

could see little old Mr Sills hanging to a strap. He had never looked so utterly hateful to her before—though everybody said he was a domineering old driver, and acted as if he owned his clerks, body and soul! Pet hated him for standing there, bland and benevolent, quietly selecting a nice young man to be the husband of that ugly girl. Doubtless he would give Jack to understand he must not take Pet about—and she did not know what Jack would do!

While the way lay along the noisy surf, conversation was impossible. They made a sharp turn and went flying through darkness sweetened by strawberries and magnolias. What would it be like, Pet wondered, to have him all one's own, no matter who wanted him? To hang upon his arm everywhere one went! The homeward ride was half over; in half an hour Pet would know whether she was engaged or not. At Rose Hill two ladies entered the

car. As they came down the aisle, Jack touched his hat to the pretty one, who sank into his vacated place. Pet felt a pang. (For is a married man, or an engaged man, to go about touching his hat and offering ladies his seat?) "Were you with that gentleman?" asked the strange lady. "Too bad, I turned him out of his seat!"

"Oh, he doesn't mind the standing!" Pet assured her; "and he wouldn't feel comfortable to sit talking to me while any lady stood!"

She could see Jack, his big arm thrown behind his head, his magnificent physique displayed by the very motion which almost threw Mr Sills from his feet, where they clung to the same strap. Jack bowed—rather distantly—to Evelyn; then he exchanged glances with Pet, then he glanced casually at Evelyn—to see how she took her punishment for Sunday afternoon. (On Sunday afternoon they had walked in the park. And the airs of Evelyn! To say to him, "Carry my coat!" as if he were the dust under her feet!) Pet's dead-white face stood out against the outer darkness; she was leaning forward; whenever he looked at her, her meek mouth broke into a smile.

"Pleasant night on the water!" said Mr Sills.

"Lovely!" assented Jack. Time was, when he had been afraid of Sills, afraid to call in response to Evelyn's invitation; but for six successive Sunday afternoons, Mr Sills had wandered through the parlour during Jack's call, had not interfered in the least with Jack. Well!—Jack thought it might be hard to get a nice fellow for such an ugly girl!

"You seem to be with Miss Isabel this evening," said Mr Sills, looking about for Pet, whose other name was Isabel. Jack jauntily assented. Sills began to rattle him; Sills always rattled him! "I feel a responsibility for young women in my employ, Mr Deelong,"—this was so blandly said, that for an instant Jack thought it was of rather a complimentary nature. He looked at Pet.

"So I trust you won't take it amiss—" Jack looked down on Mr Sills, very large and fair by contrast with his employer. Sills was taken with a sneezing fit.

"Are you engaged to the young lady?"—no explanation, just that question flung at him. Sills had wiped his nose and was benevolent again.

"Beg pardon?" said Jack; he changed his hands on the strap and shifted his feet.

Mercifully, Sills took another sneezing fit.

"Are you expecting to marry the young lady?" resumed Mr Sills. There was a blue flash in the old man's little eyes. (And yet, those Sunday afternoons, while Jack was calling on Evelyn—strolling in the park with Evelyn—hanging over Evelyn's piano—Sills never said a word!) Jack glanced at Pet, who was ready to answer the look.

"I presume you are engaged!" said Sills.

Jack wiped the perspiration from his brow. "No, sir," he replied.

"If that is the case, Mr Deelong—" Little Sills drew himself up like a master; his chest swelled out with all the responsibilities of the employing class.

"Oh, we're engaged," said Jack, hastily. "I only meant we ain't expecting to marry immediately."

"Ah, indeed!" Sills' face and his voice broke up like ice in the spring. "And you don't feel able to marry at once, Ah!"

"I'm not feeling well," said Jack. "I've taken cold, I think I'll go in out of the wind!" But Sills followed him into the car.

Inside, Jack was not far from Evelyn; sick as he felt, he kept watching her till he saw what she was trying to hide, her red eyes, with rings around them. His mouth relaxed; he looked through the glass and smiled at Pet. He was thinking that Sills would go home that night and just casually remark that young Deelong was "engaged."

"What are you getting now, Deelong?" inquired Sills at his elbow; Jack told him. "When you get married," said Sills, "we'll raise you twenty-five."

"Thank you," replied the head clerk. They were now spinning about curves in the business part; it was here that Jack first began seriously to consider the possibility of his marrying for love. If he did marry for love, he wanted a while to think about it; and he intended Pet should never know he had said they were engaged.

Pet's station was Mr Sills' transfer point; Jack quite gallantly assisted Pet to alight from the car, and Pet linked her arm in his and hung upon it. Jack, perfectly silent, turned into that little

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