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### TRIUMPH OF THE SENTIMENTAL.

Mrs. Maynard came from the funeral and went directly up to the room where her son had died. She stood a moment in the door and looked stolidly around the room; she leaned a little heavily against the door casing and put her large white hand to her throat. A diamond on her finger gleamed and the lace across her shoulder moved in the air from the open window.

There were traces of tears on her cheeks and heavy circles under her eyes, but in spite of them her face was the face of one who would be as selfish in grief as in, to her, not less important things of life.

When she had stood a moment, she walked restlessly to the table where he had studied. The evening before he had been taken sick suddenly. His papers and books lay spread out as he had left them. An open knife lay at one side with a newly sharpened pencil; the last number of the college paper half covered a copy of Beowulf, open and marked with a memorandum of the next lesson: twenty lines of "Passing of Seyld."

She saw in a dim new way the tragedy of her son's death, and following came a brief sense that his life had not been less tragic than his death. He had lived so alone with his books and his violin, while she, his mother, had lived alone with her diamonds and her opera. While her husband, Lee's step-father, had lived alone with his stocks and dividends; yet in all their complexity of feeling she felt most keenly the baffled sense of having lost in Lee's death something that she had never had.

They had never understood each other. Perhaps if she had kept Stella and let Lee go with his father she might have been different and happier. A girl would have loved her and understood her, it might have been. A sudden fierce resolve came into her heart. She knew where Stella was now; she would go to her and bring her back. It was not fair that Stella should be alive with her father and that Lee should be dead. The children belong to the mother.

She started to leave the room and then stopped. No, she would write to him and ask for Stella to come and see her for a little while, for a year, because Lee was dead. She would come and she could choose herself whether she would go back.

She sat down at Lee's table and took from the drawer a box of plain and un-scented note paper. Lee's tastes were not like hers, but this would do.

Stella urged her pony up the incline towards the house and came trotting along briskly by the door. She cast her eyes swiftly around over the stretching prairie to take in the red sunset and the far-away line where the Rockies made a dim irregularity on the horizon. Then she turned to the door where her father stood, and sprang from the saddle. He was looking at his old fashioned watch and smiling.

"Is the hour up?" she laughed. "But it doesn't matter anyway. I've got the school. I can afford to lose a bet."

She dismounted and held the horse a minute while she explained that she was to teach a seven months school and was to get thirty-five dollars a month.

"Which'll be," and she made a pretense of counting on her fingers, "two hundred and fifty-five dollars. That ought to be enough to send me through the high school."

Then she led her pony down to the corral. When she came back her father spoke hesitatingly. "I wish I was well enough off to send you to school with-out this year of teaching. I could, by getting a mortgage and if you say so—" She interrupted him.

"I told you before I wouldn't. I can wait a year I guess. I'm not so old.

Of course I would like to go now—" she smiled up into his face—"but I'll never go in debt."

Suddenly she reached into her pocket.

"I forgot," she said, "there was a letter."

She tried not to seem inquisitive as he looked at the letter, and with an in-coherent word or two brushed past him rather ungraciously into the house. It might mean many things for her father to get a letter in a woman's hand-writing.

He held the letter a long time before he opened it. He could hear Stella moving about in the house and the soft clink of carefully handled plates. He looked out at the sky and the distant Rockies. Then with an effort he tore away the end of the envelope.

When he had folded the letter away in his pocket and let his hands fall listlessly between his knees, Stella called him in to supper. He went quietly and ate as usual, bearing as long as possible the scenting of her keen eyes. He kept up a forced conversation about the new irrigation ditch that was to be dug, but when he rose from the table he took down his hat and changed the subject abruptly, answering her thought.

"I can't tell you what was in the letter just yet" he said and walked away down to the corral.

Stella washed her dishes and sat by the table reading till ten o'clock, but her father delayed coming in. Then she left the lamp burning, and when she had turned down the covers of her father's bed in the front room, turned into her own room and went to bed. From where she lay she could see the lamplight from the kitchen fall across the rag carpet of the front room. The cat came and stood in the light, moving her tail restlessly.

"I ought to let the cat out," Stella thought drowsily and then fell asleep.

"In the night she was awakened by the cat creeping softly across her knees. She saw that the lamp had been put out and rose carefully that she might not disturb her father.

"Come kitty" she whispered softly, and the cat purred in her arms.

At the door of her father's room she hesitated. In the dim light from the stars she could see that her father's bed was as she had left it. But at the window he sat looking out through the screen with his chin leaning on his hand. She stroked the cat a moment and then went resolutely across the room.

"Father," she said, and stopped to lay her arm in its white gown softly across his shoulder. He turned a little to press his bearded cheek against her breast and then, as if she had been a little girl, drew her down on his knee. It seemed the most natural thing in the world that she should come to him. She sat quite still. The cat curled comfortably upon her lap and the soft summer wind came purling through the screen.

When her father began to talk he spoke quietly.

"I have let you always think that your mother was dead, Stella. You are old enough now to be told that she is not. When she left me and got her divorce, I came here with you. She could not very well refuse when I asked for you. She kept your brother; he wasn't a year old then; and a week ago tonight he died. Now she wants you. She says you shall have all you want as long as you will stay."

He had given only the bare story, but somehow Stella felt what was underneath.

"Am I like her?" she asked.

"No."

Stella guessed the "Thank God" that followed in his mind.

"Was she wicked?"

"No, no, not that!"



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