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References.

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Description.

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We will allow up to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ years in which to make payment, divided in equal monthly, quarterly or half-yearly payments (one of which must be paid in advance), with interest on the unpaid balance at 6%, or a further reduction from the above price of \$25, making the net cash price \$300. The regular price of the piano at \$400 may be verified by calling at any of our regular places of business. This is a genuine offer, and we stake our business reputation on the reliability of same.

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Address all communications to the General Manager.

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go an' pull him through. You lay right still where ye be."

Nathan was lifting at the iron gate, and Mary came upon him just as it yielded, saggingly. Now, as he entered the little graveyard, she stepped in after him, and followed him to the well-tended lot in the corner, where the cinnamon roses would be fragrant by and bye. Nathan paused heavily at the head of two graves lying side by side, and, hands in his pockets, studied them. He looked up at Mary as if she were the confidante naturally provided when he chose to speak.

"I didn't realize mother died so soon after father," he meditated.

Something flashed into Mary's eyes, but instantly she had a hand upon herself and dulled it.

"Yes," she said, "your mother wa'n't mare'n a middle-aged woman when she was took away."

"Marthy looks a little mite like mother," he continued, musing. "Great-aunt Mattie, too. But Marthy's thin as a rail. She didn't use to be."

Mary's eyes were flaming at him in a way they had those years ago when Nathan took his own inflexible track and Martha and his mother sadly followed. Mary was "help" then, too young and too humble to betray what her eyes saw and her warm heart uttered. But now she was not young, and having learned some of the values of life, subservience was afar from her.

"Marthy's workin' herself to death," she informed him, shortly.

Nathan accorded her a glance of momentary interest.

"Sho!" he said. "What's she want to do that for?"

"She don't want to. She's got to. Nathan Temple, when Marthy give away the money you paid her for her half, to save Willy's hide, what did you think was goin' to become o' her?"

Nathan's lips tightened in the line his creditors knew.

"That's Marthy's own lookout," he remarked, briefly. "She knew what he was, an' she knew what he had been. If she made up her mind to turn in what she had towards savin' him from the consequences he had himself to thank for, that's her concern. When it comes to Marthy's fallin' sick or bein' disabled, I shall do somethin' for her. Up to that time—"

Here he paused, and as Mary looked at him, the anger she had cherished against him for many years walked and lived, and became his adversary. Old loyalties to those of his blood, and therefore even to him, took possession of her, and again she spoke.

"Nathan Temple, what Willy was he was, an' now he's dead an' gone an' there's an end on't. There's other things on the docket for you to answer for. What wore your mother out afore her time? 'Twas your everlastin' way o' rulin' with a rod o' iron."

Nathan turned upon her.

"What d'ye mean by that?" he asked her.

Mary's heart beat fast with some uncertainty of her own wisdom, but she was beyond even her own recall.

"You was always possessed to show folks you was right an' make 'em buckle down an' foller where you led. There was Willy. He was ravin' distracted to play the fiddle, but you set down your foot to keep him on the farm. An' then he got led away an' thought he's goin' to be rich in a minute, an' he done what we all know. An' seein' what he'd been through, an' how sweet his liberty looked to him, I can't say as I blame him."

Nathan was frowning heavily.

"Well," said he, "I blame him. I blame anybody that throw themselves away."

She faced him like an enemy. All she had brooded over in these years when she sat in the dusk after her day's work was done or when she woke at night, came back upon her in a new flood of memory. So many times had she traced out the causes of things touching these dear people to whom she was bound by ties that seemed sometimes welded stronger than those of kin, that now they looked like clear, straight roads leading to judgments that had to prove inevitable.

"There's Marthy," she went on. "You're doin' the same trick with her. You think you know what's best for Marthy. So you're lettin' her go on earnin' nimpence a day an' livin' nigh the

wind, an' when she drops in her tracks you'll pay the doctor's bill. Mebbe you'll put on mournin' too."

"Well," he asked her, "that all you got to say?"

"No," said Mary, spurred now by the wildness of having said too much, "it ain't all. I know, as well as I know how to eat, just how you come by it. Marthy's like your mother's folks an' you're the image of t'other side. You're as like old Aunt Phrony Downs as two peas in a pod. Look at her! She'll be as good as pie if Marthy 'll toe the line an' mind her, be it aye or no. It ain't so much you're hard, Nathan, as you're set on your own way. You're a dretful know-it-all. You think you've read the Tables o' the Law an' the congregation's got to foller."

"Well," said Nathan again. He glanced at her with a grim wryness of the mouth, and she wondered whether, after all, the years had bred some humor in him. "That all, Mary? Anybody else I've killed?"

She debated for a moment whether he need see all the flaming record in her mind, and then, remembering an expected hour that seemed at last to strike for him, she answered soberly:

"Well, Nathan, there's somebody you hurt once. You hurt her pretty bad. I guess she hurt you, too, but you never knew 'twas your own fault that brought it on ye."

He glanced at her in startled half-suspicious questioning.

"You come over here," she said. "You know where 'tis, I mean."

But he was not fully sure until she led him across the tangle of money and jill-run-over-the ground to a corner of the yard where two stones stood alone.

"That's Annie Hill's grave," she reminded him. "Annie an' her mother. You know they died pretty poor, an' Marthy let 'em be buried here."

Instantly, it appeared, he forgot her at his side. A musing fell upon him, chiefly made up, it seemed, of wonder that he could be here, warm and sentient, while Annie Hill had gone too far for voice to reach her.

"I went in there that very afternoon," Mary was continuing, in a quick, moved tone, "the afternoon she wrote that letter, to break off with you. She told me she'd done it. My! how she cried! 'What'd you do it for, Annie?' I says, 'What ever made you do it?' Then she told me. 'He thinks mother's lameness is kinder put on,' she says, 'an' mother'll have to live with us. He's a good man, Mary,' she says, 'but he's terrible set in his own way. I shouldn't care for myself, but I'm afraid mother 'd see dark days.'"

Nathan bent down and rubbed a bit of lichen from the stone. After that, Mary could not watch him. She wished herself away. Presently he spoke, but very gently.

"You better run back now an' see to Marthy. Tell her I'll be along in a minute."

Mary went hurriedly through the tangled green. Tears blinded her, and she dried them almost angrily. Suddenly, because she had struck too deep, she realized that Nathan himself, since he was a Temple, was dear to her, and because she had hurt him he was dearer still. She wondered how it was that her unruly tongue had so betrayed her, and here, too, where she had meant so infinitely well. No wish of Mary's life had ever been so dear to her as that of paying back to the Temples some of the kindness of old days. But that, she humbly knew, and now most of all because her temper had misled her, she never could.

When she went into the kitchen, Martha was at the cupboard there.

"See here, Mary," she called, "see what I found." They were two tiny tumblers side by side. "Don't you remember Nathan an' I had these two alike? I guess I'll send mine to his little Flodde. Ain't it queer to think of Nathan's havin' a grandchild of his own? Let's take down the sprigged set an' see if it's all here."

The china was ranged on the table, and they were regarding it with the housewifely reverence due a perfect set, when Nathan came quickly in. Martha started a little, but Mary turned her back and could not look at him. She still remembered that he was a Temple and she had hurt him.

"Soo here, Marthy," said he, abruptly.