

tip under a plate, and fled before it could be discovered.

It was a red-letter day for all three, for they were going to the theatre that night for the first time. Joan had once been at a play with her father, but it was so long ago as to be the dimmest memory, and she was as excited as the boys. Their first play was to be *As You Like It*. Oh, lucky young people to see, for the first time on a April evening, in Shakespeare's own town, the youngest and gayest play that ever was written!

They ran up to their rooms to dress, talking and laughing. They could not be silent, their hearts were so full of light. Jean sang softly to herself as she laid out what she meant to wear that evening. Pamela had made her promise to wear a white frock, the merest wisp of a frock made of lace and georgette, with a touch of vivid green and a wreath of green leaves for the golden-brown head. Jean had protested. She was afraid she would look overdressed: a black frock would be more suitable; but Pamela had insisted and Jean had promised.

As she looked in the glass she smiled at the picture she made. It was a pity Pamela couldn't see how successful the frock was, for she had designed it. . . . Lord Bidborough had never seen her prettily dressed. Why did Pamela never mention him? Jean realised the truth of the old saying, "Speak weel o' ma love, speak ill o' ma love, but aye speak o' him."

She looked into the boys' room when she was ready and found them only half dressed and engaged in a game of cock-fighting. Having admonished them she went down alone. She went very slowly down the last flight of stairs (she was shy of going into the dining-room)—a slip of a girl crowned with green leaves. Suddenly she stopped. There, in the hall watching her, alone but for the "boots" with the wrinkled, humorous face and eyes of amused tolerance, was Richard Plantagenet.