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JANUARY 23, 1913

"Mine doesn't!" exclaimed Rebecca.  
"Then there's something wrong with your aunt!"

"Or with me," laughed Rebecca.  
"What is your name, young lady?"

"Rebecca Rowena Randall, sir."

"What?" with an amused smile. "Both?"

Your mother was generous."  
"She couldn't bear to give up either of the names she says."

"Do you want to hear my name?"

"I think I know already," answered Rebecca, with a bright glance. "I'm sure you must be Mr. Aladdin in the Arabian Nights. Oh, please, can I run down and tell Emma Jane? She must be so tired waiting, and she will be so glad!"

At the man's nod of assent Rebecca sped down the lane, crying irrepressibly as she neared the wagon, "Oh, Emma Jane! we are sold out!"

Mr. Aladdin followed smilingly to corroborate this astonishing, unbelievable statement; lifted all their boxes from the back of the wagon, and taking the circular, promised to write to the Excelsior Company that night concerning the premium.

"If you could contrive to keep a secret,—you two little girls,—it would be a nice surprise to have the lamp arrive at the Simpsons' on Thanksgiving Day, wouldn't it?" he asked, as he tucked the old lap robe cosily over their feet.

They gladly assented, and broke into a chorus of excited thanks, during which tears of joy stood in Rebecca's eyes.

"Oh, don't mention it!" laughed Mr. Aladdin, lifting his hat. "I was a sort of commercial traveler myself once,—years ago,—and I like to see the thing well done. Good-by, Miss Rebecca Rowena! Just let me know whenever you have anything to sell, for I'm certain beforehand I shall want it."

"Good-by, Mr. Aladdin! I surely will!" cried Rebecca, tossing back her dark braids delightedly and waving her hand.

"Oh, Rebecca!" said Emma Jane in an awe-struck whisper. "He raised his hat to us, and we not thirteen! It'll be five years before we're ladies."

"Never mind," answered Rebecca; "we are the beginnings of ladies, even now."

"He tucked the lap robe round us, too," continued Emma Jane, in an ecstasy of reminiscence. "Oh! isn't he perfectly elegant? And wasn't it lovely of him to buy us out? And just think of having both the lamp and the shade for one day's work! Aren't you glad you wore your pink gingham now, even if mother did make you put on flannel underneath? You do look so pretty in pink and red, Rebecca, and so homely in drab and brown!"

"I know it," sighed Rebecca. "I wish I was like you—pretty in all colors!" And Rebecca looked longingly at Emma Jane's fat, rosy cheeks; at her blue eyes, which said nothing; at her neat nose, which had no character; at her red lips, from between which no word worth listening to had ever issued.

"Never mind!" said Emma Jane comfortingly. "Everybody says you're awful bright and smart, and mother thinks you'll be better looking all the time as you grow older. You wouldn't believe it, but I was a dreadful homely baby, and homely right along till just a year ago, when my red hair began to grow dark. What was the nice man's name?"

"I never thought to ask!" ejaculated Rebecca. "Aunt Miranda would say that was just like me, and it is. But I called him Mr. Aladdin because he gave us a lamp. You know the story of Aladdin and the wonderful lamp?"

"Oh, Rebecca! how could you call him a nickname the very first time you ever saw him?"

"Aladdin isn't a nickname exactly; anyway, he laughed and seemed to like it."

By dint of superhuman effort, and putting such a seal upon their lips as never mortals put before, the two girls succeeded in keeping their wonderful news to themselves; although it was obvious to all beholders that they were in an extraordinary and abnormal state of mind.

On Thanksgiving the lamp arrived in a large packing box, and was taken out and set up by See-Saw Simpson, who suddenly began to admire and respect the business ability of his sisters. Rebecca had heard the news of its arrival, but waited until nearly dark before asking permission to go to the Simpsons', so that she might see the gorgeous trophy lighted and sending a blaze of crimson glory through its red crepe paper shade.

(To be continued).

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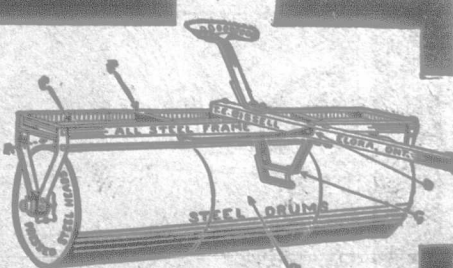
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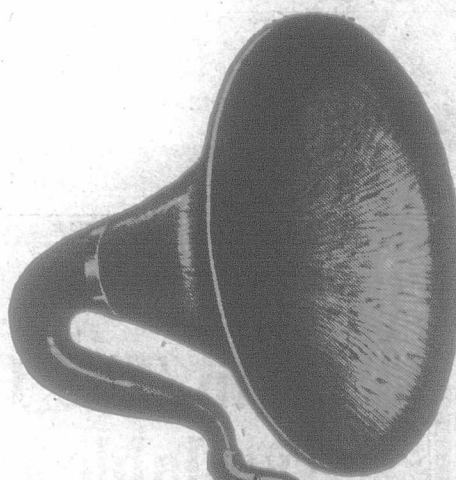
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