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They Would Fight "Awful"

A Daughter Objects to Her Mother's Second Marriage

By ELLEN OGILVIE

I was twelve years old when paw died—old enough to know that his death was a double calamity to me. I had lost him, and I stood in danger of a stepfather. I could not recall him, but I vowed that if any man came into the house to take his place he would have to walk in over my dead body. I drew mental pictures of putting a fork into his vitals, scalding him or servin' him as Jack served the giant-by diggin' a pit for him.

When the danger really came I was seventeen years old. Josiah Shadwell, owner of the adjoining farm, lost his wife. He and maw had always been very friendly, and I no sooner heard that Mrs. Shadwell was dead than I began to tremble. Maw, she just took charge of the Shadwell home till after the funeral. The Shadwells had only one child, a son, Jim, twenty years old, and he wasn't home when his mother died. When he came his father persuaded him to stay and relieve him of some of the responsibility of workin' the farm.

Jim consented, partly because I persuaded him to stay, for we had played together as children, and I liked Jim first rate. But as to assumin' the responsibility of the farm, my experience is that when an elderly man talks about throwin' off his responsibilities it means he's bent on takin' a tighter grip on 'em; just as a woman in house-keepin'—the older she grows the less willin' she is to let any one else do any-thing.

It wasn't three months after Mrs. Shadwell's death that I began to observe indications that the widower had intentions on maw. Nobody but me noticed any change in his behavior toward her, and there didn't seem to be. But there was—that is, I knew it by that womanly intuition that knows things that ain't so which nevertheless are so. Not very long after this Jim and his paw got to comin' over evenin's to sit by the open fireplace with me and maw.

Then I knew somep'n else that Jim didn't see at all. How could he, bein' a man with a man's simplicity about such things? Mr. Shadwell saw through me as I saw through him. But it wasn't any credit for him to see through me, for I made it as plain as a barn with the doors wide open. He knew that in his designs on maw he had to down me and I wouldn't be easy to down.

Well, do you know the old feller went

about to circumvent me. To think of a man's tryin' to circumvent a woman! I guess not! And he didn't suspect that I'd see through his designs. What he was after was to come over to our house with Jim, intendin' Jim to distract my attention from him and maw. When we was settin' around the fire, eatin' doughnuts and drinkin' cider, after we was through with the eatin' and drinkin' Mr. Shadwell would make some excuse to git maw into the settin' room, lookin' at Jim and me as much as to say: "Young folks haven't any use for old folks. Let's give 'em a chance."

If I hadn't been so riled I'd 'a' laughed, and if I hadn't been as bent on circumventin' him as he was on circumventin' me I'd said: "You old fool! You're speakin' one word for me to two for yourself."

One Sunday evenin' Jim he come over alone. Maw got out some nuts and things for him and me and left us, sayin' she'd got a headache and was goin' to bed early. Jim wasn't long doin' somep'n he had never done before. He sidled up to me and put his arm around my waist.

"What you doin' that for, Jim?" I asked.

"Because I like you."

"That's not the only reason, Jim."

"What's the other one?" he asked.

"Your paw is anglin' for my maw. He sent you over here to make up to



"Mandy 'd better move it back again," me, hopin' to put me where I wouldn't have any objection."

Jim just drew off a bit and looked at me kind o' surprised.

"How did you know that?" he asked.

"'Cause it's as plain as a yeller pumpkin," I answered.

"I didn't know it myself till you told me."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Why, dad, 't'other day he said to me,

Jim, mawdy Sarah's a nice girl, isn't she? You bet, I says. Why don't you try to git her? says he. 'I been thinkin' that for some time,' says I. That was a week ago Monday. This evenin' dad said he thort he'd stay home and read his farmer's journals. I wonder if he didn't do it to give me a chance to do some sparkin'."

"That's plain enough," said I. "And I wonder whether maw and he understand each other? I can see through a man, but when one woman sets herself to hoodwink another it's a different matter."

I give Jim just enough encouragement to keep him where I wanted him, and no more. If I couldn't have him for a husband without his paw for a stepfather I wouldn't have either of 'em. Before I listened to Jim I had a mind to settle matters between Mr. Shadwell and maw. We kept a few pigs just to eat up the leavin's from our table and to sell when they got big enough. First thing I did was to complain to mother that the sty was too near our house. It smelt bad. And I kept diggin' at her to let me move it till she give in. Then one day when she went to the county fair I stayed home and had the sty moved close up to Mr. Shadwell's fence.

Nobody made any objection till one night I got out of bed, went to the sty, let out the pigs, scraped a hole under the fence between our yard and the Shadwells' potato patch big enough for the pigs to git through and put 'em all in the patch.

The next mornin' I looked out of my window and saw Mr. Shadwell standin' over his potatoes—those that the pigs hadn't eaten—swarin' like a pirate. Maw, she happened to take the swill to the sty at that time, which was mighty lucky for me and unlucky for them.

"What's the matter, Mr. Shadwell?" she asked, kind o' soothingly.

"Matter, ma'am! Why, the movin' o' your sty up here has cost me most o' my potatoes!"

"I'm sorry."

"What did you move it for?"

"Mandy did it."

"All I've got to say is Mandy better move it back again. Mandy seems to be boss in your house anyway!"

This made maw mad, and without answerin' she dumped the swill into the trough and come back into the house.

Jim come over that night and told me his father was mighty sorry he'd lost his temper. I said to Jim that his father better come the next Sunday night and not say anything about any unpleasantness and all would go smooth again. He said he'd give his father my recommend and went away early to make the old man feel more comfortable.

I'd been lookin' for a weak spot in the fence between the two farms and had one in mind. That night I pulled away enough of it to let our cows into the Shadwell cornfield. You ought to see that cornfield the next mornin'! I almost felt ashamed of myself. When maw saw the damage that had been done she went over to pacify Mr. Shadwell, and it ended in their gittin' into a regular fight. He said some one

must 'a' done it a-purpose. This riled maw a little, but she kept steady. She said she'd been wonderin' for some time why he didn't mend the weak spots in his fence, and he said there wasn't any weak spots, except what had been made a-purpose. Maw asked if he was referin' to her, but she wouldn't give him time to answer. She just let out on him.

Mr. Shadwell he didn't come over the next Sunday night; no more did Jim. I thought maybe Jim had begun to see through a milestone, and he had. The next day, after the cow destroyed the corn, he and his father was hammerin' at the fence all day. I didn't go near 'em. I just waited. Next day when I was goin' to the store I met Jim in the road. He hardly spoke to me. I asked him what was the matter, and he said I'd spoiled everything between us. His father had taken a great dislike to me and had forbid his comin' over to our house evenin's any more.

"What's he got against me?" I asked in a voice smooth, like peaches and cream.

"He'd have more against you than he has," said Jim, "if he'd seen you the other night, as I did, turnin' the cow into our cornfield."

I knew his paw and my maw had done too much fightin' to be likely to make it up, so I said to Jim: "There's nothin' mean about me. If the old folks love each other as we do I wouldn't stand in their way to bein' happy." Jim said that was just like me—always givin' way for other people's benefit.

When the trouble had blown over Jim and I was married, his paw makin' no objections after Jim told him my "noble words," as Jim called 'em, about not standin' in the old folks' way. But the spell between 'em wasn't so thick as if they'd been younger, and it was broke clean through. Mr. Shadwell treats me fairly well, but he hasn't the confidence in me Jim has or had when we was married. I expect the father's nearer right than the son. I do think a man in love can make the biggest fool of himself. He always seems to me to have taken leave of his senses.

Maw and Mr. Shadwell are pretty good friends; but, laws, they don't want to get hitched! They'd fight awful!

Joinder that she had some such experience as the one referred to on her mind. But it was also plain that she had not considered the man in the case unworthy. She entered upon a hypothetical defense of him.

"I can understand a man's momentarily yielding to a temptation, and yet love his wife truly," she said. Then, pausing, she seemed moved by a sudden resolution and continued in a tone that indicated deep feeling: "Margaret, I am going to make a confession to you. And yet it is not a confession, for that indicates an injury, a wrong; and there was no wrong on my part nor on the part of the one who was implicated with me in what I am about to relate.

"You remember that John and I were both of artistic temperament. We were fond of the fine arts, music, sculpture, painting, literature. He was the only real poet I ever knew personally. His

appreciation for music was of the keenest. Do you remember that period when your mother was taken ill, you were called away to attend her, and she finally died? You left John in my charge, and I recall your exact words when you did so. 'John and I have not been long married,' you said, 'but long enough to have come upon that period when a newly married pair begins to suffer from their incongruities. Leaving him at such a time is dangerous, for he is liable to seek solace with another woman. Help him to stand by his better instincts, so that when I return nothing shall have occurred to make a breach between him and me.' "This is all you said, but it was enough. I knew you meant that in case I should see your husband about to fall under a bad influence to have a care of him and draw him away from temptation. I was sure that so great was your confidence in me that you would not ask anything of me on a matter between him and me.

"I kept John with me during nearly all his idle time in the period that you were absent. We visited what galleries there were, went where we could listen to music and read together from the works of our favorite poets. One evening he took me to the opera. 'Faust' was given and given beautifully. John sat entranced by the music and seemed under the spell of that legend which contains in condensed form the story of humanity. After the opera we rode to my home and during the ride John did not speak a word to me. I invited him to come in and led him to the drawing room. Suddenly he began to talk strangely.

"'I feel,' he said, 'that I am Faust and that a mephistopheles is dragging me to hell.'"

"And by the same passion he secured Faust's soul?" I asked.

"Yes."

"And who, I asked, 'is Marguerite?' I was trembling and spoke the words so low as only to be heard by one intent on hearing.

"His hand was near mine, and he took it in his. I arose and stood apart from him.

"'John,' I said, 'stand firm. This is a passing madness occasioned by that weird drama acting upon an impressionable nature. Your wife will return soon, and by her presence banish what is but an evanescent emotion.'"

"He stood looking at me as one in a dream for a time, then said: "Helen, from the bottom of my heart I thank you for having saved my self respect.' And, turning, he left me. Your mother died that same evening and within another week you were at home.

"You know the rest so far as John is concerned—that he was saved from a momentary temptation, and that yours and his happiness were not marred by the incident. What I have to confess is this: From that moment I was a changed woman. The word of love that had been spoken entered into my being and I could not eradicate it. But no more than this, Margaret, did I wrong you. John never sought me, and that I might not meet him I left him and you for another place of rest-

ence. I never saw him again.

The woman who listened to this confession gave no other evidence of its effect upon her than to reach for the confessor's hand and press it. Helen continued:

"From that moment I took on a life-long suffering. But not from your displeasure, for I am sure even now since you know my secret that you are too strong, too just, too generous to blame me for what I could not help."

Margaret, who had retained the hand she held, bent forward and kissed her friend. Then she said:

"I do not blame you now, nor have I ever blamed you, for I have known of this from the moment of my return, when I heard it from John, though a different version. He told me that he loved you and would always love you."

Helen's head dropped on her friend's breast. There was a long silence, which was broken by Margaret.

"You would hear?" she said. "Why, knowing what I did, I remained John's wife, keeping you two apart. Perhaps my conduct to you seems that I grudged you what I could not myself possess."

"I have no such thought. I am sure you had a reason, and that reason was a noble one."

"Had I believed that you would have been happy with John," she said, "I would have given him to you. But you would not have been happy with him. He was too volatile, too intense in his feelings, too unsteady in every way. You would have been the blind leading the blind. You would have suffered under perpetual misunderstandings. He needed a different hand from yours to manage him. A time came when he recognized this himself."

"But you?" exclaimed Helen, looking up with a wonder akin to pain.

"I did my duty by him and you."

on or before the 7th day of February, 1913, said date being after the expiration of six weeks from the date of the first publication of this summons, and if you fail to so appear and answer said complaint, to-wit, a decree of partition of real property according to the respective rights of the owners therein, in and to the following described property, to-wit:

The South half of the Northwest quarter of Section One (1) Township Five (5) South, Range One (1) West, except three (3) acres in the Northwest corner lying in Marion county. Also beginning at the Southeast corner of the above described parcel of land and running thence south eighty (80) rods; thence East sixty (60) rods; thence North one hundred and sixty (160) rods; thence West sixty (60) rods; thence South to the place of beginning. Also beginning at the half mile corner stake on the west side of said Section and running thence west to Pudding River four (4) chains, more or less, and thence down said river to the section line; thence South to the place of beginning, containing in all one hundred and forty (140) acres, more or less. Situate in Clackamas County, Oregon.

Also the following: Beginning at a point 2.74 chains North of the Northwest corner of Section 18 in T. 5 S. R. 4 E. of the Willamette Meridian, running thence East one hundred and fifty-two (152) rods; thence South one hundred and seventy-one (171) rods; thence West seventy-two (72) rods; thence North eighty (80) rods; thence West eighty (80) rods; thence North to the place of beginning and containing 120 acres, more or less. Also the Southwest quarter of Section Eighteen (18) in T. 5 S. R. 4 E. of the Willamette Meridian, containing 45.72 acres, more or less. Situate in Clackamas county, Oregon.

This summons is published by order of the Hon. J. A. Eakin, Judge of the above entitled Court, and which order was made and entered on the 20th day of December, A. D., 1912, and which order required that the first publication of this summons be made on December 27th, 1912, and the date of the last publication thereof on February 7th, 1913.

Dimick & Dimick, Attorneys for Plaintiff.

Mortgage Loans.

Money to loan on first class, improved farms in Clackamas county. Current interest rates—attractive repayment privilege. A. H. Birrell Co.—202 McKay Bldg., 3rd. and Stark Sts., Portland, Oregon.

SUMMONS.

In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon, for the County of Clackamas.

D. C. Yoder, Levi Yoder, Delilah Troyer, Sarah A. Yoder, Mary E. Hartzler, Ella M. Miller, Fena Yoder, Silas A. Yoder, Oliver Yoder and Fannie M. Yoder, Plaintiffs, vs. John L. Zook, Viola M. Zook, Elsie P. Zook, Zephaniah Yoder and Fannie Yoder, Defendants.

To John L. Zook, Viola M. Zook, Elsie P. Zook and Zephaniah Yoder, the above named defendants: In the name of the State of Oregon, you and each of you are hereby required to appear and answer the complaint filed against you in the above entitled suit on