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LONGFELLOW

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

BETWEEN the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me 5
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight, 10
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes,
They are plotting and planning together 15
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded, 20
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret,
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.