

'Take this chair, Mr. Woodlett,' invited Mary Frank.

'I want to ask you a question to-day,' he began. 'Remember, I want you to say just what your heart says. Ever since I carried you home that day I've wanted you to go over yonder as my wife. I'll make you a good man, and you will never want nor be overworked. Don't say yes unless you can love me, or because you feel obliged to me for anything.'

Mary Frank put her hand over her face and commenced to cry.

'Don't,' said Cyril awkwardly, 'we won't say another word about it.'

He picked up his hat a little blindly, but Mary Frank's thin hand caught his sleeve.

'Don't,' she cried brokenly. 'I could not live without you. I have liked you a long time.'—'The Monitor.'

## THE INTERFERENCE OF D.D.D.

Carman scowled as a tiny figure in brown linen scuttled across the lawn.

'Up to more mischief,' he growled. 'Just had one spanking and getting ready for another. I hope he gets it. It's a pity I can't give it to him. He'd remember it better than the hairbrush sessions he usually has.'

Daniel Davenport Dudley slipped around a corner of the carriage house and Will Carman resumed his book. The day was far too fine for reading, but his clothes were downstairs drying out, and one of Bob Dudley's dressing gowns was scarcely an appropriate costume for outdoor exercise.

He had run down to his partner's bungalow for one day only. He had wanted to make a base of operations against Ruth Emory, who was staying across the river at the Blessington country place. Ruth was to leave to-morrow for Bar Harbor, and unless he spoke to-day there was small chance of winning her hand for another six months. Carman was no letter-writer, and he could not hope to conduct an epistolary courtship.

Helen Dudley, his partner's wife, had suggested the scheme of his running down ostensibly upon business, just at the time that Dudley was going away. He might go over to Blessington's for want of better occupation and the battle would be won.

But they had not counted upon D.D.D. That ingenious six-year-old had spent the early morning in bridging with branches and sod the tiny stream that cut through the Dudley lawn. Carman had broken through the shaky bridge and had soaked himself to the knees. Mrs. Dudley had spanked D.D.D., but that did not dry damp trousers nor muddy boots, and now Carman was sitting in the guest room smoking Bob Dudley's cigars and softly cursing small boys and other fates that kept him from Miss Emory's side.

Presently he laid down the book, as D.D.D. came around the corner of the carriage house again. The roof-repairers had left some tar on the dirt heap, and in making up a ball of the sticky compound D.D.D. had smeared his clothes with the mess.

'Good,' commented Carman. 'Now, you will get spanking No. 2. Just wait until your mother sees you.'

There was not long to wait. D.D.D. ran to the rear of the house, and presently a succession of wails announced that the youngster's condition had been discovered by his long-suffering mother. Carman chuckled.

'Vengeance was swift, my boy. You'll wind up on the gallows yet.'

Carman was not ordinarily heartless, and as a rule he was fond of children, but the provocation had been great.

Mrs. Dudley tapped on his door, and Carman answered.

'Do you think,' she asked, 'it would hurt your boots to put them in the oven to dry. We had them in the sun, but they are drying very slowly. Here are your other clothes.'

Carman decided in favor of the oven. Anything to hurry the process. Perhaps, after all, he might be in time. He assumed his restored clothing and shuffled down to the porch in Bob Dudley's bath slippers. Carman was a six-foot giant, while Dudley was small and dapper. There was nothing in the house that would fit Carman.

On the porch he chatted with his hostess, and found it more pleasant to talk of youth than to sit in a room by himself and brood over his lost opportunity.

D.D.D. was playing at the other end of the piazza under the maternal eye. With the prospect of a speedy return of his footwear Carman even found it possible to smile upon the youngster mildly.

Then the servant came out bearing the boots, and as she neared Carman, D.D.D. made a dive for the footwear.

'I want my tar,' he exclaimed. 'I hid it there when Norah ran after me.'

Norah dropped the boots on Carman's stockingless feet, and with a howl of dismay and pain, the latter picked them up. It was all too true. In the right boat were the dark stains that told how well the heat of the oven had spread the pitch. The shoes were ruined.

Mrs. Dudley was all concern, but it began to look as though all the fates were against Carman. There was not another pair of shoes about the place that approached his size. It was out of the question to send the girl to town. The chauffeur had driven the head of the house to the city and had not yet returned.

'It's all over,' said Carman resignedly. 'Ruth Emory will never be mine.'

'Perhaps it is not as bad as that. You might write, you know,' comforted Mrs. Dudley, but Carman refused to be comforted. He knew how vainly he had tried to frame a letter that would sound unlike a business communication. It was only the prospect of her leaving that had nerved him to speaking. Now the chance was lost, thanks to D.D.D.

That evening Carman sat on the porch looking across the water to where the lights betrayed the Blessington's place. Mrs. Dudley had promised to call on a sick friend, and Carman would not hear of her remaining at home. It was nearly ten when a figure stole across the grass and Carman rose from his chair.

'Look out for the pitfall,' he warned. 'Don't get in the brook.'

'I won't,' came the cheery reply, and Carman started. It was not Mrs. Dudley, but Ruth Emory who presently emerged from the gloom of the trees to offer her slim cool hand.

'I thought that Helen was here,' she said. 'I paddled over to say good-bye to her.'

'She will be home presently,' he said eagerly. 'Won't you wait?'

Somehow, now that she was here, he had lost his courage again.

Ruth sat down and demanded an explanation of his warning, and he explained the device of D.D.D.

'And you have been cooped up here all day,' she cried. 'What a shame! It was a perfect day.'

'Not for me,' he said mournfully. 'That little limb of Satan spoiled it for me.'

'I ain't a limb of Satan,' denied a sleepy voice from the low French windows. 'I am a good boy, only I am bad sometimes,' he explained as he pattered out upon the piazza and climbed upon Ruth's lap. 'I was bad to-day,' he added. 'I got tar in Mr. Carman's boots, and I got spanked because he couldn't come over and ask you to marry him. Won't you please marry him, so I won't be spanked?' he added. 'I was spanked three times to-day.'

'Won't you?' asked Carman softly. 'I want you so, dear! When it seemed that I had lost my opportunity I was nearly crazy. It was fate that brought you over. I am not a good pleader; won't you let D.D.D. plead for me?'

Miss Emory's eyes grew softly bright. She, too, had been afraid that perhaps the word that would mean so much to them both would never be spoken.

'I am a member of the Children's Aid Society,' she said with a low laugh. Perhaps—for the sake of D.D.D.—Exchange.

He tried Port Hacking after fish,

But only caught a cold.

He said, 'Atchoo! By jove, I wish

I'd done as I was told.

This is indeed a Hacking cough,

Good name it's got, I'm sure!

But next day he was right enough

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