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The Dead Child and the Mocking-Bird.

[The following poem is in no sense a mere fancy. On the contrary, the strange, pathetic incident it commemorates actually occurred not long ago in the neighborhood of Jacksonville, Florida.] One, in a land of balm and flowers, Of rich fruit-laden trees, Where the wild wreaths from jasmine bowers Trail o'er Florida seas, We marked our Joannie's footsteps run Athwart the twinkling glade; She seemed a Hobe in the sun, A Dryad in the shade. And all day long her winsome song, Her trembles and soft trills, Would wave-like flow, or silvery low Die down the whispering rills. One morn' midmost the foliage dim A dark gray pinion stirred; And bark'd along the vine-clad limb What strange voice blends with hers? It blends with hers, which soon is still'd— Draver the mock-bird's note Than all the strains that ever fill'd The queenliest human throat! As Joannie heard, she loved the bird, And sought thenceforth to share With her new favorite, dawn by dawn, Her daintiest morning cheer. But ah! a blight beyond our ken, From some far feverous wild, Brought that dark shadow feared of men Across the fated child. It chilled her drooping curls of brown, It dimmed her violet eyes, And like an awful cloud crept down From vague, mysterious skies. At last one day our Joannie lay All pale and cold, forlorn; The sole sweet breath on lips of death, The fluttering breath of morn; When just beyond the o'er-curtained room (How tender, yet how strong!) Rose through the misty morning gloom The mock-bird's sudden song. Dear Christ! those notes of golden dulceness caught from heavenly spheres, Yet born from their marvelous cadence and tones soft as chastened tears. Is it an angel's voice that throbs Within the brown bird's breast, Whose rhythmic tangle soars or sobbs Above our darling's rest? The bird's voice—me once more, When stolen from Joannie's bed, That o'er, along the porchway floor I find our minstrel—dead! The fire of that transcendent strain His life-clords burned apart, And, merged in sorrow's warthier pain, It broke the overladen heart. Maiden and bird!—the self-same grain Their wedded dust shall keep, While the long low Florida wave Moans around their place of sleep. —Paul H. Hayne, in Harper's Magazine.

WITH THE BEST INTENTIONS.

There's no doubt about it the Robinson was a good fellow at heart, and meant well; but it's astonishing what an amount of trouble a man may bring upon himself by undertaking to much for his fellow-creatures. I don't suppose there was another man in our store that took the interest Robinson did in the different wardrobes of his fellow clerks. If a man got a new hat Robinson noticed it right away; wanted to know where it was bought, when and why, and generally concluded by saying that if the purchaser had consulted him he might have made a better bargain. And I've no doubt I would. Robinson would have made it point to favor him with his influence and experience, both of which were considerable. The same way with coats, openters, or boots, or anything! But, notwithstanding all this, very few of our clerks consulted Robinson in these matters; they generally bought their articles with a reckless indiscriminateness that was painful to a man constituted as Robinson was. It seemed hard, when a man took the interest in his fellow-creatures that Robinson did, that his mores should be misconstrued and unappreciated. I remember when I bought an ulster of mine, I disliked, for no reason or other, to see Robinson; I had a ridiculous aversion to telling him just where I got it, and when, and how much it cost, and what I did with the other one. It was a kindly sympathy on Robinson's part, there's no doubt about that; but it was wasted, as far as our boys were concerned. "Why don't the fellow and his own business?" they said. "What does he want to manage other people's concerns for?" So I was glad when he told me confidentially, that he was about to be married. I felt then that his interest would be so absorbed in the one fact that it would be impossible to refuse it all over the universe. Robinson seemed to have found a treasure. Of course everybody thinks so; but I knew that Robinson would know more, and see more, and be less likely to be deceived, than other men, and he had, as I supposed, gained the confidence of the family to which he proposed to marry. I was afraid his projected mother-in-law might object to some of Robinson's ways; but he told me he got on with her splendidly. I thought she was a reasonable woman, not altogether because she got on so well with Robinson, but from Robinson's conversation I imagined she must be very clever.

"The fact is," said Robinson, "we are mutually interested in the same topics. We sit and talk about domestic matters for hours together, while Anne thums over her new piece on the piano, and Mrs. Page has told me, time and again, if there's one thing more than another she admires in my character it's the interest I take in little domestic details that most men despise or hold in utter indifference. You see, Smith, marriage is a sacred obligation." "Undoubtedly, Robinson." "And requires study, Smith. I wouldn't have been a successful buyer if I hadn't inquired into all the little intricacies of our line of business." "You certainly can judge of a good article, Robinson." "Ah, Smith, the one I've secured now is beyond price. She's just the kind of goods a man wants to rest his eyes upon when he's tired of shams and shoddies. Annie isn't brought up to dabble and deceive. Her mother has taken great pains to inculcate in her daughter qualifications of mind and character that will make her a good wife and mother. Mrs. Page is an excellent woman, Smith." "And I suppose her daughter is like her?" "Well, no, Smith. She can't converse and reason as her mother can, nor has she her mother's appreciative qualities. Annie's mind is less astute." "Well, she's young yet." "She's as simple and pliable as a little child. I'm a happy man, Smith." I was delighted to hear him say so, and told him so, and at the wedding I expressed it as my opinion that his happiness would last. I was charmed with his wife. She seemed such a nice, jolly little creature, so unaffected and simple in her manner, and had a wonderful magnetism about her. She was as plump and round as a little partridge, with big black melting eyes and a pretty little mouth. I can't say I was so much drawn to her mother. She was a fine-looking woman, with a deep voice, and something very firm about the contour of her jaw. Mrs. Page had more of what they call character in her face than her daughter would ever have; but I haven't the admiration for a face with character that some men have. Robinson always said he liked that kind of thing, and he certainly had it in his mother-in-law. Robinson spent the better part of an hour talking with her that night, while I was chatting with his wife. I came away convinced that marriage must be a very pleasant thing, with a little wife like Robinson's, and my bachelor quarters looked exceedingly dingy and forlorn. I don't know how it was, but I took an extraordinary interest in Robinson's marriage, and was sorry to see a cloud on the matrimonial horizon before six months were over. "We've gone to house-keeping, you know," said Robinson. "I was afraid Annie would want to board at home with her mother, but Mrs. Page agreed with me it was better to build a little nest of our own. She took the kindest interest in everything, and wanted to go house-hunting with Annie and to help her pick out the furniture. But I had already secured a house, and bought the furniture of friends of mine in the business, who would favor me in prices. As to bed-linen, carpets and things of that sort, I got them here in the store at cost. In heaven's name, Smith, is there any reason why a man shouldn't hire his own house and purchase his own furniture?" "None whatever," I replied, "unless it may be that his wife desires the same privilege." "But she didn't Smith. Annie said she was glad to leave it to me. I took the dear little woman in my arms and kissed her, and felt my heart lightened of a very heavy load that somehow had rested there since my last interview with her mother. But Mrs. Page's manner is very unpleasant, Smith—very. I don't want to say that she accuses me of robbing Annie of any legitimate happiness, but she conveys some such impression to my mind, and it makes me feel like a malefactor. I'm so fond of my wife that the thought of depriving her of the smallest joy is misery to me." "Well, these little trifles will all come right, Robinson. It isn't as if your mother-in-law lived with you." "She's only round the corner, Smith. I thought of that when I took the house, that it would be so comfortable for Annie to live near her old home, and have the attention and advice of her mother. As heaven is my judge, Smith, I have tried to take every burden from my wife. I've opened accounts with the neighboring grocer, butcher, baker, and hired an excellent servant. I leave a generous margin for sundries, which I look into rigidly at the first of every month, and settle with the other accounts, when we begin again with a clear fresh record. A woman certainly ought to be happy when she has nothing to do but enjoy herself. I've even persuaded her to put all her little expenses down in my book, so that she knows where every penny of her money goes; and, as I said before, I take care of the household expenses myself. The servant comes to me every morning for orders before I go to business, so that Annie scarcely knows what she's going to have for dinner. Could a man do more than that, Smith?" "Perhaps he might do less, Robinson. I'm only a miserable bachelor myself, and know nothing about women; but the question is, if you're not erring on the generous side—if you're not taking too much upon yourself." "A man can't do too much, Smith, for the woman he adores." Just then a customer came in, and I

was glad to get away. Robinson evidently had the best intentions in the world. He loved his wife. He even esteemed his mother-in-law. I never saw a man work so hard in what he considered his line of duty, and so utterly fail to recommend it to others, as poor Robinson. But he began to be brighter and apparently happier. The anniversary of his wedding was close at hand, and he was interested in a gift to his wife. "I was puzzled what to get," said Robinson. "You see she's got almost everything, Smith; her wedding presents embraced so many little adornments and knickknacks. At last I hit upon a black silk dress—a woman can't have too many, and I can get a bargain down in the store just now. She said she'd rather have the money and buy it outside; but I persuaded her that would be foolish. So she's coming in to choose the trimmings this afternoon, and if she comes while I'm out you'll take care of her, won't you?" "With pleasure," I said. And it so happened that she did come while Robinson was away, and seemed to bring all the sunshine with her. I told her that her husband had left her in my care, and begged her to use me in any way that suggested itself to her; that it would be my happiness to serve her. I suppose there was an honest fervor about this declaration that impressed Mrs. Robinson. It had so happened that I was able to show her some little favors and attentions in return for the many that her husband had done for me. I had told her I was under obligations to Robinson. Of course I didn't explain that it was in his desiring to help me select my hat and coats and boots; it wasn't necessary to enter into these little details, but she understood that a natural gratitude on my part led me to send her in return a few little trifles, like bouquets, or new books, or music, or opera tickets, once in a while. So she knew the declaration of mine that day at the store, that I would be happy to serve her, came straight from my heart. "You are so good and kind," she said. Then all at once an eager wishfulness leaped into her eyes. "I wish I could dare ask you to do me a favor, Mr. Smith—a very great favor," she said. "Do," I replied. "I won't abuse your generosity." "Oh! I wonder if it will be right?" she said, clasping her little gloved hands, and looking up in my face with a charming air of indecision. "I wonder if I ought to do such a thing?" "The fact that you desire to do it is a proof that it is blameless," I replied. "I do desire it, ever so much," she said; "and it is perfectly blameless. I've set my heart on giving my husband a present upon our marriage anniversary." "Is that all, Mrs. Robinson?" "All!" she replied, tapping her foot with her parasol, with an air of vexation. She was looking upon the floor now, and a warm color burned in her cheek. "It's so hard to explain to you," she said. "I don't like to borrow money of mamma, because she doesn't understand my husband, and makes so many unpleasant remarks, and it's quite a large sum I want for the present. I'm afraid it will cost ten dollars." Here she hesitated, and her color grew more and more vivid. "Ten dollars isn't a very large sum," I said. I had decided now that she wanted to ask me to lend her the money, but didn't know how to go about it, and I was at loss how to help her. I had two crisp five-dollar bills in my vest pocket, but how to get them into her hand was a problem. In the meanwhile time was flying and Robinson would be back. "You understand my husband, Mr. Smith. You know how kind and good he is to me. He has told me how he confides in you. You must know he is the dearest, best of husbands." "Of course I do, Mrs. Robinson. We are like brothers," I said, with intense friendly fervor. "I hate even to deceive him for a moment, Mr. Smith. Of course I shall tell him afterward; but I want to surprise him. I wouldn't care to give him anything if it wasn't a surprise." "Of course you wouldn't, Mrs. Robinson. Any other way would be just how you feel about it." "And my husband is so thoughtful, he is so anxious to relieve me of every care, that he knows just where every penny goes; and, oh dear, it's too bad!" Big tears gathered in her beautiful eyes; it was too much for me. "I understand it all, Mrs. Robinson," I blurted out. "Don't fret over such a trifle as this, and I'll thrust the two five-dollar bills in her hand." She was on her feet in an instant. White now to her lips, and an awful expression in her eyes of reproach, rage, regret, heaven knows what and all. The five-dollar bills had dropped on the floor. "Good-morning, sir," she said. "I have been mistaken in you. Please tell my husband I could not wait for him." She was a little woman, but she seemed about ten feet high as she swept out of our department. Fortunately some foreign cases had effectually screened us from observation. It was some time before I could pick up the bills. I felt stunned, bewildered, and exceedingly humiliated and miserable. I had made an ass of myself in a way, and innocently outraged the feelings of this excellent little woman whom I was most desirous to serve. When Robinson came back he thought

it so strange that his wife hadn't waited for him. He wanted to know when she came, how long she staid; whether she sat down or stood up, or said she'd come in again, and if so, when. At last I was desperate, and went out into the street. Before I knew what I was about I was uptown, and ringing the bell of the brown-stone house that Robinson hired. The servant he had selected came to the door, and showed me into the parlor he had furnished. His wife came right down to me, and the moment she entered the parlor I saw that her good sense and kind heart had gained their own again. "Not another word, Mr. Smith," she said, when I began pouring out apologies and explanations. "I was myself to blame for it all. I wanted you to sell something of mine for me, and with the money help me to get the present at cost. There, now, that's the whole of it. If I had only told you at once, instead of beating about the bush in that way! But I've given up that idea, because he'd be sure to know if I parted with anything, he's so interested; he'd know if a silver thimble was gone. But I've hit upon another plan, and I'll tell you all about it, if you'd like to hear." "Of course I'd like to hear," I exclaimed. "You are an adorable little woman to forgive that stupid blunder of mine. I was so miserable to have offended you; and your husband," I added, for I thought I noticed a growing rigidity in her manner from the word "adorable," "we are like brothers, you know, Mrs. Robinson—twin brothers!" "Well, I'll tell you what I've decided to do, Mr. Smith. I had to take me into my confidence, for she's going to help me. You know I'm to have a new black silk, and it costs a good deal of money to have it made. Mrs. Jones, my dressmaker, wouldn't do it for less than twenty dollars, and mamma and I will make it ourselves, and take the money we'd have to give Mrs. Jones for the present. That will be really my own money, because I shall earn it—my very own. Isn't it a capital idea?" "Splendid!" I said; and shortly after I took my leave, thinking all the way down to the store what an amount of trouble Robinson innocently gave that dear little wife of his. We settled upon a dressing-case for Robinson before I left that day, and Mrs. Robinson and I had to go together to look at the different varieties of these articles, and I didn't want to choose anything in a hurry, and then be sorry afterward; and altogether it was astonishing how absorbed I became in the purchase of that dressing-case. I thought of nothing else. The anniversary of Robinson's wedding came upon a Saturday evening, and the next morning I was walking in the park, thinking it all over—how happy Robinson must have been when she surprised him with the dressing-case, and what a confoundedly lucky fellow he was anyway. I fell into quite a sentimental mood. I suppose the scene around me had something to do with it. It was one of those delightful mornings in May, when happy ripples run through the grass, and young shrubs burst suddenly into bloom and verdure. Birds sang gayly in the hedges and the air was full of a vague perfume. Some white-winged butterflies flitted by. I took off my hat. Though a little bald, I enjoyed the soft radiance of the sunshine. I began to understand how at certain seasons a man might slip into rhyme, or matrimony. All at once this celestial silence was broken by an advancing figure. It was Robinson—and alone. His head was bowed, his hat jammed over his eyes; the only part of his face that was at first visible was of an ashen hue. His whole aspect was one of unutterable misery and despair. "Good heavens, Robinson," I cried, rushing up to him and seizing his arm, "has anything happened to your wife?" "To my wife? Yes," he said; and I sank into one of the iron benches. I thought she was dead, and was relieved to hear the next sentence. Relieved, though startled. "My wife has left me, Smith. She's gone home to her mother." "Left you? Gone home to her mother? Why, wasn't last night your anniversary?" "Yes; that was how it came about; that was the way I found her out, Smith. She's deceived me—shamefully and persistently deceived me, and yet, miserable wretch that I am," added Robinson, sinking into the seat beside me, and covering his face with his hands, "I love her still." "You have deceived yourself in some way," I cried, naturally indignant and incredulous. "It is some miserable mistake of your own. I know that your wife is the soul of integrity and honor." "God bless you, Smith!" he cried, grasping my hand fervently. "Would to heaven I could believe what you say! but the facts are too convincing. Up to yesterday I was the happiest man in the universe. I went home early, and on my way stopped at Mrs. Jones', my wife's dressmaker, to see if her black silk was done." "What?" I shrieked. "Her black silk, you know," said Robinson—"the one I told you about. She said at least a dozen times that it was in the dressmaker's hands. I gave her twenty dollars long ago to pay for it, and I thought I'd step in on my way home, so that there would be no disappointment. That was perfectly natural, wasn't it, Smith?" "Go on," I groaned. "I went to the dressmaker's, rang the bell; Mrs. Jones came to the door, and

she said that she hadn't seen my wife for six months, that she never heard anything about a black silk dress. I was stunned, bewildered. I tried to persuade her she was wrong; she shut the door in my face. I hurried home, naturally vexed and indignant. My wife came to meet me, smiling and fond, Smith—it breaks my heart to think of it. I asked her about the black silk. Was it done? Not quite, she said. Was it at the dressmaker's? Yes. At Mrs. Jones'? And was it to cost twenty dollars? Yes; but why was I so troubled about it? "Because, madam," I cried, "you have deceived me; I have just stopped at your dressmaker's. She hasn't seen you for six months." "My wife turned pale, called to her mamma, and fell back into Mrs. Page's arms in a dead faint. "Mrs. Page then flew into a violent rage, and abused me shamefully. She used language, Smith, that it is painful to repeat. She called me a sneak and a petty tyrant, a spy and a miser. She declared that her daughter never had a penny that I didn't know when it was coined, and how she spent it; that Annie had no more to do with her own house than a Dutch doll, and the sooner she was out of it the better. She sent my servant for a cab, and before my wife had fully recovered she took her away. I have paced the floor all night, Smith. I shall never go back to the store again. I'm a ruined man—for there's something behind all this, Smith: my servant told me last night that my wife has been in the habit lately of seeing a gentleman, of going out with him and remaining a couple of hours; he is stout and dark, a little bald, and wears spectacles." I burst out laughing. "That's me!" I cried. "Look at me, Robinson. I'm the man!" Robinson glared at me in a dazed but desperate way. I saw that he was upon the point of frenzy, and hastened to tell him all about his dressing-case. Before I was half through, he had absolutely thrown his arms about me, and cried like a baby. "My mother-in-law was right, Smith," he cried. "I have been a sneak and a spy, and perhaps a miser." "You meant well, Robinson; but it's better to let women manage their own affairs." "It's better to mind one's own business," said Robinson. "I've been a miserable meddler, and deserve to be punished. Before heaven, Smith, it was with the best intentions." "I know it, Robinson." "But I'll never do it again—never! And now let's go after my wife—you and I can explain the thing to Mrs. Page. I don't wonder she hates me, Smith. Poor little Annie! What a life she has led! I wonder she remains fond of me." "Well, I can vouch for that," I replied, honestly enough; and I persuaded him to stop at home and tidy up a bit, get shaved, and have some breakfast. "That servant must go," said Robinson, savagely. "Let your wife hire the next one," I said. And just as I imagined, when we reached Robinson's, there was the dear little woman waiting for him. He fell on his knees at her feet and began his protestations. I thought it best to leave them alone together; but how exceedingly lonely and forlorn my bachelor chambers did look when I reached them!—Harper's Weekly.

FOR THE LADIES.

A Royal Bride's Trouseaux. The New York Telegram says of the trousseau belonging to the Princess Stephanie, of Belgium, married to the Crown Prince of Austria: It had been exhibited at the royal palace at Brussels, and the descriptions of its fairy-like materials, and the exquisite works of art in gold and silver embroidery and laces of marvelous delicacy, were most exciting. Amid all the bridal glories one table in the middle of the hall was heaped up with linen and household goods, which attracted the attention of the ladies. It may interest lady readers to know that the chemises are fringed with costly lace and with lovely bosoms of artistic workmanship. Then there were jackets, corsets, jupons, handkerchiefs, fichus, cravates and other most charming objects necessary to the feminine toilet. Near these were costlier presents of dresses and jewelry. The bridal dress was of the traditional cloth of silver, richly ornamented with embroidery designs representing oak, laurel and rose branches, intertwined with bouquets of orange blossoms, the whole, both for design and harmony of color, forming a robe such as connoisseurs declared was never seen before. The waist and arms were decorated with delicate silver lace, the train of the same material as the robe and embroidered to match. It was four meters long and four wide. The bouquets and designs in high relief on the train have occupied many industrious hands for over three months. The queen of the Belgians wore a dress at the wedding which was composed of azure velvet, the train, with rich silver embroidery, falling over a similarly embroidered under-dress of dead blue satin. It was very tastefully decorated with silver lace, and the draping and arrangements of this matchless robe were such as to send those who have seen it into ecstasies. How Women Should Dress. An American authority says: No lady need be ashamed to dress plainly or cheaply; she can, with the help of the modern guides to dress, appear like a lady on very little money. She can lay down three rules for herself: Never to pretend to anything, never to wear jewelry, and, affirmatively, always to be neat. A young girl with a white muslin and a fresh flower is dressed for a queen's ball. A lady of maturer years, with a well-fitting dark silk, real jewelry or none, and her own hair—all the better if it is white—is also dressed for a ball. True womanhood include all the delicate refinements that overflow in the perfect glove, the well-fitting shoe, the pretty stocking, the neat frills, the becoming bonnet. The American woman, to do her only justice, is not a creature by instinct, and if she occasionally gives too much thought to dress, she is still to be admired and commended for her daintiness. Fashion Notes. Scarf draperies grow in favor. Vermorell lace is out of fashion. Colored Spanish lace is made into hats. Steel lace bonnets are trimmed with ostrich tips. Tuscan cream is the name of a new color in lace. Crosswise draperies are much used for short skirts. Triangular sticks are the newest for sunshades. Surah serge is trimmed with batiste embroidery. Soft thick ostrich feathers are put on bonnets of steel lace. The frills on summer silk dresses are cut in points this season. Wall flower tints reappear again in flowers, ties and ribbons. The Watteau is the favorite style for illuminated foulard dresses. Paste jewels set in steel are used for buttons on foulard gowns. The pinkish white color of the new laces is called baked earth. Some of the summer piques have designs like those of brocade. Surah is made into blouse waists for children's wear. It washes as well as linen. Chenille dotted net is not tied when used for bonnet strings, but caught by a flower. Flat collars to be worn on silk dresses have a point behind and a point on each shoulder. Watered silk appears as panels in skirts, and also as waistcoats in evening costumes. Black satin parasols are frequently edged with plaited satin ruffles of gold color or scarlet. Shirred cuffs edged with lace, accompany shirred collarettes and fichus of the same material. The fastening used with surplice waists is three buckles placed slantwise at the waist. Some of the light summer mantles are trimmed all around with black lace over white lace. White pique bonnets in the poke shape have muslin crowns which are fastened on by buttons. White waists under overdresses with square neck and no sleeves are to be worn by little children this summer. Summer gowns for young girls have skirts of thin wool, and waists of surah with silk ruffles and ruffles of choice lace. Iris colors are the soft hues of the sea flower, and are becoming to young girls with yellow hair.