

upon the ambitious "as Thou wilt!" When Father O'Donnell had lowered his eyes and hands, which he had raised in an attitude of prayer during his pious exclamation, he sat silent for a moment.

"Shall I get the tea, sir?" said Alice.

"Yes, my child; yes, do."

Alice took her seat at the head of the table, and Frank and Father O'Donnell sat one at each side of her.

As she poured out the tea her hand trembled, and she sighed.

"What's the matter, Alice; your hand is trembling as if you had the ague, and you are sighing as—— I'm blest but there is another sigh. I hope, child, that your true love hasn't run away from you; but no, I'm sure, your little heart hasn't—heigh-ho, what's this they call him? ay, I have him, Cupid. Well, I hope Cupid hasn't seized on your little heart yet?"

"Who is he, Father?" said Alice, with an arch smile at Frank.

"Oh, you don't know, I suppose; but then you are too young. Wait a little, though, my little baggage, I warrant you that one of the first hearts he'll steal will be your own."

"Sure you would not let him, father?"

"That's good, though—a poor old priest to prevent him; if Frank, there, had any pluck, he is a likely young fellow, he might take the start——Pooh, there is another sigh from Frank. I am blessed but it's infectious—but Alice; Alice, child! What the deuce—God forgive me; Alice, stop! don't you see that it is into the sugar-bowl you are pouring the tea?"

Both Alice and Frank blushed and smiled alternately. Father O'Donnell looked at them and sighed too; and then mused and muttered—"Could it be?"

Now, we must try and make out what Father O'Donnell was hatching in his precious noddle when he muttered—"Could it be?"

"That will do, child; take away these things and bring us the makings of a glass of punch."

Alice did so, and then sat beside the fire playing with Carlo and puss. Carlo and puss received her attentions with evident pleasure; for Carlo frisked about and jumped into her lap, and puss purred and curled up his tail, and rolled on the rug, and then looked up as if envying Carlo his happiness; and then thinking that he had as good a right to be in her lap—he also jumped into it. Carlo, not liking his company, grinned. "Now Carlo, don't; you

naughty little dog, let pussy alone; do you be quiet and sleep together, poor pusseen cat. I will tell you something, pusseen cat; you ought to get in love with Carlo, and then you will be quiet." Though Alice said this in a whisper, Frank overheard it, and blushed and looked into his glass, watching the dissolution of a lazy lump of sugar. Father O'Donnell, too, overheard it, and stirred his punch, and took a spoonful to see was it strong enough, and then, not finding it exactly to his liking, he put a little more whiskey into it, and again tasted it, and, not finding it to suit, put another lump of sugar into it, and then gave a "Pooh—can it be?"

Having finished his glass of punch, he leant back in his chair and seemed to reflect.

He leant back in his chair and reflected for some time, and then he slapped his thigh with his hands, and exclaimed half aloud, "I will ask them!"

"Ask whom, Father O'Donnell?" said Alice.

"Oh, nothing, love," said he.

"Now," said he, or rather thought he, to himself, "what an ass I was near making of myself,—ask them, indeed,—why that would be playing the deuce with it entirely, but then it can't be,—in love, in love! and they so young—two children, that used to be climbing my knees a few years ago! no, it cannot be; but then, sure I didn't feel them growing. Look at how big they are!" and he gave a side look at Frank and Alice, as if to see how far they had grown beyond the standard of children. "What will I do with them? I'll tell you; I'll send Frank home; I could not tell that laughing little baggage to go;" here he gave another sly look at Alice, who was busily engaged with Carlo and puss.

"Stop, Frank," said Alice, saucily; "stop, and don't be pinching Carlo; look at the way they are fighting," and as Frank had pushed near her to join the fun, she saddled him with the grave offence, in the priest's eyes, of pinching Carlo.

"Now, Frank, child, don't pinch the poor dog," said Father O'Donnell.

"There again, Frank," said Alice, as Carlo gave a squeal, and no wonder, for she had pinched puss, and puss laying the charge to Carlo's account, stuck his paw in his woolly ear.

"Come here, Carlo, from them," said the priest; and Carlo jumped over to him, leaving puss in undisputed possession.