

"He can look down on you though," Bertrand continued, "and if he sees you grieving, it will make him very sad, darling."

The child's brown eyes opened with horror; a white drawn look came into her face; she clutched Bertrand convulsively.

"Has papa gone where mamma has gone?" she whispered. "Has papa gone to God?"

"Yes, darling," was said very softly.

"Shall I never see papa any more? Will he never, never speak to me again?" The brown eyes opened wider and wider—fixed earnestly on Bertrand.

"Oh!" came with a sob of childish despair. "I don't like it at all; every thing goes to God. He didn't want papa as much as I wanted him. How could papa leave me?" Then almost resentfully—"I shan't love papa any more; he knew I loved him so much. How could he leave me all alone? O papa, papa, I would have been good, if you had stayed with me. I never would have put Dolly in the bath again or done anything bad. O why did you go to God? I dare say he has plenty of other papas and didn't want you as I want you. Why did you go and leave poor Gypsy?" And she buried her little head on Bertrand's shoulder and sobbed with a passionate vehemence very unusual in such a child. Then in a tone of fear, looking up suddenly—"Perhaps it was because I was not always very good that papa has left me?" There was great remorse in the child's tone as she put that question.

"No, my darling, that was not the reason" answered Bertrand very gently, trying to speak soothingly as he sat down and drew the child nearer to him. "Papa never would have left you, however naughty you might have been. He suffered great pain here; but"—Gypsy lit rally quivered with sobs here—"But where he has gone he will suffer no more pain, Gypsy. 'There he will be happy.'"

"Happy without me?" asked the little thing,—then very decidedly. "I doubt it. You see you don't know papa as I know him. He can never be quite happy without me. I don't believe it."

"If he knows you are happy, Gypsy, he will then be happy too."

"Do you think I can ever be happy without my papa?" was said with a pathetic droop of the little red mouth that went straight to Bertrand's tender heart. "I hope God will soon take me and put me wherever papa is; even if I could just see him at a distance I would try to like that and be good; but oh! never to see him at all any more. I cannot understand what I am going to do," said Gypsy hiding her face again on Bertrand's shoulder and crying bitterly.

"Don't think about that now Gypsy. I will take great care of you, and try and be like your papa to you."

"You" she said contemptuously; "you like papa!" And the rose-bud mouth approached very near to something like a sarcastic smile. "And pray when I am naughty, what will you do?" This was a poser, and Bertrand felt it as such, and was silent for some time, then he said, feeling himself cornered.

"But you won't be naughty Gypsy."

"But I will," she answered quickly; "I can't help it. I will be very naughty sometimes; and then I will have to be punished."

"How did your papa punish you?" As the question escaped him, Bertrand could have struck himself, as he noted the look of pain creep into the little face. In perfect simplicity she answered, "He always sent me away from him, but you won't have that punishment. I loved him so much I could not bear to be away from him; and then I felt he was punishing himself while I was away; because he could not bear me away from him, and that was not fair to him because you see he was never naughty. But I should not mind leaving you, because I don't love you," Gypsy said more truthfully than politely. "Never mind," she went on with a little condescending air, caressing Bertrand's great beard. "I will tell you what to do when I am naughty. You don't know anything about it, had you never a little girl of your own?"

"No," very gently; "I never had a little girl of my own. If you can love me, Gypsy, I would like you to love me a little. I have no one to love me at all."

"Poor fellow," she said reflectingly. "I will try. Did papa love you very much?"

"Yes," he answered very softly, "I thank God he did."

"And yet he has left you and left me. Will it be a very long time before I shall go to papa?"

"God only knows" he answered solemnly, his arms closing round the little creature more tenderly. "Try and go to sleep, Gypsy; you are very tired."

"Can I go to sleep here?"

"Yes, here in my arms, darling. I will try and take as much care of you as"—he stopped.

"You will take me to papa when I wake?" she said. He promised her that he would. "You will soon get tired of me," she said sadly. "Papa never did; because he was accustomed to me; but it is different with you. I am afraid you will find me a great trouble."

"I am your Uncle Bertrand now," he answered. "Even if you give me trouble, I shall not mind, darling, because I shall love you."

"Kiss me" she said, putting up her lips to him. A very tiny, sweet little mouth it was that Bertrand kissed with gentle reverence.

"Uncle Bertrand" murmured the child as she closed her eyes heavy with weeping; and little did she guess how with that kiss and murmured name, she had forever bound to her a true great heart.

That night,—as Bertrand Germaine entered the room softly where Gypsy was supposed to be asleep in bed, he heard these words whispered:—

(To be Continued.)

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