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"Why, daddy, this is dreadful!"

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The Making of the Mayor

By DON MARK LEMON

For a moment the members of his family gazed in spellbound admiration at Colonel Anson, then with a general exclamation of unalloyed enthusiasm they gathered around and fairly bore him down into the big morris chair by the window.

"You to be mayor of Sunnyville!" cried Miss Flora, the beauty of the family, tall as her father and handsomer than her mother. "Oh you dear daddy mine, ain't I proud of you!"

"And we are proud of you too," cried the younger Misses Anson, pressing still closer about the colonel's chair.

"And, girls, your mother is as proud as all of you put together!" beamed the colonel's wife.

Harry Anson now seized his father's hand and rung it heartily.

"Let me congratulate you, dad! When you're in office I shall drop around occasionally and help you compose your off-hand speeches."

Colonel Anson lifted his hands. "Quarters! quarters!" he cried. "I'm not elected yet! I'm not even nominated! My name has only been mentioned for the slate." He arose and stood amidst his family in white-haired, beaming protest. "My dear soldiers and fellow officers, there will be two nominations, and even though I should gain one of these nominations, my election is far from a certainty. Act with confidence, I beg, but be prepared for defeat."

"Why, daddy," cried Miss Flora, "that epigram alone should elect you!"

"Indeed it should!" chorused the two younger Misses Anson, and the colonel's wife beamed another "indeed!"

SETTLES THE MATTER HIMSELF

"Consider that I have already filed my application as your secretary," insinuated the bland Harry, whereupon his two younger sisters congratulated him upon his good fortune.

"How nice it sounds!" exclaimed the younger of the younger Misses Anson. "Secretary to the mayor! You must have it engraved on your cards, Harry."

"I certainly shall, sis."

"When do you begin to run for mayor?" questioned the colonel's wife.

"Yes, daddy, when do you begin to run for mayor?" demanded the younger Misses Anson, placing a delicious emphasis on the mayor.

"Why, as soon as I am safely slated," laughed the colonel. "But again, I beg that you do not place your hopes too high, to fall and be broken like poor Humpty Dumpty. Keep your heads level and cheer the band wagon along, and maybe one of these times I shall sit in the mayor's chair for a little season, and perhaps that will prove a stepping-stone to gubernatorial honors, who knows?" and the colonel placed himself behind the big morris chair to escape a second and even warmer ova-

tion, when his family had pictured him as governor of the state.

The seed of political ambition once sown, it took fast root, and in a few days it had grown to a tree of such proportions that it quite overshadowed the entire household of Colonel Anson.

"It means so much to your father," observed Mrs. Anson. "Perhaps it will end in him being elected governor of the state, as he himself thought possible."

"And when he steps down from the governor's chair, what will prevent him running for the United States' senate!" suggested the darling Miss Flora.

DREAM OF THE WHITE HOUSE

The two younger Misses Anson fairly hugged one another in rapturous delight at the



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thought of their father moving on Washington, and even the cautious Harry was carried a little farther towards the open sea of political schemes and dreams.

"And once I am a United States' senator," cried Colonel Anson from the open doorway, "who knows but that a fierce, running fight might seat me in the chair of the President of the United States!"

He entered the room, laughing, accompanied by a well set-up young fellow of eight-and-twenty, whose presence brought a sudden glow to the cheeks of the handsome Miss Flora, and an agreeable feeling of surprise to the others.

"One of my staff," said the colonel, presenting the younger man. "I brought him

along to let him see for himself how interested my family has become in my election."

Young Thornton bowed in easy confidence. "The colonel has consented that I may do a bit of electioneering for him. I believe I shall be of some service."

"I am sure you will!" beamed the colonel's wife.

"And we know it," smiled the younger Misses Anson.

"You'll line up the second ward solid," nodded the knowing Harry.

Only Miss Flora was silent, but an hour later, as young Thornton was taking his leave, her reserve fell away a delicious moment as she offered him her hand.

"If daddy is elected," she said; then hesitating, she pressed a hanging branch of bloom to her face.

Thornton bent forward eagerly. "If he is, what then, Miss Anson?"

"If he is, why, then, perhaps—perhaps—" "Perhaps?"

FENCING WITH HER WORDS

The hanging bloom could no longer conceal the glow that had mounted to the cheeks of the colonel's daughter. She hastily withdrew her hand and stepped back. "Here comes Harry! I meant to say, if daddy is elected, perhaps Harry will get to be his secretary. Good afternoon, Mr. Thornton."

The eager young fellow watched the mobile figure till it had turned into the house, taking a subtle fragrance with it, then he accosted Harry, who had just come up, and the pair went out through the garden gate.

As election day approached, Colonel Anson was forecast to win the mayoralty by a slight majority, for the political map of Sunnyville was nicely shaded, and its lines distinctly drawn, and it was not hard to gain a clear idea of how things would be the day after election. But this happy state was suddenly threatened by an indiscreet act upon the part of the colonel himself.

One evening at a club banquet he came out with the statement that he was personally opposed to the renewal of the franchise of a certain electric branch street-road. At the most it was merely a side issue, but the shrewd Thornton foresaw that as sentiment then stood the opposition could make the matter appear of sufficient importance as to win over a small but dangerous dissatisfied vote.

He cautioned the Colonel to stop where he had begun, but the latter was in one of his positive moods, and when next day the opposition's paper charged him with harboring sentiments against the renewal of the franchise, the old soldier threw down the gauntlet.

"I shall inform the public exactly how I stand in this matter!" he exclaimed to Thornton. "And to make sure that it shall be fresh in their minds, I shall incorporate these senti-

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ments into my speech of the night before election!"

HER FEARS ARE AROUSED

When Harry came home that evening with a long face and reported the matter to Miss Flora, she clasped her hands tensely.

"I feared it!" she exclaimed. "Daddy is so self-willed at times. Oh dear, if only he would listen to Mr. Thornton!"

"What shall we do?" appealed the younger Misses Anson, in great alarm. "Can't you think of something, Harry?"

That young fellow shook his head gloomily. "It will only make dad more hard-hearted to reason with him. Better lay low, and perhaps he'll overlook it." But it was a hopeless face that he bent over his cup of coffee.

"Did daddy say he would not speak of this till the night before election?" suddenly demanded Miss Flora.

"That's what he told Thornton. Why?"

"Oh, just because," replied the other indifferently, but shortly afterwards she excused herself, and going to the phone called up Thornton and commanded him to come at once to the house. "Important business about my father," she condescended to explain.

When a little later Thornton arrived at the Anson home in answer to the phone summons and was met at the gate by Miss Flora, that young fellow wore a rather clouded face; but when a half hour afterwards he took his leave, it was with a light heart and a cheerful countenance.

As he turned to go he hesitated a moment, as if he would speak of other matters than politics, but there was something in the face of the colonel's daughter that warned him to capture the enemy before speaking of the rich reward, and lifting his hat he hurried back to headquarters.

EVE OF THE ELECTION

The evening before election day arrived, and Colonel Anson was all prepared to proclaim himself against the renewal of the electric street car franchise. He had the notes of his speech in his pocket, written out by his son Harry, who now saw his rosy dreams as secretary to the mayor fading into the thin, cold air of a rude awakening.

Again Miss Flora protested, begging her father 'not to hold such a little ten-cent issue so close before his dear nose that it blotted out matters as big as the moon.' But the colonel only shook his head.

"Very well, daddy," said Miss Flora, a dangerous firmness showing in her chin, "be sure you're right, and then fill your dear old ears with cotton, and harken neither to men nor the angels!" and she smoothed her father's white hair fondly.

Just then the bell rang and a message was left for Colonel Anson. Opening the envelope, he read.

Colonel Anson: Come at once to my law office. Will detain you only five minutes. Important business. Don't fail me.

Thornton.

"What can he want at this hour?" reflected the colonel. "I'm due at the hall at half past. Well, come along, Harry; we'll drive by and see."

Twenty minutes later, accompanied by his son, Colonel Anson entered the handsome arched doorway of the Monix Building, a new down-town structure where young Thornton had his law offices, and stepping into the waiting elevator, the two men were shot upwards.

When the car had reached an elevation between the third and fourth floor, it came to a sudden stop.

"Hallo!" impatiently cried the colonel, "what's wrong?"

"Somethin' matter with the power, boss," explained the grinning elevator boy. "Jest don't git restless; she'll start up in a bit."

AT THE CRITICAL MOMENT

But the delay proved so considerable that Colonel Anson drew out his watch. "I'm due at the hall now. Let the car down to the street and let us out. Thornton will have to wait."

The elevator boy attempted to do as he was told, but it seemed that the carriage was out of fix on the fall as well as the lift, for it refused to move.

"We're stuck, boss, I reck'n."

"Hallo there!" called Colonel Anson, as through the bars of the car he espied Thornton descending the stairs from the fourth floor.

"Hallo!" answered the young lawyer. "What's wrong with the elevator?"

"The power has given out," explained Harry. "Why don't you let the car down to the landing?" demanded Thornton of the elevator boy.

"It won't go."

"Then wait a moment, and I'll see what's wrong." Thornton hurried down the stairway.

Ten minutes passed, when the young lawyer returned accompanied by a mechanic in overalls.

"The shaft rod is broke and jammed," explained the latter. "It will have to be sawed out."

"How long will it take?" demanded the impatient Colonel Anson.

"Well, sir, likely three hours or so, for you see—"

"The devil, man!"

"Can't be helped, gentlemen. Sorry!"

Thornton now took out his watch. "I'll have to report the accident at the hall, colonel; you're overdue now."

"Do so. By the way," called Colonel Anson, "what is the nature of that important business you wished to speak with me about?"

But Thornton was already out of hearing, descending the steps three at a time.

TIME FOR REFLECTION

"It would be of no use to give him my notes about that electric road franchise," reflected the colonel. "He is opposed to my sentiments, and might lose them on purpose. Well, my good man," this to the mechanic who was regarding the elevator from the fourth flight with a super-critical eye, "see how quickly you can start the car. It may not be as bad as it first appears."

"Pretty bad, sir; pretty bad!"

The man now descended the stairs, and Col-

onel Anson occupied the next half hour in the stopped elevator in meditating his speech. Perhaps, after all, he would be freed in time to deliver it.

Suddenly there was a hurry of feet on the stairway and Miss Flora and her two sisters appeared on the scene.

"Why, daddy, this is dreadful!" cried the former. "I met Mr. Thornton and he said that you were detained here, but I thought he was jesting."

"Indeed we did!" chorused the younger Misses Anson.

"The joke is on us," growled Harry.

"Does your mother know of this?" demanded Colonel Anson.

"No, daddy,—you poor, dear fellow!" There seemed to be actual tears in Miss Flora's handsome gray eyes.

"Then go home like good girls, and tell her that Harry and I may be detained by business over night, in case we are not released before."

"Yes, daddy,—you poor, dear fellow!"

"Say, sis," called Harry, "couldn't you manage to drop me down a pillow and a few cigars? I haven't slept a wink for two nights and I'm as hungry as a chimney for a smoke!"

"Of course we can!" volunteered the younger Misses Anson, and they hurried off to return a little later with a box of cigars, a pillow, and a paper sack of fruit, all of which, after considerable labor, they got through the roof of the elevator car.

CONTEMPLATING THE SCENE

Miss Flora now seated herself on the stairway and watched the scene with her determined chin in her hands, while from below came the sawing of steel and the hammering of iron, as the mechanics labored to free the carriage.

"Go home, daughter," commanded Colonel Anson, after an hour had passed and the car still remained jammed.

"No, daddy," replied Miss Flora, firmly. "I shall stay right here till you and Harry are released. You poor, dear, patient fellows!"

"And so shall we!" chorused the younger Misses Anson.

"Very well," yielded the colonel.

Two more hours passed and Harry and the elevator boy had fallen fast asleep, when young Thornton returned.

"The meeting is over, colonel," he called from the third landing. "I thought best not to say anything of your present predicament, but stated that—"

"Start the car up there!" shouted a voice from below, and aroused by the colonel the colored lad let the newly freed carriage to the street landing and threw open the door.

Gathering up his pillow and remaining cigars the sleepy Harry followed the little party to the waiting carriage, wondering as he went if his father's chances to be elected mayor on the morrow had not been greatly augmented by his detention in the elevator.

A good night's rest found Colonel Anson in cheerful spirits on election day, which he spent for the most part at home with his family, solicitously waited upon by the handsome Miss

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Flora. It was she, too, who had the honor of bringing her father the first positive report of his election as mayor of Sunnyville.

MAY MEAN HIGHER HONORS

"I'm so proud of you, daddy," she said. "You poor, dear fellow! you deserve it, after spending half of last night in that dreadful elevator. And mark my word, you'll be made governor of the state one of these bright election days."

"You're safely in line for it, colonel," affirmed young Thornton, shaking the hand of the new mayor.

"If I ever am governor," laughed Colonel Anson, "it will be owing to my detention in that elevator carriage. I see now that I was a bit too hasty in proposing to oppose the renewal of that franchise, and if I had made the speech I intended to, I would not be mayor to-day, and consequently out of the race for still higher preferment. But I want you two young people to promise me one thing."

"What is that?"

"If ever I do run for governor and get hard-headed about some issue, I beg that you will lock me in my library, and not trap me again in an elevator carriage."

Miss Flora gasped and sat down weakly, while Thornton retreated, a bit staggered.

"Then you knew it all along, daddy!"

"No," laughed Colonel Anson, "not till you came and sat on the stairway, you minx. Then I knew it was a trap. But don't think I am

offended; that delay was just what I needed to clear my head. Now I'll leave you to your further schemes, while I receive the congratulations of my townsmen." He turned and left the room, still laughing.

Some moments later Thornton did what no man save Colonel Anson himself had ever dared to do. He took the handsome Miss Flora into his arms and kissed her.

"I wonder if your father knows of *this!*" he smiled, gazing fondly into the level gray eyes.

Miss Flora returned the gaze, unabashed. "I don't know," she said, "and—I—don't mind!"