

every whim he would strive to gratify. It was in one of these moods that he one day planted himself in front of her as she sat at work, and with a curious smile on his face, said, "Well, Maud, you are indeed of a confiding disposition. You have never even asked me anything about your mother's will, although you might naturally suppose it concerned you."

"I don't see much in that, papa. I suppose that my interests are yours, and that you will take care of them. Still there is one thing I should like to know, did mamma leave nothing to Frank?"

A shade passed over Mr. Brereton's face. "Your brother is a minor. He cannot touch any money left him even if any body knew where he is to be found."

"Then mamma did leave some of her property to him," persisted Maud, eagerly.

"Property! your mother had none to leave," prevaricated the other.

"But she had money, I know, papa. Did she leave it to Frank?"

At this moment Mr. Brereton was called away, and without an instant's delay he left the room. After a considerable interval he returned. "Maud," he said, "when I was called away, I was on the point of making a proposal to you. You are growing dull. You are a great deal alone. You will take to nothing if you lead so solitary a life. And now for my plan. I am thinking of engaging a lady, who will at once serve as a chaperone and as a companion for you."

"Oh, papa, pray don't!" cried Maud starting up. "I am very happy, I never get dull. I have not time. In fact, I often wonder how the days go."

"Why? what do you do?"

"Well, papa, you know I read a great deal, and I am working hard at German, and then there is the house to be attended to, and I visit amongst the poor, and I go down to the school three times a week, and I ride almost every afternoon. So you see I have no time left for feeling dull."

Mr. Brereton looked grave when he heard this category of his daughter's occupations, and he took himself severely to task for his carelessness in never having before inquired how her days were spent, but he merely said, "This kind of life is all very well, but you must have something more."

"I am quite happy, dear papa. Pray do not trouble about me. Look at me yourself. I don't look as if I moped, do I?"

That sweet, bright smile was irresistible, and Mr. Brereton took the fair face between his hands and kissed it tenderly.

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