

And they were all there!

And up to the very last she had—yes, now she knows he had—hoped against hope that something, something, would happen to let her, even her, be there too.

Her father had looked uneasy—had that meant anything? her mother made an inquiry or two—did they refer to this point? Last of all, her aunt Susan had privately interrogated herself as to the real reason of her remaining behind?

Janet had responded breathlessly with what she believed to be the truth.

It was, she had said, an expensive day's pleasure, and she fancied her father thought he had spent a good deal already. Then her lips had parted in her eagerness, and she had fixed a pair of hungry eyes upon her aunt, the while her heart had beat in an ecstasy of anticipation.

Mrs. Greybrooke had said nothing.

"Perhaps she will go quietly to Papa," Janet had whispered to herself. "Papa would not mind if she did offer to pay for me. She is better off than we are; and she is such a near relation that he could not be affronted."

And almost immediately afterward her father had come in, and with simple will the poor child had offered him her seat in the window beside her aunt, and had stolen out of sight and hearing, not to be any hindrance in case of a private word being desired. This had happened late in the evening of the night before.

It had been a second blow, but little inferior to the first, when bed-time had come and there had not been a word said to reverse to stern decree of fate.

All was now over; hopes and fears were alike at an end; and for more than an hour after the thin smoke of the departing steamer, had disappeared, the forlorn Janet lay like one stunned, staring with wide-open eyes into vacancy. She felt so sorry for herself. She had a kind of strange pity for her poor self. Nothing could ever give her back this butterfly day that was to have been. No after-joys could make up for the loss.

Some-how she knew that through all years to come she would grieve for this poor girl who was lying here, and whom no one else seemed to compassionate at all. She would know what this poor girl had suffered. She would never think of it as nothing, as a mere trifle which would soon pass out of memory. She would remember how the poor little heart had wrung, and how the eyes had poured forth and how the hot cheeks had been glazed with tears. Would it not seem wonderful that no other soul had cared whether Janet cried or not?

At length Janet rose.

The sun was shining more and more brightly, and so full of stir and bustle was the merry world below, that there would have been no chance of further repose even had such been desired.

"I will go out-of-doors and sit on one of the garden seats," murmured Janet, to herself. "Aunt Susan never comes down till half-past nine, but I cannot stay an-

other whole hour in bed. It is only eight o'clock now. Eight o'clock, and they have been gone more than an hour! Oh, dear! Oh, dear!

But in spite of sighs and sadness, she rose up and dressed herself. Some fancy induced her to put on the tweed dress—Stronachan's dress. Afterward she often wondered what had ever made her think of doing so. The tweed was too hot for so warm a day on shore, and only the inevitable ocean breeze would have made it acceptable on board of a steamer.

But the frock became Janet, and she took it down from its peg in the wardrobe and then donned the hat to match. Also, she laced on the boots that should have trod the Staffa shore, and smiled a little melancholy smile to herself as she did so. "I will carry out the make-believe all through," she said.

When fully equipped, it was a relief to leave behind the small bare chamber with its plaintive associations, and step downstairs to see what others were doing. Not that she cared what others were doing—there were no "others" there whose doings were worth the thinking about; but still she found herself noting this and that.

She noted that the hotel seemed very empty, while the bay, on the other hand, appeared to be unusually full. She noted that the large, beautifully appointed steam-yacht which had come to anchor late the previous night, had sent out a trim gig, which was just approaching the shore; and she noticed that in it was a kilted Highlander, at sight of whom her heart gave a throb, for he reminded her of her cousin Stronachan.

Then she turned away, and found a seat under shade of one of the few trees; where, looking out in the other direction, she fell to thinking and musing once more.

A voice broke in upon her reverie.

A voice! Whose voice? Who hailed her in familiar tones as "Janet"? Whose step approached from behind? And whose hand caught hers as a swift torrent of words fell upon her ear?

A few moments before she had been reminded of her cousin—was it then, could it have been, Stronachan himself whom she had seen, and—and—

"I say Janet, what luck that you did not go in that boat! I—hum—missed it myself somehow. But there was a beastly crowd, and we should not have enjoyed it at all. "And now, what do you think?" (eagerly). Such fun! My uncle Stewart's yacht—that one over there—came in late last night, and I have just been on board her; and she is off to Staffa in half an hour, and he wants us both to go. Your aunt can give you leave—or, better still, I dare say she will go with us. I am commissioned to invite you both."

"But—but how did you know I had not gone with the rest?"

"Oh, I—well, fact is, I was down at the boat," allowed Stronachan, somewhat shamefacedly. "I thought if you were going, I would not break faith with you;

but as soon as I found you were not there."

Janet turned away her head.

"I did not seem to care," added the speaker.

There was an awkward pause.

"We must not wait now," cried he, however, in another minute. "I promised my uncle to be back in half an hour."

"But Aunt Susan could never be ready in half an hour."

"Oh, if she will go, I could just run back and explain. He is with the gig now. I am sure he would wait for your aunt. Of course half an hour was a figure of speech. But do you think she could be ready in an hour? We should breakfast on board, you know."

"Oh, yes," cried Janet, starting, to her feet.

"And you think she will go?"

"I really think she will. She almost went with the rest. It was only the crowds, and the fear of its being a bad day which prevented her. Now that she sees what a day it is—"

"Yes, a dead calm. She need not to be afraid even of a swell."

"And in a yacht?"

"And such a jolly yacht, Janet! Everything is splendid from top to stern, and only a few old fogies on board—my aunt Stewart, who is a benevolent old soul, and some elderly Glasgow men, rather vulgar, but quite inoffensive—oh, it will be first-rate? Do run and hurry your aunt. Tell her I'll be back here in exactly an hour."

"But are you sure they can wait?"

"I am sure they will wait. They will be rather pleased, don't you know. Mrs. Greythorpe is a fine lady, and my uncle will be awfully flattered if she goes in his yacht, when she would not trust herself on the Staffa boat."

"Yes—yes."

"Fly then!" But still he detained her, "I say, Janet, were you—weren't you—it was not your doing, was it, that you did not go with the rest?"

"Oh Stronachan!" Open eyed, reproachful amazement.

"All right," said he cheerfully. "I thought not; but I wanted to be quite sure. Nobody said anything, you know."

"And—and—what did you say to them?" She was longing to hear this; and as the two were now on the move toward the house, time was not being wasted over the inquiry.

CONCLUDED NEXT MONTH.

It's a fool hoss that don't know who's boss.

A colt'll frolic in the mornin'; an old hoss at night.

Tain't allus the purtiest girl that kin make the best flapjacks.

A feller that's honest with himself'll be honest with his nabors.

You wanter watch the feller that's allus keen fer a hoss trade.

A balky hoss an' a kickin' cow make ots o' trouble on the place.