

LITTLE BOBBY'S FOURTH.

"T must hev ben 'bout four o'clock when Little Bobby woke 'N frod them tarna crackers off, until it warn't no joke Er wakta everybody up 'n shoutin out in joy, 'Till little Bobby's pa he said he guesed he'd fix that boy. But lordy! yer might jest ez well hev tried ter stop ez loud, 'Cuz that air little feller he wuz wild, we all allowed. So his pa sez, 'Well, Fourth July comes only once,' sez he, 'In every year,' 'n so he guesed he'd let ther youngster be. 'N cracky! but the noise he made er frin off them things, 'N all day long we set 'n heard them bings and bings and bings! 'N little Bobby's ma wuz scared, 'n she sed: 'Dear me sus! He'll blow hisself up. Such a boy I'm sure thar never wuz! But his pa sez, 'You let him be,' 'n so until that night The little feller kep it up—ther back yard wuz a sight. 'N then we hed some pinwheels 'n some rockets 'n Greek fire, Niagara Falls 'n candles, till that boy began ter tire, 'Cuz he got sleepy. Then sez he, his big brown eyes er blink: 'Say, pa, I wanter ask yer 'bout terday, 'n what yer think: Does ther hev fireworks up in heaven like we hed terday? 'Cuz if they do I guess I like ter go thar right away."

TOM MASSON.

THE MATCHMAKERS.

A STORY OF LOVE AND FIREWORKS BY CHRISTINE GRIFFIN.

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"ZZZ, bing, boom! Boom, boom, boom! All through the night and all through the day. Will it ever stop? Perhaps it wouldn't be so bad if one's thoughts were happy, but when they are not it is just awful. Bab leans out of the library window and lifts her flushed face to the light breeze that sweeps by. Things are going all wrong with her. They have been going wrong ever since Mr. Archibald Jones has seen fit to devote himself to her with a persistency that has driven away all the other men. To be sure she rather liked him at first. He has horses to take her driving with and plenty of money and leisure time to spend with her at the theater, lawn tennis parties and all the other good things that come along through the seasons, and at a dance especially he acquits himself very creditably in spite of his extreme thinness and extreme height. "If he only would talk about something or somebody besides himself," Bab said once reflectively. She was trying on a love of a new bonnet at the time—touching its loops of ribbon lightly and twisting her head from one side to the other to get the effect in her mirror; so that very naturally the sight of her own loveliness brought to her mind a pardonable wonder why he did not occasionally vary his egotistical themes by a little wholesome praise of herself. Bab was a little amused at his conduct in the beginning, but as she sees more of him, night after night, week after week, and the chances of the final recital of his remarkable existence grow more and more remote, she begins to find it very wearisome, and catches herself more than once looking back with longing to the time when Mr. Archibald Jones was not—the dear old life when she had found so sweet a happiness in the words and glances of another man, a man who rarely in these later days comes to her at all. Beyond a doubt it is some thought of him that brings that pathetic light to her eyes and that tender little smile to her lips this July morning as she leans against the window frame with careless, dreamy abandonment, her fingers wandering restlessly through the soft, loose locks of hair upon her temples. Things happen just right sometimes, even outside the pages of a story book, and it is certainly a very happy coincidence that at this moment a tall young man should come quietly around the corner of the house, and looking up see the girl and her smile. Bab is all in a flutter as soon as she sees him. "Why, Mr. Brayton," she cries, with an excited, broken little laugh, "where did you come from? I—oh, I'm awfully glad to see you."

She flushes prettily as he steps across the grass plat that lies between them. He takes the pretty white hand extended to him in his own sun-tanned palm and perhaps he holds it there a trifle longer and just a trifle tighter than would be prescribed by the etiquette of polite society. "I don't believe you're half as glad as I am to see you, Miss Barbara," he says, and his voice is a very good voice to listen to with its deep, mellow tones. "I never have any luck with you nowadays. No matter when I come you are sure to be out or just going. It is really a pity that you are so popular."

Bab laughs. She looks a trifle self-conscious, as she smooths out the folds of her morning gown. "Oh, but I'm not," she declares; "truly, I'm not. Aren't you coming in? Do." But he shakes his head. "Thanks. Can't possibly. I must be in town by 11, and it is quarter of now. I was riding past on my wheel and thought I'd just run in to ask if you'd enjoy going to the top of the Waverly tonight to see the fireworks. I believe there's to be quite a display."

Bab flushes up to the soft unruly waves of gold brown hair upon her forehead. She looks down intently at the

handkerchief that she is twisting and untwisting between the tips of her fingers. Fate again. Mr. Archibald Jones has already asked her the same question and for the sake of escaping a tiresome tete-a-tete she has declared her intention of staying at home and enjoying the few illuminations that have been purchased for the children. "I'm so sorry," she says, not very steadily because of some emotion that makes her heart throb furiously, "awfully sorry. It's too bad, but I have had to refuse one invitation like yours already, because I was going to have the children want me to stay with them. Won't you—couldn't you come here, Mr. Brayton? I can't promise you much of a treat," she adds, laughing a little nervously as she thinks of the other one, who is coming on his own invitation. "I don't suppose it'll be very exciting, but you don't know how glad I should be if you would come."

Then she lifts her eyes and looks at him. They are such lovely eyes, so blue and tender and wistful. He sees the wistfulness, to be sure, but whether it is meant for him or the other man who has invited her, he cannot tell. Men are so stupid about these things. When there is any doubt of this kind to be considered they usually give the benefit of it to the other man. "Thanks," he says again, but a little chill of reserve has crept into his voice now and frozen all the genial warmth out of it. "Ever so kind of you. Perhaps I will. I won't promise. Then you can't expect me and be disappointed if I don't appear."

The words end in a decidedly curt laugh, as he steps out into the path again. An innocent looking torpedo gleams white against the red gravel at his feet. He stoops down, picks it up and flings it against the stonework of the steps. Perhaps its sharp report serves as a vent for his turbulent thoughts. Then he looks back at the girl, and their eyes meet for an instant—a single glance, incomprehensible to both. "Goodby, and allow me to wish you a very pleasant evening, Miss Barbara." A pleasant evening! Poor Bab. She drops down in a little heap on the divan as he disappears, and buries her face in the depths of a big silk pillow. What is the use of trying to be happy any more? What is the use? He doesn't care for her—he never will care now. That hateful Jones is like a grinning skeleton, putting himself always between her and her one love. Oh, dear—The thought ends in a long sigh. "You come over to my house first, Dolly."

"No, you come over here. That'll be nicest. We're going to have eight rockets—maybe more—I dunno." "So're we." "An whole lot of fires—red and blue and green." "So're we." "Goody, goody, goody! Ain't it fun? I think Fourth o' July's nicer'n all the days in the year 'cept Christmas, don't you, Ducky?" "Course I do."

A series of happy little giggles and the voices grow fainter as the children pass the window and go around the house. Bab drags herself up again and looks out through the bright sunshine, her eyes full of longing. If she could only be a child again and crave no greater happiness than the Fourth of July celebration. If there were only no such things as men and heartaches. As the long day wears itself out and twilight settles down she becomes more and more restless. One question whirs through her mind again and again and routs all other thoughts. Will he come? That Mr. Archibald Jones will be prompt in arriving she does not doubt. He is always on hand with patient persistency, and no coolness of manner or scornful words could ever affect him to the point of keeping him away.

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"Well, well," says Mr. Jones with an appreciative smile, "this is downright jolly. I really think, Miss Austin, you were wise to stay at home. Can I sit here on this rug beside you? No, no, I don't want a chair. This is ever so much nicer." Mr. Jones looks at her with approval. It is not so dark yet but that he can see how very becomingly she is dressed. It seems to him that he has never seen her look so sweet and dainty before, and all unconscious of the irony of Fate, he placidly congratulates himself on the fact that it is all intended for him. "Perfect night," he says, throwing his



head back to peer up through the trees. There is not a cloud in the sky, and already in the far distance the stars are beginning to glimmer faintly. "Do you remember, Miss Austin, how we went to the lake a year ago and got caught in a drenching rain? Awful, wasn't it? That was the time, I believe, when I was lucky enough to have an umbrella, and just on account of it succeeded in cutting out another man. I really believe you would have gone home with him if it hadn't been for that umbrella. I am treasuring it yet—it saved the day for me." He laughs with unquestionable pleasure at the recollection, but Bab bites her lip and turns her face away. She has be-



TWO FIGURES UPON THE PORCH.

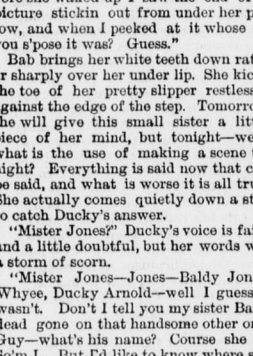
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minute, Ducky Arnold, that Bab wants me to have him? Well, I guess I know a thing or two 'bout that. What'd she want to cry for the other night when that old Jones asked her to go to the lawn party and that awful nice Mr. Guy Brayton came and asked the same thing when it was too late? "An what does she cry for most ev'ry night? It's 'cuz he don't come any more. I hear her, but when I ask her what's the matter she says, 'Oh, my head aches—go to sleep—don't bother me.' Humph, should think her head would ache. An wait'll I tell you something else—only don't you dare to breathe it to a soul. Land! she'd be just wild if she knew I knew 'bout it. Well, the other mornin' fore she waked up I saw the end of a picture stickin out from under her pillow, and when I peeked at it whoose do you s'pose it was? Guess." Bab brings her white teeth down rather sharply over her upper lip. She kicks the toe of her pretty slipper restlessly against the edge of the step. Tomorrow she will give this small sister a little piece of her mind, but tonight—well, what is the use of making a scene to-night? Everything is said now that can be said, and what is worse it is all true. She actually comes quietly down a step to catch Ducky's answer. "Mister Jones? Ducky's voice is faint and a little doubtful, but her words win a storm of scorn. "Mister Jones—Jones—Baldy Jones? Whyce, Ducky Arnold—well I guess it wasn't. Don't I tell you my sister Bab's dead gone on that handsome other one, Guy—what's his name? Course she is. So'm I. But I'd like to know where she keeps that picture daytimes. I never saw it before." Their voices flutter off into a little giggle as they rise to run away under the trees. The fun is commencing. The boys are sending up a shower of Roman candles. Bab gives an involuntary sigh. "Oh, dear," she says; "oh, dear me." And then such a strange thing happens. Somebody comes up the steps two at a time. Somebody's hand is laid over hers as it rests on the railing. Somebody's dear voice speaks. "Is it true?" he asks a little huskily. "Is it true, Bab, darling? I couldn't help hearing. Do you care for me? I love you so. I have a right to know." But Bab doesn't say anything after that one half startled "oh!" What she does is quite as expressive as words. When he slips his arm around her she lets it stay there and lifts her pretty face confidently up against his own. "Fizz, sizz, whizz! A long, fiery tailed rocket shoots into the air and a great mass of red light flares up through the darkness, illuminating everything with its soft radiance. Especially prominent for a moment are those two figures upon the porch, and most especially prominent is the tall young man's right arm, where it is thrown around the white shawl. Yet in the excitement of looking for the next display no one sees the little tableau except one man, and as the light fades out he turns in his leisurely walk up the path toward the house and goes back—this time straight to the street and cityward.

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OUT OF SIGHT. First Rocket—How are you feeling, old man? Second Rocket—Way up.

TEXTS FOR THE FOURTH.

American patriotism must be a household virtue.—Henry Ward Beecher. One flag, one land, one heart, one hand, One nation ever free.—Oliver Wendell Holmes. Let us have peace.—U. S. Grant, May 29, 1868. Love of country is the first principle of true manhood.—James A. Garfield. Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right, but our country, right or wrong.—Stephen Decatur. They love their land because it is their own, And scorn to give aught other reason why; Would shake hands with a king upon his throne And think it kindness to his majesty.—Fitz-Greene Halleck. Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death.—Patrick Henry, March 23, 1775. This nation has dissolved, but in tears only. It stands, four square, more solid today than any pyramid in Egypt. This people are neither wasted nor daunted nor disordered. The government is made stronger.—Henry Ward Beecher. God grants liberty only to those who love it and are always ready to guard and defend it.—Daniel Webster. In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea, With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me, As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free—While God is marching on.—Julia Ward Howe. As It Used to Be. The following song was published some years ago. It was written by the late Royal Tyler, formerly chief judge of the supreme court of Vermont. He was the author of "The Algerine Captive," a novel which was popular over half a century ago: Speak the life and beat the drum, Independence day is come! Let the roasting pig be blest, Quick, twist off the cocker's head; Quickly rub the pewter platter, Heap the outside fatted in butter; Set the cups and beaker glass, The pumpkin and the apple sauce. Send the keg to shop for brandy, Maple sugar we have handy; Independent, staggering Dick, A noggin mix of staggering thick; Sal, put on your russet skirt—Jotham, get your boughten shirt, Today we dance to tiddle diddle, Here comes Sambo with his fiddle. Sambo, take a dram of whiskey And play up "Yankee Doodle" frisky; Moll, come leave your wretched tricks And let us have a reel of six. Father and mother shall make two, Sal, Moll and I stand all a-row; Sambo, play the dance with quality, This is the day of blest equality. Father and mother are but men, And Sambo is a citizen, Come, foot it Sal—Moll, figure in, And mother, you dance up to him; Now saw as fast as you can do, And father you cross over to Sambo, Thus we dance, and thus we play, On glorious Independence Day. Timely Thoughts. Fourth of July orations should not be empty glorifications of America, but rather expositions of American freedom, said the late Rev. Howard Crosby, which will equally resist the tyranny of the government and the tyranny of the mob, which insists on law and order as the only security of personal liberty, and which will crush the anarchist as quickly as the despot. The great public should have these fundamental doctrines expounded to them on our great national holiday, and the people should so thoroughly understand them that any attempt by man or church to mar the symmetry of our liberties would be met with an effectual and crushing indignation. We do not sufficiently appreciate our enormous advantages, and hence we are careless regarding their conservation. Were these advantages lost the world would be set back many centuries. Let us therefore encourage true American sentiment as the antidote to the poison introduced among us from foreign sources, and let our Fourth of July be consecrated to this elevation of the American standard. Here It Is Again. All sight we heard the clanging bells, And the cannon's loud report, And at the early hour of three Our boys began their sport. Our eyes are filled with battle smoke; We're deaf in either ear, And thus by all wondrous signs We know the Fourth is here.

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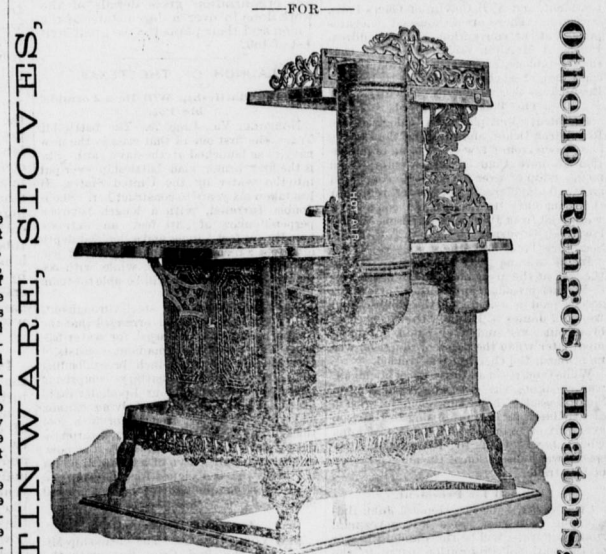
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