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want of some one to bring provisions to the house.

But when the old folks died, and it began to creep out that John was a very wealthy man and it was really surprising to see how good-looking he became, and how many intimate friends he had. For a time John held himself aloof from all the same as before; but a hermit sort of life does not fulfill the natural desire of a human being, though John had so long been accustomed to universal avoidance, he did not so readily respond to the offers of friendship, as it was confidently hoped.

Among his most confiding friends, or those who fain would become his confidantes, were, as might be supposed, impecunious widows who would gladly have taken from his shoulders the responsibilities incident to such large possessions. Mothers also of several marriageable daughters, suddenly awoke to the fact that John must be very lonely, and that society was wrong in leaving him to bear his sorrows unaided. There is a weak point in everyone, and John's was by reason of contrast no doubt, intense admiration of beauty, be it exemplified in scenes of Nature, or the human family, and when Sarah Slocum, the most beautiful girl in the town, began to look demurely toward John, John hesitatingly but longingly looked toward Sarah.

Glances soon resolved into smiles, smiles into words, and it would not take a prophet to tell the only result likely to ensue. John struggled manfully against the surging waters of love that engulfed him whenever Sarah was near, and he told himself a hundred times a day that he was just as ugly as, before, and that no girl would ever have looked at him but for his money; but with Sarah at his side, affectionately patting his hand, while the tears filled her eyes as she referred to his sorrowful life all alone, with no living relatives to care for him, John knew that there was at least one sincere woman in the world, and yet he hesitated to throw his last card, for if he lost—then what? He dared not think.

"Now, John, dear," said Sarah, for John had laid his heart and fortune at Sarah's feet and she had quickly picked them up. "You know, you cannot attend to all the details of the wedding preparation; it is too much to ask or expect of you, and mamma has so kindly offered to attend to everything, and not bother you with a single thing till the house is all ready to receive us when we return from our wedding trip; and she knows just the kind of a house we want in a lovely location. But, John, dear, of course—well—you know the money must be paid before we can do anything towards fixing it up, and mamma says she will look after all that business. It's awfully good of her. She will go and buy the house in her name, because, of course, it would be so embarrassing for dear mamma to acknowledge that it was your money, and it can be deeded to you after we are married, you see, just as well. Mamma says—and, of course, she knows—that we ought to have an elegant trousseau for me, because it would show so much more respect to you, dear; and she says she knows you would not have it any other way. Of course, you would be so proud to have everyone say that your bride was the most beautifully dressed that ever stood before the altar. Since poor papa's death (with a few tears) we have never felt like taking our proper position in society, but Mamma says that the marriage of her only daughter is a signal for coming from retirement, and she shall do her duty by me, cost what it will.

"Now Johnnie, my love, you know we are to be married in three months and mamma says that you can just write a check to-day for the house, and she will secure it at once, for it is such a bargain, only fifteen thousand pounds, or some one will be sure to snatch it up, and then you can give me a check for—oh, I guess I can get along with only twenty-five hundred pounds! Mamma and I will leave at once for Paris, and then we can see just what we're getting, and it will be so much more satisfactory than ordering—you are bound to get cheated that way.

You see that will give us time to have everything made, and we will be sure of a fit; that is so important. Why, mamma says it would never do at all to order without seeing what we are getting. You dear boy"—Sarah always called him "Boy" when she wanted to be real tender—"Just think what a load this will take from you, won't it?"

"I'll get a pen now that we understand just how it's going to be, and you can sign the checks so that mamma and I can begin at once, for there won't be any time to spare." And Sarah puckered up her mouth, and bending over him with a very wry face, touched her lips to his forehead.

John was silent, but extending his arm, he drew her to him, while his eyes sought her face in a beseeching way that would have been touching had those eyes been mated.

"Sarah, my darling," slowly came from his white lips. "You can never know the depths of my love for you—never know half the gratitude my heart encased in this ugly frame holds for you. Long I resisted your noble attempts at friendship—long refused to even accept common civility at your hands; but having at length received you as a friend, I determined that there the relationship should cease. I have never mentioned this to you, but feel that the moment has now arrived when you should know the whole truth. I knew there could be no such thing in the world for me as love. I, with my unsightly features, could never hope to win the affection of any woman, though my gold might. But when your presence seemed a necessity to me, and when you did not recoil in horror from my first intimation of affection, I knew that I had found a true heart and a being whose love would not be mercenary could I but win it. I tried, and did win it. I thank the God who made me this misshapen thing that he sent across my path this bright angel to teach me love and happiness. Now, my dearest one, after my confession, and also my declaration of implicit faith in you, I am going to make one request which I am sure you will willingly grant when you see how much I desire it, even though it does not accord with your plans. The world will gossip, will slander, will kill with suspicion the purest women, and I would not have one breath of malice directed against the only being the world holds for me, and so I would ask you to give up this proposed trip to Europe. Be satisfied, as I shall more than be, with what costumes can be obtained at home, and which your mother, pardon me for referring to it, can easily afford to procure. Let me purchase our home, and after we are married, it shall be put in your name. We together will sail for Paris, and my darling shall then select whatever she pleases, and it will be my greatest pleasure to buy it for her. Though I request this, it is a matter on which I shall be obliged to insist, for I foresee the fatal result of a different plan."

A convulsive shudder shook the frame of the thwarted woman; a fiery look of intense hatred darted from her eyes; her teeth ground in rage, and for an instant she was speechless. But as John turned to receive her answer, with a heroic effort she controlled herself, and smiled sweetly as she began a most impassioned appeal to be allowed to follow out the plan so adroitly formed by herself and mother.

But though John Swift was supposed to be a man of easy principles, still where virtue was at stake and one word might admit of misconception, and bring sorrow to his idol, he was firm as adamant and Sarah's words of eloquence fell powerless.

Finding a will stronger than her own, and one against which it were worse than useless to struggle, Sarah threw off her cloak of hypocrisy, and in a manner that ill-fitted those beautiful features, revealed her true self.

"Did you think, Jonathan Swift, that you were so handsome that any girl could fall in love with you for your good looks? Did you think that I, the most beautiful girl in the country, who can have any man I choose, would pick you out from all the rest if it were not to my advantage? You stingy old, baldheaded heathen ourang-outang, do