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CHAPTER XIII.—(Continued.)

At length, the noise of footsteps in the hall roused Edna, and she started to her feet as the sound of her beloved father's voice fell on her ear. She heard him enter his study, and Selina go upstairs. When she knew that her sister had reached her own room, she opened the door gently, and stole noiselessly into the hall. She stopped at the study door, trembling with excitement. At last, she opened it, and closed it gently after her. Her father looked up in surprise at the unwonted intrusion, for no one ever entered his study unbidden, excepting Edna; but on seeing his daughter standing there, he exclaimed,

"Edna, my child, is that you?—or am I dreaming?"

Edna waited not to reply, but flew to her father, and was pressed tightly to his heart.

"My own little daughter, my own darling child! how—when did you come?" he said, when the first surprise was over.

"I arrived here about six this evening.

As soon as I received Selina's last letter, I felt anxious to return, for she told me you were not well, and when I saw that the letter had been delayed more than a fortnight beyond time, I was doubly desirous to start for home; so we left Chamouni the following day. The passage out was rather a long one, and of course we were detained at some places; but I can assure you we came home almost as quickly as possible."

"But why did you hurry so, my dear child? I did not expect you so soon, and was only feeling anxious that we had not

heard from you for so long a period; nevertheless, my dear little rosebud, I need not tell you your old father is glad to have you with him once more. But I fear, my love, you do not merit your title of 'rosebud'; you look pale and thin," said Mr. Clifford, holding up his daughter's face between his hands for inspection.

"Oh, well, you know I am tired now, papa dear. It is not fair to judge of my looks to-night; but how are you now? I have felt so very anxious about you."

"Well, I suppose I am better," said Mr. Clifford; "but never mind me, my love. I think we should go to Selina. She has been so good to me, Edna; and I would not like you to grieve her."

Edna felt the reproof her father's words conveyed, and she knew she justly deserved it, for she could now see how often she had been to blame in her conduct towards her sister; but she said nothing, wishing rather to give her father a more tangible proof of her desire to act differently than words could show.

As they were leaving the room, she laid her hand on her father's arm, and, looking imploringly in his face, said,

"Tell me one thing, papa, before we go: Do you know anything about Ernest's illness? Selina told me he had typhoid fever, and I have been so anxious to hear if he was better, or——"

Her voice sank so low, her father could not hear her last words; but he put his arm tenderly around her, as he said,

"He is better, my dear child. For some