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## A SUMMONS HOME

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Everything Else She Tried and Failed-But Her Last Trick Won Success.

By ELEANOR PORTER

Author of "Pollyanna," "Just David." Etc.

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MRS. THADDEUS CLAYTON came softly into the room and looked with apprehensive eyes upon the little old man in the rocking chair. "How be ye, dearie? Yer hain't

wanted fer nothin', now, have ye?" she "Not a thing, Harriet," he returned

cheerily. "I'm feelin' real pert, too. Was there lots there? An' did Parson Drew say a heap o' fine things?"

Mrs. Clayton dropped into a chair and pulled listlessly at the black strings of her bonnet.

"Twas a beautiful fun'ral, Thaddeus-a beautiful fun'ral. I-I 'most wished it was mine." "Harriet!"

She gave a shamed-faced laugh. "Well, I did-then Jehiel and Hannah Jane would 'a' come, an' I could

The horrified look on the old man's face gave way to a broad smile. "Oh! Harriet-Harriet!" he chuckled, "how could ye seen 'em if you

was dead?" "Huh? Well, I-Thaddeus"-her voice rose sharply in the silent room-"every single one of them Perkins boys was there, and Annabel, too. Only think what poor Mis' Perkins would 'a given ter seen 'em 'fore she went! But they waited-waited, Thaddeus, jest as everybody does, till their folks

"But, Harriet," demurred the old man, "surely you'd 'a' had them boys come ter their own mother's fun'ral!" "Come! I'd 'a' feasted her eyes on 'em. Thaddeus"-Mrs. Clayton rose to her feet and stretched out two gaunt hands longingly-"Thaddeus, I get so hungry sometimes for Jehiel and Hannah Jane, seems as though I jest

couldn't stand it!" "I know-I know, dearte," quavered the old man, vigorously polishing his

"Fifty years ago my first baby came," resumed the woman in tremulous tones; "then another came, and an-other, till I'd six. I loved 'em an' tended 'em, an' cared for 'em, an' didn't have a thought but was fer them bables. Four died"-her voice broke, then went on with renewed strength-"but I've got Jehiel and Hannah Jane left; at least, I've got two bits of paper that comes mebbe once a month, an' one of 'em's signed 'your dutiful son.
Jehlel, an' the other, 'from your loving daughter, Hannah Jane."

"Well, Harriet, they-they're pretty good ter write letters," ventured Mr. "Letters!" walled his wife. "I can't

hug an' kiss letters, though I try to. sometimes. "Well, well, wife, mebbe they'll come

mebbe they'll come this summer;

She shook her head dismally. "You've said that ev'ry year for the last fifteen summers, an' they hain't come yet. Jehiel went West more than twenty years ago, an' he's never been home since. Why, Thaddeus, we've got a grandson 'most eighteen, that we hain't even seen! Hannah Jane's been home jest once since she was married, but that was nigh on ter sixteen years ago. She's always writin' of her Tommy and Nellie, but-I want ter see

'em, Thaddeus; I want ter see 'em!" "Yes, yes; well, we'll ask 'em, Harriet, again-we'll ask 'em real urgent-like, an' mebbe that'll fetch 'em," comforted the old man. "We'll ask 'em ter be here the Fourth; that's eight weeks off yet, an' I shall be real smart

Two letters that were certainly "urgent-like" left the New England farmhouse the next morning. One was addressed to a thriving western city, the

other to Chattanooga, Tennessee.
In course of time the answers came. Hannah Jane's appeared first, and was opened with shaking fingers.

Dear Mother (read Mrs. Clayton sloud):
Your letter came two or three days ago,
and I have hurried round to answer it,
for you seemed to be so anxious to hear.
I'm real sorry, but I don't see how we
can get away this summer. Nathan is
real busy at the store; and, some way. I
can't seem to get up energy enough to
even think of fixing up the children to
take them so far. Thank you for the inyitation, though, and we should enjoy

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the visit very much; but I guess we can't go just yet. Of course, if anything serious should come up that made it necessary—why, that would be different; but I knew you are sensible, and will understand how it is with us.

Nathan is well, but business has been pretty brisk, and he is in the store early and late. As long as he's making money, he don't mind; but I tell him I think he might rest a little sometimes, and let some one else do the things he does.

Tom is a big boy now, smart in his

Tom is a big boy now, smart in his studies and with a good head for figures. Nellie loves her books, too; and, for a little girl of eleven, does pretty well, we

I must close now. We all send love, and hope you are getting along all right. Was glad to hear father was gaining so fast.

Your loving daughter, HANNAH JANE.

The letter dropped from Mrs. Clayton's fir.gers and lay unheeded on the floor. The woman covered her face with her hands and rocked her body back and forth.

"There, there, dearle," soothed the old man huskily; "mebbe Jehiel's will be diff'rent. There, there! Don't take on so, Harrlet! Don't! I just know Jehiel'll come."

A week later Mrs. Clayton found another letter in the rural delivery box. Yes, it was from Jehiel. She drew a long breath. Her eager

thumb was almost under the flap of the envelope when she hesitated, eyed the letter uncertainly, and thrust it into the pocket of her calico gown. All day it lay there, save at times-which, indeed, were of frequent occurrencewhen she took it from its hiding place, pressed it to her cheek, or gloried in every curve of the boldly written address

At night, after the lamp was lighted, she said to her husband in ton low he could scarcely hear:

"Thaddeus, I-I had a letter from Jehiel today."

"You did-and never told me? Why, Harriet, what—" He paused helplessly.
"I—I haven't read it, Thaddeus," she stammered. "I couldn't bear to, someway. I don't know why, but I couldn't. You read It!" She held out the letter with shaking hands.

He took it, giving her a sharp glance from anxious eyes. As he began to read aloud she checked him. "No; ter yerself, Thaddeus-ter

yerself! Then-tell me. As he read she watched his face.

The light died from her eyes and her chin quivered as she saw the stern lines deepen around his mouth. A min-



"A Fun'ral-It's Murder!" He Gasped.

ter and laid it down without a word. "Thaddeus, ye don't mean-he didn't

"Read it-I-I can't," choked the

She reached slowly for the sheet of paper and spread it on the table before

Dear Mother (Jehlei had written): Just a word to tell you we are all O. K. and doing finely. Your letter reminded me that it was about time I was writing home to the folks. I don't mean to let so many weeks go by without a letter families. and cries, besieged their father with

from me, but somehew the time just gets away from me before I know it.

Minnie is well and deep in spring sewing and house-cleaning. I know-because dressmaker's bills are beginning to come in. and every time I go home I find a carpet up in a new place!

Our boy Fred is eighteen tomorrow. You'd be proud of him. I know, if you could see him. Business is rushing. Glad to hear you're all right and that father's rheumatism is on the gain.

As ever, your affectionate and dutiful son.

son, JEHIBL.
Oh, by the way-about that visit Esst.
I reckon we'll have to call it off this year,
Too bad; but can't seem to see my way
clear.

Bye-bye,

Harriet Clayton did not cry this time. She stared at the letter long minutes with wide open, tearless eyes.
then she slowly folded it and put it back in its envelope.

"Harriet, mebbe-" began the old man timidly.

'Don't, Thaddeus-please don't!" she interrupted. "I-I don't want ter talk." And she rose unsteadily to her feet and moved toward the kitchen door.

For a time Mrs. Clayton went about her work in a silence quite unusual, while her husband watched her with troubled eyes. His beart grieved over the bowed head and drooping shoulders, and over the blurred eyes that were so often surreptitiously wiped on a corner of the gingham apron. But at the end of a week the little old woman accosted him with a face full of

aggressive, yet anxious, determination. Thaddeus, I want ter speak ter you about somethin'. I've been thinkin' it all out, an' I've decided that I've got ter kill one of us off."

"Well, I have. A fun'ral is the only thing that will fetch Jehiel and-" "Harriet, are ye gone crazy? Have

ye gone clean mad?" She looked at him appealingly. "Now, Thaddeus, don't try ter hen-der me, please. You see, it's the only way. A fun'ral is the-"

"A fun'ral-it's murder!" he shud-"Oh, not ter make believe, as I shall,"

she protested eagerly. "It's-" "Make believe!" "Why, yes, of course. You'll have

er be the one ter do it, 'cause I'm goin' ter be the dead one, an'-" "Harriet!"

"There, there, please, Thaddeus! I've got ter see Jehiel and Hannah Jane 'fore I die!"

"But-they-they'll come if-" "No, they won't come. We've tried It over an' over again; you know we have. Hannah Jane herself said that if anythin' 'serious' came up it would be diff'rent. Well, I'm goin' ter have somethin' 'serious' come up!"

"But, Harriet-" "Now, Thaddeus," begged the woman, almost crying, "you must help me, dear. I've thought it all out, an' it's easy as can be. I shan't tell any lies, of course. I cut my finger today, didn't 1?"

"Why-yes-I believe so," he acknowleged dazedly; "but what has that to do-'

"That's the 'accident,' Thaddeus, You're ter send two telegrams at once one ter Jehiel, an' one ter Hannah Jane. The telegrams will say: 'Accident to your mother. Funeral Saturday afternoon. Come at once.' That's

asked anxiously. "The 'accident' is this is being harvested at night because cut. The 'fun'ral' is old Mis' Went- it shatters out worse in the day. worth's. I heard terday that they couldn't have it until Saturday, so that'll give us plenty of time ter get the folks here. I needn't say whose fun'ral it is that's goin' ter be on Saturday, Thaddeus! I want yer ter hitch up an' drive over ter Hopkinsville ter send the telegrams. The man's new over there, an' won't know yer. You couldn't sand 'em from here, of

course." Thaddeus Clayton never knew just how he allowed himself to be persuaded to take his part in this "crazy scheme," as he termed it, but persuaded he certainly was.

It was a miserable time for Thaddeus, then. First, there was that hurried drive to Hopkinsville. Though the day was warm he fairly shivered as he handed those two fateful telegrams to the man behind the counter, Then there was the homeward trip, during which, like the guilty thing he was, he cast furtive glances from side to side.

Even home itself came to be a misery, for the sweeping and the dusting and the baking and the brewing which he encountered there left him no place to call his own, so that he lost his pa-

tience at last and moaned: "Seems ter me, Harriet, you're

pretty lively corpse!" His wife smiled, and flushed a little. There, there, dear! Don't fret. Jest think how glad we'll be ter see em!" she exclaimed.

Harriet was blissfully happy. Both the children had promptly responded to the telegrams, and were now on their way. Hannah Jane, with her husband and two children, were expected on Friday evening; but Jehiel and his wife and boy could not possibly get in until early on the following

All this brought scant joy to Thaddeus. There was always hanging over him the dread horror of what he had done, and the fearful questioning as

to how it was all going to end. Friday came, but a telegram at the last moment told of trains delayed and connections missed. Hapnah would not reach home until 9:40 the next morning. So it was with a four-seated carryall that Thaddeus Clayton started this paper, for the station on Saturday morning to meet both of his children and their

The ride home was a silent one; but once inside the house, Jehiel and

The family were all in the darkened sitting room-all, indeed, save Harriet, who sat in solitary state in the chambeating almost to suffocation. It had | jund indicated him for it! been arranged that she was not to be seen until some sort of explanation had been given.

"Father, what was it?" sobbed Hannah Jane. "How did it happen?" "It must have been so sudden," faltered Jehiel. "It cut me up com-

pletely." "I can't ever forgive myself," mouned Hannah Jane hysterically. "She wanted us to come East, and I wouldn't. 'Twas my selfishness-'twas

easier to stay where I was; and now-"We'be been brutes, rather," cut in Jehiel, with a shake in his voice; "all I never thought-I never dreamed-father, can-can we see-

her?" In the chamber above, a woman sprang to her feet. Harriet bad quite forgotten the stove-pipe hole to the room below, and every sob and moan and wailing cry had been woefully distinct to her ears. With streaming eyes and quivering lips she hurried down the stairs and threw open the sittingroom door.

"Jehlel! Hannah Jane! I'm here, right here—alive!" she cried. "An' I've been a wicked, wicked woman! I never thought how bad 't was goin' ter make you feel. I truly never, never did. "Twas only myself-I wanted yer so. Oh, children, children, I've been so wicked-so awful wicked!"

Jehiel and Hannah Jone were steady of head and strong of heart, and joy. it is said, never kills; otherwise, the results of that sudden apparttion in the sitting-room doorway might have been disastrous.

As it was, a wonderfully happy family party gathered around the table an hour later; and as Jehiel led a tremulous, gray-haired woman to the seat of honor, he looked into her shining eyes and whispered:

"Dear old mumsey, now that we've found the way home again, I reckon we'll be coming every year-don't you?"

#### lots and littles

(Continued from page 1) Shedd has 8700 acres in the Canada thistle pact.

Balf Bond and wife went to the A'beny Chautauqua Friday.

Miss Ida Mitzner proposes to take a term at the Moumouth wormal school the coming winter.

Hslsey State bank literature

now carries the name of L. D. Taylor, assistant cashier. That's Lawrence. Grandma Frum of Brownsville and Miss Ruth Frum started

spend a couple of weeks. Labor is scarce in the southern "Now, that's all true, ain't it?" she part of the county and some grain

Monday evening for Newport to

Rosa Powell has been appointed administrator of the T. A. Powell estate, which is valued at \$4,720. ee legal advertisement in this

S. S. Hayes, John Standish, J. C. Standish and wife and Mrs. Mary Hayes motored above Brownsville Sunday and spent the afternoon at the home of A. C.

Septic tanks have been put in at Dr. Garnjobst's and at J. J. Corcoran's, Mr. Corcoran being the cement artist. In the absence of sewers the septic tank is necessary whenever a home in Halsey has up-to-date plumbing.

S. S. Hayes of Portland, who has been visiting at Jim Porter's, near Peoria, arrived in town Sat. urday for a visit at the home of J. C. Standish. Mr. Hayes is an old-time resident of Halsey and is well known among the old-timers, He is Mre. Standish's uncle.

On a hot Sunday recently Pastor Cook annouced in the Methodist church that men would be excused if they took off their coats. Only W. J. Ribelin responded by removing his coat, "Ah," said Cook, "only one man with a clean shirt in the house."

Frank Smith's chickens at Sweet Home raised a cry of alarm on several successive evenings. Finally he went to investi-gate and killed a rattlesnake with thirteen rattles that he found coiled in one of the nests.

The business of the Elite confectionery, Mr. Tripp says, is increasing rapidly since he and Mr. Hood took charge, being probably the largest in Albany. The cafe-teria branch, which has a special appeal for Halsey people who reach Albany hungry, is advertised in

F. C. Powell, assistant postmaster at Albany and employe of the office for twenty-five years, discovered a shortage of \$1500 in Hannah Jane amid a storm of sobs the stamp account, reported it

JULY 13, 1922

himself and made the an ount good employment, and G. W. Laubner how the apparent shortage occured, ber above, her face pale and her heart | and a federal grand jury in Port-

while investigating to try to learn has moved into the Dean residence.

PAGE 3

Ray Bryden, the youth arrested for stealing a bottle of perfume in the Woodworth drug store at Al-Mrs. D. F. Dean is going bany, paid \$25 fine and \$6.50 costs Coquille, where Mr. Dean has and promised to leave town under

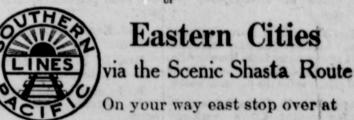
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