

girl slipped from her, giving place to the quaint merriment of an entirely peaceful nature.

To her life meant the cheerful performance of a multitude of little tasks, for all of which there was an appointed hour, and each night she sought her tiny cell murmuring gratefully: "What a happy life I have!" And yet she was only the portress, whose place it was to stand meekly by that the choir nuns might proceed. Why should it mar her sweet tranquillity that Mother Margaret was a famous scholar, and Mother Agnes a wonderful musician whom visitors came many miles to hear, when her delightful duty it was to keep the long hall swept and dusted, to ring the Angelus at morning, noon, and eve, and to hasten to open the hall door at the first sound of the bell?

Before her in the hallway hung a great painting of the girlhood of Mary, bequeathed to the convent a score of years ago, which pictured the holy maid girlish and sweet, sitting musing by her distaff, with spindle lying idly on her knee, while she looked wistfully through an open doorway awaiting the coming of the wondrous message which was to make her for all time blessed among women, and Sister Katharine, from long musing by the picture, had caught some of the peaceful beauty of the Virgin's face.

"How kind every one is to me!" thought Sister Katharine; "here I have been portress for about twenty years, and being portress is so interesting! almost as good as being sacristan." And truth to tell, it was most interesting, often so nearly exciting that Mother Superior, known to her Sisters as Mother Anna, gently warned the little nun against distractions.

To the portress came all the visitors, the dealers in supplies, returning pupils, and the beggars whose name was legion, and who knew well that even the most flagrant impostor would not be turned away empty-handed. "Where should they go, poor dears, if we refuse them?" Sister Katharine would murmur with heartfelt pity. Once the

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