

—you look so queer! Isn't it right to wish it?"

"It is right to do more than wish, it is right to will to make the best of ourself, and all of ourself, that God wants us to; and that is enough to overbrim the deepest measure of our ambition. The trouble comes when we are not willing to study God's lessons, but want to choose our own."

"Yes, sir," Katharine replied, wonderingly. Her father was looking at her so strangely, almost pityingly, it seemed to her. She could not understand it. Her hands moved restlessly; they were thin, nervous little hands; her father closed his strong ones about them.

"Katharine, do you remember our talk the other day about the years of preparation needed for all great work?"

"Yes," the girl answered.

"Would you be willing to work and wait and suffer years if necessary?"

"I believe that I would," she answered, steadily. Her breath came quickly; what was this strange, hard work that was coming to her?

"In all the world, little daughter, there is no such high and holy work as the making of a human life. The finest universities in the country cannot teach it; only God can do it, and God has his own way. Are you strong enough for that, dear? strong enough to enter God's university?"

"I—don't—know," the girl faltered. "Tell me, father. I don't understand. Tell me, quick!"

Then her father told her.

"Dear, Doctor Barrows has been watching you closely the past year. He told us to-day that it would be absolutely necessary, unless you were to ruin your health for years for you to drop your studies at once, and not touch them for a year at least—it might be longer."

For a moment Katharine sat motionless; uncomprehending; then a look grew in her eyes that made her father's heart ache for her.

"I—I guess I'd better go—for a little while," she said, dully. At the door of the study she stopped a moment and looked back.

"Tell mother that I shan't want any dinner to-night. I'll come later; and—thank you for trusting me, father." Then she closed the door gently and ran up to her room.

It was dark, and she was glad. She buried her face in the pillows and sobbed out her pain and disappointment. To drop out of school at seventeen—it seemed like dropping out of life. Even if she could go back another year it would be with a lower class, not her own friends. They would be younger than she, most of them, and only that afternoon she had been the acknowledged leader of her class! There was Alice, too; Alice would go on and have good times and take everything. Oh, it wasn't fair! Why couldn't it have come to some one who wouldn't have minded? Plenty of girls wouldn't; they would even have been glad. And she had been meaning to work so hard. Why, she would have given up everything for study!

For a long time she lay there while the darkness wrapped her closer. Then gradually, from sheer exhaustion, the struggle grew weaker, and, with the quiet, new thoughts came. Were books, printed books, all of life? Was there not, outside and beyond them, all mankind, and nature, and God? Was it because she was in danger of shutting herself into a tiny world, after all, that God had taken this dear thing out of her clinging hands? Perhaps, by and

by, when she could be trusted to use it wisely, he would give it back again; and until then?—until then she would try to grow worthy.

She pushed away the pillows and went and bathed her swollen eyes. Then with a little half-smile she lighted the gas, opened her desk and took out her journal. There were no long entries in it, only notes to call back happy hours and dates of a few special times in the glad, girlish life that had been hers. She hesitated a moment and then wrote a single line:

"Entered God's university November tenth, 1890."

She closed the book and put it back in its place, but still she sat thinking. There were lessons; oh, yes, many, she began to understand dimly. Would not the great Teacher make them clear as she went on? There was all out-doors to study; always she had wished that she had time, and the time was given her. There would be beautiful household lessons with mother—"Economics," she said, whimsically. But there were others, too—gentleness, and unselfishness, and courtesy. She had seen so little of mother in the rush of school duties and pleasures; she realized it now. It should be mother's year, she promised herself. And father? "Ethics," she decided, quickly. Who but father could help her to decide the vexing questions and to walk bravely and cheerily though dim, difficult ways?

"I think," she said, gravely, "I think, Katharine Morgan, you will find all the lessons you want this next year. See that you take them without complaining when they're hard. That's your part!"

So Katharine's new studies began, the hours out of doors with sun and wind; the talks with mother and later with father; the long, still resting times in her own room each day. They were hard at first. She was glad that she had not known how difficult they would be; and hardest of all was the keeping in with her old circle of friends and hearing constantly their eager talk of the senior doings. Katharine, making dainty commencement gifts for her friends, said to herself over and over that she would try to sympathize with the girls in it all; but one thing she could not do, and that was, go to the commencement. It was too much; no one had any right to ask it.

Then one day her mother called her in as she was passing her door. The table in her mother's room was covered with a white heap of organdy and lace. Katharine looked at it in bewilderment.

"It is just like Alice is going to wear, dear," her mother said, tenderly. "Did you think that I was going to have you left out?" And after that, of course, there was no question about her going.

And after all when she looked in the glass, commencement night, she could not help a little thrill of girlish pride. The dress was so pretty and the roses mother had put in her hands the last thing were so fragrant and beautiful and 'remindful.'

"I will have a good time," the girl said, resolutely. "I would not have mother disappointed for anything in the wide world." She turned from the mirror, then she gave a little exclamation of delight. On the table was a set of Burroughs, and with the books a line in her father's writing:

"To my little daughter, in recognition of her faithful study of the lessons God set for her. June thirteenth, 1891."

The girl's eyes dimmed as she read it. "Oh, they have been so dear to me!" she cried to herself. "How could I be ungrate-

ful and blue! I'll be just the very happiest girl there to-night!"

She kept her resolution bravely. If once or twice during the exercises she felt a queer lump in her throat, she touched her roses softly and smiled up at her mother. She did not falter even when Professor Stafford, who had been invited to make a few remarks to the class, spoke of the value of study, and when Alice, pretty and radiant, gave her graceful valedictory, the one that she was to have given. And after that it seemed a pity that so small a thing should spoil her victory. It was at the class reception at the close of the exercises, and someone was congratulating Alice. Katharine, passing, heard the next question and answer.

"But where is your cousin? Wasn't she in your class?"

"Yes, she was," Alice's light voice replied, "but she dropped out in the fall. They said she wasn't strong and must rest for a while, but I guess, after all, she rather enjoyed having nothing to do. She wasn't too sick for good times, you know. You'll find her here somewhere. She doesn't look like an invalid."

Katharine slipped by and into a sheltered corner. There was a window there opening out in to the soft June night. Katharine, pressing her hands tightly together, looked with hard, unseeing eyes, into the shadows. It did seem as if she might have been spared that. It was cruel of Alice. Alice, for all she learned so quickly and gracefully, had never cared half so much for her study as she did. She—a voice at her side made Katharine start and turn quickly, the tears still on her lashes. Professor Stafford stood there holding out his hand.

"Have I discovered your hiding place at last, Miss Morgan? I have been looking for you the last half-hour. I wanted to congratulate you."

"Congratulate me?" Katharine stammered. "I—I think you must be mistaken. I don't graduate, it was my cousin."

"No, I don't think that I made a mistake," the professor answered, smiling. "I have seen your cousin already. Her valedictory was a very fine one, unusually graceful and spirited."

"Yes, sir," Katharine replied. She knew that it was bare and ungracious, but she couldn't speak then. Why wouldn't he go away!

But the professor understood the appealing glance. He directed the girl's attention to the effect of certain wide-branched trees against the night sky. Gratefully Katharine turned to the sheltering darkness, and then he spoke.

"I said that I had not made a mistake, Miss Morgan. If it is not presumptuous for an old man to say that he understands anything of a young girl's life, will you permit me to say that I can appreciate what the past year has been to you? When I was just ready to enter college my eyes gave out and I had to wait three years before I could open a book."

Katharine did not need the darkness now. She had turned to him eagerly.

"Oh, go on, please!"

He looked past her out at the horizon. "I do not believe there is anything to tell. I rebelled at first, then slowly I began to understand. Before the three years were over I had learned the greatest lesson of all my life—that God, and not man, is the great Teacher of the human soul; that I might be educated without books or teachers or universities, but I could not be without God."