

a boy to Bust the news gently to the afflicted wives, which he did by informing them, in a hoarse whisper, that their "old man had gone in."

The wives felt very badly indeed.

"He was devoted to me," sobbed Emily.

"And to me," said Maria,

"Yes," said Emily, "he thought considerably of you, but not so much as he did of me."

"I say he did!"

"And I say he didn't!"

"He did!"

"He didn't!"

"Don't look at me, with your squint eyes.

"Don't shake your red head at me!"

"Sisters!" said the black-haired Henrietta, "cease this unseemly wrangling. I as his first wife shall strew flowers on his grave."

"No you *won't*," said Susan. "I, as his last wife, shall strew flowers on his grave. It's *my* business to strew!"

"You shan't, so there!" said Henrietta.

"You bet I will!" said Susan, with a tear-suffused cheek.

"Well, as for me," said the practical Betsy, "I ain't on the Strew, much, but I shall ride at the head of the funeral procession!"

"Not if I've been introduced to myself you won't," said the golden-haired Nelly; that's my position. You bet your bonnet-strings it is."

"Children," said Reginald's mother, "you must do some crying, you know, on the day of the funeral; and how many pocket-handkerchers will it take to go round? Betsy, you and Nelly ought to make one do between you."

"I'll tear her eyes out if she perpetuates a sob on my handkercher!" said Nelly.

"Dear daughters-in-law," said Reginald's mother, "how unseemly is this anger. Mules is five hundred dollars a span, and every identical mule my poor boy had has been gobbled up by the red man. I knew when my Reginald staggered into the door-

yard that he was on the Die, but if I'd only thunk to ask him about them mules ere his gentle sprit took flight, it would have been four thousand dollars in *our* pockets, and *no* mistake! Excuse those real tears, but you've never felt a parent's feelin's."

"It's an over-sight," sobbed Maria.

"Don't blame us!"

### CHAPTER III.

#### DUST TO DUST.

The funeral passed off in a very pleasant manner, nothing occurring to mar the ceremony of the occasion. By a happy thought of Reginald's mother the wives walked to the grave twenty-a-breast, which rendered that part of the ceremony thoroughly impartial.

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That night the twenty wives, with heavy hearts, sought their twenty respective couches. But no Reginald occupied those twenty respective couches—Reginald would nevermore linger all night in blissful repose in those twenty respective couches—Reginald's head would nevermore press the twenty respective pillows of those twenty respective couches—never, nevermore!

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In another house, not many leagues from the House of Mourning, a gray-haired woman was weeping passionately. "He died," she cried, "he died without signifyin', in any respect, where them mules went to!"

### CHAPTER IV.

#### MARRIED AGAIN.

Two years are supposed to elapse between the third and fourth chapters of this original American romance.

A manly Mormon, one evening, as the sun was preparing to set among a select apartment of gold and crimson clouds in the western horizon—although for that matter the sun has a right to "set" where it wants to, and so, I may add, has a hen