

do, won't you? Oh, how tall and handsome you are!" with little gushes of impetuous kissing. "And how glad I am that you are here!"

"My dear little Sybil," Cyril said, with a light laugh, "what unconscious havoc I have been making with your five-year-old heart! And you really like me so much as this?"

"Like you! I love you better than anybody—ever so much better than brother Charley. But then Charley's only three years old, and you're a great big man, and wear a lovely uniform, and I like big men."

"And lovely uniforms—highly characteristic of the sex! But it is growing dark, my fairy princess, and if I am to catch the seven-fifty train back to London, it is high time I was on the move. The fly from the railway is waiting for me just outside the gates."

"Going back? Oh, Cyril!"

"I must, my pet," the lieutenant said, smiling a little sadly at that reproachful cry. "It is Hobson's choice, if you know what that is. Say good-bye for me to Lady Lemox and baby Charley, and kiss me yourself."

"I'll go with you to the gates. Yes, I will!" impetuously, as she saw her companion about to object. "Wait until I get my cloak; I won't be a minute."

She darted away like a spirit—a little, slender thing, all in white, with bright brown ringlets down to her slender waist, and great wide eyes of luminous blackness.

Gone and back like a flash, this time with a little cloak of scarlet cloth, the hood drawn over the brown curls, and the bright, pretty face peeping out rosily from the hood.

"Little Red Riding-Hood," the young man said, "and I am the Wolf. Come on, my fairy. Very polite of you, I must say, to escort me so far. Are you in the habit of seeing your gentlemen friends to the entrance gates, Miss Lemox?"

"No," said the fairy; "because there isn't one of them half so big or so beautiful as you, Cousin Cyril. The officers from Speekhaven come here; but some of them are old, and most of them are ugly, and I don't like them at all. Oh! what a nice evening it is, and how sorry I am you are going away!"

They were walking down the long, winding avenue that led to the portico entrance of the house, the stately trees meeting above their heads, the golden stars a-glitter in the cloudless blue.

Very beautiful—mysteriously beautiful—looked the black