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Won by Waiting

By FRANK S. CHISWICK

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Ferris Seaton had meant only to lightly crack the shell, but when he grasped the napkin to mop the sticky yellow from his vest he realized the fierce energy with which he had struck the unoffending egg.

His sister looked across the table in surprise. "What's the matter, Ferris?" she asked. "Is the market wrong, or is Audrey? It is Audrey," she finished for him as she noticed the quick contraction of the bushy brows. "What is it?"

He tossed the morning paper across the table.

"At the head of the third column," he said briefly as he continued the cleaning process.

The article was a lurid scare head announcing the forthcoming marriage of Audrey Wiley, daughter of the multimillionaire Thomas Wiley, to the Baron von Zinghen of the German embassy at Washington. At a dinner and ball that evening the formal announcement of the engagement would be made.

In the early seventies, when Tom Wiley and Dave Seaton worked adjoining claims in the Sierras, they had been fast friends. Seaton had sold his claim to Wiley, who struck it rich ten months afterward.

When Wiley came east a multimillionaire, Seaton was a prosperous merchant, and the old friendship was renewed. Ferris and Ethel were invited to play with Audrey, and the companionship of the fathers was repeated in the second generation.

Then Ferris went to college, only to be recalled during his senior year by the failure and subsequent death of his father. The friendship between the two families lapsed temporarily until Ferris had placed the wrecked business on its old basis. Audrey, just back from the finishing school, was a beautiful girl. Between her and Ferris it was love at first sight, but Wiley pere had other plans for his daughter.

"I like you, my boy," he admitted to Ferris, "but Audrey is not for you. I've spent thousands on that girl, and she's going to marry more money or marry blood."

Ferris replied sharply. Mr. Wiley forbade him the house and imported from California a sister to act as Audrey's duenna.

This had happened six months ago. Ferris' letters had been returned by her father, and meetings were impossible. And now came the announcement of her engagement!

"I never thought Audrey would be so mean," declared Ethel hotly as she threw down the paper.

"She's not to blame," declared Ferris, calmly consuming what remained of the egg and its fellow. "I have all faith in her. It's that father of hers."

Ethel passed around the table and seized her brother by the shoulder.

"Ferris Seaton," she declared, with energy, "you are the most aggravating person I know of! Why don't you do something?"

"I'm going to, if you don't shake out all my ideas," retorted the young man.

"Then," she declared, "I will leave you in peace."

Ferris smiled as the dining room door slammed, and he finished his breakfast with some appetite. Then he started down town at a brisk walk. The air was sharp and bracing, and the half formed idea took shape in his brain. He turned his steps to the poorer quarter of the town, and a twenty minute walk brought him to an establishment, half saloon, half cafe, over the door of which was a small sign

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reading. "Headquarters of the Bakers and Confectioners' Union."

The place was crowded with clean shaven men, each carrying a small parcel which Seaton knew contained a dress suit. They were waiters not regularly employed, but hoping for odd jobs with caterers. Here the head waiters for the big catering establishments secured their staffs for balls and dinners.

The Planet had announced that Monaco would serve at the Wiley dinner and ball, and Seaton went straight to the proprietor.

"Has Fritz come in?" he demanded, naming the well known maitre of the Monaco establishment.

The proprietor jerked his thumb over his shoulder to where a stout blond German sat at a table. Fritz rose as Seaton approached. His memory for faces was good, and he recognized the young merchant instantly.

"Want a job, Mr. Seaton?" he inquired jocosely.

"That's it exactly."

"Where's your card? You don't belong to the union." Fritz was willing to carry out the joke.

"See here," said Ferris, "I'll give \$100 to the union and another \$100 to you if you hire me at Wiley's tonight."

Fritz blinked a moment. Then he put out his hand. All the world loves a lover, and he knew what Seaton wanted. A bill passed between them.

"Better hire a dress suit. Your own will fit too well," suggested Fritz after the details had been concluded. "And be at the back door of Monaco's at 6:30. I'll take you up myself."

When the chosen few who had been bidden to both dinner and ball gathered about the board that evening, none recognized in the smooth shaven waiter Ferris Seaton. Even Audrey did not know him until a waiter handed her a menu card on the back of which was written in a familiar hand:

Meet me in the conservatory as soon as you can after dinner. I am here as a waiter. F. S.

Little Von Zinghen, sitting by her side, wondered at the flush that suddenly spread over her face and neck, but complacently credited it to maiden modesty and the impending announcement. Von Zinghen had his blue blood and his vast estates, but the possession of all Germany could not have made a man of him. Audrey contrasted, with loathing, the puppet at her side with the clean cut specimen of American manhood who, even in an ill fitting dress coat, showed his physical perfection and whose keen features bore the impress of intellect.

An hour later they were in the conservatory, where as children they once played among the palms, pretending they were castaways on a tropical island.

"Ferris," she said as he clasped her hands, "what ever persuaded you to run this risk?"

"You," he responded tenderly. "I couldn't lose you without one last effort. I want to know if you love me enough to go with me now—at once! I have a good income, and I am at least a man."

"The dearest man in all the world!" she whispered softly.

"Then come," he urged. "I have a cab at the corner and a warm wrap for you. The gardener's door, dear, and no one will see us!"

So hand in hand they went out into the night.

The next morning the papers rang with the sensation, and Thomas Wiley over his coffee was in a frame of mind utterly indescribable. The one touch needed to complete his fury was supplied when the butler brought in Seaton's card.

It took Wiley four minutes by the clock to calm down to the point where he could control his voice sufficiently to tell Jenkins, the placid English butler, to kick Seaton off the step. By that time he had decided to execute the order in person.

Seaton was not on the front steps, but in the reception room and in the most comfortable chair. He arose as the elder man approached.

"I thought," he announced affably, "that I would run in and tell you that Audrey was all right."

"All right! She's disgraced!"

Ferris caught Wiley's arm in a grasp that made him wince. "Be careful!" he warned. "You are speaking of my wife. We were married last night by Dr. Stetson, your own pastor."

"Her name's in all the papers!" spluttered Wiley.

"So it was yesterday," retorted Seaton, "but then it was linked with that of Von Zinghen, a man whose past life is notorious. You put it in then. You are responsible for its appearance this morning. You thought you wanted blood instead of brains. I knew better and corrected your error. You will thank me some day. Better thank me now."

He held out his hand frankly, and Wiley grasped it.

"Hang me if I don't! You were right!"

J. R. Hamilton, the world famous mutton buyer, recently closed a deal with William Childress for 5,000 muttons, 1,500 dry ewes, 2,000 bred ewes and 1,500 yearlings at \$2.25 per head. These sheep belong to the Howard Well ranch. T. T. Thomason bought a flock of sheep from Mr. Thomas of Bosque county for \$2 per head. The sheep are now ranging in Deer canyon on the Pecos—Ozona Kicker.

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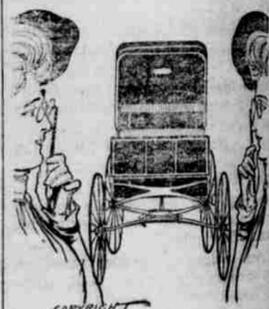


A Warm Baby

isn't always a comfortable one, any more than a man is in warm weather with his cuffs and collars wadded, when they are not properly laundered. Was your shirts, collars and cuffs are laundered here you can sally forth under broiling July sun happy in the knowledge that your linen will not "tucker out" before the day is over. Try a sample of our summer laundering.

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