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### MOONEY'S.

glected. He was, of course, entire-  
ly ignorant of the cause of this  
change of household affairs. His  
heart yearned for her who had been  
the light and pride of his home; who  
had been the centre about which all  
domestic affairs revolved in perfect  
order and harmony.

He did not dream of the burden his  
daughter carried about, or of the  
disappointment which had soured  
her whole life.

He did not know how often Minty  
sat up in bed at night, staring out  
into the darkness and beating the  
quilts helplessly with her little,  
white hands, and when she fell  
asleep it would often be to dream of  
a confused jumble of lemon pies,  
china pigs, and organs growing on  
berry bushes.

Thus the days and nights were  
spent.

One night the twins burst into the  
sitting-room, where the family were  
gathered, with the announcement  
that a new music teacher had come  
to town, and had hired the front  
bed-room of the next neighbor, and  
was going to turn it into a music-  
room, where pupils could come for  
their lessons.

Someone had seen the drayman  
bring up her piano from the station  
along with several boxes and trunks,  
and which would no doubt by this  
time be duly installed in their neigh-  
bor's front room. They had heard,  
too, that she had been engaged as  
organist of the new Simpson Street  
Church.

To all this Minty listened with a  
dull interest. Nothing mattered to  
her now, she thought.

The next morning as she was fry-  
ing the eggs for breakfast, she was  
startled by the low, sweet tones of a  
piano. At first they were waver-  
ing and hesitating, as if afraid to trust  
their new surroundings. Then loud-  
er and bolder grew the notes, and  
then whirled away in some fantastic  
measure, that, to Minty's entranced  
ear, seemed like a thousand angel  
harp.

She stood with mouth and ears  
and eyes wide open; not a muscle  
moved until the last note had died  
away. The eggs were burned to a  
crisp, the coffee-pot had boiled dry,  
but what did that matter to Minty?  
Her soul had had a feast far greater  
than eggs or coffee.

For the rest of the day she went  
about her work as if in a dream.  
That night, however, she took her-  
self severely to task, for allowing  
herself to be so carried away. A  
feeling of envy and bitterness rose  
against the owner of that piano.  
What right had she to a piano any-  
way? Why must she be able to play  
such music when poor Minty was de-  
nied that boon? Before she slept she  
had wrought herself up to this de-  
cision:

"I hate her; yes, hate her and her  
music; I will not listen to it." And  
giving her pillow a mighty jab with  
her fist, she had the matter settled.

During the next few weeks she set  
bravely to work to carry out her de-  
cision. Every time she had occasion  
to go outside she would clap her  
hands over her ears to shut out the  
hateful sound. If she caught the lit-  
tle ones listening by the fence she  
boxed their ears soundly.

Once or twice she caught sight of  
a tall, strange figure on the front  
porch across the way; she turned  
her head and pretended not to see  
her. She could not bear to look at  
the boys and girls and young women  
who, day after day came up the  
street and into that little front room  
to begin their practice.

One evening as she was weeding  
the one little onion bed, she noticed  
a brown head, "won't you speak to  
your new neighbor?"

This was more than Minty's exas-  
perated nerves could stand. She  
straightened herself up till her four  
feet ten inches of stature might have  
been a giant in dignity; her pent-up  
feelings like the tail of a me or,  
blazed forth from her eyes, as she  
almost screamed; "I don't want you  
nor your music, and I wish you  
would go away and never come  
back."

The tall figure of the music teach-  
er swayed to and fro in amazement  
at the unexpected outburst. But she  
did not speak. She turned slowly  
towards the little front room, while  
Minty resumed her work at the onion  
bed.

After that, Minty seemed to grow  
more lifeless and despondent than  
before. It was not surprising then,  
that she grew thin and weak, and  
matters were fast hastening to a  
crisis.

One day as she was carrying a pail  
of water from the well, everything  
suddenly grew black, her form reel-  
ed, then fell heavily on the grass.  
Just at that moment the music teach-  
er, Miss Graham, was standing drum-  
ming on the window-pane of her  
music-room, and gazing over to-  
wards the abode of that "strange,  
wicked girl," as she inwardly termed  
her. When she saw Minty fall, she  
was undecided for a moment; then  
she turned quickly, ran down the  
steps and crossed through the little  
gate and was bending over the un-  
conscious girl.

Maisie and Harry were, by this  
time, crying piteously, and calling  
for their sister to speak to them.  
Miss Graham hastily summoned the  
twins from their gambols in the  
pansy-bed, despatched one of them  
for a doctor and the other for Mr.  
McDowell. Meanwhile she carried  
the girl in, laid her on the faded  
lounge in the kitchen, and began  
chafing her face and bosom with cold  
water.

When the doctor arrived he order-  
ed her to be put to bed in a dark,  
quiet room. He shook his head  
gravely as Minty stared at him in a  
vacant, bewildering way, and when  
she began to talk, it was unintelli-  
gible—brain fever had set in.

The doctor said she must have a  
nurse, but Miss Graham settled that  
question by proposing to stay with  
her and give her music pupils a lit-  
tle holiday, while the twins and their  
father attended to the household  
work.

For many weeks they watched  
over that sick bed. The twins were  
almost broken-hearted; they hung  
round the door of the sick-room,  
anxious for an errand, or even a look  
at that dear, white face they had  
grieved so many times. Their father  
had given up his work and devoted  
his energies to the saving of his  
daughter.

Miss Graham was, in herself a real  
treasure. Calm and cheerful, yet  
firm, she went about her duties as  
if she and Minty had been the dearest  
of friends.

All through her sickness, the one  
topic of the sick girl as she tossed  
wearily on her pillow was about her  
organ and Jimmie Forbes. By de-  
grees the twins told the whole story  
to their father and Miss Graham, of  
Minty's hopes and ambitions, of her  
struggle to earn the money for the  
organ, and of her sacrifice to shield  
them.

At last the critical night arrived—  
and passed—and Minty was safe. One  
morning as she opened her eyes, she  
was surprised to find a stranger  
stooping over her.

"Who are you?" she whispered.

"I am Charlotte Graham, your  
nurse," the other replied calmly.

"I know you," went on Minty; "you  
are the music teacher; I have  
been sick, and you were kind to me.  
Oh," she cried, covering her face with  
her hands, "and I treated you so  
shamefully."

"Hush, Minty, you must not talk  
any more," answered the nurse, while  
a mist rose and fell in her own vi-  
sion. She left the room hurriedly,  
that her patient might have time to  
compose herself.

From that time Minty steadily im-  
proved and she and the music teach-  
er-nurse, became fast friends.

Gradually Charlotte Graham drew  
from her the story of her life's hopes  
and plans and how they had been so  
rudely shattered.

In the days that followed, she and  
Minty's father held many mysterious  
conferences downstairs, in which the  
twins sometimes joined, with eager  
promises of good behavior.

Once the door was left open and  
Minty's sharp ears caught her father  
saying, "Yes, the sitting-room is  
large enough to hold your piano and  
trunks, and your pupils coming in  
would be no trouble to us, and I am  
sure, as you say, you would be a  
great help and comfort to Minty."

"Poor child," broke in the music  
teacher. "I would be so pleased to  
teach her and let her use my piano,  
if I could feel that I had a home here  
with you all."

"You are welcome to come," he an-  
swered heartily, "so you can tell  
Minty about it."

But when Charlotte Graham enter-  
ed the room where Minty sat she had  
no need for words. Minty was sob-  
bing joyous, hysterical sobs of rap-  
ture, as she exclaimed, "O it is too  
good, too good to be true."

A few days later Charlotte Gra-  
ham her piano and all her belong-  
ings, were snugly ensconced in Mc-  
Dowell's big sitting-room; practice  
had begun on the fine piano in the  
corner, and Minty was blissfully  
happy.

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the big black eyes. It was the  
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