

fair part, now we have done our share. And you and I could live together here or near Hugh and take care of ourselves."

"It would be so hard to have to do that with father: hard for Hugh, hard for father," sighed Letty.

"All there is about it is hard," said Faith; "but we should not wish to relieve Hugh of his due share of responsibility. He would be the better man for taking up duty, hard or easy. And you, Letty, have suffered enough; you shall not be further endangered by father."

"The way I manage it," said Letty quietly, "is to make the very best I can of every little quiet, easy time that comes. Then I get up courage and strength for the hard times. Now father will be good for awhile, and I shall keep my mind as easy as possible."

In fact, father kept the peace for nearly three weeks, and Kenneth Julian did not reappear, so Letty felt as if she had come indeed to a lull in life, a very truce of God.

Then troubles came up again, swift as a summer thunderstorm. Since the time when father sold his clothes, Faith had kept the clothes locked up when the well-known danger signals were flying. It was now late in July, and Kenneth Julian was coming back for a week. Richard had brought the news.

"Fore he went he told me when I heard mother say he was coming back to come up here and tell you, Miss Mermaid, and if I did it right, he'd bring me one pound of sugared almonds and nine packs of firecrackers. You'll tell him I did it right, won't you? I'm going to give you half the almonds, after I give mamma some, but I don't guess you care much for the firecrackers—girls don't 'most always."

Thus the new Mercury carried messages between the gods.

The next day Kenneth would arrive, and Faith felt pretty sure he would be up the beach speedily.

Perhaps she was glad of it. Faith was always the one to get the breakfast. She made Letty stay in bed until the meal was nearly ready.

"I ought to get it; I am the eldest, you know," said Letty.

"Being the eldest, with a Faith and Hugh younger but quite grown up, you have reached such venerable age that you must lie in bed in the mornings and rest."

And this morning when Faith came downstairs, lo! the door of father's room was open, and father gone! His bed had not been slept in; and from the wall of the front room those three engravings, "The Angelus," "The Return of the Mayflower," and "Cupid in Vacation," had vanished—gone with father, gone to buy drink! And Kenneth was coming, and he always called at the little house on the beach to shake hands with Letty and to bring her a bunch of flowers, a book of patterns, or a box of candy or a basket of fruit. He would see the vacant places on the wall; he would know what had happened!

At first Faith dropped into Letty's chair and cried heartily. Then she wiped her eyes and told herself that Letty must have a hot breakfast and so must she, and then she would have those pictures back.

She made great despatch about breakfast. When Letty came down she gave a moan at hearing that father was gone, but, absorbed in him, she never noticed the loss of the pictures. Faith did not call her attention to it.

"I am going for Kiah Kibble," said Faith, "and we will go to the town and hunt up father and bring him back. We must find out where he gets his liquor and put a stop to it. It will be fourteen months yet before Hugh can take care of father. Keep quiet here, Letty, and don't worry. Kiah and I will see to the rest."

That Kiah should give up a day's