

Mathewson she must earn money for herself. To a girl with a mind and ideals like Isabel's, the monthly doling out of these much-grudged dollars was humiliating in the extreme. Perhaps if she had been of a less sensitive nature and had begged occasionally for the payment of a bill, or a sum for "helping out" purposes, as Jeanne and Irene did, she might have been happier in her home life, but money was to Isabel a distressing subject, and rather than ask for it she wore her dresses far longer than there was necessity for, and retrimmed hats with a persistency that filled her younger sisters with contempt.

"Isabel is a born old maid," they told their mother; "she actually likes to wear old clothes." And Mrs. Mathewson, with perception dimmed by constant contact with a man whose only pleasure was money-making, admitted she thought Isabel was old maidish, failing to see that this tall, slender girl with flower-like face possessed a soul that craved for sympathy and an artistic eye that longed for the chiffons she so patiently did without.

Isabel was not altogether disappointed when her mother consented readily to her plan of training, though she confided to her pillow with a few tears that night a wish that they had said they would miss her. But they did not, and the following day the application to the Training School for Nurses was sent in.

So many months elapsed before an answer came, the entire family save Isabel had forgotten the letter had been sent. When it did come, however, with its abrupt statement that her services would be required in twenty-four hours, it found Isabel with her outfit of pink dresses and white aprons all complete, a fact that filled her mother with astonishment and some resentment.

"You go about all you do in such a queer way, Isabel," she said somewhat complainingly. "One would think you did not want us to know what you were about." Then noting the pathetic look on Isabel's face, she

added in a more kindly tone, "Well, good-bye, my dear. Take care of yourself, and—God bless you."

When the tiresome train journey was ended, and an equally fatiguing one through long stone-paved corridors, and up endless flights of stairs to the corners of the bedroom, which grew so dear to her in after months, the girl found herself in the office of the directress. As she was surveyed from behind an intimidating pair of *pince-nez*, a lump rose in her throat and it seemed as if even the alluring bait of independence was not worth what she was going through.

"You are very late, Miss Mathewson," was the cold greeting she received, and Isabel began to explain in a voice so meek she hardly recognized it as her own, the fault was that of a delayed train, not hers.

"Take Miss Mathewson to Ward 4," was the sole response, and this was addressed to the white-capped nurse who had brought her into the august presence.

It was with a grateful heart that Isabel found herself in the long corridor again. Once outside the office door she pulled herself together and tried to steady her nerves. It would never do to be afraid of those who were in authority over her. After all, the worst thing they could do would be to send her home; so holding her head a trifle higher she followed her guide, with, at least, an outward show of intrepidity, up to the Woman's Medical.

Perhaps it was the strangeness of the long ward with rows of spotless beds on either side and the white medicine chest and dressers' carriage in the centre, that established the first bond of sympathy between Miss Mathewson and Ella May. They were just putting her into bed when Isabel came on the ward, a poor little frightened mite of two and a half years, hardly able to speak, and so wasted by disease she looked but half her age. An aunt who had brought her in was taking a severe farewell.

"Now, Ella May," she said, shaking