

## A Militant Measure

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She turned to Lucy and helped her off to school, and then broke down and cried as if her heart would break.

After a while she bestirred herself and made the house tidy, and then she went over to her nearest neighbor. Aunt Mattie was an old maid, of sixty-five, who had introduced her to Arthur. She had kept

house for Mr. Stilson after his first wife's death, and taken care of Lucy, and had a heart big enough to mother the world. She loved Esther as if she were her own daughter.

"Aunt Mattie," Esther said huskily, "I want you to go over to take care of Lucy and the house. I am going back to my school."

Then she broke down again and buried her face in Aunt Mattie's lap.

"Oh, Esther, is it as bad as that?

You know, dear, I told you of his peculiarities. He seems stern and autocratic, but he has the best heart in the world, though he makes grave mistakes. He sent his two boys away from home without a penny, he shortened the life of his wife, and now you are going away. When will he learn his lesson? You thought you could manage him? A man—yes, and a woman, too—is sometimes like a mule. He needs a beating, metaphorically, to make him wake up to

see things. But this will break Lucy's heart!"

"Oh, that is what breaks mine, Aunt Mattie. But I shall send for Lucy soon, if he will only let her come."

"Why not take her with you, Esther?"

"I dare not do that. My life is my own, but she is his, and he loves her in his own way."

(Continued next week)

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