

excitement and the rapidity of her walk home from the post-office, she did not laugh. It was a beautiful lace paper affair, embossed with rosebuds and true lover's knots, and contained screens of gauze over white satin, that opened on a Temple of Love, wherein a gift heart was revealed pierced by two arrows. Circling this were the words:

"If you'll be myne,
I will be thyne,
And so good
Morrow, Valentyne."

"Oh, Lib! Ain't that jest—Land though! of all the pretty things!" She fairly bubbled with excitement. Then she turned it over to see if the price had been rubbed off.

"Do—d' you think Mr. Cox sent it, Ann?" Elizabeth spoke with a strange quietness that made Ann look at her.

"Course he sent it. Oh, the dear, dear man!"

"It ain't his writing."

"Course it ain't, you big booby. He got the storekeeper in town to send it. Why you ain't thinkin' folks is goin' to play jokes on a body with this kind of valytine? Their fortunes would soon be ruined if they did—why, look there! it cost four dollars!"

The fact that Mr. Cox was away on Bible Society work was the only thing that prevented Ann from writing him a letter. She did not know his address, however, so settled herself to await his return, and talked incessantly to Elizabeth, who became peculiarly silent as the days passed. The day the minister got back, a few weeks later, she talked over every detail of her wedding-dress, and, after tea, sat down to write her letter of thanks and much love.

Elizabeth washed the dishes, and, in the twilight, stole upstairs to her room, and sat down at the open window. She often did that when she felt lonely; she had long ago learned that the world has an ugly habit of getting along without one, and had grown accustomed to strange aches in her throat.

He had been so attentive to her that day of the picnic when she had first dared to like him so much, but she might have known it was only because she was Ann's sister. She

gazed away over the meadow, to where the night glooms were clustering in the creek bottom, and there seemed a mellow kindness in the moon-man's big, lop-sided face as he came and peered at her through the lace-work of the trees. She sat there for a long time, listening to the frogs, and breathing the fresh softness of spring in the night breeze.

The following evening, Elizabeth was standing at the front gate, when Ann came down the path with a paper box in her hand.

"Lib, I'm jest going to slip over and show it to Betsy Gillies. I won't be gone on'y a minute an' you can see that things is locked up for the night, an' the cow let into the pasture."

She called the dog, fastened a piece of clothes-line to his collar, and, without heeding her sister's criticism of what she was about to do, hurried off up the road.

Elizabeth stood watching until, in the dusk, Ann's form had faded into the gray of the road. She was about to turn back to the house, when she caught the sound of footsteps approaching from the direction of the village. Curiosity prompted her to see who the individual was, and her heart gave a queer jump as she recognized the minister. He was turning in at the gate before he noticed her.

"Ah, good evening, Miss Henny." Then, as he perceived which of the two it was, he quickly opened the gate, and it clicked shut behind him. "I have been waiting all day for an opportunity to come up and see you," he said.

"My sister has just—"

"It is rather late, I know, but I so wished to see you that I could not wait till to-morrow, and so—"

"It's not Ann, Mr. Cox, it's me." He was very stupid not to see he was talking to the wrong one; she was conscious that she was trembling, and wondered vaguely what made her do that. "Ann has just this minute gone up the road to the Gillies' place, and if you hurry up you'll easy catch her, Mr. Cox."

Instead of being eagerly off out the gate, he deliberately leaned against it.

"Pray, why should I run after your sister? Do you want to get rid of me so