T HALF past six o’clock on a December Saturday morning Evy Gilroy was dressing for a day at Taggart and Emslie’s pattern counter and an evening at the Royal Arcade Theater. Her small sister Agnes who shared the room with her was still in bed, for Agnes had not yet reached a size that could attain even “workin’ stificates for th’ holidays only.” Agnes was not asleep, the vehemence with which Evy had yanked at an unruly bureau drawer had thoroughly aroused her and she was staring with shrewd eyes at Evy’s frantic preparations.

“Your rat shows this side,” she announced gravely as Evy put down the comb with an exasperated sigh of finality. Evy caught at the hand mirror and scrutinized the cushioned upholstery that loomed above her nervous little forehead.

“Darn!” she snapped, despondently, “if I ever get a dollar fifty-nine ahead I’ll buy me a good transformation and don’t you forget it!”

“You’d be a fool to,” responded Aggie, sagely; “Annie Halleran was telling me and Meg that up to her store they are selling hardly any; she says they are goin’ out entirely and that coronets is goin’ to be all th’ rage.”

“Is that so?” asked Evy, with deep scorn, “did she tell you any other re-cent news?” She paused to suck ruefully at the thumb her belt pin had penetrated. “Gee, and the bunch of cheap folks that mob that store up there! What does she know ’bout style? Why the Cramer girl, you know that one that had all the money left her and that got married to old Anderson’s son?—well, she’s back from a Paris honeymoon and she was in Taggart’s yesterday and I saw her close up—and her hair was pumped—not so high as some, but it was pumped all right.” Evy paused a second time, she was pinning an elaborate lace collar underneath her hated black blouse before fastening the stiff little collar prescribed by the store rules, an operation requiring much skill and many pins. “You can tell those Halleran girls that,” she ended, contemptuously, “and you can tell ’em that what they think about style or anything else don’t cut any—”

“Say,” interrupted Aggie, sitting up in bed excitedly as she spied the collar arrangement. “Are you goin’ to another show tonight? You’ve been four Sat’days runnin’ this makes!”

Evy smiled, a very tantalizing little smile, and finally laughed outright.

“Did th’ Halleran tribe want to know anything about that?” she asked; “you can tell ’em I’m liable to be goin’ for some Sat’days
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more. If you want to know it, Dan’s got regular subscription seats engaged for the rest of the season, N seventeen and eighteen.”

“You certainly did grab Annie’s beau all right,” giggled Aggie; “goodness knows he hain’t worth the fight you two put up, but Annie certainly is madder than mad.”

“Dry up!” commanded Evy, shortly, “Annie Halleran’s been stuffing you with lies——”

“Shame to you!” cried Mrs. Gilroy from the doorway; “you’ve no call to be talking against Annie Halleran. I’m ‘shamed to meet her mother these days from your carrying on so wid Annie’s feller—’nd him so small he can’t perrupt himself,” she added, scornfully.

Evy went red with rage. Danny was a shipping clerk, he could wear his “good” clothes every day and he did not carry a dinner pail, but he looked ridiculously small beside Evy, daughter of big Marty Gilroy, even when she adroitly carried her hat in her hand.

“A man’s no call to be a telegraph pole,” she flared back, “and Danny hain’t always so covered with dirt you can’t see whether he’s big or little!”

“Well, you’ve no call to be knocking your father all the time,” retorted Mrs. Gilroy, slamming the toast plate before her daughter; “a man can’t work all the time and then come home widout a bit of honest dirt to him——”

“Honest dirt!” snorted Evy, jabbing her hat pins through her long-suffering pompadour; “Heaven knows there’s enough ’honest dirt’ around here all the time and you ‘widout’ the sense to get out of it.” She flounced angrily through the outer door. “You needn’t to put by any supper for me, I’ll not be home.”

And all day long, as she scornfully flipped over the gaudy pages of the fashion journals for the worried devotees of “style,” she brooded over the petty morning squabble. As the nervous strain of the day’s work increased, her resentment of her mother’s interference and Aggie’s malicious teasing grew so sharp that she was in a mood of ill-suppressed rage when she met Danny at the great iron gateway of the employee’s exit.

Until now she had always charmed him with the sharp gaiety of her “company manners,” and he stared in amazement at the petulance of her greeting.

“Tired?” he asked, anxiously.

“Dead to the world!” she snapped; “I’m sick of the whole darned show!”

“Who’s jumped on you?” he demanded, promptly.

She laughed a little at the shrewdness of his query.

“Oh, nobody in the joint,” she said, with a backward nod of her
head to the building behind them. "It's just up to the house. Ma picks on me and picks on me."

She was still grumbling over the querulous plaint of her wrongs when they turned through the shabby doorway of the tawdry little eating house.

"I'm sick of being treated like a kid," was the burden of her wail. "Ma acts as if I was a dog sometimes—I'm getting dead sick of the whole thing, I am."

Danny leaned across the imitation marble top of the table and put an apologetic hand on the much-manicured fingers that were beating out an angry little tune with the salt cellar.

"Evy," he protested, "don't get a grouch on the old lady. It's a hard life our mothers gets—since mine's gone I get 'most crazy thinkin' about it sometimes—women has th' hard time."

"They 'has,'" mimicked Evy; "they certainly 'has,' if they 'hasn't' the sense to take care of themselves or else find somebody decent to do it for 'em." She tossed her head impatiently. "They don't have to tie up to the first guy that comes along and then keep a-saying 'thank you' all their lives every time they get hit in the head."

All through the evening in "N seventeen" of the Royal Arcade Theater he sat with a proprietary arm over the back of "N eighteen." He was not thinking about the play, he was pondering over Evy. Until tonight she had always seemed to him a radiant being who moved in a happier sphere than mere work-a-day man. A dull pity for her sorrows possessed him, a pity that roused a daring hope. He straightened his shoulders manfully and grinned.

She sighed as they stepped out into the snowy dampness of the night.

"It was an elegant show," she said, politely; "I think she was ever so much grander than she was last week in 'Trilby'. I'll bet," she added slyly, "she'll be simply great next week in 'East Lynne'."

"Will you go?" he asked, promptly, "I got th' seats reserved regular, you better use 'em."

Evy smiled into the swirling storm.

"I might if I don't find a better fellow," she replied as Danny tucked his arm protectively through hers. They were loitering carelessly under the entrance portico, an elaborate structure of stucco and tin, when Evy spied Annie and Meg Halleran with their gawky brother as escort pushing their way from the narrow doorway that served as the balcony exit. She grinned with malicious sweetness. Danny's embarrassed touch to his hat brim provoked Annie's noisy mirth.
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"Look who’s here!" she cried out; "hang onto him, don’t let him get away or you might lose him; th’ little thing gets lost easy!"

"Gee, she’s awful sore on me," Evy remarked with guileless innocence, "and her and my mother’s cousins, too."

Danny stood in chagrined silence.

"Annie’s all right," he answered, nervously; "I used to be good friends with her—she was just kiddin’ me—she was always kiddin’ me—it wasn’t you she was knockin’—" he ended, feebly.

"Take it if you want it," said Evy, shortly; "I’ll get enough more of the same all right, when I get home."

Danny stopped and drew her into the shelter of the drug store’s gleaming vestibule.

"Evy," he said, huskily, "you don’t have to go back and take their lip unless you say so. You and me can hike over to Jersey and—and——" his voice quavered with excitement. "I suppose that sounds dead crazy to you, but I—I been thinkin’ about it this long time back and didn’t have th’ nerve to ask you. They can’t kick on your goin’ out with me if—if you’re married," he laughed nervously and his voice grew deeper, "I’ll be good to you, Evy, always, I will, and you can take it good and easy—I’m getting twenty-eight now—and I—I’m dead gone on you," he ended, pleadingly.

"I don’t know," whispered Evy, "I——"

She stared into the storm, her thoughts were whirling like the snowflakes. She was no longer young, her little dreams of romance were tucked away in the long ago days when she had lived through a heart-aching "crush" for a frock-coated floor manager, and the deadly monotony of behind-counter life stretched before her appallingly. That Danny—Danny who in her own parlance was "Annie’s mash being strong along for a good thing"—that Danny actually wanted to marry her—that was the stupendous unexpected.

"Will you?" he asked, breathlessly.

She looked at him, startled by the intensity of his tone. Again she felt that tremor of fright that she had experienced earlier in the evening. A vague sense of unfairness, toward what she could not have told, made her hesitate. Her voice quivered.

"Are you sure you want me?" she faltered; "are you sure?"

"Dead sure," whispered Danny, gravely; "dead sure, Evy."

The first weeks of their life together passed like a child’s holiday. Evy luxuriated in the first real idleness of her life. Their "light housekeeping rooms" seemed to her the very heaven of elegance and the money Danny so willingly gave into her hands every Saturday she spent with a joyous prodigality that seemed to him altogether delightful.
Afternoons she dressed herself in her new finery and sauntered about the stores as a resplendent customer, gossiping with her old friends behind the counter when the floor manager had passed by. One red-letter day she flounced haughtily into the "Gates Hair Emporium" and nonchalantly bought a "seven dollar and ninety-eight cents, twenty-seven-inch, extra quality Maxine coronet," which the trembling fingers of her erstwhile rival were forced to adjust under the pompous supervision of the proprietor.

These were the days of Evy Noonan's pride, the pride whose very arrogance brought light to her dancing eyes and smiles to her thin lips. Her quarrelsome family, in the reflected light of their daughter's rise in the social scale of Shonnard street, forgot their former grievances against her and exulted in her pretty airs of condescension.

"She's a regular high stepper and no mistake," chuckled her father; "I meets her tonight goin' to the office wid a feather as long as your arm to her hat—'Good evenin', Mis' Noonan,' says I, wakin' to th' boys. 'Good evenin', Mister Gilroy,' says she, sassin' me back, cutelike.' And bye and bye she comes along back wid th' boy wid her. He's all right if he is small," ended Marty, reflectively, "and certainly dead stuck on Evy. Looked as solemn as a church over it."

Danny looked as "solemn as a church" for many nights to come, for that was the night when Danny lost his job. Though he searched unceasingly there seemed to be no other job. Evy no longer tripped gaily about the shops. The old lines of worry and discontent were creeping back into her face and for whole days she scarcely spoke to Danny. For Evy had no patience with adversity and professed a fine scorn for "luck."

"Luck!" she sneered, when Danny with buoyant faith in the next day insisted that it was all a "chancy thing"; "folks make me sick and tired always talkin' about 'luck!' What am I goin' to eat tomorrow? Your luck?"

And then it was that Danny rose up and went out into the night, leaving her to fret and fume until she had cried herself to sleep. It was long after midnight when he came back and woke her with his little rollicking laugh.

"Your father's the grand man," he cried out, joyously. "I was chasin' around with my grouch and I meets him on th' corner and he stops me and gets me to tell him what a mut I've been and then he chases me up to Hanan's house and gets me a job!"

Evy sat up in astonishment. She pulled her gaudy kimono over her cheap bridal laces and stared.

"I didn't know pa had any pull there," she said, stupidly.
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“You can just bet pa has a pull,” sighed Danny, contentedly; “he’s goin’ to stop for me in the mornin,’ we’ll be goin’ up together.”

“What makes you go so early?” she asked, “th’ office don’t go down till eight. There’s no use your hangin’ around th’ yards till an hour.”

“I’ll be hangin’ around th’ yard nine hours,” said Danny; “it’s not in the office I’ll be.”

“And you’ll be in the yards?” gasped Evy. “You went and took a dirty job in the yards?”

He could not understand the sudden flood of anger that she let loose. He could not realize that it was not simply a definite outburst against Danny Noonan; but that it was the accumulated rage of years, the foolish shame of a girl for her father’s humble occupation; the pitiful, unreasoning resentment of a woman against the lines of caste that manual labor meant to her. He could only grasp at one concrete thing, that constantly her teeth clicked over one word, an insulting reiteration of “lit-tle—lit-tle” until he could endure it no longer and burst forth.

“Little am I? I was big enough—you were glad to get me a few weeks back!”

“And a fool I was!” she snapped; “I thought you had th’ makin’s of a gentleman, but you’re like all th’ rest! Fit to be some decent fellow’s slave!”

“I’m no more a slave in th’ yards nor I was in th’ office,” he answered in amazement; “it’s decent work and it’s decent pay!”

“Decent!” Evy snorted. “Decent! You talk like an old woman! If you think it’s so decent I ’spose next you’ll be gettin’ a pick and gettin’ down in th’ trench—or maybe you can get you one of them fine jobs on a swill wagon—seepin’ you’re so ambitious! You’ll be th’ elegant lookin’ little shrimp when you get into jeans and trot off with your dinner pail!”

“Evy Gilroy!” he cried, desperately; “shut your mouth or I’ll shut it for you! Your own father carried a dinner pail these years to feed you and I’ll do the same by you, but I’ll take no more of your lip this night.”

Frightened by the queer gleam in his eyes she let her tirade die away in muttered grumbling, grumbling that slid into trailing bits of speech like a tired child that will not stop its fretting.

He was gone when she awoke in the morning, but all through the day she brooded sullenly. The few tasks she might have busied herself about she deliberately neglected; she did not even dress herself, but cuddled, wrapped in her kimono, in a chair by the window, idly watching the children in the street below.
When she heard Danny coming she fled obstinately to the bedroom and buried her face in the pillows.

"Where'd you put yourself, kiddo?" he called, cheerfully; "where'd you get to?" and he stumbled into the dark room, shielding the lighted match in his hand. When he had lighted the gas he went over and tugged at her shoulder gently. "Let's shake th' grouch," he said, tenderly; "I dropped mine. Come on, let's cut it out! Gee, what you got for supper? I could eat any old grub!"

The more she pouted and grumbled, the louder he laughed. At length he pulled her out of her pillows, set her on the floor and kissed her resoundingly.

They ate their supper in awkward silence. It was not until she began to drop the spoons noisily into the pan that she spied the shining object he had half hidden among the gaudy couch cushions. Behind his paper he was watching her anxiously. She dropped the pan with an abrupt bang and crossed the room hurriedly.

A moment later a very new dinner pail went hurling through the window to the street below and Danny and Evy Noonan took up their quarrel again with all the intensity of their young souls.

The weeks that followed were filled with nights of ceaseless bickering and days of sullen brooding. All the little griefs and grudges with which Evy Gilroy had fretted away her girlhood, all her disgust for the distasteful occupations into which poverty had forced her, were lost in her anger at this one great blow to her pride. She felt she had been cruelly cheated, that she had been unfairly tricked; she had given all her prettiness and smartness to a man who pretended to be Danny Noonan, shipping clerk, but who was really only Danny Noonan, laboring man.

This new Danny Noonan, a sturdy little figure in jeans, dusty shoes and slouch hat, with his dinner pail on his arm, seemed to her a daily insult.

In some blind, unreasoning way, his greatest crime was the fact that he felt no shame in that pail—the outward sign of his degradation. From the night when she had sent it flying into the street she had hated it with all the intensity that an angry woman can cherish toward a thing inanimate.

Mornings she taunted him bitterly while he clumsily tucked great slices of bread and meat into it. Evenings, if he chanced to put the pail on the table she would brush it angrily to the floor and scold over the "dirty, cluttering tin." Sundays she affected great pity for the trial it must be to him to leave it behind him.

Under the steady insolence of her constant scorn a far better man than poor Danny Noonan might have been driven to desperate lengths,
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but in some mysterious way the great love that he bore her made him pity her unreasoning rage.

And vague memories of the pride that had made his struggling mother keep him in shoes when other little urchins scampered joyously barefoot, made him realize that the "looks of the thing" meant far more to the heart of poor, foolish womankind than the mind of man could comprehend.

Evy's flimsy attempts to hide their discord from her family amounted to so little that she found a fresh impetus for her rancour in their open sympathy for Danny.

In his blundering way, Marty Gilroy, his great heart aching for his foolish daughter and his manly sense of justice roused at the manifest suffering of Danny, tried to smooth things over.

"Don't mind her too much, Danny," he faltered, "she got a bit fussy working in th' swell places she did. Just plain folks like us fret her. You see me and her ma spoiled her some—her bein' our first. So's if you'd just humor her like—"

Danny turned his head away and spoke thickly.

"Lord knows I have," he said, "It's a-makin' it worse, too. I guess we just got to scrap it out—but, gee—it's the devil!"

"It's hell, a thing like that is," answered Marty, solemnly. He stopped in the middle of the street and put his hand on Danny's arm. "Boy," he said, wistfully, "it's askin' a lot, but maybe it would help some if I knew—what's she set on? I know her—she's set on somethin'—what is it?"

Danny laughed mirthlessly.

"She's set on nothing," he said, shortly, "she's set agin' some thing."

"What?" demanded Marty.

Danny lifted his dinner pail and sighed.

"It's this," he said, grimly.

And Marty Gilroy, brave soul, laughed with his rare but hearty laughter.

"Lord love us, lad!" he said, "Wid her mother 'twas me pipe!"

"Pipe!" gasped Danny.

"Old Dugan's son Jack that married her sister was smokin' se-gars," chuckled Marty, "and me—well, I liked me pipe. An' many a one we broke between us! An' to think I'd forgot it all these twenty years! Danny, you'll have to wait till it senses itself to her. There hain't no other way about it wid women. You can talk it out easy and square wid a man, but wid a woman—she's got to sense it herself. An' she'll sense it the queerest way—ways you and me couldn't see into—suddenlike sometimes and sometimes slow
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like—but terrible easy when she does it! Don’t you fret, boy, don’t you fret.”

But Danny did fret, he fretted out his very soul in these trying days. For over and over there was borne in on his consciousness the fact that Evy did not really care for him, that she had only married him “to better herself.”

He plunged into his new work with an intensity that startled his foreman. He pored over the books that sympathetic man advised. He was no stupid cog in the great machinery of the “yards” was Danny, he was a man, a man stirred deeply by the ambitions of a woman he had doggedly determined should care.

By some delicious freak there came into that dreary February a delectable, springlike day, a day so deceptively fair that all humanity felt itself stirred by the recollection of summer joys and a disgust for the unprofitable monotony of things urban. Danny and Evy were but a small, small part of the great throng that swarmed beachward to stroll along the ugly seaside streets down to the great bulkhead that ended the boulevard.

They leaned over the parapet like the rest, alternately gazing out over the water or looking back at the shining line of motors drawn up at the head of the drive.

Evy watched the women in the tonneaus jealously.

“If I rode in one of them automobiles,” she said, fretfully, “I’ll bet I’d get myself up somehow. There’s plenty of cute bonnets they could wear instead of those veils. They certainly isn’t any style to tying your head up like the toothache.”

“They certainly haven’t nothing on you for looks,” responded Danny, gallantly.

Evy made no answer. She was eyeing the occupants of the car that had stopped directly back of them. To her amazement the young man who was clambering over the steps was greeting Danny with a friendly,

“Hello, Noonan! Some day, isn’t it!” and was actually lifting his hat to her. Even before she could respond with a dazed nod she was staring at the pretty young woman he was helping over the step.

“Dan,” she whispered, excitedly, “it’s that Miss Cramer—with all the money—that married old Anderson’s son—” but her bit of gossip died away unheeded for the pair had advanced to the edge of the bulkhead where the former Miss Cramer leaned far out over the railing taking long, delighted sniffs of the salty air.

The two men talked a moment, then young Anderson turned easily to his wife.

“Ruth,” he said, “this is Mr. Noonan, the Mr. Noonan.”
"I don’t know whether I’m glad to meet you or not," said Mrs. Anderson, holding out her hand, "You’ve made Jack altogether too fond of you."
Evy turned from the trio with awkward reluctance. She felt a soft touch on her arm.
"I’m sure," said Mrs. Anderson, "that I’ve met you, too, Mrs. Noonan, only I can’t just think where."
"I used to be at Taggart’s before I was married," blurted Evy and bit her lips over this needless betrayal.
"Then I guess we’re both haughty brides, aren’t we?" laughed Ruth. "Isn’t it the grandest day? Don’t you just love it?"
"Yes," said Evy in vague discomfort.
"Were you going to walk along the sand?" persisted the girl.
"We were, only I suppose now Jack has a man to talk to he’s quite forgotten me. We might stroll along just to see if they’d notice us," and so Evy let herself be carried along, pride and resentment struggling in her silly heart and her sulkiness betraying itself in her thin lips.
"Aren’t men the dearest?" babbled little Mrs. Anderson, "look how chummy they get right away and you and I as stiff as sticks because we don’t know each other! But then that’s not fair to us, either," she added, ingenuously, "because they did know each other before. Jack is so fond of Mr. Noonan!"
Evy’s eyes turned upon the girl beside her in startled amazement.
"He thinks he’s one of the brightest men in the yards," went on the soft voice, "night after night I have to listen to ‘Noonan—Noonan—Noonan!’ Reckon I’m jealous of Mr. Noonan sometimes! You see they have their lunch together most days."
Evy’s eyes opened wider, she could hardly tell what the little lady beside her was saying.
"Had lunch together!"
Evy went on stammering stupid yesses and noes while the voice chattered on.
"Dear me, isn’t it the worst thing, putting up lunches! I’ve ransacked about twenty cook books trying to find new kinds of sandwiches! Once I made some lovely sounding nut ones that Jack perfectly loathed, he said if it hadn’t been for Mr. Noonan’s pail he would have starved. I guess, Mrs. Noonan, you must be cleverer at it than I am."
"I guess not," stammered Evy.
"I guess yes," contradicted Mrs. Anderson, merrily. "You’re just modest about it. I’m not. I’m blatantly proud of my sandwich ability. I think I could write a book about them, and lately," she confided with a bridelike importance, "when it’s very cold I put up
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a hot lunch and take it down at noon.” She nodded her head sagely.
“I think hot things are much better for them. And then, too,” she
laughed infectiously, “I think the yards are wonderful.”

“Wonderful?” echoed Evy stupidly.

“Do you know,” said Ruth, putting her hand impulsively on
Evy’s arm, “I never was brought up decently in some ways, my
father is disgracefully lazy and all my life long there was something
I wanted terribly, I couldn’t explain it, I just wanted it. And the
first time Jack took me down to the yards I knew what it was—it
was that!” Her eyes shone roguishly. “Of course I know a lot of
it is caring about our particular man—but somehow the tremendous
bigness of seeing them all working together, making such wonderful,
powerful things! Oh, it must be beautiful to be a man and do things
—big things like that! Don’t you think so?”

“I—I guess so,” said Evy uneasily.

“But then,” went on the voice, “it’s rather nice being a girl and
seeing it all and helping a little bit—of course not in an important
way like men—but some. It’s all part of the game Jack says. I like
calling living the game, don’t you? They actually do miss us!” she
ended, abruptly, “that’s Jack’s whistle.”

“How dreadful of me to have chattered so,” she said after they
had walked back silently, “Do forgive me, Mrs. Noonan, the ocean
just runs away with my tongue some days.”

“It’s all right,” said Evy, slowly, “I don’t mind. I guess I—I
guess he wants you should hurry,” she ended, lamely.

“I guess,” laughed Mrs. Anderson, “you see we borrowed my
dad’s car and we’ve got to get it back to him before five.” She held
out her hand in warm friendliness when they parted. “Good-bye,”
she said, “it’s very nice to know you.” And then she smiled, that
slow adorable smile that brought a queer choking feeling to Evy’s
throat.

“Good-bye,” said Evy.

All the way home in the crowded train Evy’s thoughts lingered
around the smile and joyous cadences of the voice. After a time the
easy phrases began to recur in her mind and she frowned, a puzzling
frown of bewilderment.

“The big things men do—the game——”

And then it was that the blessed light of understanding began to
creep into Evy Noonan’s heart. It did not come with blinding force,
it came with quiet peace, stealing little by little into her selfish soul.

She was strangely silent all through the evening and far into the
night she lay puzzling and thinking, groping through this strange
new labyrinth of ideas. She was too bewildered to grasp it all, she
had for the first time in her life, the curious sensation of seeing herself as somebody else; she was like a bedtime child patiently sorry for the deed its naughty little daytime self had done.

In the flood of thoughts that swept her along Evy flared back in anger and resentment.

"If she'd grubbed along like my folks and me," she thought, hotly, "she wouldn't think things so——" but in the midst of this there came back the memory of the smile and the deep contented tones of the voice.

"And Jack is so fond of Mr. Noonan!" They liked him down there! They did not despise him! And suddenly, tired from the maelstrom of thought, she dropped asleep.

She woke early with an unaccustomed sense of coming back to something pleasant. She rose quietly and went out into the living room.

In the corner beside his heavy work boots lay the dinner pail. She went over and picked it up with a laugh.

All through breakfast Danny stared at her.

"What are you laughing at?" he demanded.

"Nothin'," she answered, demurely.

And when he had finished his coffee he began spreading great slices of bread and stacking them awkwardly together. She watched him, her eyes brimming with fun like a mischievous child.

For some inconsequent reason her laughter hurt him more than her scorn.

"It's funny, hain't it?" he said bitterly, and all the light of joy went out of her face. She got up abruptly and went over to the window where she stared out into the street through her hurt tears.

He crossed the room heavily, jerked the pail from the floor and banged it down on the table. The cover flew off with a clang. For a moment as he stared down into the pail at the food she had so deftly tucked into it he could not realize what had happened.

Then suddenly his voice rang out.

"Evy! Evy!" he cried. "What ever came over you to do it?"

She turned very slowly, this strange, new Evy and stood, her hand on her heart, looking across the room at him. An ineffable peace possessed her soul, she smiled dreamily through her tears, all the new-found wisdom of the night lending sweetness to her voice.

And then came the miracle.

"Gettin' to care, Danny," she said, simply.