

The little girl ran out of the room as she uttered this last injunction, and her step was heard like the leap of a deer as she bounded through the passage. When she returned, a loaf of the bread had disappeared; the old couple were in each other's arms, weeping and uttering fragments of prayer and blessing—and thanksgiving. It was a beautiful picture for the best feelings of the human heart—gratitude to God and to his creatures, shed a holiness over it.

Lucy bustled about, and a delicious meal was soon spread. The table was drawn toward the fire, and a tallow candle which she had purchased, together with the charcoal, shed a comparatively cheerful light over the humble group, as they partook of the first regular meal after many weeks of privation. Lucy was by far too happy for thoughts of her own hunger. Though she tried to eat quietly, at every second mouthful she would lay down her fork, and lift her face with a sweet look of affection to her grandparents, who were partaking eagerly of the food before them. Her little hand was ready as a humming-bird among a clump of flowers, in heaping the empty plate, and in filling the exhausted cup as fast as the old woman could drain it.

"Does it taste good, grandpa—oh, grandma, is it not nice to have tea once more?" she was continually inquiring, with the eager happiness of a child as she was, till the old people began to eat leisurely, and to select their food as those whose appetites are fully satisfied.

"Now Lucy, my child, let us hear how you came by all these things," said the old man, at last, pushing back his plate and supporting his elbow on the table, while his chin rested in the palm of one hand, and his eye dwelt fondly on the sweet young face of his grand-daughter, "come, your grandmother will listen now."

The little girl tried to school her face to the dignified seriousness of a story-teller, but spite of herself, the little mouth would tremble, and tears and smiles struggled in her large black eyes, like clouds and sunshine on an April sky.

"Well," she said, shaking back the braids of her hair, and folding her hands resolutely in her lap, "don't ask me any questions till I have done, and I will tell you all about it just as it happened. I did not like to tell you how much afraid I was to go out this evening, for I thought may be you might want to go out instead of me, and I thought perhaps that walking in the damp and calling out so loud might set you to coughing again. So I made believe to hold as a lion, till I got out of sight of the house, and then I could hardly keep from crying, I felt so strangely. I believe it just the sort of feeling that the 'Babes in the Woods' had, only I had no brother with me, and it is a great deal more lonesome to wander round among lots of men and women that you never saw before, than to be lost among the green trees where the sunshine comes laughing through the leaves, and flowers peep up from the soft moss, where birds are hopping about, singing and chirping in the bushes—dear little birds—such as covered the poor babes over with leaves, and—finally, grandpa, as I was saying, I think that I felt a great deal worse off than they did, for when they grew hungry, there were plenty of blackberries that they had as much right to pick as any body; but I was dreadful hungry—I was, indeed, though I would not own it to you, and every step I took there were nice cakes and tarts and candies in the windows, just as if the people had put them there to see how bad they could make me feel. Well, I tried to call out radishes, but the tears almost choked me, and I could hardly make the least noise at first, and when I did it was such a strange hoarse scream, just like a frightened bird. But I began low, and called out louder and louder, till I am certain somebody must have heard me, besides, I went close to the basement windows sometimes, and screamed radishes, radishes, till I could not call any longer; but no one took the least notice. I was very fatigued and tired with carrying the basket, and may be my voice sounded louder to myself than to any body else. Once a lady knocked on the window. My heart sprang into my mouth, for I thought she wanted me to stop, but a great stout woman, with such a voice, turned a corner just that minute, and she pushed by me as I was going down the area, and the lady bought four bunches of her. I felt the tears come up from my heart, but I would not let the radish-woman see me cry, she looked after me in such a hateful manner, and laughed so when I dragged along with my heavy basket.

It was a long afternoon, and I had gone down Madison Street and across clear to the North River side, without selling one single bunch of radishes. My heart grew heavier and heavier, till it lay like a stone in my bosom, for I thought of you, so hungry and in such trouble, and of the money which you had borrowed of Mrs. Miles. I was getting more faint and hungry every minute, and I thought my heart would break at last, for I was so tired that I had to hold to the iron railings to keep from falling on the pavement. I don't know exactly where I was, but somewhere near Broadway a young gentleman went by me very fast, for it was beginning to rain. He looked hard at me, but a great many had done so before, and I should not have minded it, but he turned in a slow, thinking way, and after looking at me a minute, very kindly told me to go with him a little while, and he would take me out of the rain.

"I thought perhaps, that the gentleman kept a house, and wanted some radishes for tea; so I was very glad to follow him to the

sides, he had such a kind, pretty way of speaking, that I could not have helped it, if I had wanted to; it seemed natural to do as he bade me. Well, he walked on till we came to a block of new buildings in a street near Broadway. All around the lower windows and the doors was solid stone. A little black plate was by the side of the door which he took me through, and on it was written in beautiful yellow letters the name of C. Ver Bryck, Portrait Painter. I did not know what it meant at first, but afterward I found out it was the name of the young gentleman who took me there, Mr. Ver Bryck—a queer name, isn't it? I should not have known how to pronounce it, but that I heard it so many times after I got in. We went up a great row of stairs, and along a passage, till we came to a door which had another piece of black like that on the outside, with the same name on it, and a little slate hung by it covered over with writing.

Mr. Ver Bryck opened the door. Oh, what a grand room it was! There was a fine carpet on it, and nice tables covered over with brushes and little boxes and dear beautiful images, white as snow, and flinging their arms up, as if they wanted to play with one; and all around the walls were places where it seemed as if you were looking out of doors. You could see mountains that looked as if they melted away into the blue sky, and trees with large heavy limbs, that seemed as if they would break down with heaps of leaves, with soft grassy places about the roots, besides rivers that wound toward you, so deep and clear, and cows lying—the lazy things—on the banks. I can't give you the least idea how beautiful it all was. I should have thought myself in the woods, but for the ladies and gentlemen that stood round the edges of the floor, so handsome; and dressed so beautifully with square things that looked like gold all around them. They every one, seemed staring at me as I went in. This frightened me so that I ran into the passage to come away, but Mr. Ver Bryck followed me, and wanted to know what I was afraid of; I began to cry, and told him I did not like to go among so many grand people. He looked at a young gentleman who came to the door to see what the matter was, and they both smiled, and told me not to be afraid, for the gentlemen and ladies I had seen were only pictures. I did not know how that could be, for the pictures in books don't look like breathing people as they did, but I was afraid they would think me babyish to be frightened when they were so good natured, so I followed them into the room.

He took me up to an old gentleman with a bald-head, who sat reading a great book through his spectacles. A nice old gentleman he was, and so still, he did not once lift his eyes from the book, though I stood between him and the light. I was not in the least afraid of him, for he looked kind and pleasant; but when I was told to touch his hand, I held back, for it did not seem right for a little girl like me to take such a liberty. They both laughed when I told them so; but they would make me touch the hand which lay on the book, and as true as I live, grandpa, it was like touching a board! That was what they called a picture too, but it looked as much like a living man as you do this minute. I did not think so much of the others being pictures when I come to look at them very close. But that old gentleman with the book and spectacles, I don't really know what to think of it. Yet—but if I stop to tell you all I saw, it will be twelve o'clock before I get through. Mr. Ver Bryck came to me while I was looking about, and made me stand just where the light came in from the upper part of a window. He sat down by a couple of shining sticks that stood up from the floor like a great A, and put something that looked like a wide lace-frame with a cloth nailed over it, on the little pegs that were fastened to the sticks, then he looked in my face so long that I grew almost ashamed and wanted to turn my head away; but he began to draw marks on the cloth, and after the first I did not mind it, for he only looked up quick once in a while, and then marked away like any thing. I had forgotten all about being tired or hungry till then; but standing still so long put me in mind of it, and I began to grow faint and dizzy, till the room went round and round. I did not remember any more till Mr. Ver Bryck was lifting me from the carpet.—When I told him that I was tired and very hungry, he looked serious, as if he pitied me, and the other gentleman said, 'Poor thing! poor thing!' and went out of the room as fast as he could. In a little while he came back with a handful of cake and a cranberry-tart. He was almost out of breath, and his hand trembled like any thing, when he put them in my lap. I cried so that I could not thank him. He did not seem to mind it, though; but smiled and looked happy when he saw how fast I eat. I wanted to have saved some for you, but they were looking at me and I was ashamed.

In a little while stood up again, as strong as could be. You can't think how fast Mr. Ver Bryck worked with a little brush, which he took from the table. His eyes grew brighter and brighter every time he looked up. I am sure it must make people very happy to paint pictures—don't you think so, grandpa?

At last he gave me this half dollar, and told me to come again sometime when you could spare me. My heart jumped into my mouth when I saw the money, but I did not know as it was right to take it for doing nothing, but stand still in a beautiful room. He would not hear what I had to say, but put the money into my hand, and told me to be a good girl and to come again.

When I went out, my basket did not seem half so heavy as it had; and though I had money enough to pay Mrs. Miles, I was

determined to sell some radishes. You can't think how much courage that cranberry tart and the cake gave me. I called loud enough, I am sure, but nobody seemed to want radishes for tea; and I was getting down-hearted again, when a carriage stopped at the pavement just when I was passing; and one of the most beautiful ladies that ever you set eyes on, came down the steps and was going into a house; but a dear little girl put her head out of the window, and while looking up, the lady forgot her shawl, and it dragged into the mud. I can't think how I ever come to be so bold; but before I thought what I was doing, the shawl was in my hand, and I was saying something, but I can't remember what. The lady spoke very, very kindly to me, and sent me down stairs, where I found four or five women at work. One of them was buying some of my radishes, when the lady sent for me to come up to her room. I never saw so many beautiful things in my life as I saw in that room. The carpet looked as if bushes and bushes of daisies and tulips and roses had been matted into it, and my feet sunk down softly, as I walked. It was like treading on Spring moss, when the May blossoms are just beginning to peep through it. I saw things to sit down on, covered over with silk and green leaves, and bunches of grapes seemed growing all over them. There were stools and cushions and chairs, all of silk and beautiful wood, and a bunch of fruit lay on each one of them. You know I had been cheated with pictures once, or I should certainly have thought the grapes and the peaches, and the apricots, were good to eat, they looked so natural. Four of those things which the gentleman called landscapes, hung on the walls, and it seemed like sundown in the room, for it appeared to me that more than a hundred yards of the thickest and heaviest silk hung about the windows. Oh, grandma, I do wish you could see that room, I am certain you would stare as much as I did.

After all, the most beautiful thing in the room was the lady herself, and the sweet little girl, who lay with her curly head on one of the cushions I have told you of, at her mother's feet. I remember it very well, for her cheek lay against the picture of a rose, and it was so red you could hardly tell the difference. A gentleman was sitting in a great easy chair, but I did not like to look at him, he was so tall and had such a proud way when he moved. And there was a nice boy, almost a young gentleman, so handsome and so polite; but I had seen him before—he carried my radishes into the basement for me. There they all sat, looking as happy and contented as if they had not frightened me to death by sending for me to go up there. Oh, how I trembled, when I first went in! But the lady called me to her so softly, and smiled in a sweet way, which made her look a thousand times more beautiful while she talked to me; and in a few minutes I was not in the least afraid to speak. She made me tell her all about you, and about my father and mother's dying, and—and—I don't like to talk it all over again, but I told her every thing. She almost cried once or twice, and the young gentleman did cry in real earnest. When I had done, he went to his mother, and put his arm round her neck, I heard him say—'Do take her, mamma, she is so pretty, and there is so much feeling in her story.'

The mother looked at the gentleman, who sat in the easy chair, and then he asked me a few questions. At the first sound of his voice, I began to tremble all over, like a leaf; but somehow, he did not seem so proud when he was speaking, and I made out to answer him very well. He turned to the lady and made a motion with his hand, which seemed to say, 'she is a nice, honest little girl, and you may take her.' The lady then told me to bring you and grandma to see her, to-morrow; and if you liked, I should stay with her, to 'help about house'; and she would give me good wages, and be kind to me, if I deserved it. She said, that if you and grandma proved the kind of people that I had told her of, you should have a room in one of her husband's houses, all for nothing, and that she would help me support you. A great many kind things she said, but I was so full of happiness, that I scarcely heard them. I am sure I don't know how I got down stairs, but the woman had taken all my radishes. The money was ready for me, done up in a paper; and there the basket stood, filled just as you see it—so heavy I could not have carried it home for the life of me. I suppose the lady had ordered the footman—I believe they called him that—to come home with me, but he seemed awful surly about it; and I begin to think, from what I have seen to-day, that a real gentleman is a thousand times better natured and more free, than one who don't know whether he is one or not. Why, grandpa, have you gone to sleep while I was talking?"

The old man's face was buried in his hands, and he was lost in deep emotion, such as the grateful Christian alone can feel. At length, he lifted his face and clasping his hands on the table, spoke his gratitude in the solemn and beautiful words of scripture. "I have been young and now I am old, yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging bread." There was a depth and fervency in the old Christian's voice, solemn even as the words he uttered. The little radish-girl bowed her head on her bosom, and the grandmother uttered a sweet and gentle amen.

SERMONS.—This department of our sacred literature contains more rubbish and less of any thing valuable in thought and diction than any other. We doubt whether there is so much trash in the form of novels as in the form of sermons.—*Hard's Miscellany.*