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FOUR SCENES IN REAL LIFE.

By Bro. Wm. Rounseville.

SCENE FIRST.

"You will give me leave to doubt your story!"

The speaker was a woman in the prime of life; the hour, eleven o'clock at night; the place, a room in a house supplied with all the necessary comforts of civilized life; the occupants, the before-mentioned woman, and a gentleman of the laboring million, whom she called husband. A cheerful fire was burning in the grate, and all the appliances of the room spoke of a competence, and taste and judgement to render the means effective in building up a cheerful and desirable home.

"You will give me leave to doubt your story, for I do not believe one word of it."

"Eunice!" and the name was pronounced more in sorrow than in anger, in a deprecatory tone: "Eunice, have I ever given you reason to doubt my word?"

"But it is not reasonable! You say you have been attending to your Masonic duties. I should like to know what duties Masonry requires of you at this time of night!"

"The poor you have always with you," responded the husband, "and the sick also."

"It does not appear to me that you would be out in this storm, attending either to the wants of the poor or the sick, and besides, if you have been engaged in that kind of business, how is it that your clothes are so free from wet?"

"As you doubt my word, perhaps it is better to show you how it was that I kept dry," and he stepped to the door which he had a few moments before entered, opened it, and pointed to a waterproof cloak yet dripping with the rain.

"Whose is that?" she asked.

"It belongs to Bro. Bentley."

"Then you have been to Bro. Bentley's, instead of being at the lodge and assisting the poor and the sick. I was not aware that there were either poor or sick at Bro. Bentley's."

"They are not, I am glad to say. They have a sufficiency of this world's goods, and enjoy good health."

"Then you have been visiting there, perhaps, while 'Bro. Bentley' attended the lodge, and 'Sister Bentley,' as I have no doubt you call her, kindly loaned you her husband's waterproof cloak, that you might shield your body from the storm. I must say she was very considerate."

"She did nothing of the kind, and besides, if you will take a word which you have so lately doubted, I have neither seen Mrs. Bentley this evening, nor been at her house."

"Where, then, did you get the cloak?"

"At the lodge, of Bro. Bentley himself."

"That will hardly answer. You would hardly take his cloak from him on a stormy night like the present, and allow him to go home in the rain without it."

"Nevertheless, that is just what I did. I had much further to go than he, had neither cloak nor umbrella, and, therefore, accepted his offer to let me wear it, while