

pointing to a china-tree near, where a flock of robins were eagerly chirping over the feast of berries.

"Why, Claudy! how can you wish the poor little fellow such bad luck?" The dark, thoughtful eyes, full of deep meaning, rested on Claudia's radiant face.

"Oh! you need not think I am a bear, or a hawk, ready to swallow the darling little beauty alive! I would not have him lose a feather for the world; but I should like the fun of seeing him stagger and wheel over and over, and tumble off the limb, so that I might run and catch him in my apron. Do you think I would give him to our matron to make a pie? No, you might take off my fingers first!" and the little elf snatched them emphatically in Beulah's face.

"Make a pie of robies, indeed! I would starve before I would eat a piece of it," chimed in Lilly, with childlike horror at the thought.

Claudia laughed with mingled mischief and chagrin. "You say you would not eat a bit of roby-pie to save your life! Well, you did it last week, anyhow."

"Oh, Claudy, I didn't!"

"Oh, but you did! Don't you remember Susan picked up a bird last week that fell out of this very tree, and gave it to our matron? Well, didn't we have bird-pie for dinner?"

"Yes, but one poor little fellow would not make a pie."

"They had some birds already that came from the market, and I heard Mrs. Williams tell Susan to put it in with the others. So, you see, you did eat roby-pie, and I didn't, for I knew what was in it. I saw its head wrung off!"

"Well, I hope I did not get any of roby: I won't eat any more pie till they have all gone," was Lilly's consolatory reflection. Changing to glance toward the gate, she exclaimed:

"There is a carriage."

"What is to-day? let me see, Wednesday: yes, this is the evening for the ladies to meet here. Lil, is my face right clean? because that red-headed Miss Dorothy always takes particular pains to look at it. She rubbed her pocket-handkerchief over it the other day. I do hate her, don't you?" cried Claudia, springing up and buttoning the band of her apron sleeve, which had become unfastened.

"Why, Claudy, I am astonished to hear you talk so: Miss Dorothy helps to buy food and clothes for us, and you ought to be ashamed to speak of her as you do." As she delivered this reprimand, Beulah snatched up a small volume and hid it in her work-basket.

"I don't believe she gives us much. I do hate her, and I can't help it, she is so ugly, and cross, and vinegar-faced. I should not like her to look at my mug of milk. You don't love her either, any more than I do, only you won't say anything about it. But kiss me, and I promise I will be good, and not make faces at her in my apron." Beulah stooped down and warmly kissed the suppliant, then took her little sister's hand and led her into the house, just as the carriage reached the door. The children presented a pleasant spectacle as they entered the long dining-room, and ranged themselves for inspection. Twenty-eight heirs of orphanage, varying in years, from one crawling infant to well-nigh grown girls, all neatly clad, and with smiling, contented faces, if we except one grave countenance, which might have been remarked by the close observer. The weekly visiting committee consisted of four of the lady managers, but to-day the number was swelled to six. A glance at the inspectors sufficed to inform Beulah that something of more than ordinary interest had convened them on the present occasion, and she was passing on to her accustomed place, when her eyes fell upon a familiar face, partially concealed by a straw bonnet. It was her Sabbath school teacher; a sudden glad light flashed over the girl's countenance, and the pale lips disclosed a set of faultlessly beautiful teeth, as she smiled and hastened to her friend.

"How do you do, Mrs. Mason? I am so glad to see you!"

"Thank you, Beulah, I have been promising myself this pleasure a great while. I saw Eugene this morning, and told him I was coming out. He sent you a book and a message. Here is the book. You are to mark the passages you like particularly, and study them well until he comes. When did you see him last?"

Mrs. Mason put the volume in her hand as she spoke.

"It has been more than a week since he was here, and I was afraid he was sick. He is very kind and good to remember the book he promised me, and I thank you very much, Mrs. Mason, for bringing it." The face was radiant with new-born joy, but it all died out when Miss Dorothea White (little Claudia's particular aversion) fixed her pale blue eyes upon her, and asked, in a sharp, discontented tone:

"What ails that girl, Mrs. Williams? She does not work enough, or she would have some blood in her cheeks. Has she been sick?"

"No, madam, she has not been sick exactly, but somehow she never looks strong and hearty like the others. She works well