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## AT HOME ONCE MORE.

"WANTED—A governess at Brayton Lodge. One capable of teaching music and languages, and bringing good references."

"At Brayton Lodge! Dear old Brayton, my own home!" cried Lucille Brayton, throwing down the paper and bursting into tears. "How can I ever go back there as governess and see it owned by strangers; and yet, what else offers itself? I cannot starve."

Almost desperately she sprang up and walked about the little room for a moment, then picked up the paper and re-read the advertisement.

"How I wonder who owns the dear old place now!" she mused: "Is there any girl there now who is as happy as I was—who, perhaps, has my room, loves the flowers and walks as I did. Has a lover, perhaps, and rows with him on the lake in the moonlight evenings. Oh, Loyd, Loyd! Why do I torture myself in this way?" She broke off, suddenly throwing herself on the little old lounge, in a passion of tears and grief.

Her's was truly a sad story.

Ten years before, a petted only daughter surrounded with every luxury and affianced to one whose devoted love she fully returned, sorrow had singled her out as a target for its arrows.

First, her lover was called abroad and in mid-ocean went down with the fated ship on which he had taken passage.

Then, just as her heart seemed breaking with its weight of grief, a terrible blow fell over her home—none other than the death of her father by his own hand, and the sudden terrible knowledge that he had succumbed first to one temptation and then to another, intending in time to replace all, but driven to desperation at last by the accumulation of bad luck and wrong-doing.

To make what reparation they could, the heart-broken widow and daughter gave up their home and everything they possessed, and then went away to cover up their shame and grief in a part of the world where they would be strangers to all.

The year that followed had been one continuous struggle with sickness and poverty, in the midst of which Mrs. Brayton quietly folded her tired hands over her broken heart and died, leaving Lucille alone in the world.

After that, overcome with loneliness and a longing to see her old home, Lucille slowly drifted back to the place of her happy girlhood; had just to-night arrived at the little village, taken a room in the hotel, asked for the paper and read of the governess wanted in her old home.

"I can at least go and see the dear old place," she said to herself the next morning, when after a night spent in sleepless sad memories, she ate her breakfast without seeing one familiar face and started off.

"I don't suppose I will do, because my references are too far away, and I will not let them know who I really am."

How familiar was every turn and byway of the little village and the road leading off to the lodge. Lucille's eyes were so continually blinded with tears that she hardly noticed the few passers-by, and no one noticed her.

Veiled, and in her plain black gown, she bore little resemblance to the beautiful Lucille Brayton who, in other years, had dashed gaily over these roads on her pony or in her phaeton, the admired of all observers.

At last the dear familiar tower, peeping above the trees, rose in sight, and then only a few steps and she was at the gates, stretching hospitably open as in olden times, with the smooth white drive rolling away beyond under the shady beeches.

"I must—I must control myself," she murmured, leaning for a moment against the lichen covered stone gate-pillar. "But, oh, how hard it is! And how little everything is changed! I had hoped to find it so, and yet how doubly hard it makes it to bear!"

Slowly she went on, winding in and out the wide shady drive until the house was reached, and every step revealed how lightly time had touched the place.

The new owners had made no changes. Every seat, arbor and statue were the same, and unchanged as to position.

Two children on the shady stone porch sat on the same ornamental settee she had always used, and at the sight of her one of them jumped up.

"I s'pect your our new governess. Do you want to see mamma?"

"Yes," answered Lucille, with a great exertion at steadying her voice.

And the child at once disappeared into the house, leaving her sister staring shyly at the stranger.

A pleasant-faced lady soon appeared in the doorway.

"Will you walk in, please? It is very warm without."

Lucille did so, more by sense of feeling than sight, for memories were overpowering.

"You come in answer to the advertisement, Miss——"

"Lathrop," said Lucille, faintly, and pushing aside her veil with reluctance as she remembered her tear-stained face.

But the darkness of the room only revealed its excessive pallor—nothing more.

"I would be pleased to secure the position; and can teach music, French, German and, with a little study, Latin. But I am a—stranger here, and my references are from places and people so distant that I did not know whether you would be willing to accept them."

Two keen, bright eyes had been searching her face as she spoke, and their owner was making up her mind in a hurried decisive way characteristic of her.

"I think I would be willing. Are you fond of children?"

"Yes, madam."

"And have you taught before?"

"For three years in a family from whom I bring a recommendation."

A few more questions and answers followed; and then, almost before