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CLARE MARSHALL'S REVENGE.

BY ELECTRA.

You would not think that the lovely little woman sitting yonder on the vine-wreathed verandah of the pretty parsonage, surrounded by three beautiful, happy children, could be guilty of revenge—for she looks as fair and calm as a pictured Madonna; but she was, and I, who know her history well, will tell you what that revenge was, and how she worked it out.

We have been friends since early childhood, ever since the days when I made mud-pies and other confectionery of unedible ingredients; and she would have done likewise, had she been allowed to follow the bent of her own sweet will, but that she could not do, for *she* was the daughter of Richard Vane, Esq., a merchant prince, and an only and idolized child, petted and cared for tenderly. Mr. Vane occupied a large, elegant house in the outskirts of the city, because it was removed from the dust and din; and my father, James Walton, found shelter for himself and family, in a small though neat cottage next door to Mr. Vane, because rent and fuel were cheaper there than in the city, for he was only a clerk in a mercantile house, with a large family, and small income, and to him and all others in like circumstances, economy was and is a perplexing and lifelong study. Mr. Vane drove daily to the city for a few hours of business, in a shining buggy, drawn by two spirited horses, while my father trudged to and fro, early and late, to his monotonous work, save when kindly Mr. Vane, with a forgetfulness of social status so much more common among men than women, overtaking him on his home-

ward way, gave him a friendly lift. So you see that Esther Walton was no fit companion for Clare Vane; but Love is a true republican, and delights in breaking down and overleaping the barriers of rank and wealth, and many a sweet and stolen interview we held, separated by the fence which ran between her father's large and beautiful garden and my father's little cabbage patch. But one happy day my mother washed my face till it shone, invested me with a clean white apron, with many injunctions to keep the same clean, and sent me out to play in the sweet spring sunshine.

Of course, considering the spotless condition of my apron, dirt pies were not to be thought of; just then my little store of broken dishes presented no attraction. I longed to see Clare Vane just for a minute. I waited and watched at our trysting place, but she did not come; so, slipping quietly out of the gate, my disobedient little feet, that had been forbidden to leave the precincts of our own enclosure, carried me to the bronze gate that opened upon the flower bordered and gravelled walk leading to the door of the Vane mansion. But no Clare was to be seen, and I was about to turn away in sorrowful disappointment, when I remembered that my mother had said, in some of her pious teachings, that I must always ask God for what I wanted. So down I went on my knees by the gate. It is thirty years since I made that funny little prayer, but I remember quite well what I said: "O Lord, please send Clare down to the gate. I want to see her so