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THE TOUCHING REPROOF.

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"Here, Jane," said a father to his little girl not over eleven years of age, "go over to the shop and buy me a pint of brandy."

At the same time he handed her a quarter of a dollar. The little girl took the money and the bottle, and as she did so, looked her father in the face with an earnest, sad expression. But he did not seem to observe it, although he perceived it, and felt it; for he understood its meaning. The little girl lingered, as if reluctant, from some reason, to go on her errand.

"Did you hear what I said?" the father asked angrily, and with a frowning brow, as he observed this.

Jane glided from the room and went over to the shop, hiding, as she passed through the street, the bottle under her apron. There she obtained the liquor, and returned with it in a few minutes. As she reached the bottle to her father, she looked at him again with the same sad, earnest look, which he observed. It annoyed and angered him.

"What do you mean by looking at me in that way? Ha!" he said, in a loud, angry tone.

Jane shrunk away, and passed into the next room, where her mother lay sick. She had been sick for some time, and as they were poor, and her husband given to drink, she had sorrow and privation added to her bodily sufferings. As her little girl came in she went up to the side of her bed, and bending over it leaned her head upon her hand. She did not make any remark, nor did her mother speak to her until she observed the tears trickling through her fingers.

"What is the matter, my dear?" she then asked tenderly.

The little girl raised her head, endeavouring to dry up her tears as she did so.

"I feel so bad, mother," she replied.

"And why do you feel bad, my child?"

"Oh, I always feel so bad when father sends me over to the shop for brandy. And I had to go just now. I wanted to ask him to buy you some nice grapes and oranges with the quarter of a dollar—they would taste so good to you—but he seemed to know what I was going to say, and looked at me so cross that I was afraid to speak. I wish he would not drink any more brandy—it makes him so cross; and then how many nice things he might buy for you with the money it takes for liquor."

The poor mother had no words of comfort to offer her little girl, older in thought than in years; for no comfort did she herself feel in view of the circumstances that troubled her child. She only said—laying her hand upon her head—

"Try and not think about it, my dear; it only troubles you, and your trouble cannot make it any better."

But Jane could not help thinking about it, try as hard as she would. She went to a Sabbath school, in which a Temperance Society had been formed, and every Sabbath she heard the subject of intemperance discussed, and its dreadful consequences detailed. But more than all this, she had the daily experience of a drunkard's child. In this experience how much of heart-touching misery was involved!—how much of privation—how much of the anguish of a bruised spirit. Who can know the weight that lies, like a heavy burden, upon the heart of a drunkard's child! None but that child—for language is powerless to convey it.

On the next morning the father of little Jane went away to his work, and she was left alone with her mother and her youngest sister. They were very poor, and could not afford to employ any one to do the house work, and so, young as she was, while her mother was sick, little Jane had every thing to do; the cooking, and cleaning, and even the washing and ironing—a hard task, in-

deed, for her little hands. But she never murmured—never seemed to think that she was over-burdened. How cheerfully would all have been done, if her father's smiles had only fallen like sunshine upon her heart! But that face, into which her eyes looked so often and so anxiously, was ever hid in clouds—clouds arising from the consciousness that he was abusing his family while seeking his own base gratification, and from perceiving the evidences of his evil works stamped on all things around him.

As Jane passed frequently through her mother's room during the morning, pausing almost every time to ask if she wanted any thing, she saw, too plainly, that she was not as well as on the day before, that she had a high fever, indicated to her by her hot skin and constant request for cool water.

"I wish I had an orange," the poor woman said, as Jane came up to her bed-side for the twentieth time, "it would taste so good to me."

She had been thinking about an orange all the morning; and notwithstanding her effort to drive the thought from her mind, the form of an orange would ever picture itself before her, and its grateful flavor even seem to thrill upon her taste. At last she uttered her wish—not so much with the hope of having it granted, as from an involuntary impulse to speak out her desire.

There was not a single cent in the house, for the father rarely trusted his wife with money—he could not confide in her judicious expenditure of it!

"Let me go and buy an orange, mother," Jane said; "they have oranges at the shop."

"I have no change, my dear; and if I had, I should not think it right to spend four or five cents for an orange, when we have so little. Get me a cool drink of water; that will do now."

Jane brought the poor sufferer a glass of cool water, and she drank it off eagerly. Then she lay back upon her pillow with a sigh, and her little girl went out to attend the household duties that devolved upon her. But all the while Jane thought of the orange, and of how she should get it for her mother.

When her father came home to dinner, he looked crosser than he did in the morning. He sat down to the table and eat his dinner in moody silence, and then rose up to depart, without so much as asking after his sick wife, or going into her chamber. As he moved towards the door, his hat already on his head, Jane went up to him, and looking timidly in his face, said with a hesitating voice—

"Mother wants an orange so bad. Won't you give me some money to buy her one?"

"No, I will not! Your mother had better be thinking about something else than wasting money for oranges!" was the angry reply, as the father passed out, and shut the door hard after him.

Jane stood for a moment, frightened at the angry vehemence of her father, and then burst into tears. She said nothing to her mother of what had passed, but after the agitation of her mind had somewhat subsided, began to cast about in her thoughts for some plan by which she might obtain an orange. At last it occurred to her, that at the shop where she got liquor for her father, they bought rags and old iron.

"How much do you give a pound for rags?" she asked in a minute or two after the idea had occurred to her, standing at the counter of the shop.

"Three cents a pound," was the reply.

"How much for old iron?"

"A cent a pound."

"What's the price of them oranges?"

"Four cents a piece."

With this information Jane hurried back. After she had clear-