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A WILL AND A WAY

By Martha McCulloch-Williams Copyright, 1904, By Martha McCulloch-Williams

"I think there ought to be a law against making wills," Jean said half tearfully. "So do I—almost," Aunt Mary answered, with a little sigh. Thereat Jean began to laugh, a whimsical, bubbling peal, good to hear. "If it was any other time I shouldn't mind—not so very much," Aunt Mary protested. "I'm bound to say it for your father, my brother John, he's as peaceable as can be until he's crowded real hard. I know he wouldn't ever have gone out of his way to quarrel with Major Hymes—but knowing poor, old Uncle Jimmy Jackson as he did, he was bound to stand up for that will—it only said what the old man had told him over and over and over—" "I know," Jean interrupted, then with a laugh: "I know, too, aunty, darling, you're distressed because I shall be left out of the Hymes party. I do want to go, dreadfully, not so much on account of Rob Hymes himself as to see who—all else is there—and what the Claytons will do to get a beau piece—" "H—m! I believe you'd like to have a few beaux yourself, miss," Aunt Mary retorted. Jean smiled and nodded. "But I wouldn't go gunning for them Clayton fashion—not if I grew to the wall. But they are bound to marry somehow. They have no money to speak of, and can't well do anything else—" "I wish you couldn't do anything else. Maybe then you wouldn't hold your head so high you never see me," somebody said through the open window. It was Rob Hymes, who had been eavesdropping these last three minutes. He went straight to Aunt Mary, kissed her handsomely and patted her hand, then turned reproachful eyes on Jean. "If you think mother and I mean to be drawn into this absurd quarrel you



"ALL WE WANT IS A CHANCE TO HAVE HER SPEAK FOR HERSELF."

clearly don't know the sort of folk we are. The case is just this—unless you say you'll come there won't be any party—" "Why, Rob, I'd love to, but how can I, with our fathers glaring and breathing out threatenings whenever they think of each other?" Jean asked. Rob snapped his fingers. "That for all their rows," he said. "I hate to seem wanting in respect to my elders and betters—neighborhood dignitaries, too—but Squire John Bascom and Henry Hymes are a pair of spoiled children in spite of gray hairs and need to be disciplined accordingly." "Who's going to do it?" Rob dropped his eyes and answered meekly, "I propose to be a humble instrument in the hands of divine Providence—and the Claytons." "Indeed! Tell us about it. I don't believe there's anything to tell," Jean said, propping her toes together and laying her hands primly in her lap. Rob flipped them delicately, then went on: "We all know those old gentlemen have agreed ever since we two were born that we were born on purpose for each other. Indeed my father thinks my main reason for being is to give him a chance of calling you daughter. To bring them to their senses we must pretend not only to have taken up their quarrel, but that we are going to marry somebody else." "You'll have an excellent chance to do it—if you say sweet things to Elsie Clayton," Jean said. "But it's different with me. I don't know a soul I would dare propose to—" "I know several who are simply dying for a chance to propose to you, though," Rob said gallantly, playing pigtails-to-market with her fingers. Aunt Mary tried to look scandalized, but ended by laughing heartily. Jean drew down the corners of her mouth and pretended to sigh, asking: "Where shall I find them, Robby, dear? I am simply pining to say 'Yes' and 'Thanky' to somebody." "There's no time like the present—and you have never accepted me outright," Rob retorted. "But at the party you are to smile your sweetest on Ben Lloyd—and Ben only. I know it's pretty tough on him, but he has promised not to mind. Seeing he can't have

You himself, he's ready to do a man's part to help you get me."

Then the three fell talking all at once. It was late afternoon when Rob went home, humming a love tune and smiling as he rode along.

The Hymes party turned out to be far and away the grandest Hopewell neighborhood had ever seen. Notwithstanding, Major Hymes got up the morning after with a sense of aching loss. He sighed all through dressing and at breakfast swore because there were no waffles—only biscuit, muffins and batter cakes. At least he said that was the reason. Rob, with his eyes on his plate and a general air of dreams, smiled and waited prudently for the storm to gather or blow over. But lightning struck him when he was least prepared for it. Mid-meal his father turned square upon him, growling out: "Whereabouts in your travels did you sense? I think you had better go back and try to find them."

"What's the row, governor?" Rob demanded innocently. The major exploded: "That's what I'd like to know. There must be a row between you and Jean Bascom—last night you hardly were civil to her, but went tagging around after that Clayton creature."

"There's the Bascom temper—I'm afraid it's hereditary—besides, Elsie Clayton says she would permit the minister to leave 'obey' in the marriage service," Rob began.

His father cut him short. "If matters have gone as far as that," he said, "just you listen to this. Unless you marry to suit me, you'll find that my will ties up things as tight as that old simpleton, Jimmy Jackson, tried to tie up all he left—" "Why! I thought you disbelieved in the will?" Rob interrupted.

His father turned redder than ever, but went on, pounding the table hard between words. "Yes, sir, your wife must please me or you'll have hard sledding. Elsie Clayton, indeed! Look at your mother, sir, and be properly ashamed of your taste."

"I have nothing against Jean Bascom," Rob began judiciously. "But she is taken up with Ben Lloyd. Then, too, she evidently takes her father's side—just as I have taken yours—" "Then you're a fool for your pains, sir," the major fairly shouted. "Of course, she takes her father's side—that's the natural, the right thing for a woman. But you—if you were half a man, you would have shown her that you two had nothing to do with the case. You must be bewitched with the Clayton fried egg eyes."

"Not particularly," Rob said, masking a laugh with a fit of coughing. "But I did make up to Jean, far enough to find out she would have nothing to say to me—unless you apologized to the squire, which I knew was out of the question."

"Indeed! You had better not know so much," Major Hymes said witheringly. "But if that's the hitch, why, it's mighty easily straightened. Come along with me, sir. By George, it makes me think more than ever of Jean! If she sticks up this way for her father what won't she do for a husband or a son?"

Five minutes afterward they were galloping together toward the Bascom place. As luck would have it, Squire Bascom met them just inside the gate. Major Hymes did not wait for a word of welcome. Twenty yards off he roared out: "Say, John Bascom, I've come to beg your pardon and ask you for your daughter. Give 'em to me quick, else I'll be making a fool will for other folks to quarrel over."

"I reckon I've a right to ask your pardon, major," Squire Bascom said, smiling and holding out his hand. "But the daughter—there you've got me. I can't speak for her."

"Oh, all we want is a chance to have her speak for herself," the major answered.

Rob smiled to hear him. Down in his heart he knew what Jean would say.

Killing Crocodiles. "There are two ways of killing crocodiles," writes an ex-resident of India. "One is by shooting with a rifle, but the most satisfactory way of dealing with them, besides being far the most sporting, is to bait a good large hook with a bird or small animal and fasten it by a chain to a good long rope, the end of which is firmly picketed, the rope being coiled and the bait laid in shallow water. There must be lots of slack line, as the crocodile does not swallow anything at once, but seizes it and takes it into deep water to gorge. A number of lines may be laid and looked up in the morning or cool of the evening. When hooked it will take a good many men to haul a crocodile out, and as he resents the operation and can use his tail as well as his jaws one or two sportsmen will find considerable entertainment in dispatching him with spears. Some crocodiles grow to an enormous size, and their maws always contain round white stones and often trinkets, the relics of inside passengers. The writer assisted at the death of a not extraordinarily large 'snubnose' which had six women's rings in her."

Keeping It Circulating. "This," hoarsely spoke the hero shaking a roll of bills in the face of the villain—"this is blood money!" "Blood money?" echoes the villain, pausing to light a cigarette.

"Yes. Take it back. I will not have it about me!"

"Very well," replies the villain, puffing disdainfully; "I shall blow it in myself. Blood money! Ha-ha-ha! It shall not be spent in vain."

At this point a lady in the third row of the orchestra faints.—Chicago Tribune

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"MISCELLANEOUS." Hansen & McCanna, who occupy the shop formerly used by T. S. Simpson, adjoining the city water office, are prepared to do all kinds of sign and carriage painting. They will make a specialty of work of this class and guarantee satisfaction.

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION—NOTICE is hereby given that the co-partnership of Hop Hing Lung & Co., doing business as merchants and contractors for Chinese labor at No. 376 Bond street, Astoria, Oregon, is this day dissolved by the retirement of Yen Jim Sang, Wong Hong, Lee York. The business will hereafter be conducted by the remaining members of the company. Chew Gong, manager, left on the Elder for Vancouver, where he will embark for China. He will return next year. His partners, Eng Fook and Jogh Hop, will manage the business during his absence.

HOP HING LUNG & CO. AH DOCK, Chairman.

U. S. ENGINEER OFFICE, PORTLAND, Ore., December 30, 1904. Sealed proposals will be received here for stone for extension of jetty at mouth of Columbia river, Oregon and Washington, until 11 a. m., January 31, 1905, and then publicly opened. Information on application. W. C. Langitt, Maj. Engrs.

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