

Continued from 1st Page. and with such deference as though she had been the queen, handed her to the carriage.

Louise settled herself among the cushions and smiled, then pinched herself to make sure that she was awake, or was it a dream that little Lou Chester was going to spend the day with the most aristocratic family in all the city!

Mrs. Hunt welcomed her warmly and said again, "How good of you to take pity on a lonely old woman for a whole day. It is so long since I have had the society of a young girl that I fear that I shall not know how to entertain you. Since Dell has been so much away I have had no young people about me."

Perhaps Mrs. Hunt observed an enquiring look upon Louise's face, for she added, "You do not know Dell! That is my sister's only child, who has lived with me since her death, seventeen years ago. Now we will have luncheon and afterwards we will return to the parlors and you shall work your own sweet will there, or rather the servants shall work for you. You will see that I meant just what I said about the parlors. I want you to make your taste tell for my benefit."

After a daily luncheon, which painfully suggested the almost empty parlors at home, Louise found herself making a study of those crowded rooms. Presently she said—"Mrs. Hunt, please tell me what must stay here! I shall want to take out something, there are articles which you would not like to have moved."

"Mrs. Hunt missed a few moments. 'Well, there is that large vase which Dell brought from Dresden; and the bust of Shakespeare, Dell is fond of that. My own chair and table must stay here; then Dell would never forgive me if I sent away that old piece of tapestry. Those are all the things I care particularly about.'

"As Mrs. Hunt watched the young girl going about, changing the position of this article or that, perhaps only moving a chair a trifle, tying a ribbon here, knotting a scarf about an easel, putting a single spray of flowers in place of a soiled massed bouquet, bringing a vase of flowers to the table, she was struck by the neatness and the order which she saw here and there which seemed trifling but which helped to make up the harmonious whole, she said—"How do you do it?"

"Do what, Mrs. Hunt?" "Why, find out where to put things?" "I don't find out, I know." "When you came in here the other day with Mrs. Harding, did you notice that things were not in good taste?" asked Mrs. Hunt.

"Why do you try to make me say a rude thing?" asked Louise, her brown eyes laughing. "I will confess that I just longed to get my hands upon these ornaments and pictures."

"At length the young girl stopped and taking a survey of the rooms, said, 'I believe that is all I want to do here.' Mrs. Hunt was charmed with the result of the day's experiment. 'Why, child!' she said, 'you have made a new world for me! Since the accident which made me a cripple, I've seldom gone beyond these rooms on the lower floor, and it is refreshing to have something new to look at.'

"And the things which we have taken away will be new when you wish to make a change," said Louise. "The trouble here was, the room was too full; they gave you an sense of suffocation."

"Exactly, Miss Louise, you are a witch! My child, do you know that you are a genius! If ever you need to earn money, you have your fortune in your eyes and finger tips!"

"My dear Mrs. Smith! Do not be so unromantic as to talk of giving employment to a fairy! Fairies are not employed! They rule! They touch with a magic wand and, behold, a change comes over the scene! You feel that you tread upon enchanted ground, you seem to have dreamed and wakened to new scenes!"

"I see," said Mrs. Grant, falling in with the fancy of her hostess, "we must tip the wand of your enchantment with our gold before it can have power to cast a spell over our apartments."

"Exactly," said Mrs. Hunt, with a little happy laugh. "Now let me come down to facts, plain, unvarnished. You know the Chesters? It appears that Mr. Chester lost heavily by the Gordon failure, and the family are in very straitened circumstances. The older girls earn a little by painting and music lessons, but it is my little Louise who is to make the fortune of the family, and I mean to introduce her to those who will appreciate her talents. Mrs. Smith, did I not hear that you shall have my little fay to make a fairy bow for your guests to drink tea to! I'll venture to say that your half-dozen straight-backed chairs stand plump against the wall on three sides of the room, this very minute; and two great easy-chairs are placed upon exactly corresponding patterns of the carpet on either side of the grate; large vases on either end of the mantle blanketed by pairs of ornaments. And so on through the list of elegant furnishings. You are not satisfied with your parlors, and yet you have no idea what is the matter. What you need is the touch of one who does know."

"But I suppose the Chesters were very proud. Do they work for pay?" "Well, they are proud; I hope they are. But I think my little girl has no false pride. Why, Mrs. Smith, your husband works for pay, and we do not consider him the worse for that."

"But that is different. He does a different sort of work." "I am not sure that it is more honorable to be a senator than to be a homemaker," said Mrs. Hunt. "Here is Mrs. Griffin, her husband is honored by all, received into the very first circles, stands a peer among his fellows. No one ever imagined that in any degree lowered the dignity of his family when he sloped the profession for which nature evidently designed him. But if Louise Chester takes up the work for which she has an especial talent, we cry out that she works for a living! Where is the difference? Mr. Griffin plans the house and she plans the adornments. He is the architect, she the artist."

Mrs. Smith laughed, and replied, "Well, that is a very pretty way of putting it!" "Well, when Dell comes home I intend to give a party, a large party, and Miss Louise Chester will be among the guests if she can be persuaded to honor us, whether or not she beautifies your rooms for pay."

The next morning Louise received a note which ran thus: "My Dear Child!—Several friends have expressed their surprise and pleasure at the changes which have been made, and they also express a desire to secure your artistic touch for themselves. I write to tell you this so that you need not be surprised to witness some morning to find yourself an important personage. And more particularly I wish to give you warning that you may not be surprised as to fall of making terms to your advantage. I am aware that you did the work for me as a courtesy to an old woman. However, I enclose my check for ten dollars as a token of appreciation, and also to serve as a precedent. You need not hesitate mentioning the amount enclosed as your lowest terms."

"Sincerely, MELLICENT HUNT." Louise dropped the letter and exclaimed, clapping her hands, and checked, "Well, it seems that my 'genius' for putting things to rights has a market value after all!"

"Need I tell you more? You see how Louise Chester was revealed 'the way out.' Two points I want you young girls to notice. Louise was ready to take up her 'whatsoever' when it came to her. And it came to her through her willingness to do a favor with no hint of reward beyond that which always comes when we give pleasure to another. You have already foreseen that to Louise there was opened an 'avenue,' and that business flourished in upon her and that the pressure of anxiety was lifted from off the hearts of the Chesters as they saw the clouds breaking away. But there is another part of the story which you may not have guessed, and this I must tell you."

Louise grew to be a great favorite with Mrs. Hunt, and frequently the carriage would be sent for her to go out and spend the day on Browning avenue. And ere long the whole house responded to the young girl's presence by taking on an air of brightness and taskfulness such as it had not known before. And Mrs. Hunt would often say "What will Dell say to this?" or "That will suit Dell!" But, curiously enough, where Dell was sojourning, and whether for pleasure, study or business, was never revealed to the listener in any of Mrs. Hunt's remarks. Yet the omission was not intentional on that lady's part. She quite forgot that everybody might not know Dell, and be familiar with Dell's movements.

"I am 'Dell,' she said, laughing, then, as he looked into her still puzzled face, he added, 'You seem doubtful. Well, I thought 'Dell' was a girl.' Then they both laughed, and he said, 'I knew Aunt Melicent made a boy of me, but I did not know that she was playing a trick of this sort upon me.'

"It is all my fault," said Louise. "Presently, Dr. Brockway said, 'And what reply have you to my Aunt's request? Will you answer in person?'"

"I shall be happy to do so; that is if mamma allows it," said Louise, looking herself, she ran away to consult the rest. "Dr. Brockway, of course," exclaimed Margaret. "I must know him at the high school, but I never thought of him in connection with Mrs. Hunt's offer!"

The first evening after Dr. Brockway's return Mrs. Hunt watched him as he made the tour of the long, back parlor. Presently he came back to the way he had just at the right angle to give the exact view of the hall, staircase, and a part of the hall. Strangely enough he remembered at that moment that this particular chair used to occupy a somewhat out-of-the-way corner at the end of the piano, the view cut off by a half-open door.

"What is the matter?" asked Louise, "You seem to be looking at the old house?" "Doing so!" "Why?" "It causes such a queer sensation; it is the same, yet it is brighter, lighted up, as if there were an invisible presence shooting straight through it."

"He caught the gleam of a smile upon his aunt's face, he added: 'Now don't laugh at me; but I remember that this was a heaviest about these rooms, and I used to feel as though two heavy hands were pressing upon my shoulders whenever I came in here, and now I feel as buoyant as a boy.' Later he said, 'I wondered where you would hang that picture. The arrangement is perfect! How did you happen to think of a change?'"

"I didn't, but I found one to think for me a genius!" And when Mrs. Hunt told the story of her young friend and favorite, all about her trials and her success, she was so glad that she could not resist the temptation to tell her tale of woe and her tale of triumph. "Such girls as Louise Chester dignify their eyes, glowing with admiration, said, 'The young lady seems to have had an enthusiastic admirer.'"

Dr. Brockway was always a gentleman, and if Mrs. Hunt fancied she detected a touch of irony in this or that remark, she was never to be troubled by it. However, she made no response just then, but a few months afterward she replied to his question, "It was when her nephew told of his engagement to Louise Chester that she said: 'Well, Dell, it seems that you have thought up a home for me!'"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Grant, "that she has thought up a home for me! I have been thinking of it ever since. I am glad that she and Dr. Dell are going to set up a home amongst us—it will be a model!"

"I am not sure that it is more honorable to be a senator than to be a homemaker," said Mrs. Hunt. "Here is Mrs. Griffin, her husband is honored by all, received into the very first circles, stands a peer among his fellows. No one ever imagined that in any degree lowered the dignity of his family when he sloped the profession for which nature evidently designed him. But if Louise Chester takes up the work for which she has an especial talent, we cry out that she works for a living! Where is the difference? Mr. Griffin plans the house and she plans the adornments. He is the architect, she the artist."

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