An Original Proposal.

"I'll propose to her today," said Du Val Carter to himself as he was dressing. "I've hung around her all summer and taken her snubs and stood her caprices and been the laughing stock of the hotel. She must give me an honest answer before she goes on Monday or it's break between us for good."

But when there is a "woman in the case," alas, for the plans of "mice and men!"

That very morning Miss Maud Armiger said to her confidante in the mirror, "Val shall not propose to me today. I know he will try but I don't mean he shall have a chance. I'll stay by Mamma all day."

At that, however, the girl in the mirror looked so disconsolate that Maud hastened to add "Not that Val isn't the dearest fellow in the world, but I am too young to think of getting married yet, I must be perfectly free for ages to have all the good times I want."

But the mirror girl frowned as if she disapproved of such talk and wanted to say "you're a hypocrite," so poor Maud felt obliged to be still more conciliatory.

"You see," she went on, with a little explanatory nod, "if he should propose I am awfully afraid I would say 'yes' right off, and then he wouldn't appreciate me half enough; but if I keep him waiting a year or so and tease him a lot he'll be duly thankful when he gets me."

True to his resolve, Carter took the first chance after breakfast to ask Miss Armiger to go sailing, but she, equally true to her, told him that she was, "Oh so sorry!" but that her trunk must be packed.

"All right," said he cheerfully, "I'll wait, and we'll go about eleven, you'll be through by then, won't you?"

"O, you are so good, Mr. Carter," answered Miss Armiger, hypocrite, with the most naive and innocent of smiles, "and I would just love to go but unfortunately I have several letters I must write this morning." And with a smile, and a nod she was off.

"What a sell!" muttered Carter in disgust, "she slips through my fingers like quicksilver, but never mind, I'll corner her yet, the will o'-the wisp."

Safe in her room, Maud began to pack with a will, but in spite of herself thoughts began to creep in. "This was the dress I had on when I met Val," she murmured as she folded and laid away a light blue organdie "and this" to a little tailor-made serge "is the one I wore on that all-day trip to the mountains when Val said —" but even to herself she did not finish.

So each dress and ribbon as she folded it away somehow put in a plea for the man she was so skilfully planning to outwit; but Maud was not to be so easily changed and consoled herself by remembering that after all he could write.

The packing done, it occurred to her that she could just run down and take a peep to see what every one was doing and then come back to her letters.

She ran down and looked in the parlor which was deserted, just glanced at the piazza where all the old maids and aged people were congregated and concluded that the young people were all playing golf or sailing. "So" she thought "I may as well write in the ladies' parlor, for Val won't be home until dinner."

But when she reached the threshold of that room she paused with a start of dismay. Leaning back on the cushions of the window-seat was Susie Mills, the prettiest girl at the hotel. She was playing little snatches on her mandolin, and sitting by her, apparently all absorbed, and with his back to the door, was Du Val Carter.

Before they had seen her Maud had fled and once more in her own room she locked the door and threw herself on the bed in disgust. "The horrid, fickle thing," she panted, breathless with her quick run up stairs, "is that what he does when he thinks I'm out of the way? But he need not be so particular to do it on the sly, for I'm sure I don't care!"

"I have a great mind," she continued, "to let him propose and then refuse him point blank to pay him for this."

But a little reflection made her decide such a course would be dangerous!

At dinner all traces of her late agitation having vanished, Miss Armiger looked her loveliest, but in vain did Carter do his best to win a smile or even a nod. He was politely but firmly ignored, while Harold Clark, a young Yale junior was made the recipient of so many bright glances and laughing