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## On the King's Highway.

### A TRUE STORY.

(Elizabeth Norton in 'Friendly Greetings'.)

We loved to go to Hillfield, Janie and I, for our home was in a close London street, and Hillfield was on Salisbury Plain, where the sweet air blew fresh and keen, and larks innumerable sang in the sunshine, and cloud-shadows, which I loved to watch, swept over the foldings and unfoldings of the solemn, lonely downs.

We loved to go to Hillfield, Janie and I (Janie was my twin-sister), for in that roomy, old-fashioned farmhouse our dear mother was born, and here still lived our grandmamma, a venerable, white-haired lady who looked as though she had walked out of a picture; everything about her was so peaceful and restful, that it almost seemed as though Time itself stood still.

At Hillfield, then, Janie and I usually spent our holidays, and pleasant holidays they were; but one thing we missed greatly, that was our Sunday-school class, from which we rarely stayed away—we loved it so.

So on Sunday afternoons grandmamma tried to make up for our loss by giving us a little Bible-reading in her own parlor—a sunny, dear old room, full of curious and ancient things which smelt so sweetly of dried roses and lavender when the windows were closed, and of all the perfumes of the garden when they were opened.

The very first Sunday we were there, on our last visit, grandmamma wished us to read the sixty-fifth of Isaiah. Such a glorious chapter as it is, we had got nearly to the end of it, and Janie read the twenty-fifth verse.

'How can that be?' said she. "'While they are yet speaking I will hear.'" If that is so, grannie dear, miracles must always be happening.'

'Doubtless it is so,' said grandmamma, slowly and thoughtfully. 'Ah, my children, I remember long ago, when I was quite a girl, and the old century was but young.'

'What happened, grannie?' said I.

'I will tell you. You have often heard me speak of your great-uncle Richard, my favorite brother; but I can never tell you how good he was, truly a man of faith and prayer.'

'It was cold weather, and near upon Christmas. My mother and I were anxious about Richard, for it was a wild and stormy night, and he was unusually late in coming from market; still, we knew he would not feel the cold, as he had that day put on, for the first time, a new thick riding coat, and his mare, Brown Bess, was sure-footed and steady.'

'We expected him to reach home by nightfall, and at seven o'clock there was no sign of him. Mother got very uneasy; the night was so dark, and the wind shrieked and blew over the lonely downs which he must cross as though it would blow him away.'



### I LEFT A LITTLE LATER THAN I EXPECTED TO DO.

'Presently we heard the sound of wheels, and someone calling, and we flew out.'

'Farmer Attwood's gig was drawn up at the wicket, and down from it, wrapped in some of the farmer's clothes, got Richard, looking like a ghost.'

'"Oh!" cried I, as I held up the lantern, "what is the matter? What have they done to you, Dick? Where is Brown Bess?"'

'"Softly, little maid; one thing at a time," said Farmer Attwood. "Dick is all

right, Mrs. Basset, and he will tell you his own tale; 'tis too cold to keep the horse standing about, so good-night all. Good-night, Dick, my lad, I'll see you to-morrow."

'As soon as Richard was rested a bit, and had some warm bread and milk he was able to tell his story.'

'"I left market," he began, "a little later than I expected to do. I had been hindered one way and another, so that it