

ber of Mrs. Williams' orphan charge in this Asylum. Mr. Graham adopted him, and he is now known as Eugene Graham. He is very much attached to Beulah, though I believe they are not at all related."

"He left the Asylum before I entered the board. What sort of boy is he? I have seen him several times, and do not particularly fancy him."

"Oh, madam, he is a noble boy! It was a great trial to me to part with him three years ago. He is much older than Beulah, and loves her as well as if she were his sister," said the matron, more hastily than was her custom when answering any of the managers.

"I suppose he has put this notion of being a teacher into her head; well, she must get it out, that is all. I know of an excellent situation, where a lady is willing to pay six dollars a month for a girl of her age to attend to an infant, and I think we must secure it for her."

"Oh, Miss White! she is not able to carry a heavy child always in her arms," expostulated Mrs. Williams.

"Yes, she is. I will venture to say she looks all the better for it at the month's end."

The last sentence, fraught with interest to herself, fell upon Beulah's ear as she passed through the hall, and an unerring intuition told her "you are the one." She put her hands over her ears to shut out Miss Dorothea's sharp tones, and hurried away, with a dim foreboding of coming evil, which pressed heavily upon her young heart.

CHAPTER II.

The following day, in obedience to the proclamation of the mayor of the city, was celebrated as a season of special thanksgiving, and the inmates of the Asylum were taken to church to morning service. After an early dinner, the matron gave them permission to amuse themselves the remainder of the day as their various inclinations prompted. There was an immediate dispersion of the assemblage, and only Beulah lingered beside the matron's chair.

"Mrs. Williams, may I take Lilly with me, and go into the woods at the back of the Asylum?"

"I want you at home this evening, but I dislike very much to refuse you."

"Oh! never mind, if you wish me to do anything," answered the girl cheerfully.

Tears rolled over the matron's face, and hastily averting her head, she wiped them away with the corner of her apron.

"Can I do anything to help you? What is the matter?"

"Never mind, Beulah; do you get your

bonnet and go to the edge of the woods—not too far, remember; and if I must have you, why I will send for you."

"I would rather not go if it will be any trouble."

"No, dear, it's no trouble; I want you to go," answered the matron, turning hastily away. Beulah felt very strongly inclined to follow, and enquire what was in store for her; but the weight on her heart pressed more heavily, and murmuring to herself, "it will come time enough, time enough," she passed on.

"May I come with you and Lilly?" entreated Claudia, running down the walk at full speed, and putting her curly head through the palings to make the request.

"Yes, come on. You and Lilly can pick up some nice smooth burs to make baskets of. But where's your bonnet?"

"I forgot it;" she ran up, almost out of breath, and seized Beulah's hand.

"Don't forget it, indeed! You little witch, you will burn as black as a gipsy."

"I don't care if I do. I hate bonnets."

"Take care, Claudy; the President won't have you all freckled and tanned."

"Won't he?" quoth the child, with a saucy sparkle in her black eyes.

"That he won't; here, tie on my hood, and the next time you come running after me, bareheaded, I will make you go back; do you hear?"

"Yes, I hear. I wonder why Miss Dorothy didn't bleach off her freckles; she looks just like a——"

"Hush about her, and run on ahead."

"Do, pray, let me get my breath first; which way are we going?"

"To the piney woods yonder," cried Lilly, clapping her hands in childish glee; "won't we have fun, rolling and sliding on the straw?" The two little ones walked on in advance.

The path along which their feet pattered so carelessly led to a hollow or ravine, and the ground on the opposite side rose into small hillocks, thickly wooded with pines. Beulah sat down upon a mound of moss and leaves, while Claudia and Lillian, throwing off their hoods, commenced the glorious game of sliding. The pine straw presented an almost glassy surface, and starting from the top of a hillock, they slid down, often stumbling and rolling together to the bottom. Many a peal of laughter rang out, and echoed far back in the forest, and two blackbirds could not have kept up a more continuous chatter. Apart from all this sat Beulah; she had remembered the matron's words, and stopped just at the verge of the woods, whence she could see the white palings of the Asylum. Above her the winter breeze