

"Yes—"

"Millicent, you are absorbingly interesting. I never knew that you had thought so much about me."

"I ought to have thought about you before—" she paused.

Jacob waited a moment. "I understand; before you refused to marry me. You ought to make some excuse for that. With what seventh fault did you strengthen your case?"

"That you are so dreadfully masculine."

"I plead guilty. The roses are rosy, the briars are thorny, the grass is green, and I, Jacob Raus, the man who loves you, am masculine. Alas! alas! Is that more my fault than my name? You, besides, are immensely feminine, and I find no fault with that. Is it fair?"

Jacob's spirits were rising; Millicent's perceptibly falling.

"Yes, it is fair that I, being feminine, should object to your being masculine. The two are opposites. They are at variance. If Nature has made a mistake there, I am not responsible. Men and women never understand each other, because what Nature has blindly blundered into beginning, education accomplishes instead of trying to set it right."

"But I have had no education," said Jacob.

Millicent went on without answering him—falling now into an injured tone:

"Even you are constantly misunderstanding me. You sometimes trample my tenderest feelings unconsciously; just as you trampled my best white petunias the other day, walking over my flower bed as if it were a path."

"Yes," he said, "I saw you. I ran to you. I did not notice the way. Well! In the West they will be all wild-flowers, and if I trample them they will come up again. I shall think of the petunias, and wish that I had a chance to trample them; and you will forget what I did when you have found that paragon who loves you without jealousy, likes all other women and no men; who is polite and credulous and effeminate. I am not of these—but I love you passionately."

He tried to grasp her hands, but she drew them away, saying excitedly:

"And this is your greatest fault. If you loved me tenderly I might trust you; but you love me, as you say, passionately, and I, who have looked on at life and reflected, have seen that of all traps and pitfalls this is the greatest. Talk of the *beaute du diable* of girls, that flits almost with the fading of the bridal flowers, that is no delusion compared with the passion of men: and yet in choosing freedom rather than binding one's self to a delusion, you need not tell me that I choose what is only negative. It

is so discouraging. You have such hopeless faults; and I shall never like any other man better than you, Jacob, I know; and so I shall never marry."

"Yes, but I am not like that; I know that I shall marry," he said, watching the girl's face closely. "It seems to me now as if I should not, but I am only a man, masculine, as you say. As long as I am very busy I may keep up, but sometimes they say it is not quite wholesome in those ranches, and one is exposed to wind and weather. I might be ill; and then when I am homesick and lonely some good Western girl will take care of me, perhaps like me, even love me. For her I might not have so many faults. She would not be so clever as you, or have got things down so fine; and she wouldn't know, poor thing, what a tissue of faults is covered by my unfortunate name, that sounds so homely and simple and good. So being sick and lonely and wretched, and grateful to her, I know that I should be weak enough to marry her. I know that I should."

"Yes," said Millicent, throwing down beside her the bouquet of sweetbrier, with a passionate gesture, "that's just what a man's love means. I shall be so glad that I didn't marry you, when I hear of you throwing yourself away on some wild Western girl that any man of refinement would shudder to think of as his wife. I didn't believe it of you!" and she ran down the steps of the porch into the garden.

Jacob was up in an instant and followed her; but she ran from him swiftly, leaping over the flower-beds and speeding across the grass, slim and active as a nymph, her pink dress telling white in the soft light of the summer night. He had almost caught up with her when he stumbled and fell over the protruding root of an old tree. She, fleeing breathless, came suddenly upon her father and mother, who, having returned from their drive, had alighted from the carriage at the gate, and walked across the lawn. They stood now hand in hand, looking up in the sky at the new crescent moon—a charming picture of the sweet companionship of loving souls, who, unconscious of the passing of the years, find their own youth in all the promises of Nature.

Millicent stood and looked at them, with sudden tears swelling up into her eyes. They turned and saw her, just as Jacob came up, somewhat confused at the new situation.

Mrs. Fuller spoke first "Why, Millicent, is Mr. Raus here? I thought he had gone."

"Why, yes, Jacob, we thought you had gone," said Mr. Fuller, with an unexpected sympathy in his heart for his old friend's son, awakened by Mrs. Fuller's treating him as a stranger in calling him Mr. Raus. The good gentleman had felt no sympathy

whatever for him on account of Millicent's refusal. It had appeared to him a great impertinence that he should propose to take his daughter so far away.

Jacob stood silent. Millicent took her father's hand, and, throwing one arm round his neck, kissed him. This action, which conveyed nothing but his daughter's affection for himself to the old gentleman's mind, explained the whole situation to Mrs. Fuller, who was not unprepared when her daughter turning to her, clasped her in her arms and said:

"Yes, dear mamma, Jacob, is here; and when he goes I go with him. I have promised to be his wife, and you, who know what it is, will be the last of all to deny me that companionship which makes you forget even the parting from your children."

Jacob was more surprised than anyone. He never knew exactly how it had come about; he only knew that he must have been very much improved by marriage, or his wife grown very lenient; for no man ever suffered less from fault-finding than he, and the West was to him a wilderness that blossomed like the rose.

NEGRO PROVERBS.

Nigger sleep warm ef his head kivered up. Norf wind show you de cracks in the house. When you make de jail too nice you better strö'k'n th' hog pen. Mule don't kick 'cordin' to no rul'. Black sheep hide mighty easy in de dark. Sun trabble slow 'cross de new groun's. Better keep de rockin' cheer in de cab'n-lof' tell Sunday. You can't coax de morin' glory to clam de wrong way 'round de corn-stalk. Saturday night he'p de roomatiz pow'ful. High-larnt nigger ain't much service at de log-rollin'. B'nd bridle can't hide de fodder-stack fum de lean horse. Co'n-cob stopper don't hu't de 'lasses in de jug. Hot sun makes de blades dull in de har-ves'-fiel'. Mule don't understan' de wheel-borrer. Smart rabbit go home fo' de snow done fallin'. Dead limb on de tree show itse'f when de buds come out. De new groun's is de b's' yardstick to mejer a strange nigger by. Dr'bin' de steers wid mule talk is flingin' 'way your bref. Tin plate don't mind drapp'n' on de flo'. Cussin' de weather is mighty po' farmin'. De preacher need heap mo' grace when he won't pray for rain tell de wind git right. It takes heap o' licks to drike a nail in de dark. Good signs o' rain don't always he'p de young crap. Books don't tell when de bee-martin' an' de chicken-hawk fell out. Don't take too big a chip on a saplin'. De public road ain't free fo' de rattlesnake. De plow-pin't is close kin to de meal-bag. Dar's some fac's in de vul' dat don't side 'long on de tele-graph-wire.