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'RESOLVED

THERE was something wayward in Jarvis Peabody's blood. He had an eye for a pretty girl.

Aside from this, Jarvis Peabody was the soul of circumspection. At twenty-seven he had, to all appearances, settled down. He was coming along very well in his job, and there was every chance that one day soon he would be sales manager for his firm. He was neat and clean and had no habits which, nowadays, could be called bad. To add further to his stability, he was engaged to Miss Corleen Farraday, and their marriage became more of a certainty each day.

But even after his engagement Jarvis Peabody betrayed that instinct of his. He would look twice at a pretty girl. And whenever he didn't look twice it was that he was taking just one prolonged look which would be more than the equal of two.

Naturally, Corleen Farraday was annoyed. As their engagement ripened, her pique grew more pronounced and at length Miss Farraday drew the problem into the open.

"Jarvis," she said one evening when they were having supper after a rather sentimental movie, "Jarvis, we're really going to be married, aren't we?"

"We certainly are. And not later than next spring, too. Only this morning the boss was saying—"

"Then," Miss Farraday interrupted, "don't you think it's time you stopped flirting?"

Jarvis Peabody was aghast. He was in love with Corleen and had been in this condition for some time. Moreover, he had given vent to numerous expressions of his love so that surely she was aware of it by this time. "Flirting?" he repeated. "I'm afraid I don't get you."

"Perhaps you don't call it flirting. But that's my word for it, Jarvis. I mean your habit of giving the eye to every attractive girl you happen to see. Then—if she notices, and she's a flirt, too—you smile at each other."

"But I—"

"And," went on Corleen imperturbably, "you are unquestionably the greatest handkerchief, compact, and purse retriever since Sir Walter Raleigh." She sighed, "I don't know why, but when you

are around women it seems literally to rain handkerchiefs, lipsticks and compacts."

"I TRY to be polite," Jarvis said.

Corleen shook her head. "No, it's more than that, darling. You can no more resist flirting when you see a pretty girl than a politician can resist making a speech when he sees a crowd. I'm sure it's perfectly harmless. But it's not very reassuring to the girl you plan to marry."

"I guess you're right," Jarvis said lightly. "I'll just have to watch myself. You know darned well you're the only girl in the world for me. I'll just have to be a little careful."

"I'm going to ask that you do even more than exercise caution, Mr. Peabody. The New Year is coming along, and I'm going to ask you to make a resolution."

Jarvis raised his eyebrows. "My gosh, Corleen, nobody makes resolutions any more!"

"Oh, yes, they do. And," she added, "some keep them, too. There's nothing like a nice New Year with which to start afresh. Why don't you resolve that after midnight of December 31, 1938, you will never, so long as you live, flirt with a girl?"

"Well . . . I'd like to make a provision in that."

"Yes?"

"You are to be excepted."

"I'm very serious about this," Corleen mentioned. "Are you?"

Jarvis Peabody nodded quickly. "Of course I am. I'll take the New Year resolution—and what's more, I'll keep it."

"Good!" Yet there was a faint touch of skepticism in her tone. Jarvis Peabody noticed it, but made no comment.

With the traditional guile of woman-kind, Corleen now brought the conversation into less personal channels. As will happen with people in love, time passed quickly. At length the waitress, a tall lissome blond, anxious to start homeward, brought the check.

"Will there be anything else, sir?"

"No, thank you," said Jarvis Peabody, looking straight into the wide blue eyes. And then it happened. The blond lissome waitress dropped her pencil. Jarvis dived and came up triumphant. "Here you are."

"Oh, thank you so much."

Corleen sighed. After all, the New Year was a few days away.

BUT IT DID come along, as the New Year inexorably will. And the plans of Jarvis Peabody and Corleen Farraday were large indeed.

"We'll put it on right this New Year," Jarvis said. "We've lots to celebrate. In the first place, 1939 is the year we'll be married. In the second place, everything looks swell for the business. Things are coming back with a bang. Darling, you and I are going to welcome the New Year the way a New Year ought to be welcomed!"

So Jarvis engaged a table in the Peacock Room of the Golden Club. And what is even more, the table was right at the edge of that smooth white oak sea where the featured dancers would float in a soft spray of calcium light. The dinner he had ordered in advance by telephone.

Corleen was a bit dubious about Jarvis's plans. "The thing we want to remember now," she warned, "is that a blowout like this would buy a nice upholstered wing chair for the Peabody living room."

"Gosh," said Jarvis. "We can worry about that when the time comes. This will be New Year's Eve, darling. And wait until you see the program the Golden Club has lined up for that night. They've signed up Cintra Crandall, and—"

"Somebody you know?"

"No. But I saw her picture in the lobby when I reserved the table. She—"

"Never mind, darling," said Corleen resignedly.

But, despite these premature wifely misgivings, Corleen looked forward to the New Year's Eve at the Golden Club. She had bought a rustling Gainsborough

gown. It had a lame jacket studded with tiny stars . . . and no girl with a gown like it would want to be anywhere on New Year's Eve except where she could be seen by the greatest number of people in the shortest given time. As Jarvis said, they could worry later.

WHETHER it was the magic of music and New Year's Eve, or the excellent food, Jarvis Peabody was not sure. But whatever it was, he had rarely felt gayer, or more at one with the world. He and Corleen floated through many a dance, buoyed along by the high spirits of the Golden Club crowd. And when the floor show unfolded itself so close to their table it was as if this was all for them. Even Corleen had to admit that Cintra Crandall was excellent.

When the entertainment was over, Corleen said, "It's too much to ask that any woman sit for three hours without repair work on her face. You'll have to excuse me, darling."

"Your face doesn't need repairing," Jarvis said, rising. "But if it will make you feel better to try . . ." He looked at his watch. "Just half an hour until 1939, darling. Be sure to be back in time."

"Never fear. I want to watch the glorious change that comes over you when your resolution goes into effect."

Jarvis nodded. Then, when she had gone, he sat down rather soberly. What, actually, was this resolution he had made. Now as he regarded it at closer range it grew more insidious than it had seemed a few days ago. He had resolved, in point of fact, never to look at a pretty girl after December 31, 1938.

Somehow, even on so glorious an occasion as tonight, the thought saddened Mr. Peabody. The noise and music of the Golden Club were suddenly oppressive. He decided to have a cigaret in the comparative quiet of the men's lounge.

HE HAD GOT through the milling mob with all the grace and some of the roughness of an open field runner; he had almost reached his destination when he became aware of a young woman directly in his path. Well, maybe not directly in his path at first. But somehow Jarvis found her directly in his path the next

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