

tily around the shabby apartment; "money was the last thing in my thoughts."

"Then what in the world brings you here."

"A little private business of my own."

His eye fell upon the ghastly apparition of Miss Lydia, and a cold shiver ran through his frame. "First impressions are always the best, or—the worst." On turning to Miss Polly, she appeared at least ten years better looking than her sister. "This is the woman for me," he thought, "but by *Jove!* how can flesh and blood bear either of them? How can I pretend to love either of these hags? Honesty is the best policy! I will tell the plain truth."

"Well, Sir! what do you want with us?" demanded Polly, still standing with the door in her hand.

Andrews threw himself into a chair, and wiped the perspiration from his brow. "Now or never!" thought he. "But if I look at her, my courage will fail me altogether. Did I ever feel afraid or ashamed of speaking to a woman before? Shall I ever be able to look a pretty woman in the face again?" Banishing these reflections, he made a desperate effort at composure, and turning to Miss Polly, he said:

"Miss Polly King! I want a wife. You are a young woman, in the very prime of life; have you any objection to take me for a husband?"

Polly was taken by surprise. It was the first time in her life that such a question had ever been put to her, and in all probability, it would be the last. She hesitated, looked down, swayed the door to and fro in her hand, and made no reply. Miss Lydia thought if the question had been put to her, she should not have made him wait long for an answer. Miss Lydia was always matrimonially inclined—

"Well, Sir," said Miss Polly, at length, raising her head, and looking her suitor boldly in the face. "You are no hypocrite; you have told me no lies, nor pretended to admire a face, which nature for some wise end, best known to herself—I am no philosopher in these matters,—made hideous. It is not me, but my money you want. Say so at once, and I will give you a candid answer."

"You are right," said John, thinking that his suit was at an end. "I have not a shilling in the world. Your wealth would be very serviceable to me, and in return for it, I would treat you with kindness and gratitude. More than this I cannot promise; I have been a good husband to two women, whom I loved. I might respect—I fear I could not love you."

"I am not such a fool as to expect it," said Miss Polly. "Love at the best, is but a weakness that the fondest grow ashamed of. But I like your frankness, and I feel very much inclined to

accept your offer, as a matter of convenience. If we die without children, our immense wealth will go to strangers. My sister has no chance of a family; should I become the mother of either son or daughter, all this large fortune would belong to me and mine. I could not choose a more agreeable looking person for the father of my child. Your great personal advantages might perhaps remedy my defects. For these reasons, and these alone, I consent to become your wife."

John Andrew, was thunderstruck. He was astonished; yea, even disappointed with his unparalleled success. There was no remedy for it now. She was to be his wife; and he tried to make the best of the bargain. Taking her round the waist, and shutting his eyes, he imprinted a kiss upon her course cheek; and sitting down by the little table, he chatted till midnight, over their future prospects; and when he left the house, Polly King did not appear quite so hideous in his eyes as when he entered it.

"So you have made a pretty piece of work of it, sister," said Miss Lydia, spitefully, "by letting that drunken fellow into the house; I wonder that you are not ashamed of yourself for accepting his insulting offer."

"Mind your own business," returned Polly; when you get such a chance, I shall not interfere with it. I will call my first girl Lydia, in compliment to her aunt."

Perhaps Miss Polly was counting her chickens before they were hatched. This, the sequel will shew.

Late as it was, when John Andrews drew near to the dwelling of Ben Boyce, he found that exemplary early riser, Mrs. Boyce, still up, and impatiently awaiting his arrival. Her ear, sharpened by intense curiosity, caught his step before he reached the door; and she was already there, to receive him—

"Come in! come in!" she cried; "tell us the news! how did the old cats receive you? What luck have you had in your wooing?"

"Pray, my dear madam, use more respectful language of the future Mrs. Andrews," said John, laughing. "I have only been too successful."

"No—sure—it can't be possible. They must know how ugly they are, and that it could only be for their money; they would never be such old fools as to accept such an absurd offer."

"Faith, the one I have chosen, or rather, who has chosen me, is not such a fool, either. She is a deuced shrewd, clever woman; and if she were not so dreadfully ugly, I could almost fall in love with her, for her wit!"

"You are humbugging us, Andrews," cried Boyce; "she can't have accepted you."