

sisted upon having his bench. As he grew feebler the stitches became more uneven, and we were often alarmed about the awl, which might have pricked him. He lived, though, happily with us for some years. He grew more unsteady day by day and wandered a little, but still he would spend an hour or two every day at his bench. He made a goat harness for the little boy, and quite a number of pretty things in leather.

One day I heard him in his room tapping, tapping away on his lap-stone with more than ordinary vigor. Then I listened to him. He said: "A good job; a very good job. Capital, though I ought not to praise myself. There never was but one man who could equal me, and that is my dear, dear son; and his son, my grandson, shall also be a first-class shoemaker, if the good God, whose name be blessed, only lets me live a little, a very little longer," and then I had heard the rattle of a hammer as if it had dropped on the floor, and I went into his room, and the dear old man passed quietly away, with a last prayer on his lips. There are no shoemakers now-a-days like in the old time.

A Little Heroine.

IT was only a few days after my mother died that old Kate, the blind woman who lived in the room next to ours, lost her little dog, and offered to share with me her small means of living, if I would fill his place for her. I was glad enough to accept her offer, and so, day after day I led her through the streets, and at night shared her humble cot. It was in that way, through passing so often the same houses, that I noticed and was attracted towards the inmates of one. It was an elegant brick dwelling, with a bow window, and in that window often sat a lady, with the most gentle, beautiful face I had ever seen, while leaning at her knee would be a boy of about twelve years, with eyes and brow like her own, but features in general more like the dark handsome face of one who would sometimes come and talk with them for a while.

It was all the same to old Kate where I led her, so long as she knew by the sounds about her that she was in a populous neighborhood, and I often would pass and re-pass that house with the bow window and its beautiful occupants as many as a dozen times a day; and so, though they knew me not, I came to know them well.

The months went on, and summer came with its pleasant evenings. Then when old Kate, worn out, would fall fast asleep, I would watch my opportunity and slip out unheard. Perhaps it was wrong for me to do so; but surely, I thought, no one would harm a little girl.

One evening, drawn by the splendor of an open door, I stood looking in, when a lady who was passing left the arm of the elderly gentleman whom she was with, and came to my side.

"Come away, my child," she said, earnestly. "Do you not know that is one of the devil's most deadly traps? Come away, let me entreat you!"

I was not afraid—she spoke so kindly; but it did not seem to me that what she said could be true.

"Oh, it is too beautiful to be that," I answered, "it is like a fairy land."

Her voice was even more earnest as she spoke again, and there was a bitterness in it as if somehow she had suffered through just such a place.

"But it is so, my child. It is the straight road to destruction. True, it is beautiful, but it is only to entice and ruin."

I walked on by her side for some distance—the gentleman all that time not saying a word, but looking, I thought, a little amused—and then she loosed my hands and I sped home.

Another bright, moonlit evening came. I could not resist the temptation to once more stray out. This time my steps turned towards the house in which I was so much interested.

The lights were lit, but the curtains were all drawn; and though I crouched low by the iron railings, I could see nothing, and was turning away, when a light carriage suddenly drove up and stopped, and a gentleman alighted and ran up the steps. At the same moment the door opened, and the lady with the beautiful face came with outstretched hands to meet him. But her face was as I had never seen it before—all stained by tears that yet fell, though with her white hands she tried to brush them away.

"Oh George! where is Gaston? Herbert is ill—perhaps to death! I have longed so for you to come, for only you could I ask to search for him. My poor boy has done nothing but moan and call for his father the last three hours, and the doctor says if his wish is not satisfied and his mind set at rest, he fears the worst. Oh, George, I pray you leave no stone unturned till you find my husband! I cannot tell you where to look, for I have not seen him since early this morning. He did not know that Herbert was in any danger, for I did not. The fever became violent for the first time at noon."

The gentleman stooped and kissed her forehead.

"My poor sister, I only wish for your sake I had any clue as to where Gaston is; but I will do my best."

But ere he had left her I had gone, on the wings of the wind, for I knew where to look for him. Only an hour before, I had seen him enter the door that I had heard called "the devil's most deadly trap."

I knocked, and no one answering, though in my heart I was frightened, I pushed open the door and entered. I saw not this time the great crystal lights or the bright pictures that lined the wall, for my eyes were fastened upon two forms who, in the centre of the room, were confronting each other.

"You shall pay for your words—and now!" one was saying, and as he spoke, he drew something glittering from his pocket.

The man before him who was thus threatened with the weapon, was the one I sought. I sprang forward. "Stop!" I cried, with frantic energy. "Do not kill him. Herbert, his boy, is dying and calls for him!"

All eyes turned with curiosity and surprise upon me, but I cared not. The man's hand with the knife fell to his side.

"His boy, Herbert, is ill and dying," I repeated, "and he calls for his father; and the doctor says if he does not see him he cannot possibly live."

I shall never forget the look of agony that came in the place of the anger to the dark face of Herbert's father.

"My boy dying, and I here."

He had been beside himself with anger, but the shock of my words had sobered him, and taking my hand, he led me from the place. Once out in the street, I tried to leave him, but he held me tightly.

"If my boy lives, it will be you who have saved him. You shall come with me," he said.

Such a pathetic scene it was when the mother, hearing