

"Try it, Tom," said Mr. Douglass, with more interest than he generally evinced. He was in great good spirits. A business friend had just made a lucky stroke in political life, and he was delighted at the gentleman's good fortune. Tom was soon vanquished, at which Miss Douglass laughed heartily, and said :

"I did not think that you condescended to draughts, Philip?"

"I prefer chess," he replied quietly; but Trevor has taken a fancy to this game, and I've had some practice lately."

"Try Myrtle, now," said Tom coolly. "She will show you science. Here, Myrtle, take my seat, and keep up your side of the house."

"Yes, Miss Haltaine; I will not detain you long," said Philip, seeing Myrtle preparing to move away.

Unlucky or perhaps lucky boast. It nettled Myrtle, and with a defiant fire in her grey eyes, she sat down determined to do her best. Mr. Douglass scarcely guessed the power of his young antagonist. From leaning leisurely back in his chair, and pushing his men forward in a lazy way, he soon bent eagerly over the board. He had his match now, and it was a hard battle. Myrtle played calmly, never once taking her attention from the game. On they went slowly—so slowly, in fact, that Tom strolled away to the piano, and began singing "Never say die," while he played an impromptu accompaniment with one hand. By and by, Miss Douglass was called away, and Myrtle and Philip were left alone in the library. Neither spoke, but both played as if their life depended on the issue. Finally, Myrtle, after a long trial, cornered Philip, and won.

"Good night," she said abruptly, and rising left the room.

While she was lighting her lamp in the upper hall, Tom joined her.

"Good on your head, Myrtle. I knew you could do something if you set yourself to it. But isn't Philip the best fellow going? What do you sup-

pose he has been playing draughts at the Trevors for?"

"I do not know, I am sure," said Myrtle, blowing out the match, and throwing it into the safe.

"I do," said Tom. "Aunt told me. I went to the breakfast room and asked her. The Trevors have been invited to some swell parties lately, where there is wine, and all that. Philip talked Henry into staying at home, and he has spent his evenings amusing him so as to keep him in good spirits. Well, good night. You don't look as amiable as you might, considering your good luck."

Myrtle went to her room, trying her best not to think a kindly thought of "the bear," and only half succeeding, for his watchfulness over the welfare of his friend could not but raise him in her estimation.

CHAPTER VII.

The next evening, Mr. Douglass again remained at home, and astonished them all by saying :

"I invited the Trevors to drop in this evening. He works so hard in the office that he needs recreation."

In a few moments the bell rang, and the expected guests were ushered in. Both now possessed a new interest to Myrtle, as she knew a part of their history. Looking at Henry Trevor, in the full light, she could scarcely believe that he was the person of whom Tom had been speaking on the previous night. His erect figure and careless, pleasant air conveyed an idea of almost boyishness, although he must have been all of twenty-eight. His frank smile and honest brown eyes gave a decided charm to an otherwise not, strictly speaking, handsome face.

Mrs. Trevor was the same winsome, girlish matron in the drawing-room as she was in the nursery, and chatted quite happily to Miss Douglass on the all-absorbing themes of teeth, whooping cough, and measles.