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vividness the feelings of a burglar caught in the act.

"Oh!" said a voice beside him, "look at the carpet!"

With a start of conscious guilt Peter looked, not at the carpet but at the owner of the accusing voice. There, standing on the stairway, her dark eyes full of reproach, a dainty finger pointing at the pools of melting snow, stood the lady of the post-office.

Peter's first thought was of the handkerchief! When she stopped looking at the carpet she would certainly—with trembling fingers he sought to untie the knot he had tied, alas, too well, and failing, dragged at the thing in frantic haste with the result that what had been a decorative headgear became a rakish bandage over the left eye. At last it was off—too late. The reproach in the girl's eyes changed to amusement.

Rutherford could think of nothing to say, ideas he had none, his mind was a blank. It seemed but a moment since those eyes had glanced at him in just that laughing way.

"Why," he blundered, "how did you ever get home?"

"I did not try to walk, anyway," said she still smiling. "But if I may ask, how did you get—"

"I expect I *didn't* get home," said Peter ruefully. The girl was so absolutely natural and friendly that embarrassment seemed needless, beside he was not accustomed to suffer from embarrassment and now that the hideous handkerchief was safely removed he felt more equal to the occasion.

"I most sincerely beg your pardon," he began more formally. "I don't see yet how it happened but I expect I must have 'gone wrong' as the Sunday School papers say. I assure you I counted my corners and watched my directions and did everything quite properly so that by rights this ought to be the home of Herbert Leversage, K.C.—which apparently it isn't."

"Oh! Are you staying with Mr. Leversage? Why, he lives at least six blocks from here."

Six blocks! Rutherford thought with a shiver of the night outside but managed to keep his dismay out of his voice.

"Well," he remarked, laughing, "if anyone had told me that I would lose myself in a town that had to be made a city by act of parliament I would have thought they were romancing. The unexpected certainly does happen but, if you will kindly give me my bearings, I will try again. The unexpected will not be so inconsiderate as to happen twice in one night."

The girl, who, during this colloquy, had been leaning on the balustrade, came down into the hall. Peter saw that she was quite tall, very slim and girlish as yet and that her delicate face was quite as attractive as his former glimpse of it had promised. She looked at him in a friendly way with the clear, straight glance of an unspoiled child.

"You can't go alone, that's certain," she said thoughtfully, "and I can't go with you, so if you don't mind, you had better wait until Tom comes home. He won't be long," she added reassuringly. "You had better take off your wet coat and sit down."

Peter was delighted. He could hardly have hoped for anything better than this. Tom, whoever that person might be, was welcome to stay away indefinitely. To be sure the invitation had been very matter of fact but it was better than the very best he had dared to expect. He surveyed the soaking carpet with repentant glance.

"Hadn't I better sweep up the snow?" he asked guiltily.

"It would be poetic justice but I fear the carpet would suffer. Perhaps Martha had better do it. Go in, and sit down and I will tell her."

Peter went gladly into the brightly lighted room. He was surprised to find that he was shivering and that with the slightest encouragement his teeth would begin to chatter. He felt annoyed with his own discomfort but if his hostess, who had quickly followed him, noticed anything amiss she made no comment except to say brightly:

"I have told Martha to bring us some tea. I was chilled through when I came in and am not quite warm yet. A night like this is colder than it seems."

"I don't know how to thank you, Miss —"

"Margaret Manners," she told him simply. "It is possible that you have met my brother as you are staying with Mr. Leversage."

"Manners— No, I don't think I have. You see I have only been with Leversage a couple of days and we have done nothing but talk business. He was an old friend of my father's and one of his executors. Mrs. Leversage was my father's half-sister. I came down to arrange my sister's marriage settlement as I am my father's other executor. Leversage is a good fellow and Aunt Jane is delightful only I wish they lived in Montreal—at least I did wish it," he added with a smile. "And since there is no one here to introduce us, I rejoice in the name of Peter Rutherford."

Miss Manners, who was sugaring the tea, looked up eagerly but a trifle shyly.

"Oh," she said, "are you the rich Mr. Rutherford?"

Peter smiled, then he thought of a certain letter in his vest pocket and the smile faded.

"I am afraid," he said regretfully, "that I am not the rich Mr. Rutherford."

Miss Manners was plainly disappointed.

"I just hoped you were," she said frankly, "you see you mentioned Montreal and your name is the same as his. I would like to meet him very much because he is going to marry a friend of mine."

Peter sat up a little straighter. "You don't say so," he remarked anxiously.

"Yes. A Miss Mabel Sayles. She lives in Montreal—perhaps you know whom I mean."

Peter meditated.

"I think I do," he said. "I have met her but I did not know that she was—er—engaged."

"Oh, yes. I don't suppose it's a secret. She says in her last letter that she has made up her mind. He is very rich." Miss Manners finished with a little sigh and handed Peter his tea.

"Was that," asked Peter thoughtfully, "what helped her to make up her mind?"

"I don't know. I hope not. Of course she couldn't help liking it, you know. It must be lovely to marry a rich man, but not unless there were—other things."

"As for instance—"

"Well, it would be necessary to like him, too, you know."

"Do you think so? And does Mrs. Sayles like him?"

"I expect she does. Of course he's a millionaire— You can hardly blame her for consenting to become a Mrs. Millionaire?"

"Money," said Peter with a Sunday School air, "money is vanity."