

THREE TIMES A BRIDESMAID.

From New York Weekly:

And so it happened that Augusta Vivian had let a bright tear-drop or two fall upon the shining folds of silver-barred tarlatan as she sat there all alone.

"Augusta," said Aunt Bessie, presently re-entering and sitting herself down to work in the sunny corner of the bay window, "how old is your sister Helen?"

"Sixteen next month," answered Augusta, spiritlessly.

"I thought so," said Aunt Bessie, sagely. "Do you know, Augusta, I've got a new kink in my head!"

"What is that?" asked Augusta, forcing herself at least to appear to take some sort of interest in the subject under discussion.

"Major Culthorpe next door—don't you notice that he comes here every day?"

"He never speaks to me," said Augusta, coldly.

"But he does to Helen! They were out an hour yesterday looking at the lilycath beds. I do really believe he means something, Augusta. Helen is young, to be sure—only sixteen—and he must be more than thirty—"

"Thirty-one," said Augusta, with a little sigh, so soft that it was scarcely perceptible.

"But he's very rich and very handsome—a great deal more brilliant match, in a worldly point of view, than Lilly's husband. Helen couldn't do better than to accept him if he should happen to propose, and so I shall tell her."

Augusta dare not answer. Marrying and giving in marriage—how naturally they came to every girl but herself. Here was little Helen, wearing short dresses, and scarcely out of the school-room, and Major Culthorpe, one in a thousand, handsome as Apollo, and polished as Chevalier Bayard, had already singled her out to be his wife! A keen pang of envy shot through Augusta Vivian's heart, none the less keen in that she felt how base it was thus to grudge the royal crown of wedded happiness to her young sister's lover.

"Helen is the last of the flock," added Aunt Bessie, meditatively. "except you, Augusta, and I don't suppose you will ever marry now!"

"No," Augusta echoed, looking down drearily at the white tarlatan folds, "I shall never marry now."

"And you'll be very happy, I dare say," went on Aunt Bessie, in a consolatory vein. "People that don't have any ups are never troubled with downs. Dear heart alive I'm an old maid myself, and I'm sure my life has always been an easy one!"

"But if you never had a love?" "Well, I don't no how things would have seemed to me then," said Aunt Bessie. "I've always felt more like a widow than an old maid since, though I've been Miss Vivian to the end of the chapter, just as you will be!"

And Aunt Bessie fell into such a reverie concerning old times, that she never heeded when Augusta slipped out of the room.

Down into the garden, through hedges of budding lilacs, where crocus blossoms sprinkle the borders with gold, and pale snow-drops were already sending up their stars of spring bloom across the rustic bridge to the solitary walk among the evergreens, Augusta flitted

along, scarcely knowing or heeding whither she went. Some new shadow seemed to have come over her life within the last hour—some brooding phantom of evil, she herself knew not what. Only that she was very, very sorrowful, and longed to be alone.

"Miss Vivian!" She started like a frightened fawn.

"Major Culthorpe!" For he had met her at the little wire gateway which divided the Culthorpe estate from the less pretentious grounds of the cottage. A tall, handsome man, with Spanish eyes, a rich dark complexion, and a beard soft and long as floss silk. Major Culthorpe's cheek was slightly flushed, as if in sympathy with the touch of crimson which suffused Augusta Vivian's whole face.

"Did I startle you, Miss Vivian?" "No, but I did not expect—"

She stopped abruptly, not knowing what to say in her confusion.

"Were you going for a walk?" "Yes—no—I don't know."

And Augusta blushed more hotly than ever at the thought of what a goose she was making of herself. But Major Culthorpe did not seem to notice it.

"May I have the pleasure of walking a little way with you?" he asked.

"Helen is up at the cottage," Augusta answered, impulsively.

"Is she? I hope she is very well; but you have not yet answered my question."

"Of course—certainly—I shall be very happy," stammered Augusta. And she thought to herself, "Now he is going to make a confidante of me."

TO BE CONTINUED.

Artist (with elevated eyebrows)—Humph! You've been having your house painted.

Suburban Host (proudly)—Yes. Looks gay, don't she?

Artist (with cutting irony)—Why didn't you put on more colors? Host (apologetically)—The store I went to only had six colors.

Editor—What's this? Poetry? Get out of here or I'll—"

Stranger—I'm not a poet, I'm a rhymester.

Editor—Oh! Sit down.

Stranger—I'm sling slang.

Editor—Have a cigar.

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G. A. TUPPER, Proprietor Occidental Hotel, Santa Rosa, Cal.

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This Extensive Nursery, comprising 125 acres, is located one half mile from Payette depot, on the O. S. L. Ry. This Nursery has done more to promote fruit growing in Eastern Oregon and Idaho than all other Nurseries combined. The trees are acclimated and are offered for sale that are known to thrive and flourish in the mountain country. The "IDAHO" pear will be offered in limited quantities for the first time this year. This pear is a native of Idaho and is considered the finest pear grown and is extremely hardy. Do not fail to plant a few trees.

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Harper's Weekly. ILLUSTRATED. The volume of the Magazine for the year 1891, will be published during the month of January.

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1891. Harper's Magazine ILLUSTRATED.

The Impulse America, by Theodore Child, will be in Harper's Magazine during the year 1891. The articles on Florida, by Charles Dudley Warner, will be continued. Among other notable contributions will be a novel by Charles Craddock, a collection of original drama by W. M. Thackeray, now published for the first time, a novel written and illustrated by the author, a novelette by William Howells, and a series of papers of London by Walter Besant.

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