

which the mellow sunlight falls on the soft, dark hair of little children, is before us now. The thin voice is telling eagerly a story that the small listeners know full well already, and yet their interest does not for one moment flag. "It is twelve years ago to day," she is saying, "since your lady mother and I left Don Vasco's house. It was a dark night and raining heavily—" and so she goes on telling once more the oft-told tale of their marvellous escape.

"Did Don Alonzo escape too?" asks a bright-eyed boy earnestly.

"A long time passed before we knew," says Isabella, "and then it was by a strange chance. Ask your mother, my dear, to tell you the story of the golden cross."

"I know it," is the boy's reply. "How she bought it from a soldier because she knew it had been hers and Don Alonzo's, and how she heard from him that he was dead."

Just at this moment the door opens, and two ladies enter; one tall and straight and dark, the other fairer and smaller. We should know them both, for neither of them have lost their old beauty, though the silver threads in Marie's hair, and the lines in her sweet face tell of those dreadful months when Leyden was besieged and starving. Anita holds a little girl by the hand, as fair-haired; blue-eyed and dainty as Marie herself; and the children greet her enthusiastically, for their gentle cousin is a great favorite with all.

The ladies stay for a few moments to chat with Isabella, and to play with the little ones; and then they close the door again and leave the old nurse and the