

Their Hearts' Desire

looked at her in pleased surprise. Her name was Emily. Emily—what, he did not know, or where she lived.

"Yes, I'll come," he answered, advancing to the step above. "When is it going to be?"

She grasped his hand with both of hers and hopped up beside him. "I'll ask my mother if I can have you," she announced cordially as she landed.

"Oh!" said John.

They had reached the first landing.

"Can't you come a wee bit faster?" unexpectedly a voice urged from above. Looking up, John saw Jane, and the little girl saw her, too, and after an instant's curious regard leaned toward him, covering her mouth with one small hand. "Is that *your* mother?" she whispered.

John looked again at the waiting figure above and then at his companion. Instinctively he dropped her hand and backed away against the balustrade while he hesi-