



When a young woman sits down and ponders over her future life, there is one all-important subject which she should not forget. In a day dream she may build castles in the air with a happy home, laughing children and a loving husband in the foreground. At that moment she may be facing death. Matrimony and motherhood hold out no happiness to the young woman who suffers from weakness and disease of the distinctly feminine organism. The woman who suffers in this way will be a weak, nervous, sickly, petulant wife, an incapable mother and an unamiable hostess. Not knowing the truth, her acquaintances will not understand that she is deserving of pity rather than reproach.

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NOTHING BUT THE SOUTHERN STORY OF ANTE BELLUM DAYS,
BY
JEANNETTE H. WALWORTH
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CHAPTER VII.
Life at Sans Souci moved to a livelier measure when Adrien came home, exchanging the stately andante of its everyday routine for a brisk allegro movement, expressive of the holiday spirit of gladness that seized upon everybody on and about the premises.

Old Dolbear struck the keynote to the situation tersely, standing over Sandy, his helper at the stables. (Adrien's home coming meant a good deal in the direction of extra work.)

"You see, boy, it is lak lettin down the checkreins for all consarned. Miss Adele, she darsn't be so rigydfied 'bout givin out pervisions, w'en, jus' as lak as not, w'en the dinner is ready to be dish up, Mr. Adr'n yher he come 'lopin wid three er fo' young gent'mens uv quality, all es hungry es wolfzis. An cook Nancy, she sorter slack up some, becase she know Mr. Adr'n don't favor 6 o'clock breakfusses, an she kin lay all her own laziness at his door. An black Suzanne, she take her own time cleanin up uv maw'nin's, for there's such a sight uv pickin up arter that boy that hurryin is out uv de question. But nobody ain't a keerin. Lud, no, sir. Who's a keerin? Not ef he mek work enough for fo'ty extra hands. An old mars gov'nor, he step roun lively as you please, lak he want that boy distine'ly onderstan he ain't ont uv de ring bessel yit, nur ready to be lay on de sheff. Nuther is I."

With quick transition from colloquial leniency to judicial severity, Dolbear laid violent hands on the piece of harness Sandy was rubbing.

"Does you call that clean? Bekase I begs leave to diffah wid you."

His bushy, gray brows contracted ominously as closer scrutiny revealed greater obliquity on Sandy's part.

"Sandy, you is a low life, triflin, good fur nothin, quarter nigger. You ain't wuth shucks. No, sah. You ain't wuth the powder it 'ud take t' blow your saphaid off'n with. An you 'spires to wait on Mr. Adr'n!"

Sandy did not look at all aspiring at that moment. He seemed to be taking himself rather seriously, as Dolbear's denunciation grew in the direction of infinite contempt and forcible invective.

"I p'intedly tole you to bresh up the drag harness, now, didn' I, boy? An yher you is ben wesen a solid hour on the buggy crupper. You is got a sight to learn yit, Sandy—a sight, I tell you. You pun'kin haid raskil you!"

"W'en the Strongs goes a-co'tin, they does it in style. You needn't trouble youself to hitch up ary one horse contraction for my w'ite folks. They is blue blood quality, that is what the Strong family is, root an branch, boy. I driv' Mr. Gab'r'el, Mr. Adr'n's pappy, 'bout w'en he was waitin on the ladies, an we went in style, I tell you, boy. Mars Gab'r'el's gone now, an Mars Adr'n's havin his day, but ole Dolbear ain't furgot yit what's fittin in a colud pussion which 'spires to wait on a gent'men uv civility. You ain't much to look at, Sandy."

Sandy, nowise disconcerted by this slighting personal mention, surveyed himself gravely, hitched his solitary suspender farther up on the patched shoulder of his ragged cotton shirt and answered with cheerful optimism:

"But I kin fix up some. I ain't got no Sunday shoes nur no hat wuth talkin 'bout, but mammy wash my yother shirt yistiday, an I got a better pair breeches than these yher, them as I keeps for buryins an baptizin's."

Dolbear waved his hand majestically.

"I is glad to hear it, Sandy, I is glad to hear it, but you needn't 'sturb youself. Mr. Adr'n is already signify that the bobtail mar's an the drag an ole Dolbear is good 'nough to git him over the road in style to Mis' Chambliss' place. Miss Amy done come home. Miss Amy, she's ole Mis' Chambliss' onlies' gad, an she'll be rich as Shorthorn cream some uv these days. I reckon them bobtail mar's'll trample the weeds down right smart on the road 'twixt our place an hern. It won't be the fust' Strong ole Dolbear is gone co'tin with. Yher"—with a spasm of conscientious energy—"you chuckle head calf, git to work on dem harness."

The fragrance of a good cigar, followed by a quick, firm footfall, perhaps had something to do with this newborn zeal. Adrien's slender figure was framed in the doorway of the harness room the next second.

"Why, Uncle Dol, you are rubbing away as if you were just learning your trade and trying to earn your salt."

"No time fur foolin. Mars Adr'n. Some folks wuks they jaws, other folks wuks they elbows. Dolbear ain't got no time to wuk his jaws, less'n 'bout grub time."

"I thought I tole you to get help about the stables."

"Dar he"—pointing the finger of scorn at Sandy—"dar my he'p of you is a mind to call him dat. Whar's your manners, nigger?"

Thus violently introduced to public notice, Sandy rose and made a shuffling movement in Adrien's direction. Liberally construed, he might have been said to have bowed.

There was an air of vague uncertainty about all of Sandy's performances, a certain shy tentativeness as if the willing spirit located somewhere within his uncared for little body was sadly conscious of the flesh's weakness. He was approaching manhood positive of but one thing—that it was impossible for him to escape condemnation from some one of every turn of his existence. Hence a certain unhesitant acceptance of Dolbear's tart criticism. As he shuffled forward to where Adrien, resplendent in drab velvet shooting clothes, stood regarding him with coolly investigative eyes, his own were lifted deprecatingly as he ventured a shy salutation.

(To be Continued.)

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