



He broke away from her abruptly and stood alone in the chimney.

...of timidity and partly of perfect ladyhood, and she expected nothing more from a punctorious sister; but there was a perfunctory in Missy's greeting that made him at last aware of her estrangement, and struck a chill to his heart.

...the next morning he rode over to his sister-in-law's place. He hoped to receive from Flora a welcome that should make amends for what he missed in his own home, nor was he disappointed.

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CHAPTER XIV. OLD GILBERT'S VOW.



Missy dictated.

When Gilbert returned, some time after sundown, he found Missy seated at his cabin door.

"Brother Nicholas is in Tallahassee," she announced in triumph.

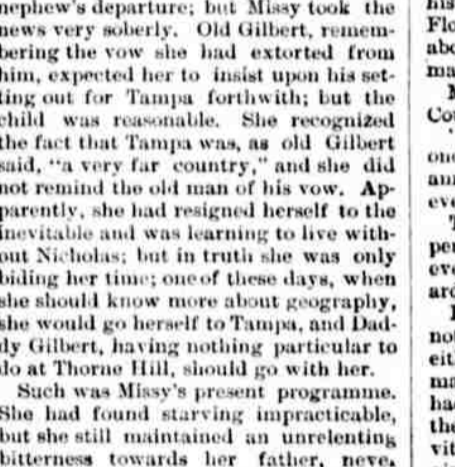
"De Laud! What dat you tell me, Missy? Nobody ter Eden, nur ter Sunrise kin tell whichever is Mawse Nick gone. Is hit fur a fac' he is in Tallahassee?"

Missy nodded, with a comfortable sense of superiority in the possession of knowledge that this old man had missed, though she had made a journey of thirty miles.

"You doan tell," she said, "and he is ill; dreadfully ill," whimpered Missy. "And I know he wants to see me."

"Laud! Laud!" ejaculated old Gilbert. "You got to carry me up to town to-morrow," said Missy authoritatively.

CHAPTER XV. PROTEST OF THE FIDDLES.



He broke away from her abruptly and stood alone in the chimney.

The colonel did not oppose this plan. He did all that he could, in fact, to expedite the work on the house by way of making a goodly sum of money.

"En' besides all dat," proceeded Gloria-Ann to her overwhelming climax, "you gwain be dressed so spruce en' gay; yo' cousins, Miss Lotty en' Miss Bess, in pink, en' yo' in a bebenly blue."

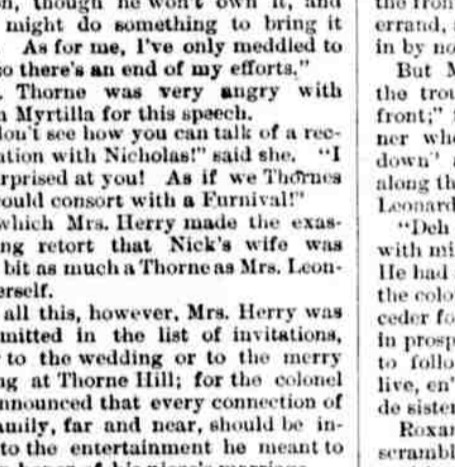
Poor little Missy, who was fond of dress, dried her tears and reconsidered her determination to abstain from the wedding festivities for her absent brother's sake.

But not even the companionship of Lottie and Bess, nor even the dress of "bebenly blue," nor the sound of the music, nor the sight of the mazy dance, could shut out the memory of Nicholas.

"Oh, Lottie, ain't them fiddles just dreadful!" she lamented. "They're always sayin', 'Nicholas, Nicholas, when's your brother Nicholas?'"

But the colonel said right. He deemed it inconsistent with his dignity to manifest any sensitiveness to the name of Furnival; and Miss White, ignoring Miss Elvira's suggestion, proceeded:

CHAPTER XVI. ROSANNA BELLETTA.



He broke away from her abruptly and stood alone in the chimney.

A few days before the wedding festivities Miss Elvira sent old Gilbert to carry a basket of cake to some friends four or five miles distant.

"En' besides all dat," proceeded Gloria-Ann to her overwhelming climax, "you gwain be dressed so spruce en' gay; yo' cousins, Miss Lotty en' Miss Bess, in pink, en' yo' in a bebenly blue."

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CHAPTER XVII. A CHRISTMAS FLIGHT.



Well, old man, what foolishness are you up to now?

Long did old Gilbert sit that evening in deep despondency over Miss White's report of Nicholas' condition; but remembering, at last, the money he had received for his mats and brooms, he drew from his pocket an old leather purse, clinking the coins and chuckling at the sound.

"Well, he ain't never goin' to be extry strong," Lotty reckoned; "but I'm to be compositely. 'Leastwise, he ain't the kind to get a livin' thouten niggers an' lan', Nick Thorne ain't."

"Now mind you set me down to the corner, old man, so's I kin get in round' the front. I ain't a speck ashamed o' my errand, an' I ain't the kind to go creepin' in by nobody's back door."

But Miss Roxanna White was saved from trouble of this kind by the "set down" a buggy was seen approaching along the private road that led from Mrs. Leonard Thorne's place.

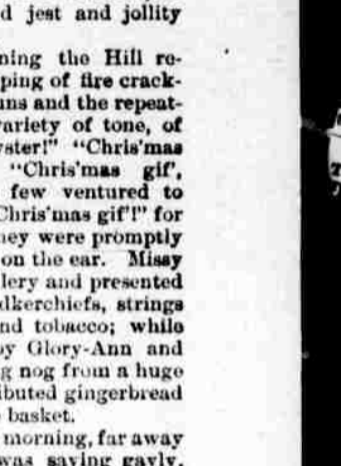
"Deh mawster, now," said old Gilbert, with mingled satisfaction and uneasiness. He had a burning curiosity to know what the colonel would say to this bold interceder for Mawse Nick, and yet he checked in respect of the colonel, that was likely to follow.

Roxanna White called a halt, and scrambled out of the cart to take her position by the road side, like an army drawn up for battle. She raised her hand as the buggy drew near, a signal for it to stop, and the colonel reined in his horse.

"Good evenin' to you, Col. Thorne," said she, in the high key of excitement. The colonel lifted his hat with stately politeness and bowed, but did not speak.

"You don't 'pear to know me, but I know you," said Miss White, the untroubled. "How do, Miss Thorne?" she nodded familiarly, even a little condescendingly, for she regarded Miss Elvira as rather a poor worldly-minded creature.

CHAPTER XVIII. THE COMPROMISE.



They compromise.

Germany and England have come to an agreement over Africa. Germany edges Somalia and a bit to England, and England cedes Heligoland to Germany.

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