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cited." He laughed. "It must be the exhilarating air of America. The sale is a long way off yet, and I think it will be further away before I get through with it. If you will accept the management, and your father-in-law proves at all reasonable, I guarantee to find the necessary money."

"You mean that Mr. Ponderby

"Precisely. I am his business adviser, as well as his chauffeur. However, we are forgetting the matter in hand. We must rescue the wardrobe of Mrs. Challis. Drive me to the mansion!"

"I'm a warned-off trespasser," said Challis, grimly, "but—here goes."

"Well, you're my chauffeur, *pro tem*. Perhaps you won't need to enter the house at all. I shall see Mrs. Anson before I meet her husband, if possible. I shall try to persuade her to give me the wardrobe."

"She would n't have courage to do that without her husband's permission, and he will never give it."

"We shall see. Ah, the mill is not the only bit of property to be sold!"

THEY had turned into a long, well-shaded avenue. To the massive stone pillars at the gate were attached posters similar to those at the mill, only in this case it was "This valuable and desirable residence" with the hundreds of acres of land attached, that were to be sold under the hammer.

They drew up at the entrance. Stranleigh stepped down and rang the bell, while Challis remained in the car. Shown into the parlor, the visitor was greeted by a sad-looking elderly woman.

"Mrs. Anson," said the young man, deferentially. "I expect your forgiveness for this intrusion when I say that I am here, in a sense, as ambassador from your daughter."

"From my daughter!" gasped the old lady in astonishment, and her care-worn face lighted up. "Gertie! Is she well? Where is she?"

"She is well, I am pleased to tell you, and is living with her husband in the village."

"You astonish me! Her last letter said she was going to New York with her husband. There has been a—misunderstanding." The old lady hesitated for a moment before using that mild term. "I hope she is happy?" The old voice quavered, and then broke, while tears rolled down her cheeks.

"She is," said Stranleigh confidently, "and before the day is done her mother will be happy, too. Mrs. Anson, will you select from your daughter's wardrobe what you think she should have at once, and I will take the trunk or parcel to her in my car."

"When at last my husband saw that everything must be sold," rejoined Mrs. Anson, "we had Gertie's belongings packed, and as we did not know where to send them, Mr. Asa Perkins, a friend in Altonville, offered us a room in which to store them; they are there now."

"How odd!" exclaimed Stranleigh. "I have taken Mr. Perkins' house furnished, acting for the present tenant. Do you happen to have the key of the room where Mrs. Challis's goods are stored?"

"The housekeeper has it. She is there still, I suppose?"

"Yes; I took the house, servants and all."

"I'll write a note to the housekeeper, then. What name shall I say?"

"Please write it in the name of Mr. Challis. He's outside now, in my automobile."

"May I ask him to come in?" she enquired, eagerly.

"It's your house, you know," said Stranleigh, with a smile. "Not for long," she sighed. "Ah—Mr. Challis and I propose that this sale shall not take place, Mrs. Anson. If I may have an interview with your husband, I think we shall come to terms."



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