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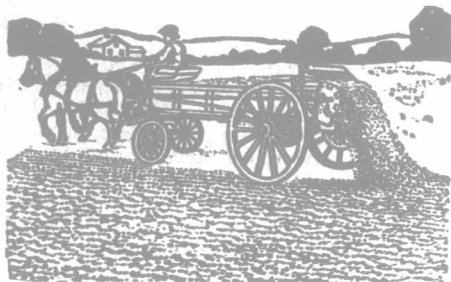
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survey of gleaming silks and dainty laces and chiffons.

She had made a tour of a large department store, and was walking along an aisle to an exit. Her progress was slow, for the store was very crowded, it being "bargain day." There was an eager, pushing crowd around the ribbon counter. Rowena stopped to look at it. As she did so a small elderly lady on the edge of the crowd came up to her and said: "Can you tell me where they sell the furniture?" Her voice was sweet, and she had beautiful dark eyes, which seemed the darker because of their contrast with her soft waves of white hair. She was neatly dressed in black. "The furniture department is on the fourth floor," answered Rowena, politely.

The old lady looked about in a bewildered way on the moving, jostling crowd. Rowena gave a quick glance around. There was no floor-walker in sight. She turned to the old lady. "I'll go with you to the furniture department," she said. "Come around this aisle. It is not so crowded."

As they waited for an elevator the old lady said: "I am not used to the city, my dear. These great shops almost frighten me. Do you think those things are safe?" pointing to the elevator. "O, yes," returned Rowena, "though I don't know much about them myself. I live in the country, too." The old lady looked nervous. "I just had to come," she said. "I had to have the things at once. Now I wonder—would you mind helping me to select the things? You see, they are for a young girl. You would know better than I what young girls like."

There was a note in the old lady's voice and an expression in her eyes which attracted Rowena. She replied cordially: "I'll be glad to do anything I can to help you." "Thank you, my dear. You see, I came to buy furniture for a young girl's bedroom. I want it pretty and simple. And if you'll help me!"

"I'll be glad to," replied Rowena. "Here's the elevator now." The old lady clung to Rowena's arm as the car shot up to the fourth floor. When a salesman came forward, she whispered: "You do it." Rowena had been through the furniture department that morning, so she said: "Show us some white enameled beds."

"My dear, those are the very thing," exclaimed the old lady, when Rowena pointed out two which she thought the prettiest, "and so cheap." She bought the one which Rowena gave her preference.

A dressing table and a chest of drawers in curly maple were also selected. Then followed three pretty chairs and a dainty escritoire. But the escritoire was found to have several rubbed spots, and the salesman went away to see if there was another of the same design. While he was gone the old lady said: "I am having the room papered with blue and rosebud paper, and new matting put down. And I have some pretty embroidered curtains for the windows. Then there are a few pictures. I think the room will be nice."

"Indeed it will," said Rowena, warmly.

"You see, she's a relative, and she's coming to live with me. I want to have things as nice as I can. I want her to be happy."

"She'll be sure to like her room. It's the kind of room I should like." "You're sweet and kind, my dear." The old lady looked at Rowena wistfully. "I wish I had a daughter like you." Here the salesman returned and said that there was another escritoire without a blemish. "Then I think that is all," returned the old lady. She opened the little leather satchel she carried, and took out a roll of bills. She ordered the furniture sent to "care of William Prickett, Wiltonville." "You see," she said, "there's no station where I live. I live farther in the country. Wil-

liam Prickett will receive it and bring it out to me in his wagons."

She thanked Rowena profusely. "I have enjoyed doing it," said Rowena; and she had.

"Now I must go down stairs and buy some towels and things, but I can manage that alone," she laughed cheerily.

It occurred to Rowena that it was about time for her to return to Mrs. Graves's. She intended returning home by the noon train. She took the old lady to the linen counter, and said good-bye to her.

Rowena reached home at supper-time. During the meal she gave Hannah an account of her trip. Her description of buying the furniture with the old lady held a prominent place in the recital. "She's the nicest old lady, Hannah—such a sweet way with her."

"I wonder who she is, and where she lives."

"She lives some place in the country. There is no station there. She was having the things sent to a neighboring station in care of some one there. The girl she bought the things for ought to be happy. It must be nice to have some one to care so much for you that she wants you to have a pretty room. It will be a pretty room. The girl ought to like it." Rowena looked thoughtful. "You will have a nice one at Mrs. Graves's, won't you?" asked Hannah. "Yes, but that isn't like having one of your very own. O, Hannah, the stores are lovely—so many beautiful things. It will be nice to live where I can go to them whenever I want to."

On Saturday Rowena went to Mr. Dutton's office as he had requested her to do. When he had finished discussing business matters, he said: "A man who lives in your cousin Phoebe's neighborhood was in my office to-day. He was out this way buying some land. She came on with him as far as the city. She had some shopping to do. It must have been important, for Phoebe always disliked the city. Have you made arrangements to go there?" "Yes," said Rowena, "I am going next month."

Mr. Dutton looked grave. "I wish you were going to Phoebe. She was a fine woman when I knew her. William Prickett tells me that she is one of the best he knows. I think that I must run over to her country and see her."

"William Prickett!" exclaimed Rowena. "Who is he?"

"The man I told you lives near your cousin Phoebe."

"O! that was the name my old lady—I wonder—where does he live?" said Rowena, excitedly. "At Wiltonville," returned Mr. Dutton, in some surprise.

It was plain to Rowena. That was the address the old lady had given. She must have been her cousin Phoebe. She gave a little laugh. "What is it?" asked the lawyer, his surprise increasing.

Rowena told him of her meeting with the old lady and of buying the furniture with her. "Had she large dark eyes?" he asked. "Yes—beautiful ones—and a dimple in her cheek—and her hair crinkled around her forehead."

"That was Phoebe," said Mr. Dutton in a convinced tone. "It was just like her to rush off and buy furniture to fix up a room for you, without waiting to see if you were coming to her."

"I suppose it was for me she was buying it," returned Rowena, slowly. "I feel sure of it. She will be quite disappointed. It is a pity you could not have known it was she, and told her you were going to live in the city." "Yes, it is," agreed Rowena.

She could think of nothing but her cousin Phoebe all the rest of the day. She took the thought of her to bed with her that night. How disappointed she would be! And that pretty room! And how sweet and gentle she seemed! Surely anyone could be happy with her! How sad she had seemed when she wished she had a daughter!

Rowena's sleep was broken, and she awoke for good very early the