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to talk about." She flushed, realizing that she might have sounded critical. "I mean --"

Edward chuckled dryly, "No need to explain, I know what you mean -- but I'm glad that it's Frank who turns out to be my brother. He's a good guy."

"Yes, I think he is. I rather like his wife. Joan and I had a chance to get to know each other as we helped with lunch."

"You and she must be about an age," he observed.

"Yes." Amy's face took on an expression of wistfulness. "I envy her. She has a husband and an adorable little boy. What have I got to show for my years -- a lot of education." There was genuine regret in her voice.

"Be patient. Your time will come." In a comradely gesture, Edward tucked her hand into the crook of his arm, and so they continued down the street.

Peter and Pearl watched their son and Amy coming toward them. No one could miss the amicable way they chatted and laughed as they walked along together, arm in arm, deep in conversation. Pearl glanced over to William with a smile of approval on her face, and was surprised to read on his a look of hostility, as if the man was angered at the idea of his daughter even showing a casual interest in a man her age.

"They make a pleasant couple, don't you think?" Pearl observed with studied nonchalance.

"She is much like her mother," was William's response, but there was no approval in the comment.

Amy slipped her hand from Edward's arm and onto that of her father. "When will you come by for me then?" she said to Edward.

"In an hour," he glanced at his watch, "Let's say three thirty. That will give us time to get a bite to eat before the movie."

"I hope you don't mind, Dad. Edward and I are going to Kingston for dinner and a movie," she smiled up at her father.

"Would it matter if I did?" He nodded a curt good-bye to the Graysons and started off down the street, a somewhat surprised Amy still holding his arm.

Pearl said a cordial good-bye to the retreating pair, then lead her family up to the walk to their house. There was something terribly possessive about the way William Thorn clung to Amy. Maybe she was imagining it, but there was something unnatural in his desire to protect his only child, more of an obsession. No, she must be imagining things. It really was quite natural of William to want to spend every minute he could with Amy before she went out to B.C. After all, she was leaving home to embark on a career, and would be several thousand mile away as well. Odd though, you'd think that seeing the girl strike up a relationship with someone nearer to home would make her father happy. "I don't think William was too happy to find that you are taking Amy out this evening," she said off-handedly to her son.

"You're imagining things Mom," Edward dismissed her remark. "Anyway, it will do Amy good to get away. And you and Dad can pretend you're childless."

"After this week-end, we seem to be something less than childless," Pearl snorted, with unusual candour.

"Oh well, you know what I mean." Edward gave his mother a quick hug, "You're a pretty good old girl, you know that?"

"Spare my blushes," his mother admonished.

They were almost home before William felt he was sufficiently in control of himself to speak to Amy. There was no point in upsetting her by showing his anger at her for deciding to go out for the evening, and with Edward Grayson of all people. If that young man turned after the father, that he so closely resembled, what kind of a person was he to associate with Amy. And anyway, there was no room in her life for a young man. But, were he to antagonize her, Amy could become very stubborn. That had been her mother's flaw as well.

"What made you decide to go to Kingston this evening? I had hoped we could just have a quiet time at home together," he tried to keep the

injury from his voice.

Amy gave his arm a hug. "Oh Dad, you know you'd get your nose into some gardening book or other and I'd spend the evening doing hand laundry and watching TV. This way, you can do your reading without having to entertain me, and I'll be home early enough to have a cup of tea with you before we go to bed."

William, somewhat mollified, returned her hug. "Don't let that fellow keep you out all night."

"Now wouldn't that be something. The straight laced Miss Thorn, having a mad fling," she teased. "You could walk over and see Mrs. Hamstead. She might enjoy your company."

"I might just do that," he agreed. "You like Hilda, don't you?"

Amy gave her father a teasing grin, "Dad, you sly old dog. You and Hilda are seeing a lot of each other. Is there anything I should know?"

"Well Hilda is a very nice woman. We have a lot in common," he admitted gruffly.

"That would make me much happier about going to the west coast -- knowing that you wouldn't be completely alone here," Amy patted his hand. "You know Dad, it would be nice to have a mother again, and Hilda Hamstead is the one I would choose, if I had a say in the matter."

They smiled at each other, understanding restored.

The rectory had settled back into peaceful silence, but it was a different silence from the emptiness that so bothered Rev. Turley on most occasions. This peacefulness was brought about by young Teddy being put down for a nap, and his parents having gone for a stroll to walk off some of the lunch they had eaten, or so they said. The rector couldn't help but wonder how many of the curious would come out for Evensong. He wondered why he continued the practice of holding the evening service in the first place. There was rarely more than a handful of people sitting peacefully in the dimness of the sanctuary. Up until today, it had been something

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