

"A kiss first, papa, or you cannot come in," she said, holding up her lips to his.

Her father lightly swept her mouth with his, and pushed past her, saying—

"There, there, Dusk, don't be silly. I'm in a hurry. Let me past."

The girl stood where her father had left her, the clouds gathering about her brows and the rain-drops glistening in her eyes. It was the first time her father had treated her so, and she resented it. She tapped the ground with her foot in anger, and then shutting the door, marched upstairs to her room.

Meanwhile, Mr. Nettleton James had sought his library and locked himself in. He pulled down his desk, and drawing some documents from his pocket spread them out before him.

The sun, just setting behind the mountain, poured a flood of light into the room, and a sparrow or two chirped in the garden.

After a while he rose, and unlocking a drawer in the desk drew out some more documents, among them a photograph, at which he gazed long and earnestly.

"Yes," he muttered, "there is no doubt about it. They have the same face, but it is countenanced in the boy. Forbes, Forbes, why did you send him here? Better if he had lived and died a farmer. But one cannot break the eagle's spirit or tame the zebra to a horse's work."

Mr. James resumed his study of the documents, and the sun had long sunk to rest ere he heard the gentle tapping that had been going on at the door for some time.

He rose, restored the documents and photograph to the drawer, locked it, and then opened the door.

"Well, child?" he asked as he saw Alice; "what is it you want?"

"Are you not coming to tea, papa?" said Alice. "It has been ready over an hour. Mother says you can go to work after tea, if you must."

"My work is over, Dawn," he replied, kissing her. "I'm sorry I kept you waiting."

Together they went into the dining-room and sat down. Edith was not there.

"Where's Edith, Alice?" asked Mrs. James.

"She's in her room, mamma. She doesn't want any tea."

"Why, what's the matter? Is she ill?"

"No," broke in Charley, "but she's in a terrible temper over something. I went in to tell her tea was ready, and she chased me out like a whirlwind. It wasn't my funeral if she didn't get tea, so I left her and came down."

"What is wrong, Dawn?" asked Mr. James.

"She says you were cross, papa."

"Cross! cross with her? Why, I only saw her at the door. Oh! yes, I know now. I was in a hurry, and answered her sharply. I'll soon make that right."

So saying, he left the table, and went upstairs to Edith's room. Edith was sitting at the window when her father entered, and did not hear him until he spoke to her:

"Crying, Dusk, crying? Did you feel it as much as that? What a cross, old bear I am. Will you not forgive me, girl?"

Edith burst into sobs, and her father drew a chair beside her, and putting his arms around her, sat with her in the twilight.

"Come, Dusk, forgive and forget. Mr. Forbes had sent me a young man to look after, and that worried me and gave me too much to do, else I would never have been cross."

"I hate him," said Edith, vehemently. "Why did he come bothering you, and making you cross?"

But Edith's were summer tempests, with sun ever ready to shine through them, and she was soon downstairs at tea all smiles and sunshine.

"Mother," said Mr. James, late in the evening, as the family party sat round the grate fire, still only a luxury, "Forbes has asked me to keep an eye on a young chap named Simson, and I have asked him to spend Saturday evening with us. That will be all right, I suppose?"

"Oh! dear," said Edith.

"How unlucky," said Alice.

"Cor' found it," muttered Charley.

Mr. James raised his eyebrows enquiringly, and looked at the three younger members of the family circle.

"Well, what's up now?" he asked. "Have I broken in on any arrangement of yours, young people?"

"Why, papa, didn't you promise to take Edith and me to the concert on Saturday, and isn't Charley going with Bertha?"

Mr. James' face expressed the dismay he felt. He made it a rule of his life to fulfil every promise he made to his children, and finding himself in a quandary, gave free vent to his feelings by rubbing his head and exclaiming, "Oh! my, oh! my."

"I'm going, anyway," said Charley.

"You're a boy," said Edith. "I wish I were a boy, I'd go, too. I've got to drag poor papa wherever I go. If I were a boy, I'd be a soldier, and I wouldn't smoke horrid cigarettes"—Charley had just lit one—"or go around with my head over a fence."

Charley rushed at her, partly in fun, partly annoyed, but Edith eluded him, and found shelter in her father's arms.

"Keep still, children," said Mr. James; "let us see what is to be done. The girls must go to the concert, even if I stay at home. I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll take him with us."

"Don't ask me to be his companion, papa," said Edith; "you know I hate him."

"You'll have to go with anyone your papa chooses, Dusk," said her mother.

"Then I'll be just as cross and rude as ever I can be," said the girl, shaking her curls.

"Which will not be much, Dusk," said her father, laughing. "You cannot be really unkind, even if you try."

And thus it was decided that Peter should go to the concert with the James'. He was not so ignorant of music as his new friends supposed, though of concert etiquette he knew so little as to go dressed in gray home-spun, much to Edith's secret amusement and Alice's chagrin. He had heard the low of cattle, the bird songs in the morning, the murmur of brooks,