

will find a valise and satchel in the cab. Send them up. I won't trouble you for supper to-night, Mrs. Hopkins; we had a snack at the hotel. But get my room ready as soon as you can. There's a good soul! We've been on the go all day, and I'm dead tired.'

A swift and subtle change has come over Mlle. Mimi. Her pleading lady-like manner drops from her as a garment; her present tone has an easy ring of command, a touch of vulgarity, that Mrs. Hopkins is quick to feel and resent, but cannot define.

'Make up a bed for Snowball on a sofa or lounge near mine,' she says to Jemima Ann, 'and don't let her have too much milk. She is a perfect little pig for country milk, and I don't want her to get fat. I hate flabby children. And I'll lie on this couch while you're getting my room ready, I really and truly am fit to drop. Good night, Rogers; tell Olympe, with my compliments, I hope she means to go to bed sober this first night.'

Her musical laugh follows Mr. Rogers down stairs. Then she glides out of her seal-skin like a beautiful little serpent slipping its skin, throws off the coquettish bonnet, stretches herself on the sofa, and before her hostess or niece are fairly out of the room is fast asleep.

'Well, I never!' says Mrs. Hopkins, drawing a long breath. 'Upon my word and honour, Jemima Ann, I do assure you I never!'

'Noball seepy, 'Noball hungry, want her bed and milk, want to go to bed,' pipes plaintively the child.

Jemima gathers her up in her arms, and ventures to kiss the satin smooth cheek.

'You dear little pet, 'she says, 'you shall have your bread and milk, and go to bed in two minutes. Oh, you pretty little love! I never saw anything half so lovely as you in my life!'

'Land's sake, Jemima Ann, don't spile the young one,' says, irritably, her aunt. 'Handsome is as handsome does, is a true motto the world over, and if her or her mother's handsome, I'm a Dutchman. 'Good-night, Rogers, and tell Alimp, to go to bed sober this first night; 'pretty sort o' talk that for a temperance boardin' house. There! get that seepy baby somethin' and put her to bed. I'll go and fix Miss Flyaway's room before the men come in, and find her sleepin' here, and make fools of themselves.'

And so, still wrathful and grumbling, but in for it now, Mrs. Hopkins goes to put her best bedroom in order. Jemima carries Snowball down to the dining-room. The flaxen head lies against her shoulder, the drowsy lids sway over the sweet blue eyes,

the very lips are apart and dewy. Oh! how lovely she is, how lovely, how lovely, thinks Jemima Ann, in a sort of rapture. Oh! if she could keep this beautiful baby with her for ever and ever!

At sight of the bread and milk Snowball wakes up enough to partake of that refreshment. But she sleepily declines conversation, and the pretty head sways as the long light curls are being braided, and her clothes taken off, and she is sound again, when Jemima bears her tenderly up to the little extempore bed Aunt Samantha has prepared. She stands and gazes at her in a rapture as she sleeps.

'She looks like a duchess' daughter! She looks like an angel, Aunt Samantha!' she says, under her breath.

'Yes!' cries Aunt Samantha, in bitter scorn. 'I never see an angel—no more did you. And if you did, I don't believe they'd a rid at a circus. Now go down and shake up t'other angel in the parlour, and tell her she can tumble into bed as soon as she likes. And mark my words, Jemima Ann, concludes Mrs. Hopkins, solemnly prophetic, 'that woman will give us trouble, such as we ain't had in many a long day, before we're rid of her!'

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH WE GO TO THE CIRCUS.

It is the evening of another day; crisp, clear, cool. The town-hall has tolled seven, and all the town, in its Sunday best, is trooping gayly to the great common on the outskirts, where the huge circus tent is erected, where flags fly, and drums beat, and brass instruments blare, and great doings will be done to-night.

A great rope stretches from the centre of the common to the top of the tent, quite a giddy height, and the celebrated tight-rope dancer, Mlle. Mimi, is to walk up this before the performance, giving gratis a taste of her qualities to an admiring world.

Other outward and visible signs of the inward and to-be-paid-for graces going on within, are there as well. Every dead wall, every fence all over the town, is placarded with huge posters, announcing in lofty letters of gorgeous colours, the wonderful doings to be beheld for the small sum of fifty cents, children half price, clergymen free!

Pictures of all the animals, whose ancestors came over in the Ark with Noah and family, together with portraits of the unparalleled Daughter of the Desert, Madame Olympe, on her fiery steed Whirwin, of the

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