

to propose, and was disappointed because I didn't. No, she wouldn't have said it, meaning that, unless she had quite given me up, and I'm sure there's no reason why she should abandon hope yet. On the contrary, I have never seen a woman who was so likely a candidate." This last quite unconscious; for Steve was alone, and when we are alone our vanities take advantage of it to emerge and parade like peacocks on a sunny terrace.

Two weeks, three, and still Steve, madly in love, could not make up his mind to propose. Everything looked all right; but somehow, whenever the words that would commit the destinies of the house of Ford to this alliance approached his lips, Anne Sulloway gave him the impression of a man stepping upon the temptingly covered top of a treacherous trap. "She certainly is unlucky," he would comment to himself, each time he departed without having honored her, when he had gone fully intending to do it. Sometimes he almost suspected that she was deliberately laughing at him; and if a woman would venture to laugh at a man before he had even proposed, what would she not dare after marriage? Again, she seemed to him to dislike him—a preposterous fancy, when he was so agreeable to all women, but somehow he could not shake it off. Sometimes he contemplated giving her up; but there always rose a vision of that alluring wide mouth with the small strong teeth, that wonderful throat, and those aristocratic lines. "What health!" he thought, all aglow at merely fancying it. "And what a mother she would make!" Whenever he thought of the unborn upholders of the glory of his house, he always stroked his long aquiline nose, the distinguishing beauty mark of all the Fords.

In June, with the words still unspoken, he included her and her mother in the party he was taking with him in his car for a tour of inspection of the kingdom his father had left him—mines and factories and railways. The journey began cloudily. "Do you know," said he to her, as they were talking alone on the way toward Philadelphia, "I was afraid you wouldn't come. I half expected you would decline the invitation."

Instead of the protest he confidently expected, she said, "I should have declined, but I had no chance. Mother accepted without consulting me."

He flushed. The words sounded—well, insulting. But he felt he must be supersensitive. "What does that mean?" he asked.

"I'll tell you as soon as you give me the chance." Her eyes were smiling—quizzical, daring—an invitation to propose.

He smiled the smile of the self reassured. She meant that she would have refused, lest he should suspect her of pursuing him. "Well," said he, eyes aflame and hands trembling, "I'll give you the chance—bang off."

But the tone of her "Not now" checked him. "I don't wish to spoil your dinner—and mine," she added, rising. Randall was just emerging from his room. "Come out on the observation platform, Sam," said she in a free and easy way that made Ford register a mental note as to what he would do "some day," if she then persisted in such undignified ways.

Ford, left alone, could only join the rest of the party—Mrs. Sulloway and Joe Persall and his wife. He had purposed to engage the others at bridge and to sit with Anne on the observation platform in the moonlight; but she, with that lucklessness or lack of shrewdness or whatever it was, upset his plans for her happiness—and his own.

As they rose, from dinner, and before he had a chance, she said, "You four," indicating all but Randall, "are going to play, I know. I don't play at all. Some one must keep me company." And her eyes rested upon Randall.

Sam gave a resigned sigh. "I suppose we must all do our best to entertain each other. Come along, Anne."

If Ford had been long enough enthroned in his kingdom to realize his power, he would not have acquiesced. As it was, he surlily sacrificed himself before his remaining remnant of an originally weak notion that his duty was to his guests, instead of daring bluntly to enforce the truth that the guests of a plutocrat are for his pleasure, not theirs. He played so vilely that Joe Persall, ardent courtier though he was, muttered curses audibly, and Mrs. Persall, Steve's partner, was in tears over her losses.

"For the life of me, Anne," began Randall, as soon as they were seated on the platform, with the door closed behind them, "I can't understand why you should keep on with the motions of angling,

when the fish is on the hook and fairly jumping at the basket."

Anne looked amused.

"Perhaps you are trying to see whether it's a good fish or only a gar."

"Perhaps," Anne smiled, without taking her gaze off the point toward which the whole moonlit landscape seemed to be rushing, as it fled from them.

"Be careful how you trifle, young woman. He's fourth on the very brief list of bachelors eligible for girls like you, and the three ahead of him are too wary for any but a widow's wiles. Be careful I've seen many a woman lose a good catch by overconfidence."

"You are sure I wish to marry him?"

"Sure."

"Why?"

"I saw it the instant I introduced you two. It was a case of love at first sight. You don't deny you fell in love with him that night?"

"No, I don't deny it," replied she somewhat dreamily. "I had never seen any young man so—so—powerful looking. And I worship power."

"Steve does put up an uncommon good front," said Randall judiciously. "He gets that face and head from the old man. Now, he was the real thing, a grand old beast of prey, grim and wicked, but strong and with a sense of humor. Steve is much like him—minus the courage and the sense of humor."

Anne laughed mockingly. "You are a good friend of Steve's, I see."

"The best he's got. Yes, we are good friends—we find each other useful."

"But aren't you afraid I'll fall out of love with him, hearing these disagreeable truths about him?"

"What if you do? A few months sooner or later is no matter, and you will certainly find out sometime, if you haven't already. If I am disillusioning you, I'm doing you a kindness. Where the woman is bound to fall out of love with the man, she had

most are those who have them. The more they have, the more they need."

A long silence; then she, with startling suddenness and energy: "Sam, do you ever despise yourself?"

"That's why you and I are such good friends—because we despise ourselves."

Anne nodded slowly. "But there is some excuse for me being the poor, footless creature I am, forever dreaming and talking of doing great things; never doing even the small ones. There's no excuse for a man—for you."

Randall's fine face expressed scorn. "But I am not a man. I'm simply a suit of clothes—a pose—an attitude—an expression for polite uselessness." He lapsed into silence.

After a pause, she: "What are you thinking?" Randall turned upon her quickly, and the light from his eyes seemed to dazzle her, to compel her to look away. "I'll tell you a secret—my secret. I am not like you in one respect. You fancy you will some day, somehow, do something. I know I sha'n't—of myself."

"Don't say that," she entreated. "Please don't!"

"Wait," he replied; "let me finish. I have a dream—we all have, I suppose. Mine is that some day I shall find a woman who will believe in me, and will put on my armor, as it were, and thrust a spear into my hand, and send me out, with a look in her eyes that would make me ashamed not to come back with either Achilles' shield on or my own. You may laugh, if you like. I'm not in the least ashamed of my sentimentality—to-night. Probably I should be in daylight, or any light but the moon's—but moonshine."

She held her breath as she listened; when he ended, she gazed at him in silence. "Why, you are quite transfigured," said she softly. "I no longer despise myself for liking you. You look strong and earnest and quite capable—really a man."

"That's because of my dream. It's the one thing that keeps me from being utterly contemptible."

"No. There is something else."

"What?"

"The fact that you are not self-satisfied—not like—"

"Steve?" he suggested.

"Like all these other men and women—these sons and daughters of somebodies—who are no more the grand persons they fancy themselves than the king's valet would be king if he put on his master's clothes."

Sam laughed at her. "You pose well," said he. "I see you have caught the disease that's raging."

"What disease?"

"The pose of revolutionist. Drop it! It will simply destroy what little sincerity there may be left in you. Of all the games we idlers invent to amuse ourselves, the most despicable are the games we play with the fine sentiments—the game of charity, the game of revolutionist, and all that. Never forget that your father is the largest employer of child labor in America—and Steve a close second. There's 'blood and filth'—I think that's the correct Karl Marx phrase—on every dollar you spend or that is spent on you. As for me, my little income comes from a company that kills or maims for life thirty-seven per cent. of its laborers. You see, I have the exact figures."

Anne had shrunk back into the shadow. "But what can we do?" she pleaded weakly.

"Who said we ought to do anything? Only, let us be honest with ourselves. Let us not pretend we loathe the cannibal feast, when we would fight to the death to hold our places at it."

"But I—"

"Don't lie," he interrupted. "No cant, for heaven's sake—not in this presence!" And his glance swept the vast, serene, open sky.

"I feel that I ought to do something."

"And so you give yourself credit, as if you really had done something."

"It is a real feeling," she retorted, and the strength that underlay the softness of her contour showed itself.

But Randall shook his head, unconvinced. "Marry Steve, and persuade him to sacrifice two-thirds of his fortune by stopping the child labor in his mines and by paying decent wages to grown men with families."

"Would he?"

"No, indeed—no fear of that. But you would get the easy conscience that comes to us from trying to do a duty which we sincerely hope we'll fail to do."

He devoted himself to his cigar and his thoughts. She watched him furtively. Presently she said:

"Sam, what is your ideal like?"

"My ideal?"

"Your—your woman?"

"Like your man."

They were gazing each at the other tenderly, as



For a Moment the Boy Thought That She Too Was His Enemy.

best do it before marriage. Then she's able to start married life right. Many a woman has messed her matrimonial career through weakness at the start—the weakness of being in love."

"And you think I'd marry him if I could—whether I was in love with him or not?"

Randall looked at her admiringly, sadly; she certainly was exquisite in that clear gentle light—was like some half divine, half human creature—a Venus come in search of a human lover. "It's a shame to say it," said he, "with you looking so unearthly—Oh, you women! How can you so belie your looks?"

"And you men?"

"That, of course. Only, we can't help expecting something better from you."

"But why should I marry where I do not love?"

"For money and social position."

"I don't need either."

"Ah, but you do. The people who need them