

## Family Department.

### "LIGHTS FROM HEAVEN."

Sunlight, moonlight, starlight—  
Morn and night and even—  
The near light and the far light,  
All come down from heaven;  
Shedding all about them  
Glory everywhere—  
What was life without them?—  
Cheerless, dark and drear—

Then came lights from Heaven  
Even than those more bright  
By God to man's soul given,  
The God of Love and Light:—  
Cheering all our sadness,  
Though deep that sadness be,  
Turning grief to gladness—  
FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY.—

JOHN FRANCIS WALTER.

## Over The Sea Wall.

### CHAPTER V. (CONTINUED.)

But Aunt Lois was really very kind hearted and very unselfish, and I have no doubt that she was ready to put up with a good deal herself, and even stretch a point of prudence, in order to please me and give me a rousing up and an interest in life. She let me take her upstairs and show her the rooms I wanted got ready for the children—pleasant sunny rooms close to my own, yet shut off from the front stairs and corridors by a swing baize door. Doubtless they had been intended for nurseries once, before the house was altered and enlarged, though now they were furnished like ordinary bedrooms. My room was just on the other side of the swing-door, so I should have my little charges under my own wing, so to speak, which quite suited my ideas. I was quite bright and talkative all the evening, and found Aunt Lois much more responsive and agreeable than I had ever done before. (I suppose the change was really in me, only I did not quite realize it.) We had quite a pleasant and sociable time, and I knew that Aunt Lois would go first thing the next morning to make the inquiries about Maudie and Guy.

Sure enough she did, starting off on foot directly her morning duties were over; whilst I, for my part, summoned Mary, and began to carry out some of my plans with regard to the rooms in which I had resolved to put the children when I had got them.

Mary was my maid. She had been mother's faithful servant and friend for many years, and was deeply attached to us. She was a fine able-bodied woman, with a warm heart and strong affections, and would have gone through fire and water to serve me. Her complaint in the new house was that she had not half enough to do; for there was an elderly housekeeper there as it was, who looked after the linen and the stores and fulfilled many of the offices that at home Mary had undertaken. So when I asked her if she would give an eye to the children when they came—I was quite resolved that they should come—she was quite delighted. She had begun life as a nurse, and was very fond of children. Nothing came amiss to her in the way of work, and she was very clever with her needle, and very fond of exercising this talent.

"I must get the poor little things into some different clothes when they come, I said. 'They are such mites to be loaded with all that mass of cheap crape. It is getting brown and rusty already, and is really hardly fit to be seen. Mary, did you bring with us that pretty white crape I had hardly worn? It would cut up beautifully

and make two evening frocks for the little girl, with plenty of black ribbons and a black sash. She will look a perfect darling when she is prettily dressed, and you could furbish her up something in a very short time.'

Mary rather thought she could, and produced the dress at once. We had by that time got the room into better order for the purposes of a nursery. One bed had been taken down altogether and a table brought in instead; whilst the other room, with its smaller inner dressing-room, had been put ready for the reception of two little inmates. Mary did not know that there was any doubt at all about the prospective visit; and I so certain that all Aunt Lois heard would be satisfactory that I had no fears at all as to the final result.

But I was not quite prepared, all the same, for the triumphant *finale* to her morning's expedition. I was washing my hands for lunch, and watching with satisfaction the wonderful result of two hours' work on Mary's part in fashioning an evening frock for Maudie out of my discarded white crape, when she suddenly started me by exclaiming—

"Why, Miss Olivia, here they come, I do declare!"

And running to the window, I beheld Aunt Lois seated in an open *fy*, with Maudie beside her and Guy opposite, talking. I could see, at the top of his speed, whilst two modest boxes shared the driver's seat, showing plainly that this was the commencement of the regular visit, which I had not really hoped to achieve without some days' delay.

I had been getting stronger and stronger for several days now, and had ceased to crawl about the house as though I could hardly drag my limbs along, but I had never fled down the stairs quite so quickly as I did then. I was hailed as I came flying into the hall by a joyous shout of—

"Miss Sea-Gull! Miss Sea-Gull! Here we are! We've come to stop. Isn't it fun? And aren't you surprised? I do think surprises are nice!"

I caught Guy in my arms and gave him a good hug, turning to find Maudie at my elbow waiting her turn and then I hardly knew why, but her kindly smiling face seemed to invite it, I went up and gave Aunt Lois a kiss and a hug, saying as I did so—

"How kind of you to bring them! I am so much obliged to you, Aunt Lois!"

Her kind old face was quite beaming. She was much fonder of me than I deserved.

"I couldn't help it when I came to see them, my dear. They are the dearest little things, and that house in Graham street is not fit for any children to live in through this sultry weather. Mr. Marshall says the drainage of all that part of the town is very bad. He said it was a capital plan of yours to have them here till the brother comes; and he knows all about their parentage, and that is everything that is right. So now you can take them right away to their rooms and make as much of them as ever you like. A little spoiling will not hurt them, poor little dears, and we will contrive to give them one month of real happiness before the brother comes to settle their fate for them."

All this passed whilst Maudie and Guy were gazing wonderingly round the hall, and making great love to the big Persian cat, who lay basking upon the wide window seat. They touched his long soft coat so gently that he did not resent the liberty, and even condescended to purr: and as I approached Guy looked up eagerly to say—

"Miss Sea-Gull, I wish you would tell me where a cat keeps his purring-machine. I can't think where it comes from; it seems to be all over him. And do you think it's worked by electricity? I've heard people say cats have lots of electricity in them; and they make sparks off their coats in the dark—I've seen them."

I was not able to answer Guy's question, but he forgot it again in the excitement of being taken upstairs and shown the rooms he and his sister were to share. I was very glad Mary and I had made such good use of our time, for everything necessary for their comfort had been done. Guy made friends with Mary directly, and took her heart by storm, as I could see. As for Maudie, she seemed hardly able to credit her senses, and was happiest when her little hand was slipped into mine. She was shy in the midst of such strange surroundings, and though very pleased and grateful, was just a little overcome also. I liked to feel the clinging pressure of her soft little hand, and was very full of plans for trying to keep trouble and sorrow away from her.

"Aunt Lois! Aunt Lois!" shouted Guy, who had rushed downstairs in front of us, and now stood looking about at the different doors, wondering which was the right one.

"She told us to call her Aunt Lois, because you were Cousin Olivia," explained the little girl softly; whilst Guy's voice was heard plainly enough, though he himself had darted into the dining-room, perhaps in answer to some call.

"This is a jolly house! but I don't see many sea-gulls—only a few stuffed ones in a case. I thought the house would be cram-full of sea-gulls. Aunt Lois, listen! I'll go out every day that I'm here and catch some for you. I suppose they've all flown away, and as you haven't any men here, you can't get any more. But I'll catch lots for you, and stock the house up. You'd like that, wouldn't you? Sea-Gulls are such nice birds!"

"Well, you shall catch as many as you can, Guy," answered Aunt Lois, smiling; "and all you catch shall live here—I promise you that. I don't think we have had any live sea-gulls indoors ever since I lived here; but there are a pair in the kitchen garden you shall see after lunch. They live there to eat the slugs and snails, and they are very tame now. They have been there so long."

Guy had so many questions to ask about the sea-gulls that lunch was well advanced before he had done. His funny little quaint questions and observations amused Aunt Lois very much, as did also the heart and soul way in which he threw himself into any subject under discussion.

"Now take me to see the sea-Gulls!" he cried, the moment we rose from table, and, running across to Aunt Lois, he slipped his hand in hers and pulled her towards the door.

"Say please, Guy!" urged Maudie, in a low voice; and Guy looked up with the most charming smile to explain matters.

"Of course I always *mean* please, though I forget always to say it. There doesn't seem time to say everything one has in one's head. Now, Aunt Lois, listen! If I go out catching sea-gulls to-morrow, do you think I shall do it best with a butterfly net, or with a hook and line and some bait?"

We lost their voices down the passage to the garden door, and Maudie turned to me, saying with a little apologetic look—

"I *hope* Aunt Lois won't think that Guy takes liberties. Indeed, he doesn't mean to; but he is so little, and people are so kind to him. He thinks they are always interested in the same things that he is. I don't quite know how to make him understand."

"I wouldn't trouble to try," I answered, "He is a dear, funny little fellow. Let him go on his own way. Nobody could help liking him."

It was pretty to see how the little girl's face lighted.

"Oh, I am so glad you think that. I do love Guy so very much. I never get tired of hearing him talk. But I know that he ought not to tease grown up people. And it is so very kind of you to have us here at all. Mrs. Marks