

On Christmas Day in the Morning

I have n't heard. She — you see, I can't help thinking it's because she's going to — turn me down — and — hates to do it — Christmas Day!"

He turned suddenly and buried his face in his mother's lap; his shoulders heaved a little in spite of himself. His mother's hand caressed his head more tenderly than ever, but, if he could have seen, her eyes were very bright.

They were silent for a long time. Then suddenly a jingle of sleigh bells approached through the falling winter twilight, drew near, and stopped at the door. Guy's mother laid her hands upon his shoulders. "Son," she said, "there's some one stopping now. Perhaps it's the boy with a message from the station."

He was on his feet in an instant. Her eyes followed him as he rushed away through the hall. Then she rose and quietly closed the sitting-room door behind him.