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### THE MILLER'S GRAND-DAUGHTER.

BY E. G. J.

The summer afternoon waned at last; the flaming sun declined toward the horizon, and a cool, soft breeze, inexpressibly delightful after the heat of the day, began to blow.

Since early dawn Lizzie Dupont had been toiling at her needle, but now she threw down her work, and, leaving the old mill, stood on the rude plank that crossed the mill-race and looked eagerly over the fields. "Oh! where can Dossy be?" she cried. "That dreadful interest, which has not been got ready by Saturday, has made me forget her. I ought not to have listened to grandfather. I am sure something has happened to her. She never was away so long before. I shall never forgive myself. What, what," she cried, suddenly clasping her hands, "if she should be drowned?"

Lizzie Dupont had not always been a resident at the old mill, dependent on her needle for support. She had once been, and that not so long ago, the petted daughter of a merchant prince in New York City. But her father had failed, and died soon after of a broken heart, and Lizzie would have starved if it had not been for her maternal grandfather. "Come to me," he had written, "an old and poor; but we will share our crusts together. If you have grown up to look like your dear mother you will be the apple of my eye." So Lizzie, ignored by her father's rich relations, had found refuge in this secluded spot.

Refuge and peace, and a life of quietude. In the days of her prosperity she had become acquainted with a young Englishman, the son of a titled family, and had pledged her truth to him. Just before her father's failure Ross Devereaux had sailed for England, intending within six months to return and claim his bride. But from that day to this Lizzie had never heard a word about him.

At first she thought her letters had miscarried, and in the faith and trust of her young heart, had continued writing. But at last, after discovering the heartlessness of her father's relatives, she began to believe that even Ross might be selfish, also. "I am poor now, and he deserts me," she said. "God help me! But it is, I suppose, the way of the world."

Lately a new trouble had come upon her. Her grandfather had been failing all winter, so that a man came to his bedside, and the mill, and this had brought them into debt. Already there was a mortgage on the mill, for the grandfather had never been a prosperous man, and now the interest had fallen in arrears for nearly a twelvemonth. The holder of the mortgage was a cruel, avaricious man. He had often threatened to turn out the little family if his interest was not paid, and two weeks before he had served a written notice that if the arrears were not forthcoming by the next Saturday, he would be as good as his word. Every day since Lizzie had risen by candle-light, and worked till bedtime. "If I can only get this embroidery done for Mrs. Watson," she said, "by that dreadful day, I may raise part of the money, at least, and perhaps then he will wait for the rest."

But this afternoon a new and greater trouble had come. Dossy, her little pet sister, had been missing all day. The child often spent the mornings playing in the woods, but invariably returned to the noon meal. On this occasion, however, she did not make her appearance. Lizzie was alarmed, and would have gone to seek her; but the grandfather took it more coolly. "She has stopped at some of the neighbors," he said, "she will be home before long. Don't fret, dear. Lizzie, thinking of the coming Saturday, had allowed herself to be persuaded that all was right, and had gone back to her work. But, as the afternoon wore on, and no Dossy came, she grew seriously alarmed. At last, throwing away her needle, she came out as we have seen. "Oh, Dossy! Dossy!" she cried, when she had scintillated about the mill, and every direction, "where are you? If God will only spare you, dear—if He will give you back to me again—I will never regret again at anything."

But where was Dossy? Was she really lost? To explain this, we must go back to the afternoon before, and look at Dossy as she sat in the old-fashioned garden away to and fro in a grape-vine swing, puzzling over the troubles of the family. She was watching a hawk that was in the heart of a lilac bush, and talking to herself the while.

"What a nasty, ugly old man that land-

lord is," she said; "and he made poor Lizzie cry so the other day when he was here. He says he'll drive us from our home. Why, then, with my sudden consciousness, 'we'll have no place to live in, and I shall never leave you, dear, and have my flowers on my knees. Oh, me! Oh, me!'"

She sobbed a little, then shook off her April tears, and then fell to thinking in earnest. If they only had some money. What if she could get some? She picked up her needle, and began to sew. She had market carts rolled by, laden with produce, on their way to the neighboring little town. On the front seat of one sat an old woman, with a basket of flowers on her knees. A sudden thought flashed on Dossy and she picked up her needle, and began to sew. Why couldn't she sell flowers? Her garden was full of them, especially of pansies, such panicles as were not often seen.

She jumped from the swing so quickly that she landed head-foremost in the grass below. But nothing daunted she regained her feet and began picking off the golden-hearted pansies and English daisies by handfuls. She would do it, yes, indeed, she would, and make over so much money; and they wouldn't have to leave the mill, and grandfather and sister wouldn't cry any more. She fell to work arranging her bouquets for the morning, her eyes fairly dancing with delight. She put them to gather quite tastefully, and by the time the summer sun shone into Lizzie's market-basket, and taking it on her chubby arm, trudged away, fortunately unnoticed. On she sped, past the long, low lines of fences and down into the very heart of the town. Her cheeks were crimson, her breath came in gasps, she almost stumbled from fatigue; but at last she reached the market-place, and there, in a little corner, under the shadows of a tree, and where an old blind woman was selling loaves, here, kneeling on the grass, she began to arrange her goods. She sat down and began with deft hands to arrange her pansies in front of her. What a picture she made in her white frock, with her short, puffed sleeves; her eyes shone, her amber rings, blown about by the morning breeze, framed, as it were, by a border of yellow daisies and golden-hearted pansies. At the silvery call of her sweet bird-voice piping "Who'll buy my pansies?" one and another pedestrian looked back, a few smiled, and some stopped and purchased. Presently a farmer, who had just such a little one at home, bought one of her nosegays and paid for it with half a dollar. Dossy was in raptures. Then another gentleman came along this time a comparatively young one, but tall and dark, and with a bronzed face.

"Won't you buy a bunch of pansies, sir, please?" said little Dossy.

The stranger, who had not noticed her before, stopped and looked for the little piping voice.

"Please, sir," said Dossy, holding up a posy, "only 25 cents."

The young man flashed a keen glance at Dossy, and drew near, smiling.

"To be sure I will," said he, pleasantly. "If only for the sake of your bright eyes, 25 cents, you said, I think, and he drew out his purse."

"Yes," said Dossy, apologetically, imagining he thought the price too high. "You see I have to ask a good deal," and she shook her curly head with a grateful, important air. "For Lizzie must have the money by Saturday, or we shall be turned out of our pretty home. As she finished she tendered to her auditor the prettiest of her posies, which she had just selected for him out of her store."

The stranger, all this time, had been looking curiously at her. The color went and came on his face, his lips trembled, and he showed other signs of emotion.

"Tell me," he cried, earnestly, "my dear, what is your name?"

He drew close to Dossy as he spoke, and seemed to be looking in her face as if for some half-revealed or half-fancied likeness.

"Dossy," she answered. "Dossy Dupont."

His answer was to catch her in his arms, and kiss her again and again, his voice trembling with excitement, as he cried, "Dossy! My little girl Dossy, don't you know who I am?"

But Dossy, startled from his embrace, smoothed her curls, and answered haughtily: "I asked you to buy my pansies, sir, and not to kiss me."

"The stranger broke into a joyful laugh. 'And I will kiss them,' he replied, 'every one of them. But don't you really know me, Dossy? I am Ross Devereaux. Why, you have sat on my knee many and many a time.'"

Dossy, at this, stared at him curiously. Then she uttered a shrill little shout and sprang into his arms.

"Oh! I know," she cried. "I remember you. Won't Lizzie be glad? Won't she stop crying now?"

Ross Devereaux's smart cheek crimsoned. "Take me to your home," he said, "to your sister. Is she here?"

"No," answered Dossy. "We live at grandfather's, at the old mill, out of town, you know."

"Let us go at once, then. No need to sell pansies any longer," cried Ross Devereaux, eagerly, setting the child on her feet.

Lizzie Dupont stood, as we have said, gazing across the meadows, heart-broken about Dossy's prolonged absence. Suddenly two figures appeared, emerging from the woods beyond, in the direction of the town. She gave a great cry of joy, for she was certain Dossy was the other.

Who was the tall, handsome man, who held Dossy by the hand? Could it be—no, it was impossible—and yet—

At this moment, while she was still uncertain, while her heart leaped into her throat, and she was about to fly and had to clutch at the railing, Dossy's companion, a young man, stepped forward, and he had recognized Lizzie, and came hurrying over the meadow, waving his hat. He reached the stile, and over it in a bound, and the next instant he was at Lizzie's side.

"Thank God I have found you at last!" he cried, clasping her in his arms. "Poor, timid darling! Did you think I had deserted you?"

What Lizzie would have replied if anything, we do not know; but he gave her no chance; hurriedly, as if life were ebbing, he pressed her to his breast, and he went on to tell his story.

"Not one of your letters ever came to hand," he said. "They were intercepted, as I discovered at last. I wouldn't men- tion your name, under other circumstances; but you, at least, ought to know the whole truth. The fact is, darling, that while my parents were eager to send me home, as you said, I had a cousin, an ambitious girl, who had always lived with us, and who, it seems, wished to marry me, not, of course, for love, but for money."

"He said, quickly, 'that she loved me, but merely to secure the title and position. Well, to make a long story short, she bribed the postmistress at the village to give her your letters so that I never heard a word from you or about you, till at last, in despair, I came over, before I intended, to solve the mystery.'"

"Come over," said Lizzie kindly and guiltily, conscious how she had misjudged him. "I buried up my feelings, and I'm sorry."

"To be sure," repeated Ross Devereaux, frankly. "A little skepticism, you doubted me, did you?"

His answer was to catch her in his arms, and kiss her again and again, his voice trembling with excitement, as he cried, "Dossy! My little girl Dossy, don't you know who I am?"

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