

JOHN BURT

By FREDERICK UPHAM ADAMS
Author of "The Klumpkopfs," "The Doctor's Dilemma," etc.

CHAPTER XXXI—Continued.
"I have been thinking of you," said John Burt, looking at her full of stocks that lay through the window. "But I'll know all about it, John, before I meet you at Hawkins at dinner. Perhaps Jessie—rather, Miss Carden—is back now. Who knows? This is your lucky day, old fellow, and all kinds of things may happen before midnight. Won't it be that if I went up to the Burt house and found her there? Of course I wouldn't say a word to spoil the surprise you have planned. Well, I must be going. Hope I'll have good news for you when I see you later."

Early in the evening Blake rang the bell of the Bishop mansion, and was greeted by General Carden. "It is a pleasure, General Carden, to tender you this check, which represents your share of the profits. Don't say a word of thanks to me, for I do not deserve any credit. Is Miss Carden at home, and may I see her all moment?"

"She will be delighted to see you, I will call her."

The general disappeared, and James Blake lay back in his chair, with his eyes fixed on the portrait of Jessie Carden. "He heard the faint rustle of a garment and turned to see Jessie Carden in the doorway of the room. Her light glowed in her brown eyes, and there was something wistful in the smile; a blending of happiness, restraint and pity. Her eyes dropped for a moment as they met his frank gaze, but her voice was clear and

"Sweet as she offered her hand and said: "You have made this the happiest day of my life, Mr. Blake. How do you do?" "No another word," interrupted James Blake. "You must not thank me. Please don't, Jessie. It's the carden's fault." "Why not?" "The parted lips and questioning eyes were eloquent with surprise. "Because you want your share," he said, releasing the little hand. "His heart beat fast as he gazed into her face, but in that moment he raised the final victory, and only the numbing pain of wounded passion remained.

"Less than a day had passed since he had resolved to surrender all his rights for the love of Jessie Carden. Why had he done so? James Blake could not answer that question. He had not calmly weighed his chances of success against those of failure. Like a flash it dawned upon him that he could not—that he must not be dictatorial to John Burt. He did not reason it out—it was told to him in that voiceless, wordless language which he could not hear or see."

"You must not insist or beg," he said, "that your father in the slightest obligations to me. On the contrary, you first in love to him. The stock which he held was to be the situation. Without it we could have done nothing. We have simply been able to vote the majority. It is his in its value, and he is the one to be congratulated on the outcome."

"I don't believe a word you say," replied Jessie Carden laughing. "It is not so stupid about these Wall street affairs as you imagine. If it had not been for my power, John, I should have defrauded you out of all his property."

"Speaking of Morris reminds me of something which has often puzzled me," said Blake, changing the subject. "It's about that portrait. The first time I ever met Arthur Morris I saw your portrait in his library room. He always pointed me some time I'll tell you."

"My portrait in Mr. Morris' room!" exclaimed Jessie, the color mounting to her cheeks. "Always you are jesting, Mr. Blake?"

"It was probably a copy, though he said he was the original," replied Blake. "He said you had introduced him to him in Berlin, and that you presented it to him. The first time I saw him here in London, and thought it a remarkable coincidence."

"There is no mystery about it," said Jessie, her eyes flashing with anger. "I never saw it to take any advantage of papa's bankruptcy, which gave me possession of our Boston residence. This portrait hung on its walls, and he had been a confederate of mine. This is consistent with other acts from which we have suffered at his hands."

"The portrait parted and Edith Hancock entered the room. Her eyes rested first on Blake and then on Jessie. "I must have seen you here," she said. "I was looking for a book and did not

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