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LOVE AND MISCHIEF.

Not many miles from London is a tiny village, a very *beau ideal* of rural beauty in miniature. The church is just large enough to seat comfortably about one hundred and fifty persons; close by is the prsonage-house on a corresponding scale, as to size, and the good clergyman who occupies it is endowed with a salary to match. The squire's house, not far off, is just a quiet little retreat, in which its proprietor hides himself for a few weeks occasionally when weary of the gay life inseparable from his more splendid residence. The cottages on the estate are in good repair, and the very model of what cottages ought to be, covered with those creeping climbing clusters of ivy roses, and honeysuckles, which send poets into ecstasies, and doctors into fits. One might fancy that some clever, enterprising individual had snoceeded in transfering the whole concern from the delightful country of Utopia—that land which, like the immortal "Mrs. Harris," everybody has heard of but nobody has ever seen. Yet in this charming retreat were sins and sorrows, heartburnings and tribulations, as in every other part of the "habitable globe." For a great many of the sorrows, little Mysie Collins must be held answerable. Mysie had lately succeeded old Miss Walker in the important position of village dressmaker; and the taste and dexterity of the new functionary soon secured to her a greater number of customers than her predecessor had ever managed to obtain. Nay, she had even been favored by an order to make some morning-dresses for the squire's lady, while the clergyman's wife declared that to employ a city hand was unchristian extravagance, since one of their own parishioners could suit her quite as well at half the price. So Mysie grew in favor, and all the more so for her having given a home to her aged and infirm grandmother, who was not of so pleasant a temper as to make her society a thing to be coveted in general by anybody. But Mysie had no nearer relative living, and her statement of the case was that, as she wanted all her time for her business, she thought it would be a great convenience to her to have her grandmother to overlook the housekeeping and keep the little servant-maid in order. Now, this account of Mysie's affairs was, like most of her representations of her own proceedings, fiction founded on fact. The *fact* was that Mysie did all the real work of housekeeping, *fiction* that the old lady was assistance. True, as Mysie said, "grandmother did the overlooking,' if the latter term might be held to signify "*grumbling*;' but there, you could never trust anything that Mysie said about herself. To hear her talk, a stranger would conclude her to be the most heartless, openly selfish little piece of vanity in the world; while those who knew her were aware that no human creature could be more self-denying and generous. A witching little thing she was; her dark eyes, now sparkling with mischief, now tender and loving; her shell-pink bloom, the little pert nose, and the pretty dimples playing at hide-and-seek in the cheeks and corners of the small, decided mouth were all so many arrows in Cupid's quiver. Sad to say, however, with all her generous goodness, truth compels us to confess that Mysie did flirt: not, however deliberately or maliciously, nor did she break hearts to gratify a spirit of petty vanity. But sometimes unconsciously, sometimes from the love of frolic inherent in her buoyant, laughing nature, Mysie did occasionally make deeper wounds in masculine hearts than she need have done. With an unmistakably deep affection she could not trifle, always giving a decided answer, like an honorable little woman as she really was; but if she was not convinced of the genuineness of a suitor's attachment, she could seldom resist the temptation to probe his feelings by a spice of coquetry on her part. And woe to any male flirt who dared to approach Mysie Collins; she was sure to avenge on such a one the mischief he had wrought elsewhere. Belonging to this latter class was Tom Jones, a soldier, home in the village for two months' furlough, and who quickly fell into the train of Mysie's admirers, thinking that he would very soon be at the top of the list in the estimation of his inamorata. But Mysie had heard sundry well-authenticated accounts of female hearts cooly trifled with by this same gallant Tom, and, as usual, set herself to punish the offender. Luckless Tom taking her smiles as so many encouragements to farther proceedings, soon ventured to waylay the little lady as she was returning from carrying home some work, and begged the favor of a walk with her that evening. According to the etiquette of rustic courtship, such a proposal is generally understood as a preliminary to an offer of marriage. Mysie smiled, and dimples chased each other most bewitchingly over her sparkling countenance, as she replied demurely:

"But the boots I have on must go to the shoemaker's this evening, and I shouldn't like you to walk there with me; and if I go there after getting grandmother's tea it will be too late for a walk afterwards."

"But you are going home now, Miss Collins?" said Tom, auguring favorably from her shyness; "if you will let me have the boots as soon as you are at home, I will take them for you, and come back for you for our walk by the time you have finished tea."

"But grandmother won't like to see a soldier in the house," returned the unconquerable Mysie; "if you you will be so kind as to take the boots for me to be mended, just come round under our little back window, and I will throw them out to you,"

To this Tom eagerly agreed, and skulked round to the back of the house, while Mysie went in straight to her grandmother and told the story, winning from the old lady a grim chuckle of approval at the thought of the military flirt getting dealt out to him the due reward of his past iniquities.

"Look, grandmother!" exclaimed Mysie, as she changed her boots, holding up the dirty ones for Mrs. Elster's inspection; "aren't they delightful muddy? Oh! I stepped in all the worst puddles I could find coming down the lane, and I'm sure I can't find any paper fit to wrap them in; so Tom will have to take them just as they are. Oh! won't he be in a hurry to take me for another walk?"

She ran up stairs, and leaning out of the little window, beneath which her suitor stood waiting, said in a whisper:

"Catch them, Mr. Jones; you must excuse there not being paper around them, I hadn't any just at hand." And so saying after some pretended hesitation, she threw out the boots, one of which, missing one of Tom's outstretched hands, went plump against his arm, leaving a thick patch of mud on the handsome uniform.

"Oh! what a pity!" said Mysie sympathizingly; "but don't come back here for me, Mr. Jones, wait for me at Chips Pond."

Mysie drew back out of sight, had her tea comfortably, and after tea went for a walk with her cousin Ned Wharton. In the course of the return walk late in the evening, they took the opportunity of calmly sauntering by Chip's Pond, where stood the enraged Tom, whom Mysie passed with an innocent nod and sweet smile as if perfectly unconscious of having been the cause of his spending the whole evening on the "dreadful post of observation" in vain.

But at last Mysie's own time came. A friend of hers had married a sergeant in the marine artillery, and Mysie was invited to spend a week with them. Having arranged her business affairs she went.

Her friend Mrs. Duncan was living at Wilmington, where a corps of the Royal Marine Artillery was stationed. During the first evening of Mysie's visit, a friend of Sergeant Duncan's came in to spend the evening with him. The new comer was a tall, stern-looking man of about thirty-five; handsome and intelligent, but apparently quite unused to appreciate the charms of female society. He chatted with the sergeant the whole evening, then wishing him and his wife good-night turned to go; but suddenly starting back, just laid his big brown hand on Mysie's a moment, paused, and said abruptly:

"I'm coming again to-morrow." He seemed to have exhausted his words, for he instantly left, without speaking more to either of the astonished three. As soon as he was gone, Mysie's mirth burst out.

"Who in the world is that?" she asked, as she paused in the midst of her laughter.

"Somebody much too good for you to play with, my girl," answered the seargeant. "There isn't a girl in Wilmington who wouldn't catch at a word of kindness from Corporal Morris; but he won't look at one of the whole lot. He's done for now, I can see. Men like him don't speak as he did to you unless they are pretty far gone. Now, don't go carrying on any tricks with him, or you'll break the noblest heart God ever made. No man could be more faithful to a woman than Jack will be, if he ever takes a wife; and if he doesn't take you, why, child, you'll be a fool, that's all." And the sergeant took up his pipe as a man who has said all he means to say on a subject.

The next day Morris came very early, and asked *Mysie* to go for a walk. They had not gone far when he spoke in the stern, quiet way natural to him.

"*Miss* Collins, I have never loved anybody else. Do you think you can marry me? *I love you!*"

Now this was not at all the sort of courtship *Mysie* wanted. Her own heart was not sufficiently caught to enable her to understand the sudden, earnest love of this grave man, who could not make flatering speeches, but could only, out of the unfathomable depths of his strong, noble heart, state the fact which shook his whole manly nature—"*I love you!*" She answered in a tone of demure mischief:

"Perhaps your mother wouldn't like you to marry?"

"*Mother* won't think of interfering in a matter that is *my* business; she is too good a mother for that," he replied, taking *Mysie's* impertinent little speech seriously.

"But I don't love you," urged *Mysie*.

"But perhaps you will in time. Let me write to you when you return home."

And so it was settled. *Mysie* liked his letters, and in excuse for confessing herself caught at last, remarked to a friend:

"I like his letters, and as he will be away at sea four years at a time, you see I shall get these nice letters without the bother of a husband always about the house."

But *Morris* wanted a speedy marriage. His term of sea-service would soon begin, and he was anxious to leave her his *wife*. *Mysie* was frightened when things began to look serious. She was ashamed to break her word to the man who had chosen her as the one love of his life, and her own heart took part with him. In short, poor *Mysie* was at that point when a woman feels she cannot be happy in giving up her lover, and yet does not love him quite well enough to be ready to resign herself unreservedly to him. She took what she called a middle course; she wrote that she had no money, as what she had saved must be for her grandmother. He wrote back that he had saved enough to justify them in beginning housekeeping; and should he come to her home to marry her, or would she prefer to be married from her friend *Mrs* Duncan's. His money was in the bank, and he asked her to name the sum she would like him to draw for furnishing their house. She wrote in reply that if she was married at all, she would come to *Mrs.* Duncan's, and mentioned a round sum as necessary.

"There," thought *Mysie*, as she sealed her letter; "now Jack will think he's going to get an extravagant wife, and he won't be in such a hurry."

But she was wrong in her calculations. *Morris* took her letters in good faith, and his very next dispatch informed her that the money was withdrawn from the bank and in readiness for her use, and he begged that their marriage might take place as soon as possible. *Mysie* went to *Mrs.* Duncan's perverse in her first interview with her lover, when he laid before her the money and asked her to accompany him to choose a house she told him she did not love him, and he had better take back his money. He looked at her flushed face in silence, and then said slowly:

"And do you think, *Mysie*, that I could let you go out into the world again without a penny? If you won't have a husband to keep you, you will need the money all the more."

He turned to go, when *Mysie* exclaimed.

"Take your money, *Mr. Morris*, or perhaps you'll hear to-morrow that I'm gone, and the money too."

"If *you* go, I hope you *will* take the money," he answered. "It is useless to me without *you*," and he left the room without another word.

Our willful little coquette was thoroughly frightened now; and when *Morris* came next day as if nothing had happened, he found his lady-love in a very humble frame of mind. *She had found her* master.

The wedding came off, and *Mysie* never flirted again, except with her own husband. The gay, laughing coquette was, henceforth, before the world, an irreproachably faithful wife; but when alone with her husband she was at once the delight and the torment of his life. At length came the order for sea-service. *Mysie* parted from him affectionately, but calmly, while his long passionate kiss as she stood in the boat to say good-by," told of the strong man's heart-wring. She could have thrown herself on his breast, and shrieked in agony of sorrow, but her shy pride kept her back; and *Morris* left her for the long separation not knowing that the eager passion of that wayward, loving girl was folding itself round him in clinging devotion. At first, to her friends, she laughed off the parting; but when a year of absence had somewhat tamed her spirit, she began to confess that she "wouldn't be sorry to see Jack come back." Then, as time rolled on, she felt more and more the weary waiting; until, hearing one evening that the cholera had broken out on her husband's ship, she rushed into *Mrs.* Duncan's house at ten o'clock that night exclaiming:

"Oh! the cholera's on board his ship! Oh! *do* pray for my Jack!"

The four years had not expired, when one afternoon, *Mysie* was busy sewing in her little room. The day was warm, and the house-door stood open to admit the air. She sewed on for a time, then leaning back in her chair sighed half aloud:

"Heigh-ho! I wish Jack were here! O, Jack, if you only knew how I love you now!"

A shadow fell on the floor, and, looking up with a start, *Mysie* caught a glimpse of a tall figure in uniform, standing in the passage, the seargeant's stripes on the arm, blazing out in the golden-tinted sunbeams. Thinking it was Sergeant Duncan come with some message from his wife, and hoping he had not heard her cry for Jack, she rose, feeling rather ashamed, and went towards the door. The visitor moved forward. A crimson flush of doubt, joy, dyed her face as she drew back an instant to look on the bronzed features.

"*Mysie!*"

Everything was forgotten then as she sprang to the outstretched arms of her husband; and in one wild cry telling all the pent-up, growing love of the long absence, sobbed, as her head nestled on his breast.

"O Jack, I *do* love you, my darling!"

ANECDOTE OF THEODORE HOOK.—On the evening of the arrival at the university he joined a party of school fellows in a carouse at one of the taverns. Sundry bowls of "bishops" and of egg-flip having been discussed, songs amatory and bacchanalian having been sung with full choruses, and altogether the jocularity having begun to pass the limit of becoming mirth, the proctor made his appearance, and advancing to the table at which the "freshman"—fresh in every sense of the word—was presiding, put the question:

"Pray, sir, are you a member of the university?"

"No, sir," relpied Hook, rising and bowing respectfully. "Pray sir are you?"

A little disconcerted at the extreme gravity of the other, the proctor held out his ample sleeve and said:

"You see this, sir?"

"Ah," returned Hook, having examined the fabric with great earnestness for a few seconds, "yes, I perceive—Manchester velvet—and may I take the liberty, sir, of inquiring how much you might have paid per yard for the article?"

The quiet imperturbability of manner with which this was uttered was more than the reverend gentleman could stand, and, muttering something about supposing it was a mistake, he affected a retreat amid shouts of laughter from Hock's companions.

Out in the Apache country the Indians are said to have become so peaceable that is hard to tell a redskin from a white man, the only difference being that the white has no scalp, and the Apache has two.

Miss Clara M. Babcock, a graduate of the Divinity School of Harvard College, occupied her father's pulpit at the Warren street Unitarian Chapel in Boston on Sunday last.