

The Staying Guest

but I don't want her here, and the real reason I 'm glad she 's going is because I want to live here at Primrose Hall alone with you and Aunt Dorinda. Is n't that what *you* want, aunty?"

Miss Priscilla Flint hesitated. The child Lavinia was the daughter of her own sister, and yet—

Say true, aunty!" said Ladybird.

So Miss Priscilla Flint said "true."

"It is what I want, dearie," she said. "They say blood is thicker than water, but I don't know about that. If we had known Lavinia first, we probably would have cared more for her than for you. But after you came and twined your foolish, ridiculous little self around our old hearts, we wanted no one else. I don't know exactly what it is myself: there must be some reason."

"It is because I love you," said Ladybird, simply.