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T had always been Cynthy's word. and Lem felt no disposition to quarrel with it under the circumstances. He let his mind run

back to the long ago days when he carried her books to school and planned small treats within the scope of their narrow lives which his awkward tongue and self conscious mind almost prevented his laying before her. Cynthy was not given to many words herself, and so when he finally managed to suggest "S'pose we go berrying Sat- story. Lem," said Cynthy. "I did not urday?" or skating, as the season know how fond of the old place I was might allow, Cynthy had always contented herself with replying "S'posin'." He saw himself again as he was in those days, big for his years, hands and face tanned almost a leather color with sun and wind, a shock of unruly places and old friends that is worse brown hair and eyes of almost the than physical pain when it strikes and same shade. He did himself but scant a goodly sight to look upon even at reminiscent tone, more to herself than that time, for he had been then as now to him, and Lem felt a sort of comfort health. Looking at Cynthy, he saw only sufferer. traces of the same air of fragility that had characterized her as a child and attention to my books, as I had deseemed to set her apart from the other | termined to fit myself for a teacher. children. He had long known that it Somehow I think it always lay back was not an indication of weak health, in my mind that I should return here but was due rather to a certain trans- some day. I will not deny that the deparency of skin which neither sun nor sire became less a conscious purpose wind seemed to affect. He felt just as than a subconscious dream as the big and overgrown beside her today as years went by, but about six months he had done years ago, and Cynthy's ago it flamed into a purpose that would assent to his latest suggestion had fill- brook no opposition." ed him with the same sense of wonder and delight as in that old time.

He would have liked to know if Cynspeculate whether that simple word of him and his hopes. Every moment of the pleasurable sensations it gave him to hear it. He had never dared fate. to ask such a question, and he wondered if he ever would. There was a delightful possibility that he might, and his heart beat higher at the thought. If he had stopped to consider that fact, necessary, as that organ had not been were there no prospect of a decrease even the sturdy frame of Lem Minturn slaught. But no thought of danger the state of his heart. In fact, if quesknew it too well to need to give it fur- | to keep I should see more of life. ther consideration. He was more was not sure I could be a minister's alarmed about the condition of another wife, and besides I did not know

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begin?"

Gratefully Lem accepted their return. 'S'posin'."

Cynthy found a comfortable spot and barrass her or make it difficult for her mill, I asked this question: 'Cynthy. to give him this glimpse of her life. He s'pose I go away and take a technical could not help wondering if it meant course and fit myself for assistant suas much to her as to him.

"There isn't a great deal to my until we had moved away. They say a good friend, and he heartily approvthat those who are left behind feel worse than those who go because new things take up the attention. I dare say that is true in a way at least, but there is a kind of longing for old that only the absentee can feel. True, justice as far as appearance went. It it is not always there. One could not the position I worked for, and I ardid not occur to him that he had been stand it if it were." Cynthy spoke in a rived just the same day you did." the seeming embodiment of rugged in the knowledge that he was not the both lucky. I think, to have found

"I went to school and gave my whole

Here Cynthy paused and fell to thinking. Lem noted the fast changing color now, and his heart sank a thy was thinking of those old days in little. He wondered what had roused the same way as he was. He recalled Cynthy to the sudden determination that in that faraway time he used to and whether it boded good or ill for Anything was better than uncertainty. assent "S'posin'" caused Cynthy any seemed to make it more a matter of life and death that he should know his

With heightened color and eyes that looked steadfastly at the far horizon. Cynthy resumed her story, apparently unconscious of the anxious scrutiny of her companion. "About a year ago a he would have known it was quite un- young student came to board with us. it and at the same time so new that it As you know, I never had a brother. brings more pain than joy. Cynthy. doing normal work for a week past and before long we became excellent you are the reason." and before this last increase had been friends. It was very nice to have some going to an alarming rate. Indeed, one to depend upon, ever ready to do what one needed, to play escort and 'big brother.' That was what we both turned toward him with a look that could not long have withstood its on- called it at first. But it seemed to grow to be more, and-and-why, then. from that cause rose in the young he asked me to marry him. It was a man's mind. There were more dan- surprise to me at first, but after awhile gerous things for him to consider than I thought I would say yes. Then it occurred to me that before tying myself tioned, he might have replied that he to a promise that I might not be able heart which he wanted for his own. whether I loved him or not. I needed Thought was ever swifter than absence to prove my feeling to myself.

Something in the question made the

"It seems to me, Cynthy," he said, "that perhaps without my knowing it

as such a matter of course that if I

was a blow that stunned me. I could

But it bothered me that you were loved you." to answer, 'S'posin'.'

"I talked the matter over with the superintendent, who had always been ed. Well, a few months later I went and put in some hard studying for the next few years. During vacations 1 worked in the mill and got thoroughly requainted with its needs. I have not 1 nown many girls, because I have been too busy, and-well, that seems to be all there is to it Here I am in

"That is a coincidence, is it not?" said Cynthy as Lem paused. "We are things going our way. Now that you have proved your dream true are you content?"

"I thought I was, Cynthy, until the night I got back; then suddenly it came to me that there was something lack-Ing."

"Isn't that always so with dreams that come true, Lem? It seems to me that the only happy dreams are those that stay dreams," said the girl, with a slight sigh.

Lem made no direct reply to this bit of philosophy. He was in the mood of having his dreams come true and risking the contentment. The suspense grew unbearable. He must know "Cynthy." he said softly, and the girl started from her reverie and turned to ward him. Her face looked pale and weary, as if life had lost some of its charm. It made him pause a moment, but he gulped hard and spoke again. "Cynthy, there is a reason for the failure of contentment for me. It is a reason so old that I had not recognized

He paused again and saw the blood surge up into the girl's face. Her breath came in quick gasps, but she was partly inquiry, partly surprise and some doubt, but there was no repugnance. That encouraged him to take up his narrative where he had so abruptly stopped.

"I love you, Cynthy, but I did not know it until a week ago. I thought I was too busy to care for girls; but

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speak and quite another to find the not get used to it. I did not once think Cynthy, it was because you had all my words one wanted. While he was still of asking you to write to me. In fact, heart, and I did not know it. It was seeking them Cynthy said, "S'pose I I could think of nothing but that you really for you that I studied and won were going. The place seemed mighty my way to success. I was too wholly lonesome after you were gone, and I a boy when you went away to underversed positions and answered in his gave myself up to my work in the mill stand what gave me such pain to part as if that, too, would never change. with you. But even then I must have

sat down, while Lem threw himself at going to have opportunities in the city He paused for a moment as if to her feet. Then she began in a simple, that would put you away out of my steady himself for what must follow. unaffected way to tell the story, which class. That thought was discouraging Cynthy said nothing, but she drew the man eagerly drank in. So much until one day I said to myself, 'Cynthy, nearer to him as if unconsciously depended upon that story. It would s'pose we both study?' And it seemed drawn, and her face was lighted with either open his lips or seal them for- to me that I could hear you say. a smile that even Lem saw was the ever, and he knew it. He composed 'S'posin'.' That settled it. I began, outward expression of inward joy. He himself to listen, determined that nel- and after a year or two. during which drew her into his arms, and she did ther by word nor look should he em- I had been steadily advancing in the not resist. For a moment he held her so, while he waited for his heart to steady. Then with a twinkle in his honest brown eye he turned her face perintendent?' And again you seemed up to his and before kissing her said,

"Cynthy, s'pose we get married?" ed to promp man. And Cynthy answered, "S'posin'."

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speech with Lem Minturn, and now as So that is why I am here. I applied he stood beside Cynthy, looking down for and finally got the position of at her while she looked off toward the teacher, and here I am, out with you horizon, it traveled over all the little just as in the old days, and it hardly bypaths of memory the very approach- seems as if it could be six years since es to which he had apparently forgot- then. Does it, Lem?" ten until that day a week ago when he had seen Cynthy for the first time in young man's heart leap and the hot six years. Ever since then his thoughts blood rush to his head. He looked had been busy with olden days. He sharply at Cynthy, but she appeared could recall all the chief events in the to be merely wondering aloud, and early life of both from the time when hope died down again. But it was time she was a tiny mite in pinafores and for his story now, and, moreover, he he was a sturdy lad rejoicing in his felt as if he could tell it, indeed must first real pockets. There was no break tell it, let the outcome be what it until she was fifteen years old and her might. family had moved away to the city, where there were more advantages for the children. He had been seventeen you have always been a big factor in

then and had completed his first year my life. I had taken your friendship in the mill. There she stood, looking so much like thought of it at all it was as something the old days that he could almost have that could not be changed. Therefore believed they had never been separated your going off to the city that way except for the recurring thought that

he knew not what associations or ties she might have formed since last he saw her. It might be that the terrible longing in his heart was never to be satisfied, and then the necessity for speech became almost intolerable. It was because of this that he had spoken in the old fashion, "Cynthy, s'pose we tell what has happened since last we met?"

And Cynthy had not resented the return to old speech or the use of her name, but had answered simply, "S'posin'," and Lem was not disposed to guarrel about the answer. But it was one thing to decide to

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