

of the village. Honest Tom Halloran knew that he and Mary had been engaged, but not the cold-blooded way in which Ames had jilted the woman who was now his wife.

Mary had sent back the furniture, all except the old cabinet which Mr. Newell had had made for her. "Take care of that, my dear," he had said. "It's made of tropical wood, and some day it will be worth its weight in gold to you."

When Tom had gone into the kitchen to smoke his pipe Mary sat darning busily, and her thoughts wandered back over all those years that had passed. How happy she and Tom had been! And how thankful she was that she had discovered Ames' nature before she married him! She did not care about the field, but Ames' persecution of Tom had aroused her fighting spirit. If she repay Ames in kind!

Suddenly she perceived a tiny edge of white against the flat top of the cabinet. It looked like a paper paring. She rose to brush it aside, and to her amazement discovered that it was part of a sheet, apparently wedged into the wood in some strange fashion.

A moment's examination showed her that there was a secret drawer in the cabinet. And the paper—as she pulled it through the orifice in the wood she could see that there was writing on it. She fumbled about until she found the spring of the drawer, which she pulled open. Inside lay a document—the last will of Simon Newell.

Mary Halloran stared at it in terror. This message from the dead—she did not want to read those letters that danced before her eyes. She was still standing with the will in her hand when Tom came in.

"What is it, dear?" he asked, seeing her distress.

Mary Halloran put the paper behind her.

"Tom," she said, "you know Mr. Newell meant to leave all his prop-

erty to me, and how John Ames got it. The will was never found. But I have found it. It was in the secret drawer of that cabinet."

Tom stared at her, and slowly understanding came into his mind. "Then it's all ours!" he exclaimed. "The five acre field and—all of it!"

"No, Tom!" said Mary.

"Eh, my dear?" said Tom, slowly.

"I don't want to claim it. I don't want Mr. Ames to know. Tom, he paid a price for the property, the price of honor and self-respect. Many a night he must have lain awake, meditating over his bargain. The property is the only recompense he had. And I want him to keep it, Tom."

"You don't—want the property, Mary?"

"No, Tom. That is why I am going to throw the will into the fire unread."

"But, Mary! It's yours—ours. Think of the boys. We must be just to them. The scoundrel has had it all these years. My dear, you must—"

"I won't, Tom, I won't," she cried. "You don't understand." She flung the paper into the open fire; it scorched against the coals and fluttered, unburned, beneath the grate. But Mary had run out of the room, her eyes blinded with tears of shame.

She was thinking that she had been more than recompensed in Tom. But for the will's loss she would never have known the treachery in John Ames' heart.

Tom Halloran stooped down and picked the will out of the grate and began to read. The verbiage was difficult, but there was one sentence that stood out unmistakably:

"To my half-brother, John Ames, all that I possess, both real and personal estate, in the conviction that he will make a good husband for my adopted daughter, Mary."

Slowly Tom watched the paper burn in the fire. And, though the full meaning of Mary's wish did not come home to him, something told him that he must never let her know,