

A CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK

Samuel Percival, President and principal shareholder of the Acme Steel Mfg. Co., seated in his private office, presented a perfect picture of self-complacency and prosperity. Everything about the office, from the brightly polished mahogany furniture to the expensive cheroot, which he was smoking betokened an abundance of the world's goods.

Samuel's perusal of the morning paper was interrupted by the entrance of a young man of probably twenty-one years. Even a casual observer would have noted the striking resemblance between the two, and would have had no hesitation in saying that the two were father and son. Percival's wife had died when Ray was a baby, and since that time his affections and hopes had been centered on his only son. Ray had just been graduated from college, and was now enjoying a vacation. In the fall he was to enter his father's office and learn the business. Percival, although by no means an old man, had hopes of seeing Ray fill his position soon, thus enabling him to spend his time in travel and other pleasures, which the exigencies of his business had never allowed him to enjoy.

"Busy, Dad?" queried Ray taking a seat.

"Why, not particularly," said the father. "What's up now? More money I suppose? Didn't I give you a check yesterday? I don't mind giving you money, but I dislike seeing you form expensive habits."

"No, it's not that, I—er—well, I'm going to get married," said Ray stammering painfully.

"This is rather a sudden notion, isn't it? Has Florence accepted you"?

Florence Taylor was one of Ray's boyhood friends, and it had been almost understood that some day the pair would wed.

"It's not Florence," said Ray, feeling the courage, which he had summoned up for the interview rapidly deserting him. "Her name is Grace O'Connor."

"O'Connor? I don't seem to recollect anyone of that name in your set."

"Oh, you've never met her. She works up town. She's—" "Works? Do you mean to tell me that you intend to marry a working girl.?"

"Why not? Can't a working girl be as good as any other? Besides Grace is the nicest girl I ever met."

"Listen, son, she's likely some adventuress, attracted by your wealth and position. I simply will not tolerate such a mesalliance."

"I tell you I love her, and furthermore I intend to marry her," said Ray, aroused to indignation at the aspersions cast upon his beloved.

"I'll disinherit you. I'll cut you off without a cent, you ungrateful scamp," said Percival, who was now thoroughly angered.

"Go ahead. Do you think you have any right to dictate whom I shall marry or not marry?"

Many bitter words followed, on both sides, but both parties remained obdurate, and Ray found himself cast upon his own resources.

His father, little realizing that Ray had inherited some of his own stubbornness and determination, thought that a brief period of independence would bring him home in a more reasonable mood.

Ray spent many weary days in search of employment, finally securing work as a street labourer. It was hard work, even for one used to it, but for Ray, who had never worked before it was particularly hard. Still his pride goaded him on, and his ambition was spurred by Grace's dependence on him. He had talked it over with her, and they had agreed to postpone their marriage until such time as he could secure a position that would enable him to provide for a wife.

As the days passed, Percival felt the absence of his son more keenly. Many times he felt like yielding and receiving Ray home again, but his stubbornness usually overcame these promptings.

One evening he returned from the office, and, finding the gloom and emptiness of the house unbearable, he decided to go out for supper. After supper, taking his check, he went up to pay the cashier whom he found to be a charming young damsel with a very attractive pair of blue eyes. Half unconsciously he fell to talking with her, and was so much attracted by her personality, that he felt an inexplicable impulse to know her better. Upon inquiry, he ascertained that she finished work at seven o'clock; he asked her if she would care to accompany him to the theatre

that night. She assented, and he called for her promptly at seven.

Now it must not be supposed that Percival was in the habit of doing this sort of thing. As a matter of fact, he would have severely discountenanced it in anyone else. So we must attribute the fact that he had taken out this girl, whom he had never met before, to a mere impulse.

They went to the theatre, and Percival experienced an inexpressible pleasure in the company of this bright and handsome young lady. After the show, he accompanied her to her home, not however, without exacting a promise that she would allow him to call the next evening.

The following day, Percival, although ashamed of his folly, as he termed it, and fearful lest any of his associates should discover it, could not, try as he would, banish from him the picture of those wonderful blue eyes.

So the following evening found him on his way to visit a girl, whom he had met but once, and whose name he did not even know. Arrived at the house, he was shown into the parlour by his friend of the previous evening. It was by no means an elegantly furnished parlour, perhaps one piece of furniture in his own would have been worth all the furnishings in it, but it had an air of comfort and homeliness which was lacking in his expensively furnished home. Percival, then and there, decided to fling convention to the winds and ask this girl to be his wife. He thought that he would show his son that he could live without him. The thought that he intended to do the very thing for which he had censured his son never crossed his mind.

They chatted quite affably for some time, and Percival finally found himself pleading his cause with a vehemence and eloquence surprising even to himself.

Miss—, for Percival, so carried away by his feelings, had not yet learned her name, listened quite passively to his account of his wealth and his protestations of love. When he had finished she said, "Really, you have quite taken me off my feet. I appreciate the honour of your proposal, but it is impossible for me to consider it. I am already engaged."

"Engaged?" said Percival. "To whom?"

Just then the door-bell rang, and as she went to answer it, the girl said, "I think this is my friend, perhaps you would like to meet him." Percival had barely recovered

from his first shock of disappointment, when he received a still greater surprise.

For who should the newcomer be but his son Ray.

"Dad!" said Ray, almost stunned by the surprise.

Percival was so overcome with confusion and embarrassment that he could not utter a word.

"I have just received a very flattering offer of marriage from your father" said Grace, for Percival's friend and Ray's beloved were one and the same.

Percival was, however, a game loser. Addressing Ray he said, "Son, let me congratulate you on your choice. You will hardly wish to settle down to work, until after the wedding, but you may begin, whenever you are ready."

Then as he turned to leave, he said to his future daughter-in-law, "Did you know all the time that I was Ray's father?"

"Of course," said Grace, "Do you suppose that I would go out with any Tom, Dick or Harry who asked me?"

"Well as you are to become one of the family, I suppose I shall have to forgive you, said Samuel, going out the door.

As soon as he had departed, Ray turned to Grace and said, "Darling, I suppose there is no further need of postponing the wedding. When can we get married?"

"Tomorrow, if you wish," replied Grace, smiling sweetly.

J. K. McL., '25.

SERENITY

Here's a sigh to those who love me
And a smile to those who hate;
And whatever sky's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.

—Lord Byron.

Though to-day may not fulfill
All thy hopes, have patience still;
For perchance to-morrow's sun
Sees thy happier day begun.

—P. Gerhardt.