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My Brown Merino.

BY BIRDIE BELL.

"DO you think it will look fit to be seen after it is turned?" I asked, holding up to the light my old brown merino.

Georgie looked at it rather dubiously, while I anxiously waited her decision.

"H'm—I don't know, Rose. I wish you would take my black alpaca. The merino will be good enough for me here at home."

"Indeed I'll do no such thing!" I exclaimed, indignantly. "Have all the pleasure of going away, and take your dresses in the bargain, leaving you to stay at home and wear my old clothes! I can't be quite that selfish, Georgie."

Georgie laughed melodiously. She always had such a pleasant, rippling laugh—it sounded warm and sunny, just like her own sweet temper.

"Now that's what I call straining at a gnat," said Georgie, with her ripe, red lips trying to pout, but quivering with smiles instead. "But here comes mamma. She shall settle the point."

Poor dear mamma turned her head, first to one impetuous daughter, then to the other, sighing gently all the while. But to my great glee, the decision was in my favor.

"I wish you could have another new dress, [dear Rose," said mamma, in her kindest tones; "but I don't see how we can manage it."

All this dispute may seem very trivial to the unconcerned, but to us, the interested parties, it was of the greatest importance. I was going on a journey—actually going to leave my home, and travel alone for the first time in my life. We, that is mamma, Georgie and I, lived on grandfather's farm, in New Hampshire. Mamma had a friend named Mrs. Wharton, who had been living in Boston for many years, and she had written to mamma, begging that one of her daughters might pay her a long visit. Great was the debating as to which should accept the invitation. Georgie insisted that it was my prerogative, as I was Mrs. Wharton's namesake. I rather think our new minister had something to do in making Georgie so persistently refuse to go; for good and kind as Georgie was, she had never been so kind in the Sunday-school and Dorcas, until young Mr. Partridge beamed upon us, with bright, black eyes. However, it won't do to tell her secret without special permission.

Mamma had given me a new gray poplin for Sundays and visiting, I had also a white muslin for evenings in case I should go to any parties. These, with my two morning wrappers, were considered a very good outfit. Georgie had generously insisted on my taking her new sash along with my own; and, as I said at the beginning of my story, wanted me also to have her new black alpaca, her own best dress, and leave my brown merino—my last winter's garment—for her to wear on Sundays. But Georgie was the soul generosity, and would beggar herself to do one a kindness.

After much twisting and turning, and discussion as to trimmings, my wardrobe was considered finished and presentable, and I embarked on my journey. The ride was one long delight, for my passionate love of traveling had hitherto been very little gratified.

As I stood in the depot, at my journey's end, and looked helplessly around me, a tall gentleman, with a handsome brown moustache, approached me, and bowing with that easy and polished grace which only long contact with best society can give, said, in an inquiring tone:

"Miss Rose, I presume?"

I bowed in response, inwardly wondering if polite society required gentlemen to address ladies, on a first acquaintance, by their christian names.

"My aunt, Mrs. Wharton, has been unexpectedly called away from home for a few hours, and has given me the honor and pleasure of escorting you to her house."

My second reply was another bow. Again I was wondering who this nephew was. The gentleman looked at me rather curiously. Evidently he was beginning to think me dumb, so I found a voice to say:

"How is Mrs. Wharton?"

"Very well, indeed, I thank you, and looked eagerly for your arrival."

After we were seated in the carriage, which was far handsomer than my country experience had thought possible, the gentleman proceeded in his efforts for my entertainment.

"Do you wonder how I know you, Miss Rose?"

"Very much," I replied—not, however, without qualms of conscience, as I had really not given it a thought.

"I recognized you by your dress," he triumphantly responded.

I looked down at my brown merino, the subject at home of so much disputing, and felt an inward terror. Was the man a medium, a clairvoyant? Had he in spirit heard my conversation with Georgie?

"My dress!" I gasped.

"Yes, your dress. My aunt informed me that your traveling suit was brown."

"Oh!" I faintly ejaculated, inwardly thinking how very strange in mamma to write to Mrs. Wharton concerning the dress,

and feeling considerably vexed about it, so much so that the gentleman, judging from my flushed cheeks that the subject was unpleasant, pursued it no further, to my great relief.

Presently the carriage stopped before a large and handsome dwelling, and although I knew that Mrs. Wharton was in possession of a very comfortable income, I was not prepared for the elegance I encountered.

My poor brown merino looked sadly out of place beside the rich crimson furniture and splendid mirrors, and had not Mrs. Wharton's nephew made strenuous efforts for my entertainment, I should have subsided into that most forlorn and dreary feeling—homesickness.

"My aunt begged that we should dine at the usual hour," said the gentleman, after I had divested myself of my wraps, "as she was afraid she would not be able to return before eight or nine o'clock; the friend she has gone to see is very ill, in fact dying, and Aunt Lizzie will probably stay until all is over."

"Aunt Lizzie," I thought, "has she discarded the name of Rose?" I remembered, however, that her initials were R. E. W.

The dinner was charming; my appetite was good. I never had dyspepsia in my life, and I ate the luxuriant food, so daintily prepared, with an enjoyment that must have been quite amusing to my companion.

About an hour after we had sat down, while we were leisurely partaking our dessert, and discussing the rights of women, the butler handed a note to my *vis-a-vis*.—After asking me to excuse him, he opened and read it. The look of surprise and consternation in his face was simply appalling.

"Has anything happened to your aunt?" I timidly inquired, feeling, very uncomfortable under the scrutinizing gaze of his dark gray eyes.

"No, no—that is, nothing of importance—but I do not think she will be back to-night. But, Miss Rose—your name is Miss Rose, is it not?"

I put down the orange I was peeling, and looked the amazement I felt.

"My name is Miss Rose Terry," I replied, with as much dignity as I could assume.

"Yes, certainly—I beg your pardon—but, Miss Rose—Miss Terry, I mean—you will make yourself comfortable for the night—until my aunt returns, I should say!"

His confusion seemed very strange, after his late graceful self-possession; but, attributing it all to the contents of the note—alas! I did not dream of the information it conveyed—I endeavored to make the best of it, and told him not to be uneasy, as I did not doubt but that Mrs. Wharton would return early in the morning.

Books and music formed the principal subjects of conversation, during the few hours I passed with Mrs. Wharton's nephew; and so pleasant and agreeable did he prove, that I began to like him very much and quite forgot my embarrassment at remaining so long alone with a stranger.

At breakfast, next morning we chatted away quite like old friends; but when the meal was over my companion asked me to walk into the library for a few moments.

I complied with his request, made rather gravely, feeling a sensation pass through me that something was going to happen.

"Please be seated, Miss Terry," he began. "I regret that I am obliged to explain a very strange mistake and I beg your pardon for keeping you in ignorance through last evening, but, believe me, I did so only because I wished you to have a pleasant and comfortable rest after your long journey."

I could say nothing to this preparatory speech, for my heart was throbbing at such a furious rate I dared not trust my voice.

"My aunt," he continued, "expected a lady friend, named Miss Anne Rose, to arrive by yesterday, and being called from home unexpectedly, she commissioned me to be her escort from the depot to the house. She spoke of Miss Rose's traveling dress being brown, and hence my mistake in accosting you. The note I received last evening apprised me of my error, for in it Aunt Lizzie informed that Miss Rose, learning the illness of Mrs. Talmage, had arrived by an earlier train, and gone directly to the house of Mrs. Talmage, so that she might see her once more while alive. If you will accept my apologies for causing you this inconvenience and delay in your plans, I will be truly grateful for your forbearance, and will do all in my power to rectify my mistake as speedily as possible."

"What could I say?" He was so sincerely sorry, I could find no fault with him. With hot cheeks; I explained my part of the misunderstanding.

"My friend is Mrs. Rose Wharton. She lives on Charles Street. If you will—"

"I shall deliver you safely into her hands Miss Terry," he interrupted, "and will immediately order the carriage. But first I must thank you for your goodness in so readily granting pardon for my inadvertence."

When we arrived at Mrs. Rose Wharton's door, he turned to me, and taking my hand said:

"Miss Terry, you have shown me great mercy. Will you add to your favors one more kindness, and grant me permission to

call this evening and renew the acquaintance which although commenced under such untoward circumstances, has yet afforded me much happiness?"

The look which accompanied these words was so beseeching that my heart yielded, and I murmured an almost inaudible "yes," which favor he acknowledged by a slight pressure of my hand.

Mrs. Wharton and I had a hearty laugh over my adventure; and when he called that evening, she was completely charmed with both his manner and appearance.

The acquaintance, commenced so strangely, progressed rapidly, and, before my visit was half over, I had good reason to hug my old brown merino with a grateful heart for being the unconscious instrument in bringing me so much happiness.

I afterward had the pleasure of seeing Miss Annie Rose's brown suit. Need I say it was as far superior to mine as a brand new three dollar-a-yard material covered with expensive trimmings could be to a seventy-five cent merino, which was in its second season.

"Never mind said my lover, as I pointed out the difference; you shall have as many ruffles and flounces as you like hereafter; but this brown dress is simply perfect, it contains my Rose."

How he Shot 'Em.

During the season just passed an English gentleman, familiar with gun and rod, happened to be the guest of Recorder Hackett at the South Side Club, Long Island of which his honor is president. The Recorder himself is as certain to bring down his victim at thirty yards, as he is to "send up," his victim for thirty years, provided the criminal be sufficiently naughty. One fine morning while passing the piazza the noble Briton saw approaching an old negro having in one hand a rickety flint-lock shot-gun, and in the other some twenty odd woodcock. Accosting the African, the gentleman said, "Ah, my good fellow, that's a fine string of birds you have."

"Yes, Sah, dem's good birds and no mistake."

"Pray, my man, did you shoot them hereabout?"

"Yes, Sah, shot'em all round here."

"Ah, 'pon my w-o-r-d, that's v-e-r-y extraordinary. And did you" (pointing to the old gun) "shoot them with that singular instrument?"

"Yes, Sah, every one of 'em."

"And may I ask if you shot them on the wing?"

"De what?"

"On the wing."

"Yes, Sah—shoot 'em on de wing, shoot 'em on de head, shoot 'em on de tail—shoot 'em anywhere."

The English party turned away in disgust, and went to make certain inquiries of the Recorder.

Two Curious Needles.

The King of Prussia recently visited a needle manufactory in his kingdom, in order to see what machinery, combined with the human hand, could produce. He was shown a number of superfine needles, thousands of which together did not weigh half an ounce, and marvelled how such minute objects could be pierced with an eye. But he was to see in this respect even something still finer and more perfect could be created. The borer—that is, the workman whose business it is to bore the eyes in these needles—asked for a hair from the monarch's head. It was readily given, and with a smile he placed it at once under the boring-machine, turned a hole in it with the greatest care, furnished it with a thread and then handed the singular needle to the astonished King.

The second curious needle is in the possession of Queen Victoria. It was made at the celebrated needle manufactory at Reddich, and represents the column of Trajan in miniature. This well-known Roman column is adorned with numerous scenes in sculpture, which immortalize Trajan's heroic actions in war. On this diminutive needle, scenes in the life of Queen Victoria are represented in relief, but so finely cut and so small that it requires a magnifying-glass to see them. The Victoria needle can, moreover, be opened; it contains a number of needles of smaller size, which are equally adorned with scenes in relief.

A Senator Moving by Mail.

The New York Tribune says:—"There are now in this city seven large wooden boxes received from Washington, and addressed to James W. Nye, New York. Public documents. Each box bears fifteen cents' worth of postage stamps, the sum required on each package or letter passing through the registered letter department. Until the abolition of the franking privilege on July 1, the franks of United States senators and representatives will be respected, so that these seven boxes cost Senator Nye for transportation from Washington to this city, \$1.05. Their combined weight, it is asserted, by those employed in the post-office, exceeds that of all the legitimate mail matter which has passed through this department during the past month. There is much conjecture among the clerks in the post-office as to the contents of the boxes. There are those unkind enough to say they believe the boxes contain a portion of the senator's worldly effects, and that he has taken this cheap method of securing their safe and speedy transmission from point to point."

A Landlord Sold.

CAPTAIN S. kept a hotel in the village of M. which—the hotel, not the village—was noted for its poor accommodations and meagre fare. One day a traveler came along called for supper, partook without complaint of the slender repast set before him, paid the half-dollar which the captain demanded, and went on his way rejoicing, perhaps. So far nothing remarkable. But in about a week the traveler did what few ever did during the captain's reign—he came a second time and put up for the night. In the evening, as usual in small towns, a crowd gathered around the bar-room fire conversing upon various subjects, when the captain began to complain of rats. They were the pest of his life, he said, and he would give anybody five dollars—yes ten—if they would tell him a sure way of getting rid of them.

A dozen remedies were immediately suggested by the loungers. One prescribed poison; another suggested traps; another rat-terriers; while the fourth thought the best way was to singe one and let him go to scare the rest into vacating the premises. But, no; the captain had tried all these methods in vain. The rats scorned poison, avoided the traps and whipped the terrier. As for the singeing process, the captain reminded the promulgator of that brilliant idea that old Mrs. Glass' for dressing a hare commenced with the important item, "first catch your hare;" and in this case it seemed necessary to begin much in the same way. The traveler before mentioned spoke at this juncture.

"If you will give me ten dollars, sir," said he to the landlord, "I'll tell you how to get rid of your rats without fail."

"I'll do it, sir! I'll do it!" said the captain, joyfully.

After handing the traveler the money, who insisted on receiving it before imparting the secret he continued:

"Now then, sir, what is your remedy for these pests?"

"Well, sir perhaps you remember that I came along here and took supper with you about a week ago?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you charged me fifty cents?"

"Yes, sir, that is my regular price. But what has this to do with rats?"

"I'm coming to it, I paid you for my supper, didn't I?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, all I've got to say is, just set such a miserably poor supper before your rats as you set before me, and charge them fifty cents a head for it, they won't stand it; they'll leave the house in disgust, and never come back."

Not a Bible Reader.

A few years since the staid citizens of Kennebec County, Maine, were amazed at the murder of a well known young man in one of the most orderly villages in the county. Circumstances that could not be questioned led to the arrest of a physician with a large practice, of a good family, whose reputation had hitherto been without blemish. The county attorney, H. W. Paine, had prepared himself to conduct the case for the State, but just before the trial a new State's attorney was appointed, who thought that this case would bring him into notoriety. So he, as he had a legal right, took the case out of the hands of Mr. Paine.

The new attorney felt that the former fair character of the accused would go far with the jury toward his acquittal, and asked Mr. Paine how he should get over that in his plea. "Why," says Mr. P., "you must cite other cases of a similar character. For example, there was Judas Iscariot, who had been on the most intimate terms with his Lord and Master, was one of his chosen friends and family, and yet he betrayed his best friend to his vindictive enemies for the insignificant sum of thirty pieces of silver!"

"Capital, Paine!" exclaimed the new State's attorney, slapping him on his shoulder, where did you find that anecdote?"

Trick of a Bride.

An aged couple were married in Hubbard, Trumbull county, O., on the 26th ult., and the younger male members of the community determined to give them a charivari. After giving the newly married pair a short specimen of their musical powers the bride appeared at the door and called for a parley. She tendered them a five dollar note with which to procure refreshments, on condition that they should make no more noise. This proposition was accepted and three boys, J. J. Burke, David Benjamin and Frank Collar, approached to receive the money.

The gentle bride, however, sprinkled them plentifully with sulphuric acid instead of greenbacks, burning them dreadfully about the face, eyes and neck. Benjamin has lost one of his eyes, and Burke will probably lose both of his, and if not his life. Collar was seriously burned, but will sustain no permanent injury. Great excitement prevailed over the matter, and there was talk of lynching the perpetrators of the outrage, but wiser counsels prevailed. The man and wife were arrested on two warrants each, and required to furnish bail in \$3,000 on each, for trial at court.

A Wisconsin jury found that "deceased came to his death from calling Bill Jackson a liar."