

Strotherick opened the door and stood amazed on seeing his foreman, the quiet, steady-going Oscar standing, rapt, with the tears rolling down his face, drawing such wild, passionate sounds from the violin, as he had never heard before. A moment more, and a sudden light burst on him; he recognized in Oscar the man who sold him the violin. Interrupting him in his impetuous way, he exclaimed, 'Why have you kept this secret, why didn't you tell me long ago?' Oscar replied: 'I knew you valued the violin, and I knew you would have wanted to give it back to me, therefore I didn't tell you.' At his reply Mr. Strotherick's patience gave way utterly. He stormed at Oscar, half in jest and half in earnest, called him 'pig-headed' and a hundred other pretty names, made him tell his history and the history of the violin, and in a greater fume than ever vowed that he would discharge Oscar and burn the violin if he refused to take it again, and wound up by shaking Oscar by both hands, saying with a quiver of his lips, 'I owe you the lives of my children; will you not make me happy and let me make you happy, by taking the violin again?' Oscar was not proof against this earnest appeal, and to Mr. Strotherick's great joy consented and bore off his treasure to his mother. They laughed and wept together over its recovery, the widow repeating 'Did I not tell you that God was good, and would reward you, and He has, He has, not only now, but will for all eternity reward the son who gave up, without a murmur, his most cherished possession for the sake of his mother.' Oscar continued to rise. He and the generous Mr. Strotherick are warm friends, and Oscar is now about to become a partner in the business. Many an evening do they spend together playing on and discussing the merits of the inexhaustible violin, for who ever knew a violin player with a fine instrument that had said all that he could say about his violin."

When the Doctor finished all agreed in expressing their thanks for his story. After a little desultory conversation they shook each other warmly by the hand, with many wishes for a pleasant summer and hopes for reunion in the fall, and the "Scratch Club" was gone.