

THE FORBES- DOOLAN AFFAIR

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The Forbes-Doolan Affair by W. H. Bishop

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W. H. BISHOP

**THE FORBES-
DOOLAN AFFAIR**



MASTER JACK. — "WHAT MADE THE HANDS GO ROUND SO SURELY?"

THE
FORBES-DOOLAN AFFAIR.

BY
W. H. BISHOP.

(Author of Detmold)

WITH OTHER STORIES BY FAVORITE AUTHORS.



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+ THE FORBES-DOOLAN AFFAIR.

I.

IT is a painful case of misplaced confidence. We shall endeavor to have it over with as soon as possible.

Elsie Doolan was the daughter of Maria. She was of a weak and pliable disposition, and of a robust and chubby frame, which, upon the occasion of her appearance at the Forbeses, in these events, was attired in a red sack with white scalloping, a blue dress with three rows of black velvet, and red gaiters.

Her father, Thomas Doolan, would have preferred her to have some good, solid, old-fashioned name like Johanna, Bridget, or Mary Ellen ; but this was one of the points that Maria was inflexible about. Elsie was the name of a very fascinating young lady who often used to run in to the Forbeses, and had

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much impressed her. She wished to have something that was a reminiscence of her former genteel connections.

But the point is, who was Maria ?

Maria was the best servant the Forbeses ever had. She ran errands for them at first, out of school hours, at their place up in the country. Then they took her into the house, and finally brought her to New York. Other servants came and went ; nurses who slapped the children, cooks who drank, coachmen who were impertinent about taking out the horses of a rainy night ; but Maria, respectful, accommodating, honest, of a trim and coquettish figure, was a fixture, and everybody hoped she always would be.

When she married, therefore, it may be supposed there was a little consternation. They could not think where she became acquainted with Thomas Doolan, since she had never appeared to have suitors hanging about. But she knew very well. He was an old admirer whom she had refused up in the country ; but after he had saved his money, and gone and got into the grocery business in a Connecticut city, and come and asked her several times more, she had changed her mind and accepted him.

When the Forbeses found that it had to be, how-

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ever, and there was no preventing it, they gave her many nice things of theirs and a present in money ; and when she called there on the wedding trip, with her husband — a well-meaning and honest man but quite awkward compared with Maria, by reason of his want of experience in polished company — they entertained them kindly and gave them cake and wine.

Now you have some idea what kind of persons Elsie and Maria were when they stopped at the Forbeses on their way to the three o'clock boat, returning from a day's trip to the city last fall. Maria weighed two hundred pounds now, and wore a crimson shawl which did not make it seem less. Still she had her pleasant expression, and you could see that it was the same old Maria. The family were particularly delighted with Elsie. Their own children were slender, and of pale, clear complexions. Maria's was so plump and rosy as to occasion an envious outcry.

"Give me a kiss this minute!" said Miss Florence, a young lady in a dress which came down to the tops of her boots, and brown hair tied with a black ribbon, who had lately begun to go to school at Vassar college — making a not altogether successful attempt to toss her aloft. Miss Isabel found her a

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little ring, which could be made to fit by twisting some silk around it inside. Mrs. Forbes, while leading Maria about the house, and confiding to her her troubles since she went away, found a pretty sash and other things. Even Master George, a young man who was intimately acquainted with several eminent firemen and policemen, and rather superior to the ordinary amenities of life, and rather noted besides for parsimony, drew upon his pocket-money for a piece of silver for her.

"Why can't you stay with us a few days, Maria?" said Mrs. Forbes. "And O! I shouldn't wonder if you were quite a god-send! This is Tuesday. Couldn't you let us send you out to Alice's at Trenton, Thursday? They are just moving into their new house. She wants somebody she can trust to be there and have a general supervision of things for a day or two. We can take care of Elsie here, as she would be in the way."

Maria thought this could be done, only that Thomas Doolan expected her back that night, and would be alarmed if she did not come. But this could be obviated by a telegram. So George was sent out, and telegraphed that Maria was going to Trenton on Thursday for Mrs. Forbes, and Elsie would be kept in New York.