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**THE COMPROMISE**

By GLADYS P. ANDERSEN.

Mrs. Adams was making preparations for the noon meal when the door opened quickly and a girl about sixteen rushed in, quite out of breath.

"I'm here at last, mother." Mrs. Adams glanced up from her work. "I was calling Vivian," she said.

"Why, mother, I am Vivian." The girl threw back her curly head and laughed merrily. "Won't you ever be able to tell us twins apart?"

"I thought by the way you came in through the door 'twas Virginia. She always comes in like a shot from a gun. Where have you girls been?"

"Down by the river. The wind blew so we did not hear you when you first called."

"Well," said Mrs. Adams, "Miss Emery has just been here and invited both of you girls to her musicale next Wednesday evening."

"She said it was going to be just grand. Professor West, who has just returned from France, is going to sing. He is Sergeant West now, you know."

"You said she invited us both?" Vivian gasped.

"Yes, dear, and I am afraid you will have a hard time deciding," her mother answered.

"There's nothing to decide. It's Virginia's turn. I went to the musicale last month, you know. Oh, how I wish we had more than one best dress!" she exclaimed passionately.

It was not until Wednesday morning that Vivian appeared to cheer up somewhat. She had a consultation with her mother, who interrupted her by exclaiming, "It will never do. Of course there's no harm in it, but if you get into any trouble, don't blame anyone but yourselves."

"No one will ever know about it," responded Vivian confidently.

"I'll go down to the village now and call at Mrs. Blake's. I know she will be willing."

Mrs. Blake lived across from Miss Emery's, and she received Vivian cordially.

That evening, Virginia, in her pink silk muslin that belonged to her and her sister jointly, went timidly up the path leading to the Emery home, feeling very happy.

Miss Emery, in beautiful brocaded silk, was passing through the hall when Virginia was shown in by the butler.

"Which one is it?" she asked. "I'm sorry you both couldn't have some."

Virginia was placed where she could see everyone who played or sang. Then she gave herself up to enjoyment. She watched Sergeant West eagerly. It was only in dreams that she had ever heard such tones.

Sergeant West saw her and met the vivid glance of her eyes.

He turned to his hostess and said, "Can that young lady sing?"

"Indeed she can," answered Miss Emery proudly.

The next moment Virginia felt a hand on her shoulder. She looked admiringly into Sergeant West's face. "Will you sing for me?" he asked.

"I will play for you and you may sing what you please. Are you willing?"

"I'll try," she answered shyly.

It was nearly an hour later that Sergeant West again remembered the girl.

"I want you to sing once more," he said. "I have a plan. You have a voice, and with teaching, you could become a singer. Perhaps I can arrange to give you a couple of hours each week."

"I'm afraid I am a bit timid," said the girl, "but since you ask me I will try."

He was sorry for her as she stood by the piano. Her face was very white, and her lips almost stiff.

"Have courage," said the singer. "You did so well before."

The accompaniment began; but when an untutored, but rich contralto voice commenced the song there was a sudden discord among the keys of the piano, and Sergeant West wheeled about and stared at the trembling girl beside him. "What does it mean?" cried the artist.

"It cannot be possible that this girl has two distinct singing voices, one very high and the other very low."

The girl at whom everyone was now looking, tried twice to speak before she could say a word. Then she stammered. "I—I am the other twin if you please, sir."

"You are not the one that sang first?" he asked.

"No, sir, that was my sister, Virginia. It was her turn with our dress—"

Vivian stammered, then was silent. One half-hour before, Virginia had slipped out unobserved and met her sister at Mrs. Blake's. In their hurry in exchanging gowns, Virginia had not told her sister she had been obliged to sing.

The next morning Sergeant West

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