



The Strawberry Boy

On a fine morning in the summer of 1883, a handsome but poorly dressed boy called at the door of a great mansion in New York city, and offered some baskets of strawberries for sale. Having disposed of his fruit, he was about to depart, when his attention was attracted by the appearance of a beautiful girl, some twelve years old, who stood in the hall near the door. She was the only daughter of the gentleman of the house. The kind look which she bestowed on him attracted him to her, and he stood until that moment had passed.

"She is very lovely," he exclaimed mentally, "but she is the daughter of the great millionaire; she can be nothing to me."

He returned to the fields in search of more fruit, but the remembrance of that sunny face attended him closely in his rambles.

"I am young," he continued to himself, "would I could make myself worthy of her, and the thought, though it did not touch the feeling, lingered in his mind."

A week had passed, and the little boy again stood, with palpitating heart, at the rich man's door. His fruit was purchased as before, and he received his money from the white hand of the fair being whom from the moment the first time he had dared to love. She spoke kindly to him, and made him feel that he was not a beggar, but a young man of worth.

He did not forget the order, "I will call again, but the season was advancing, and the fruit had become a scarcity."

"I shall not be able to bring you any more," he said one morning. "I am sorry, for it was a pleasure for me to call here; but I must meet hereafter."

The young heart that fluttered in the bosom of that young girl was touched at the musical though somewhat melancholy tone in which this was uttered, and she sadly replied that she would remember him.

"We shall meet again, Miss, when I provide you, you shall not be ashamed to acknowledge the acquaintance of the poor strawberry boy."

She thought the language singular, but they parted.

Three years elapsed. The tide of speculation which was then swelling in our country, had reached "the flood," and the man of wealth, with the beautiful daughter, rolled in his elegant carriage along Broadway, upon a fine caisson carrying, on their way to Trinity Church, Charlotte was "just turned to sixteen," and the bright bud was just changing to the open rose. She was fair indeed.

The service had ended; the magnificent carriage stood at the church door; the elegantly caparisoned horses pawed the ground uneasily; a liveried footman held the door; and the wealthy merchant handed his lovely daughter to the coach, amid the low obeisance of her gay admirers.

Why does she not deserve the homage of her numerous admirers?

A young, plainly dressed stranger, stands quietly at the side of the church door, and gazes for a moment at riveted on his features.

"Who can it be?" she remembers—no she cannot remember.

The carriage rolls slowly towards the stately mansion of the man of wealth; and he discovers an uncommon quietness in his daughter's demeanor.

"My dear Charlotte, you are ill."

"No, father, no—I am very well."

They arrived at the door—the stranger was there. They alighted; he extends a slight, a very slight, but respectful bow to the "heir-ess," and moves on.

A blush tinged that bright cheek; she recognizes him.

Charlotte retired to her chamber; she was unhappy—but surely, "the stranger was nothing to her, or to him."

Time rolled on. It was the coldest night of the uncommon cold winter of '35, and the memorable 10th of December. A fire had broken out in the evening, in one of the principal streets of the business part of the great commercial metropolis. It raged violently, and at early morning on the succeeding day, a great portion of the city lay in ashes.

The millionaire was comparatively a beggar. His mansion was sacrificed; his mansion disposed of; his splendid horses and carriages went to other hands, and even "Jessie," Charlotte's costliest favorite, was doomed to pass from them under the hammer.

"Poor Jessie!" sighed her mistress: I hope she may fall into good hands."

But nobody wanted "Jessie," and she was finally purchased and thrown away upon a stranger.

"Who did you say was the purchaser?" inquired Charlotte of her father.

"A Mr. Manly, I think," said the father.

Another year had fled. Misfortune had followed in rapid succession, and the revolution of '37 had finally reduced our man of wealth to bankruptcy. The following advertisement appeared in the papers that day:

"Will be sold at public auction, on Wednesday next, on the premises, the right of redemption to that beautiful cottage, with about half an acre of land adjoining, laid out in a garden, well stocked with fruit trees and shrubbery, situated on the south side of Staten Island, and mortgaged to John Jacob A. for the sum of ten thousand three hundred dollars, etc. Sale positive—this indispensable possession given immediately—terms cash."

The next morning, as it rained, he appealed to his judgment; he said: "They must have security; the times were hard; they had lost good deals of money; people sometimes live too fast; it wasn't their fault; very sorry, but couldn't help him."

From that day he was unsuccessful, and was reduced to the last extremity; he had retired to his beautiful retreat, and the hope that right economy and frugal expenditure to his means would enable him to return to his former position. He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

From that day he was unsuccessful, and was reduced to the last extremity; he had retired to his beautiful retreat, and the hope that right economy and frugal expenditure to his means would enable him to return to his former position. He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.

He was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair, and he was now in a state of utter despair.