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but, Peter, of the rest, men must fill my mansion. Nice men, men of good character, yes I do bargain for that, young men and as rich men as possible. If we do our work properly, I count that I shall have married off the terrible five within a year."

"Oh, Mr. John!"

"Well, have you any objection? You also take up your abode in Number 1. You act as boot boy and watch the results. You must have eyes and ears for everything, everyone, and, first and foremost, before you become boot boy at Number 1, you are to secure these nice, handsome, rich young men as paying guests at Number 1. Now, set to work, you old rogue, and leave no stone unturned. The ladies will decorate the house. Gardeners will put the central garden of the square in order. All the other houses will be painted up and refurbished. At present my nieces are in rooms. I will not tell you where, but I want to get them into Number 1 as soon as it is possible to be done, and you take up your position there as boot boy and spy. Thus I am absolutely free. I pay you what I have always paid you. I go on with my own work day by day in the City. You, Peter, have to fill the house for me and put off your byway of gentlemanly airs; in short, I think you will make an admirable boot boy."

"Very well, master, I will do my best. I suppose you couldn't furnish me with a nice suit of clothes for this business. I can act the gent as well as any one, but I must appear to look the gent, musn't I, master?"

"To be sure, of course. Here's a line to my tailor. Get him to fit you out immediately for the work. Now, don't bother me."

Peter, the decrepit old man, went slowly out of the room. Jasper John watched him, and a smile quivered round his lips. "Peter will do it," he said to himself. "There never was a sharper chap than Peter."

Jasper John attended to his necessary business for two or three hours. He then told his clerks that he would give them all a half-holiday, that the place might be shut up, as he would be busy himself on important work for the remainder of the day. He then went himself to a very different tailor from the one to whom he had sent Peter.

He said to this individual, "I have a special reason for looking smart and as quickly as possible. Have you any suit of clothes by you that I can put on at once?"

NOW Jasper John was known all over London as a most successful City man. To be a successful city man is only another word for being a very wealthy man. One of the partners of this great firm of tailors nodded to the other, then came forward and said:

"I think, sir, that I am not mistaken when I address you as Mr. John of Hope Square."

"If it gives you any pleasure to address me in that way, you may," said Jasper.

"I only mention the fact," said the great tailor with the utmost deference, "because my partner and I happen to have just returned to us by one of our wealthiest clients, a suit, a morning suit, I mean, which does not quite fit, but we think, looking at your figure, Mr. John, that it will, without alteration or at least with very little, fit you to a nicety. You can pay at your convenience, of course, sir."

"I never run into debt," said Jasper John, "what is the total?"

The man named a sum which gave Jasper a series of small shocks, but after a moment's silence, he said:

"Fit the garments on, and if they suit me I'll take them."

"For ready cash, of course, there will be a considerable reduction."

Jasper made no answer. He was taken into an inner room. His exceedingly shabby, seven-year-old suit was removed. He was fitted by the amiable tailor with a correct shirt, correct studs, correct collar, and then the suit itself was put on.

It did fit to a nicety. Jasper was a well-made man and there was not a

crease in the back, nor in the broad shoulders, nor in the perfectly cut trousers, nor in the neat, fanciful waistcoat, which was of quite a different material.

Jasper looked at himself in a long glass and felt that he did not know himself. He was absolutely astonished and delighted by his appearance.

"Send those rags to Number 1," he said, pointing to the discarded garments. "They will do very well for Peter when he is boot-boy," so he soliloquised.

"Certainly, sir. Can we furnish you with anything else?"

"Another day most probably you will supply me with many clothes. Now I should be glad if you would recommend me to a first-rate hosier, a first-rate bootmaker, a man who sells hats suitable for a gentleman in my position, and last, but not least, to a barber."

The delighted partners were only too glad to give the names required. Jasper said:

"Kindly give me your account."

"Oh, really, Mr. John, it doesn't matter. Our customers never pay on delivery."

"This customer does," said Jasper John. "The account, please."

IT was given and the smart suit paid for on the spot. Then John went to the hosier, the bootmaker, the man who was to supply him with a suitable hat, the man who was to give him a smart umbrella and, having bought and paid for all these articles, he finally visited one of the most fashionable barbers in London. There his untidy beard and moustache were removed and his hair was cut to the required length.

"I wouldn't know myself," thought Jasper John, "and all for the sake of those minxes. I really feel—well, very nice. I had no idea I was such a nice-looking chap. Poor old Clem, how much I am sacrificing for you." His next business was to send a wire to his nieces and immediately afterwards he visited his bank. He withdrew from his account, his precious, his darling, his valuable account, the exact sum of two hundred pounds. He put this, in notes, into his waistcoat pocket and then drove to that low-down part of Bloomsbury, where the five Dudley girls were living, living alone, their mother gone, their darling no longer with them. He had his lawyer's letter in his pocket.

"Eve!" muttered Jasper. "Freda!" whispered Jasper. "Effie and Joan!" sighed Jasper. "Antigone!" whispered Jasper. "Dear! dear! dear! Oh, kind heaven, pity an old man, and help me to remember correctly who is Eve—who is Freda, who is Effie, who is Joan, and, above all things, who is Antigone?"

The five girls were expecting Uncle Jasper. They were not particularly anxious to see him, but their beloved mother had always spoken kindly of her brother.

"He will be good to you when I am gone, my darlings," she said.

"I don't want his goodness, I don't want him at all," said Antigone.

She had the ways and manners of a young Greek goddess. She was not in the least like ordinary girls. She was the youngest of the five, but she was far and away the most beautiful. Her eyes were large and had the peculiar colour of glacier ice. They were surrounded by very black eyelashes and brows. Her colouring was somewhat pale, but her hair was black as night.

The other girls—Eve, Freda, Effie, and Joan—were also good-looking. Eve was fair with brilliant colouring, Freda rather dark, Effie, again, fair, Joan particularly fascinating and dainty, but Antigone was the queen of this group of fair maidens.

They were too poor to dress well and they were in mourning. Not that any of them wished to wear mourning, for it did not suit them, and their mother had begged them not to put on black for her. Still, they thought they ought, and in their shabby black, with a nice tea prepared, the five damsels waited for Uncle Jasper. They had made their shabby room