

not the secret mischief she was working in the heart of her biggest pupil. But of all the lessons, Dick liked literature and writing the best; the first, because he felt that, in some incomprehensible way, some inner part of himself was communing with the soul of his teacher; the second, because it brought her to his side. And as time went on the silly boy would with aforethought mis-shape his letters, that he might prolong her presence near him.

One day after school Dick so timed his movements as to meet his teacher at the school gate. Their homes lay in the same direction, and he dared to walk by her side.

It was bitterly cold, but Dick felt enough warmth in his heart to thaw the whole ridge of packed snow that lay between their paths. Miss Moorland was pleasant, and Dick was in the seventh heaven.

After proceeding a little way in silence, the pupil turned to the teacher and said, "Miss Moorland, I would like to ask you to explain a little difficulty for me. Will you?"

"Certainly, Richard," answered the teacher with just a suspicion of the school-room, which Dick would rather have been absent.

"Why do you always call me Richard, Miss Moorland? You call all the other chaps Tom and Jack and Harry. Why don't you call me Dick? Everybody else does," he persisted.

The teacher laughed ever so gently. Maimie Moorland could never be cold to any one.

"I call you Richard, because—because you are such a very big pupil for a little woman like me to have. And I thought you would prefer it," she returned.

"I wish you would call me Dick. It sounds warmer like."

This was conclusive, so Miss Moorland replied with a smile that caused Dick to lose his head altogether.

"Very well. Henceforth, I shall call you Dick.

"Now, what was your difficulty, Dick?" she continued.

"On the first day of school," he replied a little shyly, "You asked me if I knew what a 'phantom of delight' was."

"Yes, and you said you did know, but couldn't tell me. Wasn't that, it Dick?"

"Yes ma'am; and I thought I did know then, but now I am not so sure about it. For, I looked in Webster's dictionary, and Tom Kennedy seems to have been right. He said it was 'a kind of a nice ghost,' and I was so confused at the time that I did not catch what you said it was, and I have been thinking of it ever since."

He stopped.

"Well, what did you think a 'phantom of delight' was, Dick?" asked the teacher encouragingly.

"I thought it was you,"—and, as he looked at the lovely, rosy face and the eyes turned upon his own, he added with the utmost sincerity, "And, I think so, still, Miss Moorland."

Maimie Moorland smiled again and sweetly said, "That is very nice of you, Dick,"—and deep in her heart a something stirred that sent a thrill through her whole being.

"I like that piece of poetry," went on Dick, innocently, "I repeat it to myself many times every day, because it always reminds me of you."

"That is right, Dick. It is a beautiful, little poem—one of the sweetest ever written." She spoke evasively, but Dick was not thus to be put off.