

# *Sketch*

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## A Bargain

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# A BARGAIN

By Margaret Trump, '39

“AND what can I do for you?” Elderly Mrs. Farnham drew herself up with dignity. She was not used to having such customers patronize her shop.

The anxious-eyed woman pulled at her shabby coat with nervous fingers. “I’m-I’m looking for coats for them little girls. Something cheap.” She glanced around the beautiful shop. “It doesn’t look like we came to the right place.”

Mrs. Farnham smiled superciliously. “Oh, but, my dear, yes. We have just what you want. Right back this way please.” She glanced at the two little girls who stared with wide-eyed wonder at the evening dresses in the long glass cases. “Now this is a beautiful little coat.”

The woman interrupted. “Them all look—how much are they priced at?”

“This one is only ten dollars and it’s a beautiful—.”

The woman clutched her coat around her and turned to the door. “Them’s too much. I want something cheap.”

Mrs. Farnham took a step forward. “Oh, but, my dear, don’t be hasty. I have just the thing you want. Excuse me a moment, please. We have them in the next room.”

The woman fidgeted nervously. One of the little girls wandered over to her mother.

“Ma! Ma, we gonna buy some of them coats?”

“Gertie, blow yer nose.”

MRS. FARNHAM returned holding up two garments. “Now, isn’t this what you had in mind? These are a good bargain and splendid material.”

The woman touched one lingeringly. “Feels good and warm. But ain’t they pretty much out of style? Here, Sallie, put this here one on. Gertie, slip yer arms in this . . . . . How much do you want for ’em?”

Mrs. Farnham looked at her keenly. “I’ll be losing money, but you can have them both for five dollars.”

"Five dollars!" The woman fumbled at her bag. "It don't seem like I've got that much." She looked at the little girls standing stiffly in the coats, staring at one another. "The kids won't laugh at them, will they?" she mumbled half to herself.

Opening her purse she pulled out a few bills. Clumsily she counted them. Four dollars! "I've got a little change here too," she began doubtfully.

Mrs. Farnham sighed. "Well, I'm losing money on them as it is, but I'll make that do."

The woman pushed the money into her hands, mumbled something and hurriedly propelled the two children out of the shop.

Mrs. Farnham turned to one of the clerks and laughed. "We're having a good day today. And, can you imagine? I sold two of those old coats we were going to give to the rummage sale."

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## Fashionable Fancies

By Esther Beatty, '39

**M**Y grandmother, I know, would frown,  
And sigh, "Alas! Alack!"  
To see my newest evening gown  
Go sagging down the back.

"Tut, tut!" she'd say. "I'm shocked at you!  
A hem should be quite straight;  
What are the women coming to?  
Go take that thing off, Kate!"

But I'd just laugh and pat her hair  
And say, "Oh, yes, I'll hustle,  
And put on what you used to wear—  
A nice, neat, charming bustle."