

"Didn't I tell you?" said Katy; "a dreadful accident has happened to that."

"Oh, what?" cried all the rest, for 'Edwitha' was rather a favorite with the family. It was one of the many serial stories which Katy was forever writing, and was about a lady, a knight, a blue wizard, and a poodle named Bop. It had been going on so many months now, that everybody had forgotten the beginning, and nobody had any particular hope of living to hear the end, but still the news of its untimely fate was a shock.

"I'll tell you," said Katy. "Old Judge Kirby called this morning to see Aunt Izzie; I was studying in the little room, but I saw him come in, and pull out the big chair and sit down, and I almost screamed out 'don't!'"

"Why?" cried the children.

"Don't you see? I had stuffed 'Edwitha' down between the back and the seat. It was a beautiful hiding-place, for the seat goes back ever so far; but 'Edwitha' was such a fat bundle, and old Judge Kirby takes up so much room, that I was afraid there would be trouble. And sure enough he had hardly dropped down before there was a great crackling of paper, and he jumped up again and called out, 'Bless me! what is that?' And then he began poking, and poking, and just as he had poked out the whole bundle, and was putting on his spectacles to see what it was, Aunt Izzie came in."

"Well, what next?" cried the children, immensely tickled.

"Oh," continued Katy, "Aunt Izzie put on her glasses too, and screwed up her eyes—you know the way she does, and she and the judge read a little bit of it; that part at the first, you remember, where Bop steals the blue-pills, and the Wizard tries to throw him into the sea. You can't think how funny it was to hear Aunt Izzie reading 'Edwitha' out loud—" and Katy went into convulsions at the recollection—"when she got to 'Oh Bop—my angel Bop—I just rolled under the table, and stuffed the table-cover in my mouth to keep from screaming right out. By-and-by I heard her call Debby, and give her the papers, and say: 'Here is a mass of trash which I wish you to put at once into the kitchen fire.' And she told me afterward that she thought I would be in an insane asylum before I was twenty. It was too bad," ended Katy, half laughing and half crying, "to burn up the new chapter and all. But there's one good thing—she didn't find 'The Fairy of the Dry Goods Box,' that was stuffed farther back in the seat."

"And now," continued the mistress of ceremonies, "we will begin. Miss Hall will please rise."

"Miss Hall," much fluttered at her fine name, got up with very red cheeks.

"It was once upon a time," she read, "moonlight lay on the halls of the Alhambra, and the knight, striding impatiently down the passage, thought she would never come."

"Who, the moon?" asked Clover.

"No, of course not," replied Cecy, "a lady he was in love with. The next verse is going to tell about her, only you interrupted."

"She wore a turban of silver, with a jewelled crescent. As she stole down the corridor the beams struck it and it glittered like stars."

"So you are come, Zuleika?"

"Yes my lord."

"Just then a sound as of steel smote upon the ear, and Zuleika's mail-clad father rushed in. He drew his sword, so did the other. A moment more, and they both lay dead and stiff in the beams of the moon. Zuleika gave a loud shriek, and threw herself upon their bodies. She was dead, too! And so ends the Tragedy of the Alhambra."

"That's lovely," said Katy, drawing a long breath, "only very sad! What beautiful stories you do write, Cecy! But I wish you wouldn't always kill the people. Why couldn't the knight have killed the father, and—no, I suppose Zuleika wouldn't have married him then. Well, the father might have—oh, bother! why must anybody be killed, anyhow? why not have them fall on each other's necks, and make up?"

"Why, Katy?" cried Cecy, "it wouldn't have been a tragedy then. You know the name was 'A Tragedy of the Alhambra.'"

"Oh, well," said Katy, hurriedly, for Cecy's lips were beginning to pout, and her fair, pinkish face to redden, as if she were about to cry; "perhaps it was prettier to have them all die; only your ladies and gentlemen always do die, and I thought, for a change, you know!—What a lovely word that was—'Corregidor'—what does it mean?"

"I don't know," replied Cecy, quite consoled. "It was in the 'Conquest of Granada.' Something to walk over, I believe."

"The next," went on Katy, consulting her paper, "is 'Yap,' a Simple Poem, by Clover Carr."

All the children giggled, but Clover got up composedly, and recited the following verses:

"Did you ever know Yap?
The best little dog.
Who'er sat on lap
Or barked at a frog."

"His eyes were like beads,
His tail like a mop,
And it wagged as if
It never would stop."

"His hair was like silk
Of the glossiest sheen,
He always ate milk,
And once the cold-cream