

off into a violent fit of laughter. As she mentioned no love affair, I concluded that she had never had any.

Well we enjoyed her visit so much that I invited her to come and visit us whenever she could, and to consider our organ at her service whenever she wished to practice.

She thanked me with tears in her eyes, and said that she loved me already because I reminded her of her own "poor dear mamma."

After that "the little operator," spent most of her time when off duty at our house.

Frank seemed thoroughly fascinated by her beauty, her bright happy manner, and quick repartee, while the only fault I could find with her was that on very rare occasions, she would use slang but only when excited, and then she would always seem so sorry and ask my pardon so prettily, that I always felt inclined to overlook what seemed to me a grievous fault.

I was expecting a little stranger in March and was unable to go out, or to play the organ myself that winter and Miss Brewster's visits and our pleasant evenings together when she played all my old favorites, while Frank accompanied her with his violin, meant more to me than I can tell.

All went well until about the first of March when, Mrs. Seymour, a widowed half sister of my mother, came to spend a time with us and to superintend our household during my expected illness.

She was a very prim little person and inclined to be a little severe with those who offended her by their sins against the rules of etiquette. I could see that she did not like Miss Brewster or approve of her ways and I purposely refrained from making any remark about her. Not so with Frank, however, as soon as he came back after seeing Miss Brewster home that first evening, he said, "Well Aunt Sarah, what do you think of our little friend?"

Aunt Sarah drew her eyebrows together and puckered up her mouth as if she had determined never to open it again.

Then after a few minutes she said, "Well, since you have asked my opinion, I suppose you won't mind my giving it;

to tell you the truth, I do not entertain the opinion of her that you and Annie seem to. I have only been in her company a few minutes, and I am sure I have heard her use more than one rude expression already. "Oh, auntie," I cried, "I am sure Miss Brewster could never be rude."

"Well," said Aunt Sarah, "if using such expressions as "awfully nice" and "perfectly jolly" is not being rude I should like to know what is. To my mind she is a very frivolous young person, and appears to have had a very artificial training."

"Well, you see, Auntie," I replied, "her mother died when she was very young and she was brought up by an aunt—the mother of a large family of boys. I think you will like her when you know her better, I am sure that what you consider her fault is due to the society of her cousins and that she wishes to improve."

"I hope you are right, I'm sure," said Aunt Sarah, "but I am very seldom mistaken in my estimate of any person's character or disposition, and as for knowing her better, that is an honour I do not crave."

Frank had given me a look of gratitude as I defended out little friend but as he did not wish to quarrel with my aunt he said nothing but took up a paper and began to read.

After that things were never the same, Miss Brewster seemed to know by instinct that Aunt Sarah did not like her, and only came to us when especially invited. While Frank, who never could get on with Aunt Sarah, spent most of his evenings out.

Aunt Sarah had been with us about a month when baby arrived and for the next few days I knew very little of what went

on outside my own room, except what Frank told me.

While I was ill, he spent his evenings with me, when I became convalescent however, he went out more, and to Aunt Sarah's infinite disgust he sometimes took his violin with him.

I was so absorbed in my lovely boy (who was the image of his father) that I gave myself very little concern about other matters, until one evening wishing to speak to my husband, I asked Aunt Sarah where he was.

"Where is Frank?" she replied tartly, "where he is most of the time I suppose, down to Russel's, or out riding with that girl. I am puzzled to know how you became so intimate with her Annie, I should have thought that you were the last person on earth to choose a girl of that kind for a friend. As for Frank, it's



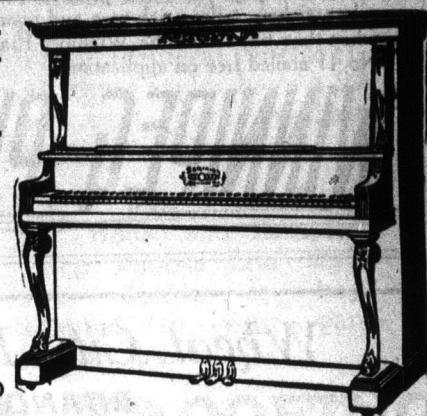
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