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for his. Servants would do that; besides he did not intend to have a house of his own at once; he should take her first to live with his mother, where she could learn what was necessary much better than at Silvertown.

Wilford Cameron expected to be obeyed in every important matter by the happy person who should be his wife, and as he possessed the faculty of enforcing perfect obedience without seeming to be severe, so he silenced Katy's arguments, and when they left the shadow of the butter-nut tree, she knew that in all human probability six weeks' time would find her on the broad ocean alone with Wilford Cameron. So perfect was Katy's faith and love, that she had no fear of Wilford now, but as his affianced wife, walked confidently by his side, feeling fully his equal, nor once dreaming how great the disparity his city friends would discover between the fastidious man of fashion, and the unsophisticated country girl. And Wilford did not seek to enlighten her, but suffered her to talk of the delight it would be to live in New York, and how pleasant for mother and Helen to visit her, especially the latter, who would thus have a chance to see something of the world.

"When I get a house of my own, I mean she shall live with me all the while," she said, stooping to gather a tuft of wild blue-bells growing in a marsh spot.

Wilford winced a little, but he would not so soon turn down Katy's castles, and so he merely remarked, as she asked if it would not be nice to have Helen with them—

"Yes, very nice; but it does not speak of it to her yet, as it will probably be some time before she will come to us."

And so Helen never suspected the honor in store for her as she stood in the doorway, anxiously waiting for her sister, who she feared would take cold from being out so long. Something though in Katy's face made her guess that to her was lost forever, the bright little sister whom she loved so dearly, and fleeing up the narrow stairway to her room, she wept bitterly as she thought of the coming time when she would occupy that room alone, and know that never again would a little golden head lie upon her neck, just as it had lain, for there would be a new love, a new interest between them, a love for the man whose voice she could hear now talking to her mother in the peculiar tone he always assumed when speaking to any one of them excepting Morris or Katy.

"I wish it were not wrong to hate him," she exclaimed passionately; "it would be such a relief; but if he is only kind to Katy, I do not care how much he despises us," and bathing her face, Helen sat down by her window, wondering if Mr. Cameron took her sister, when it would probably be, "Not this year or more," she said, "for Katy is so young," but on this point she was soon set right by Katy herself, who, leaving her lover alone with her mother, stole up to tell her sister the good news.

"Yes, I know; I guessed as much when you came back from the meadows," and Helen's voice was very unsteady in its tone as she smoothed the soft rings clustered around her sister's brow.

"Crying, Helen! oh don't. I shall love you just the same and you are coming up to live with us," Katy said, forgetting Wilford's instructions in her desire to comfort Helen, who broke down again, while Katy's tears were mingled with her own.

It was the first time Katy had thought what it would be to leave forever the good, patient sister, who had been so kind, treating her like a petted kitten and standing between her and every hardship.

"Don't cry, Nellie," she said, "New York is not far away, and I shall come so often, that as after we return from Europe, first, and you we are going there, but says we Wilford will not wait till June? must be married the 10th of June?—that's his birthday—thirty—and he is telling mother now."

"So soon—oh Katy! and you so young!" was all Helen could say, as with quivering lip she kissed her sister's hand raised to wipe her tears away.

"Yes, it is soon, and I am young; but Wilford is in such a hurry; he does not care," Katy replied, trying to comfort Helen, and begging of her not to cry so hard.

No, Wilford did not care how much he wrung the hearts of Katy's family by taking her from them at once, and the way in which he would extend, the way in which he would take her. There must be no invited guests, he said; no lookers-on, except such as choose to go to the church where the ceremony would be performed, and from which place he should go directly to the Boston train. It was his wish, too, that the matter should be kept as quiet as possible, and not be generally discussed in the neighborhood, as he disliked being a subject for gossip. And Mrs. Lennox, to whom this was said, promised compliance with everything, or if she ventured to bicker she found herself borne down by a stronger will than her own, and weakly yielded, her man-fully testifying to her delight at the honor conferred upon her by this marriage of her child. Wilford knew how pleased she was, and her obsequious manner annoyed him far more than Helen's blunt straightforwardness, when, after supper was over, she told him how adverse she was to taking Kitty so soon, adding still further that if it must be, she saw no harm in inviting a few of their neighbors. It was customary, it would be expected, she said, while Mrs. Lennox chimed in, "at Helen's boldness will come; I will least your folks your mother."

Wilford was very polite to them both; very good-humored, but he kept to his first position and poor Mrs. Lennox saw faded into airy nothingness all her visions of roasted fowls and frosted cake trimmed with myrtle and flowers, with hosts of the Silvertown people there to admire and partake of the marriage feast.

It was too bad, and so Aunt Betsy said, when, after Wilford had gone to Linwood, the family sat together around the kitchen stove talking the matter over.

"Yes, it was too bad, when there was that white hen-turkey she could fat up so easy before June, and she knew how to make 'lection cake, that would melt in your mouth and was enough sifter better than the black stuff they called wedding cake. She meant to try what she could do with Mr. Cameron."

And next morning when he came again she did try, holding out as inducements why he should be married the night before starting for Boston, the "white hen-turkey," the 'lection cake, and the gay old times the young folks would have playing snap-and-catchem; or if they had a mind, they could dance a bit in the kitchen. She didn't believe in it, to be sure—none of the Orthodox did; but as Wilford was a 'Piscopal, and that was a 'Piscopal quirk, it wouldn't harm for once."

Wilford tried not to show his disgust, and only Helen suspected how hard it was for him to keep down his utter contempt. She saw it in his eyes, which resembled two smoldering volcanoes as they rested upon Aunt Betsy during her harangue.

"Thank you, madam, for your good intentions, but I think we will dispense with the turkey and the cake," was all he said, though he did smile at the old lady's definition of dancing, which for once she might allow.

Even Morris, when appealed to, decided with Wilford against Mrs. Lennox, and he was to the task which would devolve on him in case of a bridal party at the farm-house. In comparative silence he heard from Wilford of his engagement, offering no objections when told how soon the marriage would take place, but congratulating him so quietly, that if Wilford had retained a feeling of jealousy, it would have disappeared. Morris was so seemingly indifferent to everything except Katy's happiness. But Wilford did not observe closely, and failed to detect the hopeless look in Morris's eyes, or the whiteness which settled about his mouth as he fulfilled the duties of host and sought to entertain his guest. Those were dark hours for Morris Grant, and he was glad when at the end of the second day Wilford's visit expired, and he saw him driven from Linwood round to the farm-house, where he would say his parting words to Katy and then go back to New York.

**CHAPTER VIII.**

"MISS HELEN LENNOX, Silvertown, Mass."

This was the superscription of a letter, postmarked New York, and brought to Helen within a week after Wilford's departure. It was his handwriting, too; and wondering what he could have written to her, Helen broke the seal, starting as there dropped into her lap a check for five hundred dollars.

"What does it mean?" she said, her cheek flushing with anger and insulted pride as she read the following brief lines:

"New York, May 8th.

"Miss Helen Lennox: Please pardon the liberty I have taken in enclosing the sum of \$500 to be used by you in procuring whatever Katy may need or present necessities. Presuming that the country seamstresses have not the best facilities for obtaining the latest fashions, my mother proposes sending out her own private dressmaker, Mrs. Ryan. You may look for her the last of the week."

"Yours truly, Wilford Cameron"

It would be impossible to describe Helen's indignation as she read this letter, which roused her to a pitch of anger such as Wilford Cameron had never imagined when he wrote the offensive lines. He had really no intention of insulting her. On the contrary, the gift of money was kindly meant, for he knew that Uncle Ephraim was poor, while the part referring to the dressmaker was wholly his mother's proposition, to which he had acceded, knowing how much confidence Juno had in her taste, and that whatever she might see at the farm-house would remain secret with her, or at most, confided to the ears of his mother and sisters.

He wished Katy to look well, and foolishly fancying that her country artist could make her look so, he consented to Mrs. Ryan's going, never dreaming of the effect it would have upon Helen, whose first impulse was to throw the check into the fire. Her second, however, was soberer. She would not destroy it, nor tell any one she had it, but Morris—he should repair to Linwood, making Morris at home, and startling him with the vehemence of her anger, as she explained the nature of her errand.

"If I disliked Wilford Cameron before, I hate him now. Yes, I hate him," she said, stamping her little foot in fury.

"Why, Helen!" Morris exclaimed, laying his hand reprovingly on her shoulder; "is this the right spirit for one who professes better things? Stop a moment and think."

"I know it is wrong," Helen answered, "but somehow since he came over, I have grown so hard, so wicked toward Mr. Cameron. He seems so proud, so unapproachable. Say, Cousin Morris, do you think him a good man, that is, good enough for Katy?"

"Most people would call him too good for her," Morris replied. "And in a worldly point of view she is doing well. Cameron, I believe, is better than three-fourths of the men who marry our girls. He is very proud; but that results from his education and training. Looking only upon a New York standpoint he will misjudge country people, but he will appreciate you by an accord."

"I begin by hating him as cordially."

"Yes, but this money, now, Morris, we do not want him to get Katy's outfit. I would rather go without clothes my whole life. Shall I send it back?"

"I think that the best disposition to make of it," Morris replied. "As your brother, I can and will supply

nearby distracted. Aunt Betsy suggested a blue delaine and round cape, offering to get it herself, and actually purchasing the material with her own funds, saved from drying apples. That would answer for one dress Helen said, but not for the wedding; and she was becoming more undecided, when Morris came to the rescue, telling Katy of a young woman who for some time past had been his patient, but who was now nearly well and anxious to obtain work again. She had evidently seen better days, he said; was very ladylike in her manner, and possessed of a great deal of taste, he imagined; besides that, she had worked in one of the largest shops in New York. "As I am going this afternoon over to North Silvertown," he added, in conclusion, "and shall pass Miss Hazelton's house, you or Helen might accompany me and see for yourself."

It was decided that Helen should go, and about four o'clock she found herself riving at the cottage over whose door hung the sign "Miss M. Hazelton, Fashionable Dressmaker." She was at home, and in a few moments Helen was talking with Marian Hazelton, whose face showed signs of recent illness, but was nevertheless very attractive, from its peculiarly sad expression and the soft liquid eyes of dark blue, which looked as if they were not strangers to tears. At twenty she must have been strikingly beautiful, and, even now, at thirty, few ladies could have vied with her had she possessed the means for gratifying her taste and studying her style. About the mouth, so perfect in repose, there was when she spoke a singularly sweet smile, which in a measure prepared one for the low, silvery voice, which had a strange note of mournful music in its tone, making Helen start as it asked, "Did you wish to see me?"

"Yes; Dr. Grant told me you could make dresses, and I drove round with him to secure your services, if possible, for my sister, who is soon to be married. We would like it so much if you could come to our home instead of having Katy come here."

Marian Hazelton was needing work, for there was due more than three months' board, besides the doctor's bill, and so, though it was not her custom to go from house to house, she would, in this instance, accommodate Miss Lennox, especially as during her illness, her customers had many of them gone elsewhere, and her little shop was nearly broken up. "Was it an elaborate tresseau she was expected to make?" and she bent down to turn over some fashion plates lying upon the table.

"Oh, no; we are plain country people. We cannot afford as much for her as we would like, besides, I dare say Mr. Cameron will prefer selecting most of her wardrobe himself, as he is very wealthy and fastidious," Helen replied, resenting the next instant the part concerning Mr. Cameron's wealth, as that might look like boasting to Miss Hazelton, whose head was bent lower over the magazine, as she said, "Did I understand that the gentleman's name was Cameron?"

"Yes, Wilford Cameron, from New York," Helen answered, holding up her skirts and s-k-ting at the kitten which came running toward her, evidently intent upon springing into her lap.

Fear of cats was Helen's weakness, if weakness it can be called, and in her efforts to frighten her tormentor she did not look again at Miss Hazelton until startled by a gasping cry and heavy fall. Marian had fainted, and Helen was just raising her head from the floor to her lap, when Morris appeared, relieving her of her burden, of whom he took charge until she showed signs of life. In her alarm Helen forgot entirely what they were talking about when the faint came on, and her first question put to Marian was, "Were you taken suddenly ill? Why did you faint?"

There was no answer at first; but when she did speak, Marian said: "I am so weak that the least exertion affects me, and I was bending over the table; it will soon pass off."

If she was so weak she was not able to work, Helen said, proposing that the plan be for the present abandoned, but to this Marian would not listen; and her great eager eyes had in them so sacred a look that Helen said no more on the subject, but made arrangements for her coming to leave his patient some medicine, and while he was preparing it, Helen had time to notice her more carefully, admiring her ladylike manners, and thinking her smile the sweetest she had ever seen. Greatly interested in her, Helen plied Morris with questions of Miss Hazelton during their ride home, asking what he knew of her.

"Nothing, except that she came to North Silvertown a year ago, opening her shop, and by her faithful, and pleasant, obliging manners, winning favor with all who employed her. Previous to her sickness she had a few times attended St. Paul's at South Silvertown, that being the church of her choice. Had Helen never observed her?"

No, Helen had not. And then she spoke of her fainting, telling how sudden it was, and wondering if she was subject to such turns. Marian Hazelton had made a strong impression on Helen's mind, and she talked of her so much that Katy waited her appearance at the farm-house with feverish anxiety. It was even-when she came, looking very white, and seeming to Helen as if she had changed since she saw her first. In her eyes there was a kind of hopeless, weary expression, while her smile made one almost wish to cry. It was so sad, and yet so strangely sweet. Katy felt its influence at once, growing very confidential with the stranger, who, during the half hour in which they were accidentally left alone, drew from her every particular concerning her intended marriage. Very closely the dark blue eyes scrutinized little Katy, taking in first the faultless beauty of her face, and then going away down into the inmost depths of her character, as if to find out what was there.

"I knew you would, Morris. And I'll send it to-day, in time to keep that dreadful Mrs. Ryan from coming; for I won't have any of Wilford Cameron's dressmakers in the house."

Morris could not help smiling at Helen's energetic manner, as she hurried to his library and taking his pen wrote to Wilford Cameron as follows:

Silvertown, May 9th, 18—

Mr. Wilford Cameron—I give you credit for the kindest motives in sending the check which I now return to you, with my compliments. We are not as poor as you suppose, and would almost deem it sacrilege to let another than ourselves provide for Katy so long as she is ours. And furthermore, Mrs. Ryan's services will not be needed, so it is not worth her while to make a journey here for nothing. Yours, Helen Lennox.

Helen felt better after this letter had gone, wondering often how it would be received, and if Wilford would be angry. She hoped he would, and his mother, too. "The idea of sending that Ryan woman to us, as if we did not know anything!" and here Helen's lip curled scornfully, as she thus denounced the Ryan woman, whose trunk was packed with paper patterns and devices of various kinds when the letter arrived, saying she was not needed. Being a woman of a few words, she quietly unpacked her patterns and went back to the work she was engaged upon when Mrs. Cameron proposed her going into the country. Juno, on the contrary, flew into a violent passion to think their first friendly advances should be thus received. Bell laughed immoderately, saying she liked Helen Lennox's spirit, and wished her brother had chosen her instead of the other, who, she presumed, was a milk and water thing, even if Mrs. Woodhull did extol her so highly. Mrs. Cameron felt the rebuke keenly, wincing under it, and saying that Helen Lennox must be a very rude, ill-bred girl, and hoping her son would draw the line of division between his wife and her family so tightly that his sister could never pass over it. She had received the news of her son's engagement without opposition, for she knew the time for that was past, Wilford would marry Katy Lennox, and she must make the best of it, so she offered no remonstrance, but, when they were alone, she said to him, "Did you tell her? Does she know it all?"

"No mother," and the old look of pain came back into Wilford's face. I meant to do so, and I actually begged, but she stopped me short, saying she did not wish to hear my faults, she would rather find them out herself. Away from her it was very easy to think what I will do, but when the trial comes, I find it hard, we have kept it so long; but I shall tell her yet; not till after we are married, though, and I have made her love me even more than she does now. She will not mind it then. I shall take her where I first met Geneva, and there, will I tell her. Is that right?"

"Yes, if you think so," Mrs. Cameron replied.

Whatever it was which Wilford said to Miss Helen Lennox, it was evident, that he and his mother acted at it differently, he regarded it as a duty he owed to Katy not to conceal from her what might possibly influence her decision, while his mother only wished the secret told in hopes that it would prevent the marriage; but now that Wilford had deferred it till after the marriage, she saw no reason why it need be told at all. At least Wilford could do as he thought best, and she changed the conversation from Geneva to Helen's letter which had so upset her plans. That her future daughter-in-law was handsome, she did not doubt, but she, of course, had no manner, no style, and as a means of improving her in the latter respect, and making her presentable at altar and in Boston, she had proposed that he should stand very high in the Cambridges family, though Wilford in his heart felt an increased respect for her independent spirit, notwithstanding that she had thwarted his designs.

"I have another idea," Mrs. Cameron said to her daughters that afternoon, when talking with them on the subject. "Wilford tells me Katy and Bell are about the same size and figure, and Ryan shall make up a traveling suit proper for the occasion. Of course there will be no one at the wedding for whom we care, but in Boston, at the Revere, it will be different. Cousin Harvey boards there, and she is very stylish. I saw some elegant gray poplins, of the finest lustre, at Stewart's yesterday afternoon. Suppose we drive down this afternoon."

This was said to Juno as the more fashionable one of the sisters, but Bell answered quickly, "Poplin, mother, on Katy?" It will not become her style, I am sure, though suitable for many. If I am to be fitted, I shall say a word about the fabric. Get a little checked silk, as expensive as you like. It will suit her better than a heavy poplin."

Perhaps Bell was right. Mrs. Cameron said; they would look at both, and as a result of this looking, two dresses, one of the finest poplin, and one of the softest, richest, plaided silks, were given the next day into Mrs. Ryan's hands, with injunctions to spare no pains or expense in trimming and making both. And so the dress-making for Katy's bride was proceeding in New York, in spite of Helen's letter; while down in Silvertown, at the farm-house, there were numerous consultations as to what was proper and what was not, Helen sometimes almost wishing she had suffered Mrs. Ryan to come. Katy would look well in anything, but Helen knew there were certain styles preferable to others, and in a maze of perplexity she consulted with this and that individual, until all Silvertown knew what was projected, each one offering the benefit of their advice until Helen and Katy were

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