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## HER MARRIAGE DOWRY.

"Only one silk dress, and that not new. Dear me, dear me, it is dread-  
ful!" And Mrs. Grayson caught up the pretty bodice of the garment in  
question, and gave it a spiteful little shake. Kathie, hemming ruffles by the  
window, laughed.

"What can't be cured must be endured; there's no help for it, auntie,"  
she said.

"Yes, there was help for it," cried the lady, tossing the bodice from  
her, "if you had taken my advice, but you must go and act like a simpleton!  
The idea of a girl of your age giving away her hard earnings, and then get-  
ting married, without a decent change of clothing! I declare, it is too  
absurd. And you are making such a good match too! Charles Montague  
is of good birth, and he'll be rich one of these days."

"At which time, let us hope, my scanty wardrobe will be replenished,"  
said Kathie, merrily

Her aunt frowned contemptuously.

"But what are you to do now?" she went on. "What do you imagine  
Mrs. Montague, of Oaklands, will think of you when she sees your marriage  
outfit?"

"Not one whit less than she thinks of me to-day," answered Kathie  
stoutly.

Mrs. Grayson laughed in scorn.

"You poor little simpleton! Wait until you know the world as I know  
it, and you'll change your tune. I tell you, Kathie, appearance is every-  
thing. Your bridegroom himself will feel ashamed of you when he sees you  
in the midst of his stately sisters at Oaklands."

Kathie winced, but she answered bravely:

"I don't think Charlie will ever feel ashamed of me."

"Wait until he sees you in your shabby garments."

"Shabby garments!" said Kathie, opening her bright brown eyes. "My  
garments are not shabby, auntie; I am quite sure. I never looked shabby  
in my whole life."

Mrs. Grayson glanced at the trim, graceful little figure. The close-fitting  
blue merino was faultless; the linen cuffs and collars were as spotless as  
snow. Kathie was right; she never did look shabby. Her garments  
seemed to be part and parcel of herself, like the glossy feathers and black  
tuft of a canary. Yet these same garments were usually made of all sorts  
of odds and ends, for Kathie was poor, and obliged to be rigidly economical.  
But she was possessed of that tact, or talent, or whatever it may be called,  
which is more to a woman than beauty or fortune; which enables her, by  
the mere skill of her own willing fingers and artist soul, to make her life, her  
home, her own person, "a thing of beauty and a joy forever."

Mrs. Grayson, Kathie's well-to-do aunt, with daughters of her own,  
who trailed their silks in the dust, and tumbled their plumes and laces, and  
looked dowdy all the while, regarded the trim little figure by the window  
with a half-admiring, half-contemptuous smile.

"You're rather a pretty girl, Kathie, and you understand the art of get-  
ting yourself up in style. What you've got will do well enough, but there's  
so little of it. Your bridal outfit is shameful, upon my word. What will  
you do for carriage dresses, and dinner dresses, and evening dresses, when  
you are Charles Montague's wife? Why, when I was a bride I had every-  
thing—a round dozen silks of every hue, poplins, merinoes, tissues, and  
half a dozen sorts of wraps. I didn't go to James Grayson bare of clothes,  
I can tell you."

Kathie said nothing. She bent over her ruffles, her bright eyes dim  
with tears.

"Such a simpleton as you've been," her aunt continued, "after toiling  
and teaching for your money, to turn round and give it away. I declare it  
puts me out of temper to think of it."

"What else could I do?" the girl burst out passionately. "Could I see  
poor George's cottage sold over his head, and he and his wife and children  
turned into the street?"

"Assuredly," answered the lady coolly; "he could have taken a house  
easily enough. In your place, I should have kept my money in my pocket;  
but you wouldn't listen to my advice. You are sorry for it now, no doubt."

"I am not sorry. I would do the same thing again to-morrow. I'm  
glad I had the money to pay poor George's debt, and I don't care if I do  
look shabby."

"Very well; I shall try not to care either. I shall not help you, I told  
you that in the beginning—I can't afford it, and, even if I could, I should  
not feel it my duty. You would be headstrong and senseless; you must  
bear the consequences. I will give you some lace for your neck and sleeves,  
and you may wear that garnet-reef of Josephine's."

"I don't want any lace; I've some that belonged to mamma. And I  
wouldn't wear Josephine's garnets for anything."

"Oh, very well! Don't snap my head off, I beg. You needn't wear  
them. Much thanks one gets for trying to assist you. You won't wear any  
hat either, I suppose. How about that?"

"I have plenty of trimming. I shall do up the light felt I wore last  
winter."

"And your cloak? Where's that to come from, pray?"

Kathie's tears were gone; her brown eyes flashed like stars.

"I intend to make myself a jacket out of grandfather's old overcoat,"  
she replied.

Her aunt threw back her head and laughed heartily.

"Grandfather's old overcoat! Oh, that is too good! What would Mrs.  
Montague, of Oaklands, say to that? Kathie, child, what a goose you are!"

Kathie threw aside her ruffles, and going to the clothes-press, brought  
out the old coat.