

'Don't,' he said. 'Don't make me ask myself that. You know what I told you—when we met last week—that I was doomed to a life of single blessedness unless Theo took pity on me. Heavens! I was joking then, but it's dead reality now. Why, I can't remember when I didn't love Theo—ever since the day she came flying up the parade ground—her curls streaming out behind her and her eyes like stars. It was the first day I came to the barracks—do you remember it? I can't forget—I don't want to.'

'Then she has refused you?' said the General. Forbes shook his head.

'No.'

The General gave a disgusted exclamation.

'Why, what nonsense! You're going away because you're in love with her—that's pretty good. I never thought there was any yellow in your make-up, Angus.'

'Sometimes the fellow that runs away is braver than the fellow who stands his ground, General.'

'Not in our profession, Angus,' said the General, stiffly. To him this sounded like rank heresy.

The night following a number of guests were gathered in the Wyndon home. In spite of his usual good nature the General had not been able to shake off the disagreeable impression that Angus Forbes had left upon him the evening before. He was too frank himself to understand reticence, or even to tolerate it, and no stretch of the imagination could give him a clue to the young officer's behaviour. He tried to dismiss the subject from his mind, but could not. Forbes treated Theo deferentially, courteously, but it was easily seen that not a word she said escaped him. If Theo crossed the room, a few moments later the young man was stationed near her. It was rather singular conduct for a man who was 'running away.'

'Times have changed,' said the father to himself. 'There was no such shilly-shallying in my day.'

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He gave himself up to the entertainment of 'Old Sandy' then—a task demanding his entire attention. They were talking as usual of army life and the barracks, when the General remembered something.

'Where is that book of views Captain Forbes gave you the other day, Theo?' he asked. 'I want to show Major Saunders old Bunny's picture.'

'It's on my desk in the 'den,' Father,' said Theo. The 'den' opened from the library, and the old-fashioned desk in one corner of the room was Theo's especial property. 'I'll go and get it,' she said, half rising from the piano stool.

'No, no,' said Angus Forbes, 'let me get it. On your desk?'

He was gone but an instant, and when he returned he carried the book of photos with him. The General stared. The young man's eyes were radiant, his face alight with some great joy. He looked like one who had found a treasure.

'It's all right, General,' he said in an undertone, as he handed him the book. 'It's all right.'

'What's all right?' demanded the General.

'Oh, everything, everything.'

Then the General banished the whole thing from his mind as a bad job.

The informal little party broke up rather early and Theo went to the door with her departing guests. Major Saunders and her father carried off the book of army views to the library for a parting smoke.

'Are you coming, Angus?' called the General.

'Not yet,' said Angus Forbes. 'I have something to say to Miss Theo.'

Theo stood with her foot on the first step of the stairs and looked around inquiringly. The General said no more, but followed his guest.

'Something to say to me?' began Theo. 'Can't you defer it until to-morrow?'

'Why, no. I'd rather you listened to-night. You see, Miss Theo, I've discovered the one thing necessary. And I've got it.'

Theo laughed merrily and turned away from the stairs. He held the draperies aside and she preceded him into the room.

'Now, I'm curious,' she said.

'I thought you would be. But first I must tell you that I am positive that your father approves of me as a suitor for your hand, and that he is quite willing to see us married.'

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Theo's eyes danced, her lips curved—but she repressed these signs of merriment.

'I'm so glad, Captain Forbes! I congratulate you! Now, I'm going to bed.'

'Not yet. Will you marry me to-morrow?'

'I will not.'

'Then I'll tell the General you're a Catholic!'

Theo paused, biting her underlip reflectively. Angus Forbes took a little worn prayer-book out of his pocket and shook it at her.

'Where did you get that?' she demanded.

'It was lying on the book of views on your desk,' he said, and his voice was jubilant.

'What do you know about prayer-books?'

'A good deal about Catholic prayer-books,' he said, 'seeing that I am a Catholic myself.'

Theo smiled again. She did not seem at all surprised. Angus Forbes reached over and took her hand in his.

'I've spent a most miserable week, little girl. I couldn't marry out of the faith, no matter how I cared—I've seen too much of the harm done. The warning note was sounded when your father asked me the joking question: "Do you hate the Church of Rome?" I didn't dare risk staying any longer. I was going away to-morrow. And you are a Catholic! I can't believe it.'

'No?' she laughed at him. 'But I knew you were one, Angus. And that prayer-book is an old one of your own—one you gave to Jacky King when somebody sent you another. I never went to bed at night without saying my prayers from that book—and as soon as I had sense, why, I went further. I haven't been a real Catholic very long—not much over a year, but I guess I was one at heart years and years ago.'

'And the General knows nothing?'

'Not yet. I wanted to win mother over first. She knows I used to go to church pretty regularly, but I didn't even tell her.'

General Wyndon came into the parlor quite suddenly twenty minutes later. He looked at the two incredulously.

'Theo and I are to be married to-morrow,' said Angus serenely.

'Why, what is this?' demanded the General.

'Well, father,' said Theo gently, 'I'm a Catholic—have been one for over a year. Of course, I can't marry anyone but a Catholic, so I think I'd better take Angus—don't you?'

'To-morrow,' supplemented Angus.

'To-morrow a year—and then, perhaps,' amended Theo Wyndon. 'Now, good-night.'

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It did not take the father and mother long to get accustomed to Theo's religion, and while she did not marry Angus Forbes as speedily as he declared she would, they were married two weeks before his leave of absence expired. Later, on their return from the honeymoon, the General and his wife went to see them safely aboard the train that was to take them to the distant army post.

'At least,' said the General, wistfully, as they turned away, 'they are starting out with the one thing necessary—similar religious belief. Do you think there's anything in it, Mary?'

'I used not to, Philip,' she confessed. 'But I shall never forget Theo's face when she received the Sacrament on her marriage day. I can't forget either of their faces. They made me lonely—I felt as if they were a thousand times happier than we could ever be.'

'Oh!' said the General, 'I felt that way, too. I said so to Father Manley afterward. He laughed and said: "Why don't you try to find out why they are so happy?" He hesitated. "I think I will, Mary."

'So will I,' agreed Mrs. Wyndon. 'There's no harm in trying.'—*Extension.*

The potato grub of ill-fame is (says the *Oamaru Mail*) remarkably tenacious of its caterpillar life, and may not be deprived of it by any mild violence. Hoping to discover a preparation which might be of practical use in exterminating the grub, Mr. C. B. Morris performed a series of experiments on caterpillars, but did not succeed in finding any preparation which would kill the grub in 15 minutes—a practical time limit—or even in a much longer period. A reporter who called on him was given some detailed results of the experiments. Mr. Morris first tried perchloride of mercury, known as corrosive sublimate and recommended by the Agricultural Department. A solution of one in 1300, the strength recommended by the Department, failed, and the strength was then doubled, making it one in 650; but the grubs were perfectly healthy after 13 hours' submersion. Formalin, which Mr. Morris had himself advised trying, proved to be quite incapable of producing the desired result, the caterpillars living after 13 hours' submersion in a solution of 20 drops to the half-pint. Equally useless among other substances tried were chronic acid, acetic acid (solution equal to the strength of vinegar), and a saturated solution of alum. After six hours' submersion in a solution of common salt, 26 grains to the ounce (about six teaspoonfuls to the pint), the caterpillars still lived. Stavesacre seeds, deadly to insect life, failed to kill after eight hours. As a result of these experiments Mr. Morris is of opinion that unless the pest is the product of the dry weather it will prove to be a plague such as North Otago has never yet experienced.

Teddy came home late from school,

Gave a horrid sneeze,

Had a tickling in his throat,

Soon began to wheeze.

Mother took his temperature,

Put him straight to bed,

Gave him Woods' Great Peppermint Cure,

"Bosker stuff!" said Ted.