

**MISER FAREBROTHER.
A NOVEL. IN THREE
VOLUMES. VOL.II**

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Miser Farebrother. A Novel. In Three Volumes. Vol.II by B. L. Farjeon

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B. L. FARJEON

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A NOVEL. IN THREE
VOLUMES. VOL.II**

MISER FAREBROTHER.

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A *Novel*.

BY

B. L. FARJEON,

AUTHOR OF

"GREAT PORTER SQUARR," "GRIF," "IN A SILVER SEA," "THE HOUSE
OF WHITE SHADOWS," ETC.

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MISER FAREBROTHER.

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CHAPTER I.

JEREMIAH PAMFLETT ASSERTS HIMSELF.

THE innocent fun and gaiety at the tea-table were long afterward remembered. There was an animated discussion as to who should take the head of the table. Phœbe wanted Aunt Leth to do so, but Fanny interfered, and said no one should sit there but Phœbe.

“It is Phœbe’s day,” persisted the light-hearted girl, “and something unlucky will happen if she doesn’t pour out the tea. Mr. Cornwall, come and court me at the bottom of the table.”

“Didn’t you say it was Miss Farebrother’s day?” said Fred, as he took his seat next to the young hostess. He was not wanting in resource, and rather enjoyed Fanny’s badinage.

The table was much more plentifully supplied than Phœbe expected, and she cast many grateful glances at Mrs. Pamflett, who had certainly taken pains to do honour to the occasion. Mrs. Pamflett received these tokens of gratitude gravely and quietly; no one would have supposed that her mind was occupied by any other consideration than the comfort of her young mistress's guests. But nothing escaped her secretly watchful eyes; every word, every look, every little attention from Fred Cornwall to Phœbe was carefully noted and treasured up.

A merrier meal was never enjoyed; the buzz of conversation was delightful to hear. Phœbe was the quietest, Fanny the noisiest. Suddenly she became quite still, and gazed pensively at Fred Cornwall.

"A penny for your thoughts," said he.

"They are yours at the price," she replied, holding out her hand for the penny. "I am feeling very sorry for you."

"Why?"

"Because I am convinced you would be much happier if you were at this moment shelling peas with a certain young lady in Switzerland."

This caused a general laugh, and Fred enlarged upon the delights of his trip, Fanny interrupting him a dozen times with some quizzical remark.

"You certainly want some one to keep you in order, Fanny," laughingly observed her mother.

"I do," replied Fanny, dolefully. "Where *is* that some one? Why *does* he not appear?"

Toward the end of the meal Mrs. Pamflett swiftly left the room. Looking out of the window she saw her son Jeremiah, and she hastened down to him.

"Well, mother?" said he

"What has made you so late?" she asked, anxiously.

"Now, don't nag!" he exclaimed. "I couldn't get here before; had a hundred things to look after. The new clothes I ordered never came home, and I had to go and bullyrag the tailor. How do I look, mother?"

"Beautiful, Jeremiah, beautiful!" she said, enthusiastically.

On his feet were patent-leather shoes; on his head the shiniest of belltoppers; on his hands lavender-coloured kid gloves; round his neck a light blue scarf, with a great car

buncle pin stuck in it; and he wore a tourist's suit of russet-brown of a very large check pattern.

"Rather licks 'em, doesn't it?" he asked, in a tone of self-admiration and approval, turning slowly round to exhibit his points.

"That it does, Jeremiah."

"Look at this," he said, taking off his hat.

"Why, you've had your hair curled, Jeremiah!"

"Slightly! Nobby, ain't it?"

"Beautiful! My own dear boy!"

"Keep your fingers to yourself, can't you? There, you've gone and put it all out!" He drew from his pocket a small mirror, and anxiously readjusted the curls his mother had touched. "Now just you be careful. Eyes on, hands off!"

"They must have cost a lot of money, Jeremiah."

"They did; a heap; but in for a penny, in for a pound. There's one comfort; it's all spent on myself. Catch me spending it on anybody else. They cost, altogether— Well, never mind; we're going in for a big thing, ain't we? I ain't particular to a pound or two when the stake's worth it."