

to my mother when I was a child. I liked the thing, and I thought that some day, perhaps, I might see it worn by—someone."

The old woman watched him earnestly in silence.

"Mr. Edmund," she said at last, "have you spoken to her, my dear?"

"How could I?" he asked.

"And is she dark, Mr. Edmund, or fair like your dear mother?"

"She has a sweet brown face, and beautiful brown eyes. There, nurse, I've talked nonsense enough. I'll let you know how I am getting on; and now, good-bye."

When he was gone, the old woman got stiffly out of her chair, knelt down, and prayed with all her might. That was all that she could do for "her boy"; and it was a great deal. Feeble as she was, she used a mighty power, and knew, in her own soul, that a divine voice was answering her pleading. She was too poor to pay the debt that she owed him; but God would pay it for her, and lift the heavy burden of gratitude and regret from her sorrowful heart.

Carry Lancaster was on her way to the house of a pupil when she caught sight of Edmund at the jeweller's shopdoor. As she passed through the street again, she paused before the bow-window, and felt an irresistible desire to find out Mr. Warrenne's business with the jeweller. She was very fond of pretty things, and there was an amethyst brooch set in pearls which would suit her well. She went into the shop, and asked the price of the brooch from Mr. Myle himself. The old man moved slowly, and while he was taking it out of the window, her glance fell on the glass case upon the counter. There, among a few old jewels, was the bracelet which she had clasped on her arm at Mrs. Sanderson's dinner-party.

"Ah, that bracelet," said the jeweller in answer to her question. "Yes, yes; it once belonged to the queen of Charles the First. Really, I can let you have it at quite a moderate price."

"I can't afford to buy it myself," replied Carry frankly. "But perhaps I can find a purchaser. I will see."

On the evening of the same day the Willingtons gave one of their private concerts. Miss Lancaster sang, and everyone said that she surpassed herself. She sang all the better, no doubt, because Mr. Seacombe was a listener, an old gentleman, very rich, and a great admirer of the songstress. Carry had a good deal of tact—the sort of tact which is generally used to gain a selfish end—and after some circumlocution she told him about the queen's bracelet.

She slept at the Willingtons' house that night, and gave vent to a burst of triumph in her own room.

"Becky shall never have the thing! I won't let her get the better of me! And so Edmund had to sell it—I was quite sure that he was poor! Well, I shall prepare a grand surprise for my Lady Becky Selwood!"

Poor Becky who had loved her old schoolfellow, and welcomed her to Oakenbury, had never even dreamt of the bitterness of Carry's jealousy. Her days passed as peacefully as usual; the birds perched on the little iron balcony to sing to her; the pitcher on her table was filled with the beautiful blossoms of the chestnuts, pink and creamy white; the afternoon sun shone into the pretty room while she lingered over her solitary tea-cup. Every day she was with her pupils from half-past nine till four; and on Saturday she had a whole half-holiday.

It was on a Saturday when Carry saw her again. She burst into the tranquil room like a gust of wind, and startled her quiet friend.

"How are you, dear?" she began. "I'm off to a garden party, and I want you to like my frock. Does heliotrope suit me as well as blue?"

She was elaborately dressed in soft silk with a good deal of loose filling, and wore a large black hat relieved by clusters of mauve flowers. With cheeks