

hearts they cherished a deep hatred of him. Neither of them had ever sought to learn anything about the story from their sister; they were both too delicate and tender-hearted ever to allude to the matter before her; while, as I said before, Miss Brown was too reserved, too self-contained to speak of her own troubles to anyone. When she heard from Judith that Mrs. Standfield was staying in Eastville, and of his unvarying kindness toward herself, Dorothy had felt a momentary fear for her young sister. She had once heard Augusta say that he was a heartless flirt, but at the time she had not believed this; afterwards, alas! her own heart could not deny it; so now she dreaded his influence over Judith, who was just the sort of girl to make a hero of a man of Donald Standfield's stamp, if he succeeded in touching her heart. Miss Brown debated within herself whether or not she should warn Judith against him; but then again she considered that this might put ideas in the young girl's mind, with regard to Mr. Standfield, that might otherwise never come there. After all, he was twice her age and must look upon her as a child. She would wait and see how it was likely to be; meanwhile she must trust her sister to Providence. Poor—I was almost saying, "poor Judith!" but I think I shall say, "Poor Mr. Standfield!" instead. For what hard thoughts' Dorothy seemed to have of him—this man whom she had loved so dearly once (I am inclined to think that that old love was not quite dead even yet). And how completely must that determined young woman, Miss Laurie, have blackened his character in Dorothy's eyes, when she did not feel safe in trusting her sister to his tender mercies. Poor Donald! When will you and she learn the truth, I wonder? Not till too late, perhaps.

It must not be thought that she was actuated in the least by jealousy of her sister. No, it was not in Dorothy's nature to be jealous, especially of anyone whom she loved. If Judy cared for Mr. Standfield and he wished to marry her, Dorothy would have sympathized with her sister in her happiness without one bitter thought; though I do not say that she would not have suffered; for she was a thorough woman, and Donald Standfield was the only man who had ever won her love.

On the day after that disclosure of Augusta's, Judy was in a very unsettled frame of mind. She could not bring herself to decide against Mr. Standfield, and yet she was torn with doubt, for by putting this and that together she could not but see that there was much against him. She made up her mind that she would not go to Bonny Woods in the afternoon; she could not meet him alone in her present state of mind.

Augusta was pretty well satisfied with the result of her machinations, and watched the young girl closely all day, without seeming to do so. "It was a bold stroke" she muttered, "but I think it has succeeded, so far."

Jack came in the forenoon as usual; but received from Judith no encouragement to prolong his visit. She was curt in her manner to him, and he wondered if he had been so unfortunate as to offend her.

"Are you coming for a row this afternoon, Miss Judith?" he asked.

"No; certainly not this afternoon. I did not promise to go."

"No, but I thought perhaps you would go."

No answer.

"I think you must be feeling tired to-day, Miss Judy, you are looking pale."

"Pale! Am I not always pale? and I am not tired at all," putulantly.

"I beg your pardon," said Jack, humbly, "I did not mean to offend you."

"You did not offend me at all—what nonsense!"

"Is there nothing I can do for you? let me read to you."

"No, thanks; oh! I wish you would not bother me."

"I beg your pardon. I had no intention of bothering you; I will relieve you at once of my obnoxious presence," said Jack, stiffly, and with a slight bow, walked huffily away.

Then Judith was filled with compunction for her own rudeness.

"Oh, Mr. Littleworth!" she cried, rising hastily from her chair and standing a pretty picture of distress and confusion.

Jack turned and stood silently before her; they were in the orchard and no one was near.

"Forgive my rudeness, please, Mr. Littleworth, I—I think you were right just now, I am tired, and my—my head aches," with a little catch in her voice and a suspicion of tears in her beautiful eyes that touched him inexpressibly.

"It is I who should ask your forgiveness," he said, coming nearer to her—"I was a brute to be so bad tempered; I might have known you were not well; and I have been bothering you all morning."

"It was I who was bad-tempered, but you will forgive me this time?"

"He did not answer at once, he was looking down at her with eyes full of inexpressible love—no boy's love was this for Jack had been in love scores of times before, but never before had he felt such a deep passion for any woman as that which he had for the fair young girl beside him. As Judith spoke she looked up at him and almost immediately, with a quick start and a vivid blush, turned away. She knew now that this handsome young Englishman loved her; she had read the secret in his eyes.

He noted the start and the blush, and perhaps guessed the cause, for he himself colored slightly.

"Judith," he said, tenderly, and put out his hand as though to take hers.

"Excuse me, I must go back to the house," she interposed, moving quickly away.

"Stay just one moment," he pleaded.

"Oh, Mr. Littleworth, didn't I just tell you that I had a bad headache—I must go and lie down."

"Forgive me," he said, and accompanied her silently to the door and then went away, after expressing a hope that she would be better in the afternoon.

Though she was much distressed by the discovery she had just made, the other, greater trouble, overshadowed this one; so it was not surprising that before an hour had passed Jack Littleworth and his love were almost forgotten. Coming down stairs a little while before dinner, she found old Mrs. Laurie there alone, the click of her bright knitting needles being the only sound in the room.

"Has Mr. Laurie come in yet, Judy, my dear?" she enquired, glancing over her gold-rimmed spectacles at the girl.

"No, Mrs. Laurie, I think not yet," she answered, seating herself beside the old lady.

"You are pale this morning; are you not feeling well, my dear?"

"I am quite well, thanks."

"Have you heard from Dorothy this week?"