Tim had secured the man's arms he picked up the revolver, pulled his prisoner to his feet and "boosted" him into the wagon.

There he made the fellow lie down, and, winding a blanket round him, fastened it with the other hitch strap and a short rope from a halter. That done, he raised the mask that covered the bandit's features. "Let's have a luk at ye," he said.

As he looked, Tim nodded his head several times. "Oi do be undherstandin' somethin' now. 'Twas a foine game before it hit the Oirish. Wid their usual likin' fer mixin' things the Oirish have fixed yer little game."

When Tim drove into his yard he called to his daughter to come out to help him. Kathleen ran out, expecting to find something that he had bought in the village. When she saw a masked man, tied up like a mummy, she turned a wondering look on her father.

Tim, who was enjoying the situation immensely, gave no heed to her. He took the end gate out of the box and, reaching in, grasped one of the man's feet. With a hard pull he slid the bandit half out of the wagon.

Tim and his daughter then carried the trussed man to the door, where Mrs. Lannigan stood with her hands upraised and her mouth agape. When Tim had got the prisoner inside, he assumed the airs of a showman, and with a deal of nonsense seated the figure in a chair.

"Take a sate, Molly, and you, Kathleen, may shtand in front and git the first view of the great and only holdup man in captivity in the Shtate of Minnesota. Air ye ready?"

With a flourish Tim raised the mask.

"O dad, it can't be!" Kathleen cried.

"Why, he—dad, I can't believe it!"

"'Tis true, Kathy, more's the pity. The very felly that wanted ye to marry him but six weeks before threshin' toime. Now he can sing to a different tune. Can ye run to Moike's house and tell him to come a-runnin'?"

"Yes, father, but what are you going to do with him?"

"That, me dear Kathy, is to be decided later. Go ye now and quickly."

Mike lost no time in coming, and he and Tim held a consultation over the bandit, who had said no word since he had been in the house. Mike was in favor of taking the prisoner at once to the county jail, but Tim counseled otherwise.

"Would that pay back the gould the b'ys have lost? Would sindin' this foine gintleman to the pinitinshery git back a dollar of the hard cash the farmers have been robbed of? 'Dade, and it wouldn't. Now, ye moind who he is, the brother of the agent at the elevator, and with the knowledgement of the toime of payment whin anny man goes out wid his hands full of yeller-backed bills. How does he git the news? From the brother av him, and the wan is as guilty as the other. 'Tis the rayturn of iviry cint or the jail. 'Tis a ch'ice they do be havin' and only wan ch'ice."

It took the agent just half a minute to make up his mind, when Tim and Mike called on him with the prisoner, and not much longer to hand over the stolen money. And it took the two brothers only from one o'clock till the two-fifteen train to get ready to depart from the neighborhood.

Later, whenever Tim boasted publicly of his "strathegy," Mike would shout: "Oi'd rather ha' been hild up and losht me cash than have to listen to ye, ye ould blowhard!"

AN OUTLET FOR MISS JANE

By Harriet Lummis Smith

"ARE any of the ladies in this afternoon?" Miss Jane Chapman stood at the door of Judge Wickham's handsome house. She was a pathetic figure in her shabby finery. Miss Jane loved silks and big feathers and veils and long sashes. In the merciless light of the afternoon sunshine her efforts to present, as she herself would have said, "a genteel appearance," were exposed in all their pitiful futility.

"The ladies are not at home," said Mrs. Wickham's well-trained maid imperturbably, as she took up the card receiver.

Miss Jane blushed and drew back. "I didn't bring a card. I only planned to drop in—informally."

She turned and went down the steps a little tremulously. The maid paused a moment to watch the disappointed lady, and her face wore an expression of contemptuous pity.

Miss Jane Chapman was a bore. Everyone in the little town of Washington Heights was perfectly aware of the fact. Some people hinted that she was not quite sane, but that was nonsense. At sixty years of age Miss Jane was very much what she had been at sixteen—a gushing, unintelligent person of sentimental tendencies. But when Miss Jane's cheeks had been pink and her eyes a lustrous blue, no one had minded her vacuity. Now that her once fair skin was wrinkled and her golden hair a muddy white, her silly little speeches fretted people.

All might have been well, however, had Miss Jane had any resources in herself; but her one diversion was society. Miss Jane had never learned to enjoy reading, and her eyes did not allow her to spend much time at sewing. If she had some one to talk to, Miss Jane was perfectly happy. She had nothing particular to say, to be sure, and yet she craved a chance to say it. For years she had been calling at every house that she had any possible excuse for entering. She was as likely to make her appearance at one time of day as another, and when once she had crossed the threshold she found the chance to talk so enticing that it was next to impossible for her to tear herself away.

"I wouldn't mind letting her in occasionally," said the doctor's wife, "if she'd stay a reasonable time, like other people; but the last time she was here she came at nine in the morning, and she was still here when the clock struck three. I had almost to drive her out of the house. Since then Martha has had orders never to let her in."

Miss Jane moved slowly away from Judge Wickham's door that bright afternoon. It was the fourth "perfectly informal" call that she had tried to pay that afternoon. No one had been at home except Mrs. Price, a strictly conscientious lady, who sent down word that she was busy and would Miss Jane please excuse her.

"People nowadays are so restless," said Miss Jane, with a sigh. "When I was a girl, ladies as a rule expected to be home to receive guests. Those days were so much more social! Dear me!"

She shook her head over the many changes that had come about since she was sixteen; virtually all of them, Miss Jane was sure, were changes for the worse.

From the window of the house across the way a pair of gray eyes watched Miss Jane's discomfiture. A cynical smile curved a pair of lips that were too youthful to smile in cynicism.

"Why doesn't she go home and stay home?" Sara Warren asked herself. "Why does she make herself ridiculous going where she isn't wanted? Oh!"

The exclamation came as Sara felt a hand laid on her arm. She turned and looked down at her mother. Sara was a tall girl, and Mrs. Warren a little woman.

"Have you been screaming yourself hoarse, trying to attract my attention, mother?" asked Sara. "I'm sorry."

"Oh, no, dear!" said Mrs. Warren, raising her voice. "I just wanted to ask you why you didn't take a walk this lovely day."

Sara's face was blank. "Did you ask me a question, mother?" she said quietly after a moment.

Mrs. Warren raised her voice still more loudly.

"Why don't you—take a little—walk?" She gestured toward the window, to make her meaning clear, and Sara partly understood.

"You want me to go out?"

"Such a—lovely—day!" shouted the mother, separating the words. She gestured again, this time with an upward sweep of the palm, to call her daughter's attention to the blue sky.

"Yes, it is a nice day," Sara agreed. "But I'd rather go out on a stormy one, when I shouldn't run any risk of meeting people."

"Oh, don't, Sara!" Mrs. Warren begged; but the girl did not hear her.

"I don't want to get like Miss Jane Chapman, boring everyone to death. And I'd be worse than Miss Jane. At least she could hear you if you told her to go home."

"O Sara, *please!*"

"It's the worst thing that could happen, mother, the very worst. I used to think it would be terrible to be blind, but that's nothing to this. It's like being dead and watching the living, without being able to join them."

"You mustn't be—morbid!" Mrs. Warren cried.

Sara understood the spirit of her protest rather than the words.

"If there were any hope, mother, it would be different. If it weren't the kind there's no help for, I could be as brave as anyone; but to know that I'm going to grow deafer and deafer till I can't hear a sound, that everything's over and done with for me, as much now as if I were eighty, that's more than any girl could endure."

She could not hear her mother's reply, but the pain that quivered across the tired face checked her outburst. Remorsefully Sara stooped to kiss her mother's cheek.

"I ought to be ashamed of myself. I'll go out for a little walk if it'll make you feel better, and I'll walk so fast that no one will dare to stop me to ask a question."

Ever since Sara's trouble had come on a year or so before, Mrs. Warren had not been able to coax her daughter to take a walk of more than fifteen or twenty minutes at the most. To-day an hour and a half passed without her return, and Mrs. Warren became anxious. She was on the point of telephoning to her husband to ask what she ought to do, when the door opened and Sara entered. With an unreasoning terror her mother saw that she was laughing.

DRAWN BY ADA C. WILLIAMSON

SHE HAD MOVED HER CHAIR A LITTLE AND HER STARING EYES WERE GLUED ON MISS JANE'S FACE

Sara threw herself into an armchair. "Well, mother, I've a surprise for you. I've been making a call."

Mrs. Warren stared at her without speaking. Pulling off her gloves in leisurely fashion, Sara looked up to see the effect of her announcement.

"I'm not taking leave of my senses, mother dear," she went on, with a smile, "though I'm not surprised you think so. I've made a call on Miss Jane Chapman."

"Miss Jane Chapman!"

"Exactly! It seemed to me that two such forlorn specimens should stand by each other. Of course she's a dreadful bore, but I'm proof against boredom. I couldn't hear a word she said."

"But how—I don't see—" Mrs. Warren paused hopelessly.

But Sara guessed her meaning from her expression and her little perplexed gesture.

"We got on beautifully. Miss Jane doesn't care very much about conversational reciprocity, you know. All she wants is to have a sort of human cream jug into which she can pour her confidences. You see, no one in town knows how very deaf I am, and of course Miss Jane doesn't. I sat and thought about things and let her talk. Occasionally I'd rouse up and nod and smile. Apparently luck was with me, for, if I nodded and smiled when I ought to have shaken my head and sighed, Miss Jane's manner did not once suggest it. I've invited her to come to see me soon."

"I'm afraid you'll regret it, dear," Mrs. Warren was beginning reprovingly, but she paused as Sara's face suddenly darkened.

"O mother, don't you see? It sounds ridiculous after the big things I've planned and hoped for, but I really got a little satisfaction out of knowing that I'd helped to make a bright spot in Miss Jane's day."

The queer intimacy between Sara and Miss Jane grew rapidly. Miss Jane returned the call promptly—within forty-eight hours, to be exact. She rang the bell with her usual air of expecting a rebuff and asked timidly, "Is Sara in?" So far the programme was familiar enough, but from that point Miss Jane was treated to new and startling variations. She was asked in and invited to take a comfortable chair. Then Sara, carrying a workbasket, appeared, shook hands and seated herself. With a little uncertainty, as if she had expected to wake at any minute, Miss Jane began her customary meaningless prattle. As she talked, her confidence grew. She babbled happily on, and Sara encouraged her by an occasional remark and a smile.

Week after week Miss Jane's calls continued. Mrs. Warren watched, not quite approving; but her dissatisfaction with the new friendship diminished as she saw that for the unhappy, sensitive girl there was balm in realizing that her companionship was the chief joy in Miss Jane's life.

It is doubtful whether Miss Jane ever discovered the extent of Sara's affliction. It did not disconcert the little old lady at all if her questions remained unanswered. Her mind was so inconsequent that it did not astonish her when Sara's occasional remarks introduced topics altogether remote from those she herself was discussing. She told Mrs. Warren that Sara was not at all like a modern girl; that was the highest compliment, Miss Jane felt, that she could pay her.

Miss Jane had babbled on for an hour one afternoon. Sara sat knitting in the chair opposite, now lifting her eyes from her work to Miss Jane's amiable face, now venturing a remark on any subject that chanced to cross her mind. The girl suddenly started so violently that the ball of worsted dropped from her lap and rolled under the sofa.

"I wonder why they always do that?" said Miss Jane. "Balls of yarn and kittens are so much alike, so full of mischief! Of course the yarn isn't really, but the way it runs off under things seems almost playful. Now, what was I saying? Oh, yes! My bonnet was really very pretty, with velvet strings that tied close under the chin, and my mitts—"

Sara's heart was pounding. "She's telling me about when she was a girl," her excited thoughts ran. "She said 'When I was a girl.' Now, how did I know? I couldn't have heard her. How did I know? How do I know? I must—have seen it."

She sank back in the chair, faint and dizzy. Miss Jane purred on contentedly. She was describing a costume that she had worn when she was eighteen years old, and she had every detail at her tongue's end. She was far too happy in having a listener for those fascinating recollections to notice the colorless face of her hostess.

Months before, when Sara had been visiting specialist after specialist, only to hear from each one the same hopeless verdict, Mrs. Warren had tried to lighten her daughter's suffering by suggesting that she learn lip reading. Sara, who had always clung doggedly to the hope of being cured, was in a desperate mood when her mother made the suggestion, and so she took it as an insult to her intelligence. They were trying to quiet her, she thought, by telling her something pleasant, as people sometimes soothed fractious children. She had turned upon her quiet little mother with a look in her eyes that silenced Mrs. Warren in the middle of a sentence.

"If you love me, mother," Sara had said, "never speak of that again. Never!" And until the present time Mrs. Warren had complied with the foolish request.

How foolish the request was, Sara was beginning to understand. "When I was a girl," Miss Jane had said. Without hearing the words Sara had known that they were spoken. Lip reading was not a fantastic fancy devised to soothe unfortunates like herself. She had done it without trying.

Miss Jane was telling of a compliment once paid her by a young poet. She stopped in the midst of her narrative, confused by an unexpected, indeed unprecedented, occurrence. Sara was giving her words a close, almost terrifyingly close, attention. She had moved her chair a little and her staring eyes were glued on Miss Jane's face. It was no wonder that the poor lady forgot the point of the compliment that she had treasured for forty-two years and that she spoiled the story in the telling.

It was several months afterwards that Mr. Warren, although not an observant man ordinarily, said to his wife, "Seems to me the girl's a little brighter than she was."

"Yes," Mrs. Warren replied, a little doubtfully. "But I'm worried about her."

"Well," returned her husband with some