

'Now, my dear, you are absurd! In the first place, you do understand well enough when a man means that. And, in the second place, it seems to me scarcely—well, maidently, to be assuming that every man who offers you some small attention wants to marry you. I may be old-fashioned, but it seems to me unbecoming to quarter the ground in advance, analyze every look and word, and try to take care of a man's heart that may be miles away. The world is not on your shoulders, dear. Keep within your own proper limits, and let them take care of themselves.'

'Wouldn't you like to come with us, mother? I shall not go far.'

'No, thank you, dear. I do not feel like it this morning. See that you don't wet your feet.'

So Miss Farwell and Mr Blake set forth in the clear sunshine and fresh sea-breeze. They walked along the ever-inviting rocks, and found them too populous with other pairs; they walked through story meadows, full of goldenrod and sunmuck, and found them too bare and hot; they walked down cool woodland roads, and were moved to gather flowers there, and to rest under the shimmering green roof of widespread pines. She made a handful of their fragrant burden, and arranged great clusters to carry back with her. He took off his hat, the better to feel the gentle wind, and laid himself admiringly at her feet. And, finding words for the occasion, he spoke out manfully, called her 'Julia,' told her she knew he loved her, and asked her to be his wife.

'Indeed—indeed, I did not know it, Mr Blake! If I had I should have saved you this. I do not—can not—it must be "no." I had no idea it was so much to you—believe me!'

There was an ominous silence, while the young man pulled up little bunches of thin wood grass and pushed them into the ground again with his stick.

'I hope you are not angry, Mr Blake? I do like you very much, and I am so sorry.'

'Thank you. I appreciate your—kindness.'

And, as further conversation seemed difficult, they walked silently back together. He made his adieux with careful politeness, hoping he should see her again in the winter, and went straightway to his room and his valise.

His companion sought her mother.

'Why, Julia, what has happened? You look tired out. Did you go too far?'

'Yes, mother, I did go too far, it appears, or Mr Blake did. It is just as I told you—just as I was afraid. And when I—couldn't, he was angry—actually angry and sarcastic. He acted just as if I had led him on and played with him; and you know well enough how careful I have been!'

'Don't be silly, Julia. It is not wicked, child. You can't help it if you have offers. I had five myself, and I'm sure I didn't encourage them. It's nothing to grieve over, dear!'

'It is something to grieve over, mother, to have things so that a girl cannot live naturally and honestly, try as she may. I don't care, I'm going to enjoy the rest of my life as best I can, and not bother.'

'A very sensible conclusion, my dear, and I hope you will keep to it. You will be far happier and more comfortable, and it will not hurt your chances, I promise you. Of all things, don't be odd.'

When Harold looked in to remind his friend of lunch time, he found him packing violently.

'What's up now, Sherman?' he inquired. 'You don't look exactly permanent.'

'I am going to take the afternoon train,' said he, briefly. 'Anything happened? Has—oh, I see! I'm awfully sorry, Sherman!' And Harold's hand-clasp was a small bit of human comfort, after all. Sherman returned the pressure vigorously, walked to the window and looked out through panes that seemed uncommonly dim, and then burst out suddenly: 'Don't waste your sympathy, old fellow! I'm hurt, of course; but I'm all-freshman!'

Harold looked a world of interest, but was shy of speaking.

'Jibed?

That Rare Jewel they are kind and gentlemanly and polite to a girl, I don't think the girl ought to quarrel with it.'

'Yes, but mother, if they are in earnest, if they really want to--- to marry you, they have only the same way to show it; and you are supposed to understand."

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Harold looked a world of interest, but was shy of speaking, But, as something seemed necessary, he tried one word--

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