

told at least a thousand times already, without the slightest result. They were dull children, wearisome and uninteresting. On the other hand the little Morleys were full of life and eagerness. The fault in them was that they wouldn't take petting, and what's the good of a child that won't be petted? They lacked that something which makes a woman feel motherly:

"When did you arrive, cozzie?" she asked.

"A fortnight ago yesterday."

"Ah, you sly thing! What have you been doing with yourself all the time?"

"Furnishing."

"What! you came into an empty house?"

"Not quite that, but nearly."

"It is very odd I should never have seen your husband. We have crossed each other twenty times."

"Not so *very* odd, seeing he has been my husband only a fortnight."

"What is he like?"

"Like nothing but himself."

"Is he tall?"

"Yes."

"Is he stout?"

"No."

"An Adonis?"

"No."

"A Hercules?"

"No."

"Very clever, I believe."

"Not at all."

For my father had taught me to look down on that word.

"Why did you marry him then?"

"I didn't. He married me."

"What did you marry him for then?"

"For love."

"What did you love him for?"

"Because he was a philosopher."

"That is the oddest reason I ever heard for marrying a man."

"I said for loving him, Judy."

Her bright eyes were twinkling with fun.

"Come, cozzie," she said, "give me a proper reason for falling in love with this husband of yours."

"Well, I'll tell you, then," I said; "only you mustn't tell any other body: he's got such a big shaggy head, just like a lion's."

"And such a huge big foot—just like a bear's?"

"Yes, and such great huge hands! Why, the two of them go quite round my waist! And such big eyes, that they look right through me; and such a big heart, that if he saw me doing anything wrong, he would kill me, and bury me in it."

"Well, I must say it is the most extraordinary

description of a husband I ever heard. It sounds to me very like an ogre."

"Yes, I admit the description is rather ogreish. But then he's poor, and that makes up for a good deal."

I was in the humour for talking nonsense, and of course expected of all people that Judy would understand my fun.

"How does that make up for anything?"

"Because if he is a poor man, he isn't a rich man, and therefore not so likely to be stupid."

"How do you make that out?"

"Because, first of all, the rich man doesn't know what to do with his money, whereas my ogre knows what to do without it. Then the rich man wonders in the morning which waistcoat he shall put on, while my ogre has but one, besides his Sunday one. Then supposing the rich man has slept well, and has done a fair stroke or two of business, he wants nothing but a well-dressed wife, a well-dressed dinner, a few glasses of his favourite wine, and the evening paper, well diluted with a sleep in his easy-chair, to be perfectly satisfied that this world is the best of all possible worlds. Now my ogre, on the other hand—"

I was going on to point out how frightfully different from all this my ogre was—how he would devour a half-cooked chop, and drink a pint of ale from the public-house, &c., &c.—when she interrupted me, saying with an odd expression of voice—

"You are satirical, cozzie. He's not the worst sort of man you've just described. A woman might be very happy with him. If it weren't such early days, I should doubt if you were as comfortable as you would have people think; for how else should you be so ill-natured?"

It flashed upon me that without the least intention I had been giving a very fair portrait of Mr. Morley. I felt my face grow as red as fire.

"I had no intention of being satirical, Judy," I replied. "I was only describing a man the very opposite of my husband."

"You don't know mine yet," she said. "You may think—"

She actually broke down and cried. I had never in my life seen her cry, and I was miserable at what I had done. Here was a nice beginning of social relations in my married life!

I knelt down, put my arms round her, and looked up in her face.

"Dear Judy," I said, "you mistake me quite. I never thought of Mr. Morley when I said that. How should I have dared to say such things if I had? He is a most kind, good man, and papa and every one is glad when he comes to see us. I dare say he does like to sleep well—I know Perci-

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