

Do you suppose the woman of Samaria would have lingered one instant at the well of Jacob had Jesus been a man with a face like—well, suppose I say Deacon Quickset? Do you think mothers would have brought children to Him that He might bless them? Do you imagine any one who had not a great warm heart could have wept at the grave of His friend Lazarus, when He knew He had power to raise him from the dead? Didn't He go to the marriage feast at Cana, and take so much interest in the affair that He made up for the deficiency in the wine? Weren't all His parables about matters that showed a sympathetic interest in the affairs which were nearest the hearts of the people around Him? If all these things were possible to One who had His inner heart full of tremendous responsibilities, what should not His followers be in the world, so far as human cheer and interest go?"

"I've never heard Him spoken of in that way before," said Eleanor, speaking as if she were in a brown study.

"I'm glad—selfishly—that you hear it for the first time from me, then. Never again will I do anything of which I think He would disapprove; but, my dear girl, I give you my word that although occasionally—too often—I have been lawless in word and action, I never until now have known the sensation of entire liberty and happiness. You never again will see me moody or obstinate or selfish. I'm going to be a gentleman in life, as well as by birth. Won't you believe me?"

"I must believe you, Rey, I can't help believing whatever you say. But I never saw conversion act that way upon any one else, and I don't understand it."

Bartram looked quizzingly at the girl a moment, and then replied: "Try it yourself; I'm sure it will affect you just as it does me."

"Oh, Rey—no—I never can bring myself to stand up in church to be prayed for."

"Don't do it, then; pray for yourself; but you can't avoid being prayed for by one repentant sinner; have the kindness to remember that."

"Rey!" murmured Eleanor.

"And," continued Bartram, rising and placing an arm around Eleanor's shoulders, "the sooner our prayers can rise together the sooner you will understand me, believe me, and trust me, my darling, the only woman I ever loved—the only woman of whom I ever was fond—the only one to whom I ever gave an affectionate word or caress."

There are conversations which reach a stage where they should be known only to those who conduct them. When Bartram started to depart his love-life was unclouded.

"Rey," said Eleanor, at the door, "will you oblige me by seeing Sam Kimper in the morning, and asking him to tell his daughter that I particularly wish she would come back to us?"