

"Then I want you to stay with us to-day," said Miss Terry. "We are going to have a Christmas celebration, and we need you for a guest. Will you stay, you and Miranda?"

Mary looked down at the doll in her arms, and up at the two kind faces bent toward her. "Yes," she said impulsively, "I will stay. How good you are! I don't want to go home."

"Don't go home!" burst out Tom. "Stay with us always and be our little girl."

Mary looked from one to the other, half frightened at the new idea. Miss Terry bent and pecked at her cheek, with a thrill at the new sensation.

"Yes, we mean it," she said, and her voice was almost sweet. "We believe that the Christmas Angel has brought you to us, Mary. You have the Christmas name. But you seem to us like the little girl we both knew best, little Angelina with blue eyes and yellow hair, who was Miranda's mother. Will you stay with us, Mary Angelina? Would you like to stay?"

Mary looked up with a wistful smile. "You are so good!" she said again. "I wish I could stay. But Uncle and Aunt are so—I am afraid of what they might do to us all. If they thought you wanted me, they would not let me go."