

# THE DAILY EXAMINER

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NO 56

AGE.

I have a dream that somewhere in the days  
When a myriad suns have burned and died  
There was a time my soul was not, for pride  
Of spendthrift youth, the pensioner who pays  
Dole for the pain of searching through the  
haze  
Where joy lies hidden. As the puffballs ride  
The wandering wind across the summer's side  
So winged my spirit in a golden blaze  
Of pure and careless present—future naught  
But a sad dotard's wail—and I was young  
Who now am old. Now years like flashes seem  
Lambent or gray on the great wall of thought.  
This is a song a poet may have sung.  
No proof remains. I have but dreamed a  
dream.  
—Helen Hay in Harper's Magazine.

## OBTUSE JACK.

Theodora was quite sure she had settled the question at last. For a week past her thinking hours had been filled with an all important subject, or, more properly speaking, two subjects, for the problem was to decide between two men who had seen fit to look upon her as a fitting custodian for their lures and penates.

In accepting George Hunt she felt herself fortified by a rampart of approving relatives and a decorous sense of propriety. As for Jack—well, she had always liked Jack. Everybody liked him. He was a genial, good fellow and always in demand at all social gatherings. But he was poor, as young lawyers generally are, and while people predicted a future for him Theodora thought of the present and decided to let Jack work out his career alone.

The clang at the doorbell was the signal for the last hurried peep in the glass. Theodora felt a moment's pity for Jack as she caught the reflection. They were going to Mrs. Hathaway's soiree, and the mirror gave back to Theodora's vision all the loveliness of her gown, enhanced by the pretty bare neck and crowned by the fair young face.

It occurred to her several times during the evening that Jack was not acting especially worried. Although tonight was the time she had set as the utmost limit of her consideration, he had not intimated by look or word that he remembered this.

Theodora resolved to be severe, and it was with this resolution in mind that she suggested sitting out one of the dances which showed a scrawly "J" opposite on her programme.

"Certainly, if you wish," assented Jack, arranging the cushion behind his head. "In fact, I begin to think I'm a trifle tired myself. Quite a crush here tonight."

"Yes," said Theodora. "I should think," continued Jack, gazing out into the ballroom, "that Hunt would retire from society, or from dancing at least. Just look at him now whirling around like a top that hasn't been wound up tight enough. He's beginning to wobble."

No response from Theodora. "He gets terribly red in the face, too, and the way he mops his forehead is a sign of age. He's really quite bald, isn't he? I only hope I'll remember it when I get old."

"Old!" exclaimed Theodora. "Mr. Hunt is a comparatively young man."

"Compared to a centenarian, perhaps so."

Theodora did not deign to answer. After a short silence Jack said, suddenly arranging his head prop more comfortably. "By the way, I've been considering the question I asked you a week ago, and I've concluded to save you the trouble of calculating matters too. It's no use, Theodora, I can't support a wife. I have figured it in every way and I can't make both ends meet."

Theodora's face hardened. "I might have saved you the trouble of calculating by giving my answer a week ago," she said.

"Then you weren't going to accept me anyway?" exclaimed Jack. "By Jove, I was almost afraid you would."

"Indeed!"

"Oh, now, see here, Theodora," exclaimed Jack, for the first time turning toward her. "Don't be doing on me. I supposed you'd look at this thing sensibly. Neither of us believe in long engagements, and so it is better to break off entirely than to worry along for six or eight years until all the poetry has disappeared from life."

"You presuppose the case. I never should have suggested waiting."

Theodora arose and smoothed the folds of her draperies.

"Since I'm going to marry another man I don't see the use of any further conversation on this subject."

"Marry another man!" exclaimed Jack, starting forward. "I never thought of that, Theodora."

The consternation in his voice was a satisfaction to her.

"I presume not," she said. "Humbleness is not one of your virtues."

He did not answer her, and she moved toward the door.

"But, Theodora, you know that I love you. It is for your sake!"

"No, I do not know, nor can you make me believe it. However, that is of no consequence."

"But it is of consequence, Theodora. May I ask who it is you are going to marry?"

"It is Mr. Hunt," she replied haughtily. One day, about a month after Mrs. Hathaway's soiree, Jack met George Hunt on the street.

separate read. room

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EYES

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Nov. 4

"To the honor of being the future husband of one of our most charming young ladies," laughed Jack.

Mr. Hunt blushed unbecomingly. "You are either laboring under a delusion or else this is a very meager joke. I am engaged to no young lady."

"But Theodora!"—began Jack unguardedly.

"The young lady you mention did herself the honor of refusing me," said Mr. Hunt curtly.

"I beg your pardon, by Jove, I do, Hunt. It was all a mistake. Some one misinformed me. I'm awfully sorry, but I've been behind the times lately."

"It is of no consequence," said Mr. Hunt, passing on.

Not many days afterward Theodora started for a prolonged visit to her aunt, who lived in a gay town some distance from Theodora's home. She had seen very little of Jack since the soiree, but just as the train was starting he swung himself on and in his hurried passage through the car tossed a box into her lap.

"Goodby!" he called out, and she watched him swing himself off the platform. For some unaccountable reason her heart was behaving very strangely. She

took up the box from her lap and broke the string. A note lay on a bed of deep purple, fragrant violets, and as she saw just the one word, "Theodora," in the familiar, scrawly writing, her heart gave a joyous bound. She opened the note and read these words: "The fool and his money soon parted."

She stared at the line. So Jack considered himself a fool for spending a few paltry cents on her, and this after their conversation at the Hathaways! Oh, it was unbearable for any man to be so insulting, and Jack of all men!

She took a little pencil from her pocket-book and wrote underneath the obnoxious message from Jack, "It would be wise to tack the violets on to one of those ends which will not meet."

When Jack received the box addressed in Theodora's handwriting, he eagerly opened the package. Inside he found his poor violets withered, and then he read the penciled words, "It would be wise to tack the violets on to one of those ends which will not meet."

"By Jove!" he exclaimed. "That borders on sarcasm. Wonder why she didn't like them. I'll take a run up Sunday and find out."

Jack was as good as his word and quite distracted Theodora's thoughts from her prayers when his unexpected self swung into the church on Sunday morning. She treated him with dignity which smacked of hauteur, but poor Jack was entirely unconscious.

"By the way," he remarked casually that evening, utterly unaware of or at least not noticing the frigidity of Theodora's manner, "why didn't you keep the violets? I meant you should."

"Indeed, did you? I did the best I could to restore a fool's money."

"I say, that's rather hard on me, Theodora. But, of course, I know you only meant it as a joke, same as I did. But I am sorry you did not keep them."

"A joke!" she exclaimed. "I think your jokes are in rather poor taste."

"Oh, never mind; that's all over now. Say, I congratulated Hunt the other day, and it didn't seem to set well."

Theodora gasped: "How dare you do such a thing?" she exclaimed. "How dare you insult me in this way? I have never been treated so. First you proposed to me and—"

"I didn't mean to insult you by that, Theodora."

"Oh, you know what I mean! You told me you did not want to marry me because I would be an expense. Then you dared to meddle in Mr. Hunt's affairs!"

"Now, Theodora!"

"Then you send me a box of flowers so you can poster me with your excessive brilliancy of thought. Then, to cap all, you come up here to taunt me with all this and call it all a joke. I never thought it of you. I!"

"Why, Theodora, what is the matter? Don't cry, for heaven's sake!" implored Jack, attempting consolation and exhibiting immense awkwardness.

"Oh, I say, Theodora," he said, "I didn't know you felt this way about it!"

"I don't," sobbed Theodora.

"But, my dear, you certainly do. Upon my word, I did not know that you were not engaged to Hunt. I apologized to him, and it's all right. And I sent the flowers because I knew you like violets, and the note was only a joke. And I said that I did not want to marry you because I was sure you would refuse me at first. But I don't believe you would marry any one else or be engaged so soon. Tell me anyway, Theodora, why won't you marry me?"

"Because you don't want me to," she said sobbingly.

"My dear Theodora, it seems to me you are wonderfully dense," he said, taking her in his arms.—Peterson's.

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