

old people of seventy-five looked like that? If they did, Rosme thought it fortunate that the psalmist had fixed the orthodox age at three score years and ten. The strength of Aunt's excess age was certainly labour and sorrow—for other people.

Whether some of these musings came through telepathically to Aunt it is impossible to say, but the volume of her lamentations lessened suddenly.

"What are you thinking of, standing there like a graven image?" she snapped out.

"I was thinking," said Rosme, politely, "that you haven't told me what you want yet. Excuse me, Aunt, but you have coughed your cap all crooked—over the left eye. I'll fix it."

Fix it she did with grave face and deft hand. Then, "What was it you said you wanted, Aunt?"

The old lady was exhausted, if not beaten. A tear of rage shone in her still undimmed eye but her voice was perceptibly weaker.

"You are a heartless child," she quavered, "a hard, bad child! I want that shutter open. I want my cane. I want my medicine. Nobody cares whether I live or die. Nobody——"

Rosme flew to open the shutter and succeeded in making noise enough to drown the remainder of the indictment. She picked up the cane and placed it beside the gaunt figure on the bed.

"It isn't medicine time for another hour," she announced dispassionately. "You know Frances *never* forgets your medicine. Is there anything else?"

Two more tears of rage gathered in the old lady's snapping eyes.

"Go away!" she waved feebly. "You are bad. You are heartless. The doctor shall know how disgracefully I am neglected. GO AWAY!"

"Is she all right, Rosme?"

"Yes, all she wanted was a shutter open. In five minutes she'll want it shut, at least she would only I told her you had gone out and I don't think

she'll want me again just now. Why don't you lie down, till medicine time, Frances? You look tired out. Say, Frances, do you think its worse when she's upstairs or when she's down?"

Frances shook her head with a nervous smile.

All the time Rosme had been upstairs she had been blaming herself for allowing the child to go. But it was true that she was very tired. Even her buoyant youth was drooping under the demands made upon it. Frances Selwyn had both a heart and a conscience. She did her best to satisfy Aunt, but Aunt was insatiable.

As she had rested in the window-seat, trying not to hear the unceasing rumble overhead, she wondered if other people could do better. Only yesterday a visitor had gently suggested that worry belongs entirely to mortal mind. All environment, she had said, is thought created, and the only reason why all persons are not happy and comfortable and good-tempered is because they cannot be brought to think that they are.

"If I try to think that Aunt is pleasant and kind, thought Frances, 'Will that make Aunt pleasant and kind?' The instant and overwhelming negative was not encouraging. 'But of course,' she added conscientiously, 'that is not a fair test, because I couldn't think that Aunt was pleasant and kind no matter how I tried.' There was also the undeniable fact that the visitor's remarks had made Aunt even ruder than usual and her temper ever since had been frightful. Frances and Rosme and Matilda were all tired out with it. Matilda, being a maid, could leave but the other two, being nieces, couldn't.

"She is going to tell the doctor how dreadfully she is neglected," said Rosme with an impish smile. "So I think I'll go out and play for awhile. I'm tired of being Bluebeard's wife and the turban was too hot anyway. I'll be in the back yard. Whistle three times if you want me."