

## CHAPTER XXII

### A TALKING DOG

OUR Mary, on account of her lameness, has a little bedroom downstairs, just back of the dining room. Her mother does not worry about her being down there alone, for Billie always sleeps beside her bed in a box, and if any strange step is heard in the hall, or outside the open window, she gives her queer half bark, half scream, and rouses the family.

Our Mary used to have a young dog of her own to sleep beside her, a mongrel spaniel, but to her great grief some one stole the dog a year ago, and she has never known what became of it.

One day when I was talking to Billie about sleeping downstairs she told me that she would far rather be upstairs with Mrs. Martin, but at the same time she is very glad to do something to oblige our Mary, whom everybody loves.