

seemed at noon. Now she felt the need of comfort, but as she was a stranger to the girls and sisters she did not know what to do.

She could only cry out the prayer for help that was in her heart, and seek some place to be alone. So she went into the oratory again and sank on her knees in utter abandonment. She did not know how long she was there. It was the first time in her life that earnest, voluntary prayer had seemed a necessity. She had forgotten herself in her interest for Margaret. She did not know that it was growing dark until Dolores whispering said: "Nona mia! How cold you are!" Then she followed the child into the lighted hall. She felt somehow less desolate now, but not like sharing in the play-room gaiety. At supper Margaret's vacant seat made all her fears return.

The next three days dragged by and all the school felt sorry for the forlorn girl whose cousin lay so ill.

No one told her that her uncle and aunt were expected, and when at Mass next morning the prayers of all were asked for Margaret Sloane it seemed to Nora her heart would break, for now she knew that Margaret was in danger. The sisters did not require her to attend school and she passed most of her time in one of the oratories or in the corridor outside the infirmary door. Dolores was her greatest comfort, with her loving ways and hopeful sympathy. In her distress she followed certain instructions which this little foreign baby gave her, spoken so brokenly, yet so certainly, as she would have taken the advice of a physician. Anything, anything that might help Margaret.

She sat alone on the evening of the fourth day, hoping that she might be allowed to come in to see her friend, when she must, in utter weariness, have gone to sleep. A soft light seemed to fall around her; a loving voice said: "Poor child! how tired you are. Lift up your heart. Trust me. I am your mother, though you have never known me."

She awoke, feeling comforted. She thought that the spirit of her own dead mother had been with her.

She crept noiselessly to the door of the sick room, and waited and listened for some

one to come out and give her news of Margaret.

Now and then the dark figure of a sister glided along the hall-way telling her beads with down-cast head.

This silent waiting began to be appalling, and Nora's heart beat fast when she saw a man's figure coming quickly towards her. She thought she must be dreaming, yet it seemed so like her uncle. A minute more and all doubt was gone, as she flew to meet him.

Both were silent in the fullness of their hearts, and it was some time before either could speak. Then her uncle lifted her face and looked long and lovingly at her.

"See here, kitten, this will never do! You too will be calling on us for help if you don't look out."

The tears were falling fast now, but they were doing good. A load felt lifted from her, when those strong, tender arms were around her. "But—when—did—you—co—me?" she sobbed.

"Not more than two hours ago. Your Aunt Mary is with Margaret now and I was just seeing the doctor off. Thank God! the danger is apparently over now."

Her uncle left her in a short time to go in to his daughter, and then her aunt came out.

The delicate little woman looked almost exhausted, but her face was radiant with happiness.

"Oh, Nora! Nora! You blessed child!" her aunt cried out. "Actually you look more ill now than Margaret. I know what a trial this sudden illness was, but I did not think it would make you fret so. The sisters say you have been dazed and that you live without sleep or food. But now we are together, dear, and Margaret will get well they say, so you must rouse up and be yourself again."

"Yes, Auntie, yes; it all seems right now, but oh! it has been so long and hard. I wrote you all about it, and I tried to be brave, but not until this evening have I had any comfort at all."

Then Nora told her aunt of her short sweet dream.

Mrs. Sloane had an odd, puzzled look, as she said slowly:

"About two hours ago we arrived, as all thought, just in time to see our darling before she died. We were admitted by the