan had charged me not to part with the dress and how bitterly I repented my disobedience.

Months passed on, and though I eagerly examined every black silk presented to my gaze, I failed to come into contact with the one for which I longed. In the mean time Jack's health had grown so poor that he was unable to do a stroke of work, and I was taking in plain sewing for our support. His eyes would fill with tears when he saw me thus engaged, and my cheery: "Never mind, we'll find that dress yet, dear," only half comforted him.

After awhile I was employed to sew for a very wealthy lady, and great was my astonishment on entering her room one day to find her wearing that identical black silk dress. I could not be mistaken; the trimming was unlike any other I had ever seen. I almost gave way to an exclamation of delight, but a sudden suspicion that perhaps the dressmaker had not spoken the truth checked me in time, and I decided that I would not be hasty. Why will we long for things, and when they are just within our grasp let them slip away before our very eyes?

The next day I spoke to her about the dress and asked her if she would give it to me to make over for her. "I should be glad to do so, but I gave it to a friend who went away last evening to stay several months. It's

pretty, but it got too tight for me. Did you like it?"

"Yes—do you know where she has gone?" I asked, my heart beating faster every minute.

"Oh, no, she's always travelling around from one place to another. She's a newspaper correspondent."

When I saw her the next day she asked, with a slight hesitation: "How did the silk dress fit?"

"The silk dress!" I repeated, in surprise.

"Yes, did you not open the bag of rags that I sent you last night? You see I found that my friend had forgotten, after all, to take the dress, and when I saw it still hanging in the closet I thought I would ask you to accept it. It would be so becoming and just about fit you."

I heartily thanked Mrs. Barr, mentioned that I had not yet examined the contents of the bag, and when evening came hastened home to at last lay my hands on that valuable dress. But stern, unrelenting fate was still against me. Jack had innocently sold the bag of rags, silk dress in the bargain, to a passing ragman. He bitterly reproached himself for not having looked into the bag before selling the contents, but reproaches were of no avail now, and all I could do was to look out for that ragman and identify him according to Jack's description: "Large, stent man, red beard and sunburnt face." The majority of junkmen seemed to be built on that plan, and I was several times greeted with such remarks as these: "What yer starin' at?" "Think ye'll know me agin'?" "Say, what do yer take me fer, misus'?"

Finally, I was positive that I had the right man. I grew desperate and called him to the house. Jack was now failing so rapidly that the doctor had said that only a change of air would save him and I determined to make a great effort. I did not ask the man if he had the dress; I inquired what had become of it. He pretended to be ignorant of my meaning, but I frightened him into confessing that he had given it to his wife. Then I demanded his address and immediately went there. A woman with a dirty face, and still dirtier hands, appeared in the doorway. I made known my errand. "Lor," she said, "it won't do much good now, even if I can find it. It was worn out long ago."

"No matter how much worn out it is, I must see it," I cried. Startled by my vehemence, she hurried away and soon returned with the tattered remains of what was once my beautiful silk dress. I seized the thing and felt among the drapery for the missing will. Yes, there was certainly something hard there, and I astonished the woman by paying her \$2 for the ragged dress.

It did not take me long to go home and open my bundle by Jack's bedside. "My poor dear," I said as I hurriedly ripped the drapery, "I have now something that will bring you health and happiness."

But Jack could not rejoice with me until the will was actually in our hands. Then he closed his eyes and I knew he was thanking God for his goodness.

The distant relative quickly relinquished everything when he saw this later will. Noble Jack offered him a generous share, but the man politely refused it and went on his way.

In sunny Florida Jack corroborated his physician's statement by regaining health and strength. To-day there exists no happier, stronger man than my husband. By the way, he wanted to keep the black silk dress a reminder of old times, but I insisted that it should be buried with all our past cares and worries.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

Two thicknesses of newspaper makes a good lining for apple barrels.

Lemon juice helps a cake to rise and does not interfere with the other flavoring.

A tiny scrap of cucumber rind left in the salad adds a peculiar pungency to its flavor.

To purify the air of a newly painted room put several tubs of water in it and it will absorb much of the odor.

For insomnia, pillows are filled with hop flowers and bulbs, or a mattress of pine needles will be found efficacious.

If feather pillows have an unpleasant smell place them before a good fire and let them have a good, thorough drying.

Finger marks may be removed from varnished furniture by rubbing well with a very little sweet oil upon a soft rag.

If a dish gets burned in using do not scrape it; put a little water and ashes in it and let it get warm. It will come off nicely.

An ounce of clove pink petals infused in three-quarters of a pint of pure alcohol, with a few verberna leaves, is a refreshing odor for the bath.

Paper quilts are becoming popular in Europe. They are cheap and warm. They are composed of sheets of perforated white paper sewn together.

The best way when hot grease has been spilled on a floor is to dash cold water over it, so as to harden it quickly and prevent it striking into the boards.

It is said that if the woodwork in the kitchen is kept constantly scrubbed with water in which potash has been dissolved roaches and ants will speedily disappear.

To avoid becoming a regular Niobe every time you have onions to slice, cut them holding the hands under water. They will be much tenderer if soaked an hour or two before cooking in warm salt water and sliced in rings instead of being split.

Corn starch is not used with yolk of egg and lemon juice for the skin. Laundry starch is always meant in toilet recipes, made with boiling water quite thick and the yolk and lemon stirred in when cool. It should be used at night, and a few drops of glycerine will keep it from drying too quickly and add to its effect.

Married His Own Daughter.

DISTRESSING DISCOVERY MADE BY A CHICAGO MAN.

CHICAGO, November 6.—Counsel was retained yesterday in one of the strangest cases ever brought to the notice of the public. The facts outdo those of any of Rider Haggard's novels and verify the old adage that truth is stranger than fiction. The lawyer in the case is James W. Drouillard, and the client is Samuel Clifton Willets, who asks the lawyer to decide for him whether a woman whom he married about two years ago is his daughter.

About forty-five years ago, according to the story told the lawyer, Mr. Willets was married to Miss Mamie Evans at Erie, Pa. He was only 17 years old, while she was just turning 16. They went to live with Mr. Willets' parents, and for a year they were happy. At the end of that time a baby girl was born, and the joy of the young couple knew no bounds. As time passed dissensions arose and quarrels were frequent. A crisis was at last reached. One night when young Mr. Willets returned from his work, his wife and little child were gone. Shortly afterward he heard that his wife had died.

Six years after his wife had deserted him Mr. Willets married Caroline Stevens, a young girl, whose parents reside in a small town adjoining Erie. In less than two years a son was given to him, but his wife was taken away. He named the child George. It grew and prospered in health, and when 17 years old George entered the employ of Harding, Davis & Co., wholesale hardware dealers in Pittsburg. In a few years he was sent on the road by the firm. In the meantime the father moved to Pittsburg and took up his residence with his son.

On Christmas night, 1860, Mr. Willets sat waiting in his apartments for the return of his son, who had been on the road for three months. Finally the door opened and the welcome visitor came in. He was not alone. With him he brought a young and beautiful wife. She was a Miss Helen Wright, and young Willets had met and won her in Cleveland, while traveling for the firm. Both her parents had recently died.

Mr. Willets took a strange fancy to his son's bride and as time flew on it was difficult to say which loved her the most, father or son. For twenty-eight years the couple lived happily together and old Mr. Willets seemed contented. On December 18, 1888, George Willets died, after a painful illness of six months.

A few months after his son's death Mr. Willets and his daughter-in-law went abroad. Singular attachment had sprung up between them and on January 18, 1890, they were married in West Kensington, London, England, by Wayne McLeonard, an Episcopal minister. Shortly afterwards they returned to America and devoted considerable time to travel. Much of their time they spent in Chicago, as they intended to eventually make this city their home.

A few months ago the possibility that he had married his own daughter began to dawn upon the mind of Mr. Willets and he was forced to believe that his wife was the little girl who had been born to him many years before in Erie, Pa.

Since then he has learned that his first wife, after deserting him, went to Cleveland, Ohio, where in less than seven years she married a man named John Wright. She brought her little girl up under the name of Wright. Shortly after her marriage her new found husband deserted her. She was left with her daughter and in a short time died. Miss Wright, left alone, sought employment and earned her living until she met George Willets in a house in which she was boarding, and fell in love with him.

Mr. Willets and his wife, or his daughter, as he now calls her, are living on the North Side. Mr. Willets said to-day that he had sent a private detective to Cleveland, Ohio, to trace the career of his first wife, and that he daily expected news from him.

Who Pays the Wedding Expenses?

Etiquette regarding wedding expenses is simple, but very strict. The groom does not furnish anything for the wedding excepting the wedding ring, a bouquet, and a gift for the bride; bouquets and simple tokens for the bridesmaids; *boutonnieres*, collars, neckties, and gloves for the ushers and best man, and a souvenir of the event in the shape of a scarf-pin or some other trifle; a carriage to convey himself and the best man to the church; the carriage in which he and his bride leave the church and house; and the clergyman's fee. All other expenses, of every kind, pertaining to the wedding, are borne by the bride's family. This is as it should be. If an elaborate wedding cannot be afforded, it is much better to have a simple one than to incur any obligation to the groom for a display. —From "The Modern Wedding Festival," in *Demoiselle's Family Magazine* for November.

James McCormick, of Seymour, Ind., will be 100 years old during the coming week, and his proudest boast is that he once had a conversation with George Washington.

The difference in women.

Some women are tireless in their home work. Some are tireless in their work for the church. They laugh, they sing, and are happy.

You remain at home broken-hearted, for you are utterly unable to make any effort whatever.

The horror of "Female Complaints" is upon you; you have that distressing "bearing-down" feeling, your back aches, you are nervous and despondent, don't care to move, want to be left alone, your digestion is bad, and you are wholly prostrated.

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