

"It's late now, Meester Tom. I'll have to wash him, den to starch him, after'ards to iron him, I s'pose."

"Yeth, I s'pose," mimicked Tom, with a droll face. "You wash him clean, and fix him up stunning, and I'll give you a shilling, and some pink paper. There, you're getting pink yourself, Rosalie. Well, there are worse fellows than Baptiste Duval,—only it's tough work finding them. You wash the collar, like a good girl, and I'll see that someone writes your letter."

"It's *bon*!" said Rosalie, in glee, for her *garçon* was at the shanty, and when Tom was in good nature he was her scribe, as she could not write.

"What is wrong with Aunt?" enquired Tom, helping himself to jelly.

"Him! Oh, he's purty sick. He's not well in his body. He's sick all over. Not to die, ough no!" with a pucker of her upper lip, and shrug of her shoulder. "He not die. Doctair Burks say he come right, bim-by. He's sneeze a little, and be hot. I don't know what you call that in English."

"Influenza," laughed Tom. "See here, Rosalie, have you been treating Martineau to jigs, while poor Aunt has been so ill?"

"Oh, no, it's not me, Meester Tom. I never touch it, not at all; no, I guess so, not once. It's the new Ma'mselle."

"What new Ma'mselle?"

"Mees Haltin."

"Who under the sun is Miss Haltin?" asked Tom, in a low, hoarse whisper.

"He's come last night," said Rosalie.

"He's cry. He's play the peeany."

"Old or young, Rosy?" in a quick, sharp tone.

"Young, *belle*—like a picter!"

"Not to stay long, eh, Rosalie?" enquired Tom, anxiously.

"Dunno," with another shrug. "Big trunk, lots of dresses—purty, oh, me! Rich, I tink. He's cry plentee, and has black frock, and plentee *crêpe*. He's *belle*, oh, me! Martineau say he's like the Virgin Mary."

Tom did not swear exactly, but he confounded the lady who resembled the "Virgin" roundly, even kicked his beloved dogs, and sent them howling to the kitchen. Afterwards he stole up again, to see if his aunt was awake; but no, she slept soundly, and, the hour being late, Tildy, the housemaid, was arranging a bed for herself on a lounge in the sick room, in order that she might be ready to wait on her mistress during the night. The boy went softly away again, with an affectionate anxiety in his eyes that made his face pleasant with a rare gentleness. Having joked a little with Martineau, and seen to the proper care taking of his moccasins and snowshoes, he came back again to the hall with Boxer and Nip. With his brown hair tossed back from his brow in a very careless style, minus his collar and slippers, for they were in his trunk on the train, he strode up and down, frowning and muttering to himself, unconscious that a pair of laughing eyes were watching him from a crack in the drawing-room doors. Tired at last with waiting for Mr. Douglass's return, he dismissed the dogs with a friendly pat, and a "Shake hands, my dear sirs. But if you knew what I do, perhaps you would hate petticoats too;" then he took a lamp and retired to his own room.

No sooner was Tom safely settled for the night, than a figure in black stole out from its hiding-place, and ran lightly up the wide staircase, then to a pretty chamber furnished with every comfort for this young girl who was described as being the personification of the Virgin Mary. Once before, Myrtle Haltaine had essayed an escape to her own domain, but Tom's return and subsequent promenade in his stocking feet, had prevented her stealing away unseen. So the first smiles that had brightened her face since her coming to Tecumseth Hall, were provoked by the boyish form in his negligent attire.

"Meester Tom," the girl called him," said she to herself, as she dropped down