

"Certainly, said Mr. Gerard slowly, "Will you name her then; as her nearest friend, you will be her god-mother I suppose?"

"I, oh no, if you please, I am an Anti-Mason," said Rica with a very deep blush as she met the earnest look he turned upon her.

"Are you, and why?" he asked innocently, playing with the baby in a manner that showed he was evidently accustomed to little ones.

"Oh, I do not know—for various reasons, I am very strong against them,"—answered Rica, hesitating over her words, conscious she was not showing any of the strong points of an enemy. But somehow this elderly, dignified, "lovely" old man, was not one to charge upon with her petty artillery. If it had been Hugh, sitting there instead, she would have felt no hesitation whatever. On the contrary, would have argued till both were exhausted, and then not yielded so much as she had in the first words to this gray-haired enemy.

"I hope you will not be so strong against us, in the future, Miss St. John. I hardly think you consider us even now quite heathen, or you would not have turned this little one over to our keeping so readily. You are not afraid to trust her to us are you?"

"No, certainly not," she smiled at the question.

"Then you must believe there is some good in us?"

"Yes, *some* good," she said slowly.

"But about baby's name, I have a fancy to have you name her. I want you to keep interested, you see, in the Masons."

"I am very fond of the child, and shall always be interested in her welfare. And if I must suggest a name, what do you say to May Mason? She was born in the month of May. Her mother died, and she is now adopted in May. It is an eventful month for her. It will also carry out her mother's wish in losing the name of Gray."

"May Mason, it is a very good idea and shall be carried out. I see I have only a half an hour before the train leaves. Can she be ready?"

Baby was carried out to be made ready, and Mr. Gerard turned to Rica, "I am very glad to have had this meeting with you, Miss St. John, and only wish I had a longer time so that I could convert you to Masonry." She shook her head. "I know I could," he laughed pleasantly, "and whenever you come to the city, if you will let me know, my wife and self will be very happy to call and give you full accounts of baby May."

"I shall be glad to meet you and your wife," said Rica cordially, "and hear of baby, and—I am not afraid of being converted."

He laughed. "Do not be too sure. You have my address?"

"Yes."

Baby, or we may as well call her now, May Mason, came back ready for the journey. She had looked upon the unusual bustle about her, as a sort of holiday fun, and had been very joyous, till it came to going herself. Whether the carriage frightened her, or the by-byeing, more serious than usual, made her feel instinctively she was leaving her old and only friends, she sobbed and cried as though her heart would break.

Miss St. John stood it as long as she could, and then taking the child from the girl's arms, soothed her in a few moments. "There pet will go with auntie now," and so Miss St. John rode to the depot and saw them into the car. A little finesse was then used, and Miss St. John went back without any formal leave-taking with Baby May.

She had a very amusing note from Mr. Gerard a few days after, with a graphic description of their journey and of the howling Miss Mason set up when she discovered she had been fooled away from her friends. Evidently her initiation into Masonic arms had not been on the most gentle terms. She had screamed most persistently during the baptismal rite, and had even slapped Mr. Gerard in the face, when he, thinking she might favor him as the oldest friend she had there, had attempted to pacify her. On the whole, Mr. Gerard feared she had inherited all her mother's dislike to the Masons, and imbibed some of her Anti-Masonic "aunt's" opinions, and for such a little rebel, Miss St. John need not have minded being god-mother. He was glad to say at the last, little May was boarded in a *good* Mason's family, and was, all considered, doing well."

Rica was much amused by his account, and yet worried. She missed the little thing greatly. She had found it pleasant to have something to love and care for that loved her back, and had felt several twinges of conscience in that she had given her up so quickly to the Masons,—not that she feared but that they would do well with her, but would the little one get the kind of love she might have given her? She might have kept her. George would not have minded, but it was too late now, and other cares crowded the baby out of her mind for a time. Spring melted into Summer, and Summer was melting into Autumn. Cities were vacated by all who had means to get out of them, but the heat had found its way to country and seashore, and nobody knew where to flee from it. Mr. and Miss St. John were at Newport, when the last men-