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KIRKWOOD'S SURPRISE.

It was a bright winter morning, and Mr. Segrist's two pretty nieces had just come down stairs fresh as Hebe, and pink-cheeked as the roses of fragrant hyacinth bells in the south window.

"Failed!—Mr. Kirkwood!" echoed Lisa, her rosy cheek losing a shade or so of its satin bloom. "Oh, uncle, how did that happen?"

"As most failures happen, my dear," said Mr. Segrist, folding up his paper and laying his spectacles on one side.

"Upon my word, Lisa," the elder cried merrily, "I do believe you are in a trance. Why don't you answer my question?"

"I—I was only thinking, Cora. What was it you asked me?"

"About our ball dresses for to-morrow evening. I think bunches of silver barley would be prettier to loop up than the commonplace roses. Everybody wears roses."

"Oh, Cora," cried downright Lisa, "how can you talk about ball dresses when—when you remember who was to have taken you there?"

"Mr. Kirkwood?" said Cora, calmly; "of course he'll not go now, but we can easily send for Cousin George."

"Then you really mean to go?" "Of course; why shouldn't I? Surely, Lisa, you can't expect me to go into mourning because Guy Kirkwood has failed? He was no relative of ours."

"I think he loved you Cora," said Lisa, in a low voice; "and you thought so too?"

"He must learn to unlove me, then," said the elder sister, with a musical little laugh. "Mr. Kirkwood, the successful merchant, was very well, but Mr. Kirkwood, the beggar, cannot expect to indulge in the luxury of a wife. Of course all that is over, for good and all."

And Cora calmly poured out a second cup of coffee for her uncle.

"But, Cora," pleaded her sister, "it is not as if yourself were poor. You know we will have a little money of our own."

"Very true, wise Lisa; but I mean to keep my own to myself, and not to spend it in bolstering up the ruined fortunes of any unlucky speculator. No, no, child, my husband must bring money of his own, not to be a drain upon my slender resources."

Lisa shook her head. "That sounds worldly," said she.

"Does it?" Now Lisa think it is just the common-sensical sound to it. People must look at these things from a practical point of view."

"Uncle," cried Lisa, almost passionately, "don't you think she ought to like him all the better because he is in need?"

"My dear, my dear," said the old gentleman, composedly, crumpling up a bit of dry toast on his plate. "I can't pretend to judge of these things. You girls must settle your own affairs between you."

"My mind is quite made up already," said Cora Segrist calmly.

And when poor Guy Kirkwood's card came up that afternoon to the room where the two sisters were arranging the bunches of silver barley ears that Madame Fichu, the milliner, had just sent round in a mammoth paper box.

"Please, sir, Miss Cora is engaged." Guy Kirkwood went slowly and sadly away without answering a single word.

If only she had remained true to him, he believed he could have breasted the cold waves of all other fate; but now—Well such was the way of the world. He must make up his mind to take the bitter with the sweet, as it came. But the sweet had been honey-sweet, and the bitter was as gall.

"Uncle, can I speak to you for a minute?" Mr. Segrist, setting away the piles of dusty papers in his law library, started at the sound of the soft, bell-like voice.

"My child, I thought you and Cora had gone to the ball."

"Cora has gone, uncle; but I thought I would rather remain quietly at home. Uncle—And here she paused and hesitated.

"Well, child, what is it?"

"You are my guardian and trustee, uncle," she went on, as if forcing herself to speak. "Will you tell me how much money Cora and I have each got?"

"About ten thousand dollars, Lisa—but what makes you ask?"

"And can I do just what I please with it?"

"That depends upon circumstances.—Probably yes."

"Well, uncle, I want you to lend it to Mr. Kirkwood, to help him get into business again."

"Child, what for?"

"Because he has no friends left, uncle, because I feel sorry for him," said Lisa Segrist, with deepening color and downcast eyes. "And, uncle, he must not know who let him have it."

"Why not, you little network of riddles and mystery?"

"Oh, because I couldn't bear to have him know. It could be managed, could it not?"

"Yes, I suppose. But are you really in earnest, Lisa?"

"Yes, uncle."

"And the interest of the money, that has always supplied you with pins and ribbons and tape, gimcrackery in general?"

"I can do without that, uncle," Lisa resolutely answered. "But you must not tell Cora. She would think it silly and romantic."

"Well, well, child," said Uncle Segrist, smiling, though he was in reality deeply moved. "You shall have your own way."

The next week Mr. Kirkwood's lawyer informed him that ten thousand dollars lay at his banking house, subject to his draft or order at any time.

"Ten thousand dollars!" cried poor Guy, quite overwhelmed at the magnitude of the sum; "who lent me ten thousand dollars?"

"That is what I am not at liberty to inform you," said Mr. Jessup very stiffly. "And it was in vain that Guy Kirkwood, marshaling in his memory all his improbable friends, tried to fix the benefit upon one or the other of them. No, he could not place it anywhere, this mysterious benediction; he must just accept in the spirit in which it had been given."

"Ah! I will try to prove to my unknown friend," he said, in a choking voice, "that the favor has not been bestowed in vain. Upon this foundation, Heaven helping me, I will build up the beginning of a new fortune, a more prosperous career."

Mr. Kirkwood's words proved almost prophetic. Five years from the time he had not only regained his former position in the commercial world, but had shot beyond it; and Cora Segrist, who in the meantime had indulged in several futile flirtations, and broken off two engagements, began seriously to consider the propriety of once more spreading her net for the birds she had let fly so long ago.

"Because I really am getting quite middle-aged," said Cora, demurely; "and Mr. Kirkwood certainly is more handsome than ever."

Guy Kirkwood came often to Mr. Segrist's mansion; but Cora disposed though she was to take the most favorable view of matters, could not but distrust that it was more on her sister's account than her own.

"Does he really care for her, I wonder?" thought Cora, or is it only to revenge himself upon me for the cavalier manner in which I dismissed him five years ago? Nonsense! Lisa isn't half as pretty as I am, and she never was. I shall win the battle yet."

Mr. Kirkwood had just posted a letter—a missive whereupon hung his fate—directed to Lisa Segrist. For he had learned to love the shy, gentle girl, and lacking courage to tell her so in words, he put the substance of his heart's hope on paper.

"For I won't live in this sort of suspense any longer," was his resolve.

From the post-office he went directly to old Jessup's law sanctum.

"Have you paid back that ten thousand dollars, according to my orders?" he said.

"I paid it to-day, with legal interest, both simple and compound—for five years," answered Jessup, very succinctly.

"I only wish I knew whom to thank for this stepping-stone to fortune."

Old Mr. Segrist, who was sitting by, looked up queerly, over the top of his spectacle-glasses.

"Now what would you give to know, Guy?" he said.

"Half I am worth," was the impulsive answer.

"Well," chuckled the old man, "I can tell you on cheaper terms than that. I was bound over to secrecy for five years, but the time was up last week. Your mysterious good angel was none other than my little niece Lisa."

Kirkwood colored—his heart gave a great upward bound—Lisa! his Lisa! He turned silently away and left the office.

"A curious way of acknowledging a favor," cried Mr. Segrist, a little testily. "Hem!" commented Mr. Jessup. "There are some people who feel too little to say 'thanks,' and some who feel too much. My client, I rather think belongs to the latter class. I do not believe he is ungrateful."

"Nor I neither—on the whole," said Mr. Segrist, repenting him of his haste.

Duke and Sentinel.

The late Duke of Brunswick used to relate the following anecdote with great glee:

On a certain occasion, one of the heaviest of German soldiers had the duty of mounting guard at one of the ducal hunting seats; and, not to perplex the poor fellow with more ideas than he could conveniently carry, one single "notion" was, with some difficulty, rammed into his noddle—viz, that he must present arms to the Duke, should his Highness pass that way.

He was left to his cogitations, which, we need hardly say, were of that class described by the renowned author of "Knickerbocker's History of New York" as appertaining to the pilot of the Good Vrouw, who, we were informed, sat the helm, thinking of nothing either past, present, or to come. Tired at last of this transcendental monotony, our sentinel had recourse to the universal German solace—his sausage and schaapps.

While thus agreeably employed, he saw an unpretending-looking person approach the place where he was seated, dressed in the common German hunting-dress—a sort of queer smock-frock, leather breeches, and continuations.

"Good appetite to you!" said the newcomer. "What is that you're eating?"

"Guess!" gruffly answered the peasant soldier.

"Oh! perhaps rothwurst," said the Duke, for it was no less a personage.

"No; something better than that."

"Then I suppose that it is lebbwurst?"

"No; something better than that."

"Probably then it is metterwurst?"

"Yes."

(The three terms, rothwurst, lebbwurst, and metterwurst, are the positive, comparative, and superlative degrees of the German sausage.)

"And now that you know all about my sausage, pray who are you?"

"Guess," said the Duke.

"Oh! perhaps you're one of the Duke's pages?"

"No; something better than that."

"Then you're probably one of the Duke's aids-de-camp?"

"No; something better than that."

"Perhaps you're the Duke himself?"

"Yes."

"Der teufel! Hold that sausage, for my orders are to present arms to you!"

A Walking Match.

In the town of Williamsport, Mr. Bangles, it appears, laid a wager that he could walk a thousand miles in a thousand hours, and there were a good many heavy bets in sporting circles in his favor and against him.

Mr. Bangles was known to be opposed to the undertaking; and so when the work began, and it became apparent that Bangles was not doing himself justice, his friends went around and told Mrs. Bangles that her husband was disobeying her positive order not to attempt that pedestrian feat.

Well, Mrs. Bangles suddenly put on her sunbonnet, and seized a bed-slat, and started for the tent. As she entered, it was observed that Mr. Bangles accelerated his pace, and in a few moments he and Mrs. Bangles were moving around that ring with singularly encouraging swiftness.

Everybody said it was the best time on record; and once in a while Mrs. Bangles would vary the monotony by taking a short cut across the ring, so as to head off the pedestrian, who would immediately turn around and glide in the opposite direction. They walked over nine hundred miles in one evening, and on the last quarter of the nine-hundred-and-ninety-ninth mile Mrs. Bangles caught up, and after tearing out two or three handfuls of the noble sportman's hair, she bruised him with the bed-slat and took him right home. If he gets well in time, he expects to finish the other mile before the thousandth hour elapses. Bangles has since intimated to a friend that Love's young dream has been dissipated.

Inside the Earth.

The greatest depth of the earth hitherto attained by man's explorations has not reached more than one mile from the surface. When, as Professor Forbes states, it is remembered "that the diameter of the earth is 7,900 miles," the disproportion of our studies between the surface and the interior of our planet is evident.

We have traversed every sea from pole to pole; the desert, the prairie, the great forests, and the inland river fountains have alike been explored. All the sciences prove with what ardor we have studied things of the earth's surface and thence directed our attention to distant planets to study them; yet of our planet no attempt has been made beyond one mile down.

What, however, we have learned from this descent is astonishing. We have discovered that the earth is not a solid substance; on the contrary it has a fluid interior, and only the crust is solid; and relatively not so thick in proportion as a hen's egg. It is found that, for every hundred feet of descent there is a rise of temperature of two degrees Fahrenheit, which is sufficient to melt iron, and the lava which we see ejected by volcanoes. Now, without any verifying experiment, the existence of volcanoes in different parts of the world, the perpetual springs of boiling water in Iceland, at Bath and Matlock, clearly proves the existence of subterranean heat. Fortunately, experiments of a different character from those of descending into the earth substantiate the fact of interior fluidity.

A revival preacher says the toughest customer he ever came across in the pursuit of his calling was a rough old fellow in a valley of the Green Mountains, who approached him at the close of an evening meeting with a very long face and asked gravely: "Did I understand you to say that hell was a lake of fire and brimstone?" "Yes," said the divine, thinking that he had at last succeeded in making an impression upon the hitherto obdurate heart, and going on to enlarge upon the place of torment.

"Nonsense! nonsense!" interrupted his listener; "I don't believe a word of it; you pile it on too thick; a man wouldn't live a minute in such a place." "They will be prepared for it," said the minister, impressively. "Be prepared for it! will they?" exclaimed the anxious questioner, brightening up. "I'd as soon be there as anywhere, then," and off he walked, perfectly satisfied, and as gay as a lark.

A modern thinker says many people will be astonished when they get to heaven, to find the angels laying no schemes to be made archangels.

A Story with a Moral.

The New York Journal of Commerce says: A dealer in pork has a precocious son who is an expert in cards, and, in playing with his companions was seldom on the losing side. He began at first to bet on the game, and ere long could play regular for money with any of his age disposed to take the risk. He came home one day, bringing several dollars which he had acquired in this small way of gaining, and exhibited his gain to his father with quite an air of triumph. The thoughtful parent shook his head and told his son that the money was not honestly acquired. "But I didn't cheat," said the boy. "I hope not," replied the father; "but did you give the loser any equivalent whatever for it?" The boy hung his head, and the parent added: "Money is honestly acquired when there is an exchange of products or services, and the receiver gives an equivalent for it; to take another man's property and give him no equivalent for it is to rob or cheat him."

A few months after the father came home from the Produce Exchange with an elated aspect, and announced that he had settled his speculative contracts in pork by the receipt of fifty thousand dollars. His son eyed him steadily a moment, and then said: "What did you give the other man, father, as an equivalent for the money?"

Childlike.

Jennie Jones was a very pretty little girl, and it was the first time she had ever been visiting by herself. She was spending the afternoon with one of her schoolmates, and when it came tea-time Jennie was invited to stay to tea.

"No, I thank you, ma'am," she said stily, in answer to the request. "I guess you'd better," said her little friend's mother, good, hospitable Mrs. Morse; "sit right up to the table along with Sairy—won't you now?" Jennie fidgeted, twisted her apron, put her finger in her mouth, and finally electrified the company by remarking, "Well—I don't know; ma said I was to say no, thank you, the first time I was asked, but—if you urged me I could stay." It is scarcely necessary to add that she staid.

It is a curious fact illustrating the necessity of cleanliness, and of keeping the pores of the skin open, that if a coat of varnish or other substance impervious to moisture be applied to the exterior of the body, death will ensue in about six hours. The experiment was once tried on a child at Florence. On the occasion of Pope Leo Teath's accession to the papal chair, it was desired to have a living figure to represent the Golden Age, and so a child was gilded all over with varnish and gold leaf. The child died in a few hours. If the fur of a rabbit or the skin of a pig be covered with a solution of India rubber in naphtha, the animal ceases to breathe in a couple of hours.