

## A GREAT MISTAKE.

Something was simmering in a big pot, and it smell very savory and good, is it?" said Miss Thrale, sitting down and taking the smallest scholar on her lap. "Is Kitty hungry for her dinner?"

Kitty hung her head, and put her finger in her mouth.

"Wie! Kitty! I speak to the lady," said Maria; but Lucy kissed the baby and laughed, and gave her little watch to hold.

Bee was examining the big scholars in the chair.

"I don't know Anastasia Perry here, Maria," said Lucy suddenly. "I hope her mother is not beginning to dream again."

"Oh, no;—Lord Meldrum is ailing; and Doctor March says he is not to come among the others until he gives me leave."

"Doctor March!"

The young ladies looked up, staring at the name, and turned a little pale.

"Did not Doctor March happen to see her?" said Lucy hurriedly. "I had a idea he ever came here."

Maria explained that the Doctor had never been under his care.

Lucy and Bee exchanged glances. But, while Bee laughed and looked comical, Lucy appeared to have a secret.

"I suppose he was," she said, smiling, and putting little Kitty gently down. "It is getting late."

"Oh, we must stop and see the children at dinner." There is bread and soup to-day, said Selina Jones tells me."

"Yes!—Soup with carrots in it! We seen em!" cried the children in a chorus.

"No; let us go, if you don't mind," urged Little Barbara—perhaps Doctor March might come in."

"We will go if you wish, dear, of course," said Bee, smiling. "But why need we care about Doctor March?"

"I do not know—no, of course not!" answered Lucy incompletely. "But I want to go."

"No, children," said Bee, as they said good-bye, "remember Christmas is coming. And sometimes at Christmas trees have dolls and sugar plums growing out of the branches. But only very good children get them."

You must make a note about your Christmas tree, and who knows but one of these days you might find me in this very room?"

The girls hastened down stairs, and into the pony carriage, which they had left at the corner of the street.

"Lucy, we are to see Doctor March?"

"I do not know," she stammered.

"I was afraid he might talk about our school."

"Not if he did not want to keep it secret," said Bee, smiling more and more surprised.

"You don't like him?"

"He has often seen you, though! Only to day he told me he was talking about you."

"About me?" Lucy looked frightened.

"Yes. He told me to advise you to walk to Green Knowe so late. Do you ever go there?"

Again Lucy colored painfully, and hung her head.

"It is a quiet place," she said. "I did not think it was very safe in going there."

"I am tired of King's Road; and there is a station quite close to our house, you know."

Bee looked at her, puzzled by her continued agitation.

"Of course I know you would do anything you believed to be wrong," she said, in her sincere voice. "But I think you had better venture so far from home again. Doctor March says so; and he knows what is best always."

"Very well," returned Lucy quickly, and the rest of the drive was passed in silence.

They had entered into Upper Brunswick Street and drew near the house, Lucy added suddenly, as she had—but that moment spoken. "At least, I will go no more, and then I will promise you to walk somewhere else."

### CHAPTER XXXI.

Bee and Lucy had hastened together, and Lucy had been strolling with all manner of intriguing sweets and dainties given to themselves from good Mrs. Jorum's domain; and afterwards Miss Throgmorton took Bee and friend all over the big house, so that in a few moments they were in the drawing-room again.

The last had challenged her to a game of billiards, in which Lucy was ignorantly beaten, they prepared to settle down in the comfortable brown room for the rest of the afternoon.

"We shall have it all to ourselves," said Bee, installing her friend in the easiest of easy chairs. "We will sing and play and do just what you like to do."

"But, first, I am going to remember my promise you made to me—that she had—but that moment spoken. "At least, I will go no more, and then I will promise you to walk somewhere else."

"Very well," returned Lucy quickly, and the rest of the drive was passed in silence.

They had entered into Upper Brunswick Street and drew near the house, Lucy added suddenly, as she had—but that moment spoken. "At least, I will go no more, and then I will promise you to walk somewhere else."

"I made you a promise?" said Lucy, wondering. "I don't remember. Bee; but of course I will keep it."

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