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HARMONY WINS





THERE WAS SOMETHING IN HARMONY THAT WOULDN'T LET HER GIVE UP.—Page 196.



# HARMONY WINS

A BRIGHT LITTLE GIRL BRINGS  
MUSIC OUT OF DISCORD

BY

MILLICENT OLMSTED

ILLUSTRATED BY ELIZABETH OTIS



BOSTON

LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO.



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HARMONY WINS



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# HARMONY WINS

## CHAPTER I

### HARMONY

**O**N the top step of the eight that led to the little high front porch of the Hale residence sat Harmony. The broiling sun of an August day was beating upon her. Across her knee lay a story book, so broken-backed that it required no effort to keep the leaves open. To shade her book, Harmony had unfurled an umbrella which never could have claimed aristocracy in the ranks of umbrelladom and now was not worthy the friendship of a scarecrow.

Although she made a picture at which the street urchins jeered, it didn't matter. She'd been hooted at ever since she was "knee-high to a grasshopper." That's what came of having a man like Grandfather for a grandfather.



“ Hoh! Harmony Hale,  
He bought you at a bargain sale!”

It wasn't exactly pleasant, but what was a young person of eleven, or thereabouts, to do? She had in her dim youth exhausted all such abuse as turning up one's nose and sticking out one's tongue. Then came a period of calling names, but she had gone down to defeat long since under the colossal vocabulary of the street boy. At length, Harmony's attitude became one of indifference, even a form of deafness. And so the boys didn't annoy her as much, for what's the use of teasing a person who doesn't tease?

If only Grandfather had developed a corresponding deafness! But Grandfather, in the thirty-odd years he had enjoyed the reputation of miserliness, had never grown used to the taunts of the several generations of street boys. Invariably, when they hooted, he would dart at them,



shaking his cane and his fist, and shouting threats that sent the boys into spasms of gratification and fear.

To-day they had an hour, more or less, of fun with Harmony's slitted sunshade, but she read serenely on, despite heat and derision. A fairy story could so enthrall her that unpleasant things did not intrude.

Suddenly Harmony lifted her tousled head and gave ear to a sound that came indistinctly through the hot summer air. If there was one thing the little girl loved equally with the fairy tale, it was the gay music of the street piano. Both stirred the same part of her mind, but the melody beat in her heart and made her feet tingle.

Harmony rose, listening. Her book slid down the steps unheeded and lay limply on the pavement where little quavers of heat danced. It was early, she thought, for 'Seppy. He usually waited till the sun began to go down, and it couldn't yet be more than three o'clock.



Off darted the little girl, eager to locate the alluring strains. Around the corner, quick as a wink, along that street—then suddenly she stopped. The piano was in a house, and it was not the street piano of her heart after all.

Harmony's whole figure drooped as she slowly retraced the long stretch of unshaded sidewalk to her home once more.

"I was sure it was too soon for 'Seppy,'" she sighed.

Picking up the slighted story book, she smoothed its pages lovingly with a begrimed little hand and then clasped it against her breast.

She glanced up the dusty steps to the littered porch in front of her door. The paint on that portal hadn't a vestige of color. Harmony had often wondered what it really had been, for dust and soot had rubbed it quite away. It was blistered and peeling and altogether inhospitable-looking. In fact, the whole neighborhood was



unsightly from neglect. The pitiless bright sun pointed with accusing distinctness at broken porch balusters, sagging steps, and missing shutters.

The only cheerful windows were the two that peeped up above a stone curb and area-way under the front steps. These belonged to the half-submerged dining-room where Eileen, cheerful, untidy Eileen, held sway. Here the blinds were always open, and between the fluttering tags of the ancient lace curtains, one caught glimpses of a red-checked table cloth and a few articles of cheap glass and china. Oftentimes, Eileen's broad, smiling face beamed out upon the lonely little girl called Harmony Hale, and her tender Irish blandishments came reassuringly through the open sash.

Just now, as Harmony was peering hopefully into these half obscured windows for the curly head of Eileen, a voice sounded from within the house.

“Harmony! Harmony!”



The voice pronounced it "Harmonee-e," with a soft, fretful drawl. The child gave a little shiver, glanced hastily up and down the street, then, with feet that dragged leaden-heavy, took her reluctant way up the steps. She closed the dilapidated umbrella and entered the house softly, shutting the front door without a jar. The long, narrow hall was dark as a pocket, but Harmony seemed used to it, for she unerringly placed her book and umbrella on a table in the shadow and then opened the door at her left.

The parlor which she entered was, if anything, darker than the hall, only the merest slivers of light penetrating between the tightly closed shutters of the old-fashioned blinds. The room was stuffy, and it smelled of medicine.

Harmony could see nothing. Some one was in the room, however, for presently from the gloom, the soft, fretful voice said, "How hot you smell, Harmonee. You



must have been running in the sun. How could you?"

The child said nothing.

The voice continued. "Dear me! I've been calling you for nobody knows how long? Where have you been? And Eileen, too. It seems as if I never could get any one when I want something. I might just as well live in a desert. Nobody cares. Ill as I am, and helpless, and no one near! Dear me. No, don't come any closer, child. You smell so hot. It's very unpleasant to me when I feel so ill. This heat is killing me." There was a long pause.

Harmony remained silent, but backed her sun-perfumed self several steps towards the hall door.

At last the mysterious voice sighed, and the address to Harmony was resumed.

"Dear me! I think I really ought to have the doctor, only, if I should, your grandfather would probably be more unbearable than usual. He says my doctor's



bills make his pocket-book look like a slice of dried beef. He's so brutal."

Another pause. The little audience felt that she was cooling off rapidly in the cellar-like atmosphere.

"At any rate, I'd better get some more of that last medicine the doctor gave me, Harmonee. I must have something, or I shall surely die. I feel terribly. Here's the bottle. Tell the druggist to re-fill the prescription and to charge it. Dear me, how I dread fighting out that druggist's bill with your grandfather. Seems to me you can hear the pennies in his pocket squeal, he's so pinching."

She sighed.

"Dear me, I do wish you would go, Harmonee, and not stand staring there like a numskull. And hurry back. Oh, and I'd like to have you go to the library, too. Tell the girl you want something real exciting. I must have something to take my mind off my suffering, or I certainly shall



die. The last books you brought were very dull. Now run along."

The child approached, in the dusk, the shape that had been speaking to her, and felt the six-ounce medicine bottle put into her hand. As she pushed her way between two heavy plush portières into the room beyond, the irritable voice repeated, "Dear me, I wish you would hurry, Harmonee."

One window, also with the blinds drawn, served to darken this apartment materially, but a broken shutter allowed enough light to show its untidiness. The bed was unmade, and bureau drawers were ajar. A chair by the bedside held an assortment of bottles, as well as a smoked lamp and two sticky teaspoons. A petticoat with a yard or so of torn lace, several stockings, and an odd bedroom slipper occupied the floor, and Harmony promptly caught her toe in the trailing lace. But she did not pick it up. Things were always out of place in mother's room.



She finally located the books on the center-table under a breakfast tray littered with toast-crumbs and fruit-skins, her disturbance of which started a number of tiny flies to buzzing.

The books discovered, Harmony reached the hall by another door and stumbled down the dark back-stairway to Eileen's precincts.

"Eileen, Eileen," she called. "Mother's up. Did you know? Her bed isn't made and the room looks like sixty."

"Sure, now," said Eileen, appearing from the kitchen, "she couldn't have been up long. I was there to see her at three, meself, and her still abed. And how's Dear-Me a-feelin', darlin'?"

"I think she's a-dying," said Harmony simply, without any apparent anxiety.

Eileen laughed. "You mean, she thinks she is. Well, I'll go and red up her room and let her scold me a bit. That'll cheer her."



“She complained,” continued the little girl impressively, “that I smelt of the sunshine.”

“An’ why shouldn’t ye smell of sunshine, I’d like to know, when you’re sunshine itself, darlin’?” and Eileen nodded so vigorously that a big saucy curl danced down into the middle of her forehead.

“Perhaps you think so, Eileen, dear,” answered Harmony, readjusting the library books on her left hip. “*You* may think so, but who else does?”

“Well, there’s——” began the Irish girl with a great pretence of naming a list a yard long, when the child interrupted.

“Mother doesn’t.”

Eileen shook her head promptly.

“Grandfather doesn’t.”

Eileen again shook her head.

“I haven’t got any other relatives, have I?”

“Not as I knows of,” agreed Eileen.

“Teacher doesn’t.”



“How do you know?”

“O, it’s easy enough to tell when people like you,” answered Harmony. “*I* can tell. Now, Eileen, who else is there?”

Eileen opened her mouth and kept it open, hoping for inspiration. None came.

“Of course there’s ’Seppy and Grig, but they don’t count ’specially. ’Seppy’s only a Dago and a grind-organ man, and Grig’s only a boy,” finished Harmony.

Eileen chose to change the subject. “Where ye goin’?”

“Library, drug store.”

“Might ’a’ known, with your arms full. Didn’t you go yest’day?”

Harmony nodded. “I went to the library in the morning and for some diffurrt kind of med’cine in the afternoon. Say, Eileen, I don’t see when she gets a chance to read so many books, when she stays in that dark room all day long.”

Eileen laughed and chucked the questioner under the chin.



“Dear-Me reads purty near all night, that’s what she does. And say, darlin’, I haven’t a crust of bread in the house. Can’t you stop and get me a loaf on your way back, sweetheart?”

Of course Harmony could and would, and so, grasping the medicine bottle with its sticky label, with the books tucked under her arm, out she went into the hot sun again.

It wasn’t far from the Hale residence to either the drug store or the library, for the old house was quite down town, in the ragged, nondescript edges of the business district. It was in a part of the great city that had once been fashionable and peopled with the “best.” Now, nobody in particular lived there but the Hales, and the whole neighborhood was going to wrack and ruin. It was a community of a few shabby homes, several business blocks devoted to printing and kindred trades, cheap lodging houses, small shops and saloons.

The Hale home was the corner one of a



block of eight brick houses built in the uncomfortable fashion of three stories and a basement. It had been owned by Jasper Hale for almost fifty years. The block was, at present, in a shockingly dilapidated condition, due, people said, to the niggardliness of the landlord, who was holding the property until he could get a good fat price for the land. He had already had several fine offers, but he shook his shaggy gray head. "Not yet," he said.

A number of large buildings had recently been reared in the vicinity, notably the plant of a big morning newspaper. Near by was a schoolhouse, one of the oldest now standing in the municipality, the public library, and, just a block away, a fine hotel. The city's retail shopping district was not far distant.

The other houses of the block were rented as boarding-places or apartments for light housekeeping. The swarms of tenants were continually changing. Harmony's



house, which fronted on Elm Avenue, had a side entrance on Seventh Street, the only perceptible advantage it possessed over its neighbors.

As Harmony sped upon her errands, the sound of music came again to her ears. It was after five o'clock and the fierceness of the day's heat was gone.

"Well, *that's* 'Seppy," cried the little girl, breaking into a run.

Down the street was a small crowd of idle children, surrounding a street piano which was heartily pouring forth "The Glow-worm," with metallic precision. At the crank was Giuseppe Acquaviva, fondly shortened to 'Seppy by his host of child friends. His dark eyes sparkled as they caught sight of the flying figure of Harmony winging its way towards him.

"Here comes ma leetla hoap-toad," said he to the assembly.

"Mamie, hold my things," commanded Harmony, thrusting books and bottle into



the first empty pair of hands she saw.

“Now, move back a little.”

“The hop-toad, the hop-toad,” sang the delighted throng.

Harmony poised herself, smiled blinkingly at a low shaft of sunlight that shot in between the buildings and began to dance.





"THE HOP-TOAD, THE HOP-TOAD," SANG THE DELIGHTED THROG.  
*Page 16.*







## CHAPTER II

### “ A NAIRESS ”

**H**ARMONY never knew anything that went on about her while she was dancing. She didn't even notice the admiring crowd that usually gathered around 'Seppy's street piano, if only it left her vacant circle large enough.

But 'Seppy noticed, for he knew that coppers and nickels came easily when his little “Hop-Toad” danced. In New York, among his relatives with whom he had emigrated to America, the value of the “hop-toads” was much appreciated. The little children who could dance were enticed to follow the piano, sometimes many miles, about the city pavements.

'Seppy, seeking pastures new, some



hundred miles west of the great metropolis, hailed the unsolicited services of the little hop-toad as the direct gift of his patron saint.

Harmony hardly knew when she began, for 'Seppy had been an almost daily visitor in the neighborhood, during open weather, for three years past. The little girl had commenced with the other children, taking the few simple dancing steps that are current amongst even the poorest folk, and to these had added steps and postures invented under the inspiration of the music, until she had reached the acknowledged position of 'Seppy's *première danseuse*. Everybody stopped to watch, when the hop-toad appeared.

Perhaps this hot August afternoon, while she danced so absorbedly on the sun-heated pavement, would be as admirable an opportunity as any for a good look at our little heroine.

Should one have introduced you to her



formally, you would have had no better acknowledgment than a glance, direct but brief, from a pair of clear gray eyes without a smile in them. For Harmony had never been taught manners, and it would not have occurred to her to extend her hand in token of greeting nor to dip in an old-fashioned curtsy. She would probably not have said anything, either, for she talked little except to her crony, Eileen.

Usually Harmony had few smiles to dispense, but in dancing she considered them a part of the dance. On this August afternoon, you would have caught her with an expression that was very lovely, a little smile that made her lips curve most kissingly. It was not directed at any person—if it were, that person would be hard-hearted indeed not to be thoroughly charmed.

As a matter of fact, Harmony's face was dirty, and her straight little nose and firm chin would have been much improved by



intimate contact with a thoroughly soaped wash-cloth. Her hair was a tousel of loose, light-brown curls, around which a crumpled green ribbon had been tied by the loving Eileen. The curls hung half-way down her back and were inextricably wound about the buttons of her pink-and-white checked gingham dress. The dress was smudgy and wrinkled, and the hair-wound buttons were the only ones it could boast. Her brown stockings, very imperfectly fastened up, made little rolls at the top of her shabby shoes, and coarse black darns were distinctly visible at both heels.

So much for untidy, neglected little Harmony Hale, posing and gesturing and dancing, with all the repressed enthusiasm of her eager child heart poured out into the gentle grace of forest dryads and the piquant witchery of winged fairies.

The music stopped, and the sudden sharp tinkling of broken glass awoke the hop-toad from her ecstasy.



The medicine bottle! Mother's errands!

Mamie, in her pleasure at Harmony's performance, had tried to clap the hands already occupied with bottle and books, to the destruction of the former. It lay in fragments on the pavement.

Harmony stood in mute tragedy. How was she to get the prescription re-filled if the bottle was destroyed! But quick in alternatives, she dropped to her knees and picked up the bits of broken glass that still clung together where the label had been pasted.

“ I can take these to the drug store man, only—only the bottle will cost extra,” she mourned.

“ Leetla hoap-toad,” said a soft Italian voice in her ear, “ no weep. So sorra I am. You dance so lika ze angel for me. Heere ees money. You buy new bottla.” 'Seppy put into her hand a dime, and smiled.

“ Oh, thank you,” said Harmony, very much surprised; and, conscience-stricken at



the lateness of the hour, she hurried away upon her belated errands.

Nothing further happened to add to her anxiety, for the prescription clerk easily made out the number of the medicine from the broken bits, and refused to take any money for the new bottle.

“I guess I can give such a good customer as you a new bottle without bankrupting the store,” he said generously. “How’s your mother, to-day?”

“She’s dying, I guess,” answered Harmony.

“Pshaw, that’s too bad,” he exclaimed, as if the little girl had not told him the same sad news dozens of other times.

“Yes, and she may be dead by now,” continued Harmony sadly, “because she told me to hurry, and ’Seppy came along with his street piano, and I forgot and began to dance—and—and I’m so late now, perhaps she’s died already.”

“Oh, I wouldn’t worry if I were in your



place,” reassured the clerk, as he wrapped the bottle in pink paper and fastened it at top and bottom with dabs of sealing wax.

Then she hastened to the library. Few people were there because it was most everybody’s supper time.

The young lady in the fiction department looked dubious.

“Something exciting? Why, let’s see. Seems as if she’d had every detective story in the library and most of the tales of adventure.”

Harmony followed her earnestly from shelf to shelf, her face full of concern.

“She said she guessed she’d die if she didn’t have something to take her mind off her suffering.”

The young lady shrugged her shoulders.

“Well, dear, we’ll do the best we can,” she said, and briskly marked down the two books she finally selected.

Nor did Harmony forget the loaf of bread, but added that to her armful as she



passed the corner grocery a short distance from home.

By this time it was dusk, and Harmony's worry had increased at a terrible rate. She ran clumsily, tears blinding her eyes, sobs aching in her throat. Oh, oh, if she hadn't forgotten and danced so long—and mother waiting for her medicine!

At a corner near home, she ran plump into a gray-haired man who was coming along at a great pace.

"Here, here," he growled at her, taking her by the arm and swinging her out of his way. "Whom are you running into, you little scamp?"

It was her grandfather, and he didn't know her in the half-light. Harmony did not wait to explain. She ran on to the paved area-way, down the steps, and burst into Eileen's hot kitchen.

"Oh, Eileen, is she dead yet, tell me, Eileen, tell me quick—mother?" gasped the child, white-faced and teary.



“ Little silly, is who dead? ” asked Eileen. “ Whatever is the matter with ye? ”

“ Oh, I’m so glad. ” Harmony sat down. “ Here’s your bread, Eileen, and I’m so hungry and thirsty. I want my supper. ”

“ You’re a little goosey-gander, that’s what, ” said Eileen, unwrapping the bread and beginning to slice off wholesome white slabs. “ When Dear-Me’s that sick that we’re out for watchers, I’ll tell ye straight. Just you trust your old Eileen. ” She whisked into the dining-room with her plate of bread and a pitcher of milk. “ Now’ll ye promise not to get yerself into a stew again? ” she shouted, as she set the things down on the red-checked cloth, with a resounding thump.

Harmony followed.

“ Oughtn’t I to take her med’cine right up to her now? ” she asked, relinquishing her worry by degrees.

“ After supper, ” said Eileen, “ I’ll take



the whole kit of stuff up to her, bottle and books and lamp, too. She's had her supper, and she's prob'ly asleep, or her bell'd be buzzing for all it's worth. Eat your supper, child."

The gas, mingled with the stale, hot air of the dying day, made the room close and uncomfortable, but both Eileen and Harmony were used to these conditions and sat cheerfully down to the frugal meal.

"Bread and milk for us, and your grandfather gone out to get a whacking big dinner at the rest'rant. To be sure, it saves me from sweltering over the hot stove, and I think your complexion'll be a sight better for eatin' bread and milk, Harmony. You've got a nice skin, child, and you'd best take care of it."

"But bread and milk's good," answered the little girl, spooning away with energy, careless of complexion, but hungry as a hawk.

Eileen, pottering over a cup of much-



cooked tea and her bread and butter, gazed affectionately at the child opposite her.

“ To look at you, now,” she said, smiling across at the serious gray eyes, “ eatin’ your bread and milk so contented-like, in that faded old gingham dress, one’d never guess at your bein’ a nairress.”

Harmony gulped a spoonful to ask eagerly, “ What’s a nairress? ”

Eileen was puzzled. “ My, ain’t nobody ever told you that you’re a nairress? ” she questioned to gain time, “ your grandfather’s? ”

“ Nope. Has it anything to do with his being a miser? ”

Eileen laughed.

“ Not unless that you’ll get a bigger fortune just because he is so stingy.”

“ Do you mean,” asked Harmony, at length understanding Eileen to mean heiress, “ that when Grandather dies, I’ll have all his money? ”

“ Sure. That’s what I mean.”



“Is that much?” asked the child.

“They say it’s heaps and heaps,” answered the young woman, lowering her voice mysteriously.

“Oh,” said Harmony, “so that’s what they mean when the boys holler after him, ‘Miser, miser, mean and old, where d’you hide your piles o’ gold?’ If somebody else should find his piles o’ gold, I wouldn’t be much of an heiress, would I?”

“No, I s’pose not,” responded Eileen, picking up her teapot and preparing to clear away the dishes. “Mercy, child, you do think of such queer things.”

Harmony sat dreamily staring out of the low windows, where, in the twilight, she could see only the feet of men and the skirts of women passing.

“What does he hide his piles o’ gold for?” she asked Eileen, who was going noisily back and forth.

“Sakes alive, how should I know?” came the answer, almost crossly, “an’ me



strugglin' to make both ends meet on the few dollars he allows me for the housekeepin', and his only grandchild goin' around lookin' like a rag-bag.”

Remarks about her personal appearance failed as yet to arouse any kind of interest in Harmony. She still dreamed, with her elbows planted firmly on the red checks.

“I think I'll begin to hunt for them,” she said finally. “Wouldn't it be exciting, Eileen, to come across a secret chamber, and when one opened the door, softly and slowly, and pee-e-eked in, to see the shining piles o' gold all heaped up and running over from the chests and the sacks? O-oo-oo, Eileen, wouldn't you love to be with me when I find his treasure?”

“Get out with ye,” laughed Eileen, “you've been readin' too many stories. Nobody but idjits keeps gold in their houses nowadays. Sane folks, if they have any, put it into the bank.”



Harmony smiled.

“ I don’t care, Eileen; it makes something exciting to think about, and that’s the best of all. As long as I can have nice stories to think out, it doesn’t matter so much about Dear-Me and Grandfather not loving me. I’ve got the sweetest story I tell myself, about a lovely lady who is my pretend mamma and loves me most to death. I found the picture of her one day, in a box that Dear-Me gave me. I think about her nights, when I go to bed. I’ll show her to you some time. You don’t suppose Dear-Me would care, if she knew I told myself this beautiful story of a pretend mamma, do you? ”

Eileen didn’t answer the child, but her attitude, as she stood near the window, was a listening one, so Harmony went on.

“ Now I’ve got a new story to tell myself, all about being an heiress. That’ll be lots of fun, Eileen, ’cause being an heiress is almost as good as being a fairy princess,



isn't it? Oh, and I'm going to think up a story about hunting for Grandfather's piles o' gold. He won't mind, will he, Eileen? You don't s'pose he'd call it meddling, do you? 'Specially if I didn't touch anything—just thought about it?"

“ Well, he'd be a worse old curmudgeon than he is now, if he should mind your dreamin' about his piles o' gold, as you call 'em. Ain't it most your bedtime? I'm expectin' company to-night.”

“ Oh!” Harmony jumped to her feet with alacrity. “ All right, Eileen. Good night. Shall I take the things up to Dear-Me?”

But Eileen said, “ No,” and the child trudged off contentedly to her small room on the second floor at the back, far removed from the rest of the household.

The other rooms on this floor were closed. Each month Grandfather threatened to rent them out to lodgers, and each month Eileen threatened to depart without notice



if she had to take care of lodgers' rooms.

So the second floor remained untenanted except by the child who now found her way down the dim corridor to the small, untidy apartment at the end, which was her own domain.

Still in the dark, but a dark that she loved, the little girl got herself ready for bed. The August moon silvered everything, indoors and out, with a soft radiance.

At last Harmony unfolded a tissue-paper package that had been tucked for safekeeping under her pillow, and kissed, with the fervour of a warm-hearted and love-hungry child, the photograph so carefully preserved. Then hiding it away again, she disposed herself for the happy period of dreaming awake, until dreaming asleep carried her into higher realms of bliss.



## CHAPTER III

### THE TREASURE CHAMBER

WHEN Harmony awoke next morning, the last thought of the night before came back to her. She determined that, instead of thinking a story about Grandfather's hidden piles of gold, she would act it out. It would make a splendid game. Not that she really expected to find a treasure, but there was excitement in exploring for it, even in an old, ramshackle city house that didn't look as if it had any secrets to conceal more than the mice's nests behind the baseboards.

The little girl dressed rapidly, and not remembering to wash her face or eat her breakfast, started on her voyage of discovery.

Eileen wondered where she was, but as



Harmony came and went, from day's end to day's end, during the vacation, as her whim dictated, she only knew that the child would appear when she was hungry, and gave her no more thought.

The careful examination of every dusty old room made Harmony's morning pass thrillingly. There were three rooms on her floor, half furnished, with bare floors and dingy wall paper, airless, cobwebby, and altogether uninviting. But with the enthusiasm of an adventurer, Harmony searched every nook and cranny, tapped on the walls for hidden rooms and closets, peered up narrow, sooty chimneys, crept around on her hands and knees, examining every floor for a loose board or trap door. She had a grand time until about noon, when, smitten with a sudden emptiness in the middle of her body, she suddenly remembered that she hadn't eaten a mouthful that day.

“What a sight you are!” exclaimed



Eileen, as Harmony appeared, smooched and begrimed from her curly head to her ragged heels.

“I don’t care, and I sha’n’t change my dress either, Eileen, because I haven’t half finished hunting, and I shall get all mussy again if I should,” she said, anticipating the young woman’s recommendation of a clean frock.

“What you lost?” inquired her friend, bustling about with the dinner that was the best she could do on Jasper Hale’s meager allowance.

“Oh, Eileen, you’re positively no good! Couldn’t you guess that I’ve been hunting for Grandfather’s piles o’ gold? I’ve been over every inch of the second floor, and next I’m going to do the first floor, and, if I dare, Grandfather’s own room at the back. I s’pose I’ll have an awful time getting a chance to do Dear-Me’s rooms.”

“You’re a silly if you try to do them. Your grandather wouldn’t trust a penny



with a hole in it near Dear-Me. You wouldn't catch him hiding a pin in her rooms, and you know it."

Harmony looked up from her glass of milk, a white moustache adorning her upper lip.

"I guess you're right, Eileen, and prob'ly he wouldn't hide it down here in the basement where you might get it, either."

Eileen sniffed.

"Well, he trusts me with the household money, anyway."

"Yes, dear," said Harmony, feeling she'd made some mistake, but not knowing exactly how she had offended Eileen.

"And don't you let him catch you prowling in his room, either, or you'll get fits. He won't let anybody but his mean little dogs in that office of his."

Harmony said nothing. Privately, she had planned examining even that forbidden spot.



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“Then there’s the third floor and the attic,” she continued, at length. “I wonder how many days it will take me. It’s very exciting,” she confided to Eileen between bites, “very. Do you think Grig would enjoy searching for the treasure, too?”

Grig was the boy who lived next door, somewhere between the basement and the roof, but just where, Harmony had never found out. He sold papers, and went to the same school with her, although he was in a higher grade. He liked the little girl, after a fashion of his own, and they were sometimes good companions, according to Grig’s mood.

Grig got his name from an unconquerable habit of grinning. An old-fashioned neighbor had said he was “as merry as a grig.” Nobody seemed to know exactly what a grig might be, but the nickname appeared to fit him, and the boy himself rather preferred it to Jason, given him in baptism.



“Don’t you be after draggin’ Grig all over this house,” said Eileen irritably. “Grigg in the street is all right, but I don’t want him in the house. Do you hear?”

Harmony did.

“He’d prob’ly want to be the captain of the expedition,” she said loftily, agreeing with Eileen from her own point of view, “and I’d much rather do the bossing myself.”

She whisked off upstairs again, tiptoeing softly to the door of Grandfather’s “office,” as it was grandly called, to see if the coast was clear.

As she pushed the door open, a sharp yap and an ugly little snarl came from the occupants, who were no friends of Harmony’s.

It was not an inviting reception for the intruder when Zip, the black and tan, stood in one chair, tearing his throat with unfriendly barking, and Mose, the skye, lay



crouched in his cushion, his eyes peering warily beneath his tangled bang, growling in very ugly fashion. And his growl really meant *bite*. For Mose was hatefully reserved in his friendships, and had to be put on a shelf, literally, when visitors ventured into Mr. Hale's office.

Harmony stood her ground as far as the threshold, and looked at the little dogs.

"You're hateful little beasts," she said aloud, "but I'd love you if you'd let me."

Zip sat down and yapped fitfully, and Mose, seeing she came no further, stopped growling and lifted his nose an inch or two, still eying her from under his forelock.

Harmony looked long at the room; a desk in the corner, almost concealed beneath piles of dusty papers and books; other articles of furniture snowed under by accumulations that hadn't been moved in years; a cane-seated chair with the bottom splintered out, into which Zip's cushion was



stuffed; an arm-chair covered with black horse hair, bristling uncomfortably in places and possessing only one arm; over all dust, like gray powder, except where finger-tips had recently rested, making dark little pits and furrows. An air of mustiness and stuffiness indescribable pervaded this uninviting room, and Harmony's courage was daunted.

"I couldn't hunt here at all, unless I first got rid of the dogs; and then, s'posing I could, he'd know everything I touched, by the dust. No, it's no use," and she pulled the door to and tramped disappointedly up the next flight of stairs.

Solemnly and laboriously, she examined the floor above the one where her room was located, shirking no corner as too dusty or improbable. About five o'clock she was ready for the attic.

Harmony couldn't recall when she'd been up this last flight of stairs, and surely Eileen did not frequent them. Yet the



dust was no thicker here, if as thick as elsewhere. Harmony noticed that the banisters were quite clean.

At the top of the flight was a tall gate with iron bars, covered with wide-meshed netting.

Harmony shook it, but it was locked.

Here, here, at last, must be the hiding-place of those piles of gold. Here, like in her favorite fairy tales, was the iron-barred door of the treasure chamber in the tower of the castle.

How to get in? That was the important question.

Harmony sat down on the top step of the staircase and pondered. The key was needed, but where was the key? Either in Grandfather's own pocket or in the desk of the office guarded by the two little dragons, Zip and Mose.

A key!

Suddenly Harmony was pelting downstairs like a chased rabbit. She had keys,



hundreds of them. Why shouldn't she have one that would fit the gate?

From under her bed she dragged a wooden box that tinkled with the sound of metal. In it were keys, countless keys, of every size and shape.

This collection Harmony had been making for years. A key had a sort of magic value to her. It meant power, it meant mystery. Every one of these keys that she fingered now was made to open something. If only she could find that something! She had made up stories about most of them. Even the room keys, that looked very much alike and were the least interesting in the lot, had worth to her.

No one had ever provided Harmony with toys, and this was the way she had provided herself. Keys and other odd treasures had taken the place of dolls and toys made especially for little girls. The question was whether she did not enjoy her self-gotten playthings, about which she had



all sorts of pleasant imaginings, quite as much as the ordinary child enjoys her boughten things.

Sorting over the clinking mass, with affectionate fingers, Harmony chose the possibilities, dropped them into the lap of her frock, and ascended again to the attic under the mansard roof.

How long she worked she did not know, but just as it was getting almost too dark to see, she picked up the last key but two. It went into the lock as if that were its home. It turned easily in the girl's eager fingers and clicked.

"Oh, goody, goody! It's the key to the treasure chamber," she laughed, as she jerked open the heavy gate.

The door of the room back of the gate yielded to a key like those of the downstairs bedrooms, and Harmony pushed it wide.

It was almost dusk, but she could see that the apartment in which she stood was very



big. It ran the full depth of the house, and Harmony could scarcely distinguish the further wall. In the twilight she tiptoed around, trying to make out what sort of a place it was.

There were no piles of gold glittering in half-open chests. It wasn't the treasure chamber she had been looking for, but it was full of interest.

There was a great deal of furniture, very odd and different from any she had ever seen. She stumbled against a spinning-wheel and set the wheel turning slowly. On the walls were guns and arrows and pistols and swords. There were also pictures and flags, and many glass cases, such as she had seen in stores, were fastened against the walls and stood on tables. These were full of articles that Harmony couldn't see plainly in the falling darkness.

Suddenly she jumped and squealed, "Oh!"

There, in a corner, stood a man.



Harmony wasn't exactly frightened, but the man was certainly unexpected.

She came closer to him.

"Are you the guardian of all these treasures?" she asked.

The man did not stir nor speak.

She came still closer.

"Say," she said loudly, "do you take care of these things?"

She peered up into his face. It was shaded by an odd, three-cornered hat.

Then Harmony laughed out loud.

"My, but you did fool me, you queer old figure-thing," she exclaimed. "I really did think you were alive. I guess you *are* guardian of these treasures, after all, for you've got a sword and a pistol. What shall I call you, hero-o'-mine or man-o'-war?"

She examined the tall figure as well as she could in the dim light. "Why, you're a revolutionary man, aren't you? I shall call you 'hero-o'-mine.' "



Just at that instant, a flash of light from a big electric arc in the street sent a shaft of whiteness into the room. It almost seemed as if the figure smiled at the quaint little girl addressing him.

“I guess it’s getting late, and I must go,” said Harmony, nodding at her mute friend. “It must be time for supper.”

She started back towards the door, but stopped many times and finally sat down on an old sofa and clasped her hands about her knees.

“I think this is a splendid treasure room,” she said thoughtfully. “It’s so full of things, queer things. I think it’s rather nicer than the piles o’ gold—yes, I think it’s ever so much nicer. I wonder if all these things are Grandfather’s and if he’ll be mad at me if I play here?”

The electric light flashed and waned, and flashed and waned, while Harmony sat and dreamed.

Finally, with a sigh, she rose to go.



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The door was latched. She opened it and found the gate fastened. It had swung slowly to and locked with a spring.

Harmony was a prisoner in the treasure chamber!



## CHAPTER IV

### HARMONY'S VISION

**H**ARMONY'S first feeling was, naturally, one of fright. She caught her fingers in the iron meshes of the gate and shook it and screamed.

Her voice echoed weirdly through the upper hall, but she was well aware that it could not penetrate to the rooms on the ground floor. No, she couldn't possibly make Grandfather and Dear-Me hear,—and come to think of it, she didn't want to. Grandfather would surely be hopping mad if he found her in his treasure chamber, and her mother would only whine, "Dear me, what a nuisance that child is! What do you suppose she is shouting for, now?" and she'd ring her bell for Eileen to find out.



How about Eileen? Harmony then remembered that the girl was going out to the beach that evening with her young man. Of course, she must have been gone some time.

Harmony fumbled with the big lock, but there was nothing she could do. The key was on the outside, and had probably jounced down upon the floor when the gate swung to. The little girl gave the barrier a rather spiteful last shake, and surrendered.

"Humph," she grunted, a little breathless after the shouting and shaking, "'spect I've got to stay here all night. Oh, well, I don't care. Only I wish I'd had my supper."

She wandered back into the long room. The electric light poured its white radiance over all, but the shadows were very black. Although Harmony was good friends with the dark and thought the place looked extremely interesting in this light, still there



was an eerie quality about the room, that was different from any place she had ever been before.

As she passed the huge mahogany and hair-cloth sofa, she patted it softly. "I'm going to sleep on you, by and by, you nice, old, slippery thing, you."

She actually laughed at her plight.

"If I wasn't just a little bit hungry," she said to herself bravely, "I should think it was great fun—a regular adventure. I never guessed there was anything so romantic in this ugly old house."

She peered out of the high windows, too high for her to look into the street unless she stood in a chair. As long as she was to spend the night there, she concluded to open the windows. She pushed up two, and the air of the room was soon much clearer and fresher. A wide ledge with an eavestrough ran along in front, from the Hale's house to the next and straight on to the end of the row.



"Perhaps," said Harmony to herself, her arms on the sill and her chin upon them, "perhaps Grig lives in the next attic, and if I should holler real loud, he'd hear me."

She glanced back into the room.

"No. I'll wait till morning and see what happens. I can play I'm cast away on a desert island, or locked a prisoner in a tall castle tower. My, but this *is* fun! When I tell Grig what happened to me all to-day and to-night, he'll—he'll wish he'd been here, too."

Suddenly a thought struck her. "Oh, dear, I'm afraid I daren't tell Grig a word about it, after all, for I couldn't possibly bring him up here, on account of Grandfather. Grandfather might even be angry at me for breaking into his treasure chamber."

A little depressed at the thought, Harmony turned back to the room.

"Hero-o'-mine," she said, approaching



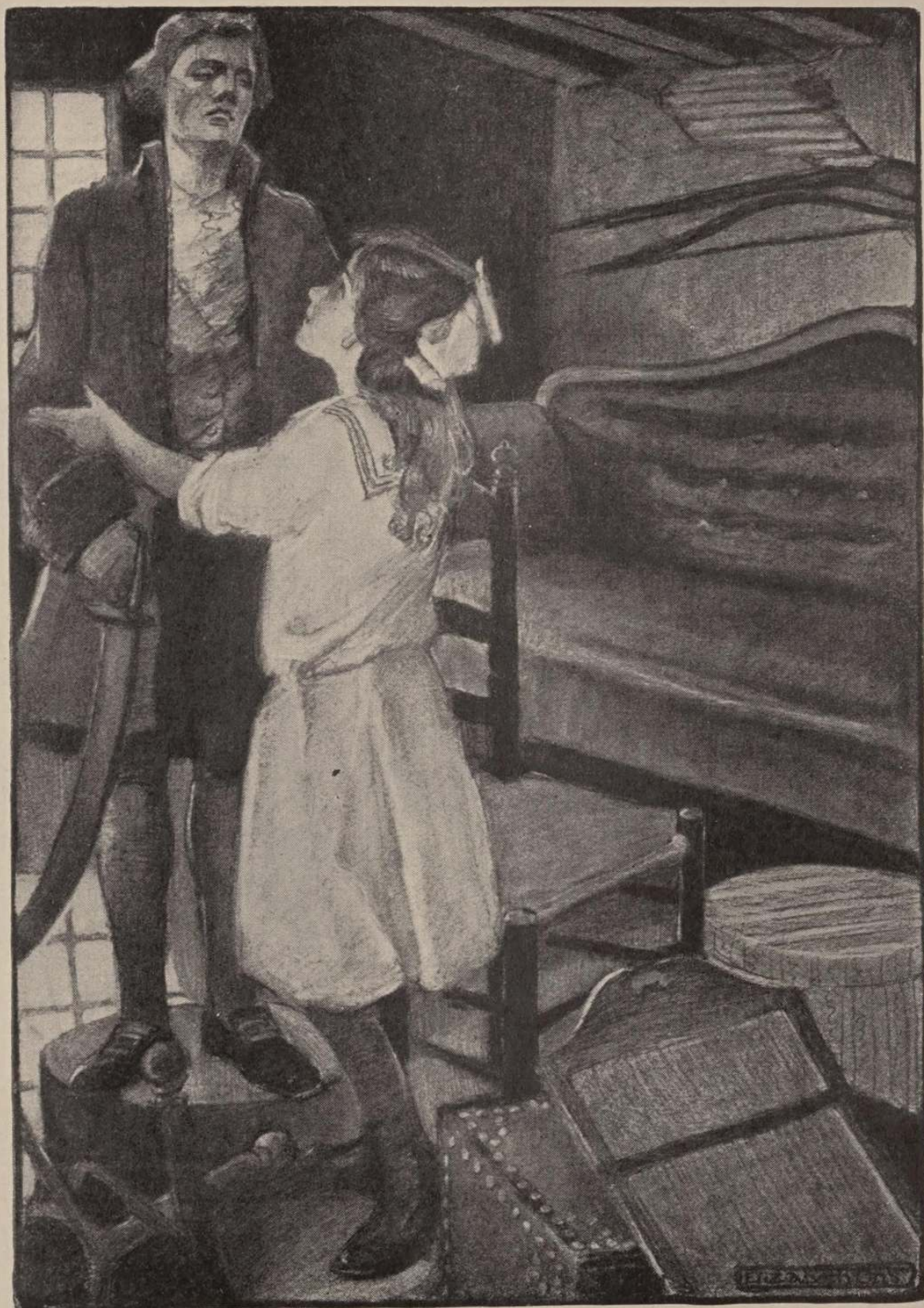
the figure of the Revolutionary soldier, "Hero-o'-mine, I place myself in your care. You must protect me from the wrath of the guardian of this castle. Will you?"

She put her hand on the figure, which was made of wood and had joints, and found that she could move him about like a nuge doll. His face was of wax, and he had a wig with a queue, like pictures she had seen. For half an hour she played with him, moving his hands and arms into all sorts of amusing attitudes. Finally, she left him with his hand to his head in salute.

Then, just because she continued to have a queer little feeling that she wouldn't confess to herself was fear, she began a regular exploration.

Each time she plunged into one of the shadows, she had to swallow hard on the lump in her throat, and her heart would give two or three hard beats like a signal. There were little sounds in the room, faint rustlings and slidings, as if, somehow, there





“HERO-O’-MINE, I PLACE MYSELF IN YOUR CARE.”—Page 52.







was a presence that mortal eyes could not see.

Once Harmony put her hand upon what seemed a table, and was thoroughly frightened for a moment when a clear metallic note fell upon the air. She waited to still the beating in her breast, then courageously touched the thing again. A different note sounded this time.

She pulled the piece of furniture out into the broad beam of electric light. There it was revealed, a tiny piano! Harmony recognized it.

“A spinet, a real little spinet!” she exclaimed and touched the narrow yellowed ivories of the short keyboard, almost reverently. The noises produced were music only to the child, and echoed sharply through the large room.

In the wall cases hung a number of faded and ragged silk flags, gold-fringed, and many soldiers' garments. Some queer high old boots with great iron spurs stood in one



case, with a saddle, saddle-cloth and bridle.

In a corner of the room there was a stack of bayonets, and, as Harmony approached them, her foot struck something that moved and rumbled like far away thunder. As she looked, with hands clasped to her mouth so she shouldn't cry out, a big black ball rolled out into the light. A cannon ball! Painted on it in white letters was: "WHITE PLAINS, 1776."

Slowly the meaning of the whole room began to dawn upon the child. A picture on the wall gave her the secret. It was named, "The Spirit of Sixty-Six." The light from the window fell full upon it. Harmony searched its meaning eagerly.

The central figure was a young man, his face uplifted as though he saw a vision. He was dressed in a soldier's uniform. A woman was buckling on his sword. Was it his wife? No, his mother, for the wife knelt at his side, kissing his hand, and his children stood wonderingly at one side of



the room. At the back, in the open doorway, a comrade was entering, hurriedly, urging haste.

“He is going to war!” whispered Harmony. “Our war. To fight for us. I know.”

Perhaps no one could appreciate the sentiment of the picture better than the little girl whose studies at school had just begun to kindle that ineffable flame of patriotism, that burns so valiantly in youth.

“I know you,” she whispered to the central figure in the picture, “You are the patriot. Grandfather has kept your clothes, and your horse’s saddle, and the flag you saved.”

She crept up on a great chest that stood before the picture and looked long at the impassioned face of the young man going forth to war.

“It must be very grand to be a man and able to save your country. I wish I knew all your story.”



She slid off the chest, and as she did so, its great size and strength caught her attention. It was almost black in color, and carven with figures of fruits and flowers and cupids. It had a big brass lock and brass corners.

“I believe,” she murmured, addressing the chest, “I just believe the secret’s locked up in you.”

She tried the lid, but it was very heavy, and Harmony concluded it was locked.

“Never you mind,” she assured it in her low whisper. “I shall come again and steal your secret. I must know all about this wonderful room.”

She slowly turned away from the chest and the picture and approached the wooden soldier, who continued to salute her gravely.

“Now, good night, hero-o’-mine,” she said softly. “I’m getting sleepy, and the old sofa is calling, ‘Sweet dreams, Harmony.’ Say you’ll take good care of me.”



At her touch, the figure bent its head slightly.

“That’s right. Good night.” She reached up and patted his waxen cheek, “Good night.”

Then she curled herself up on the big sofa. If it was slippery, it was also cool. She took off her dress and spread it out on the couch so that the hair-cloth would not prick her cheek.

But it was very light in the room, and Harmony was still excited. She could not go to sleep, but lay and stared at the queer shadows and the strange shapes the treasures took.

The faint rustlings continued. Harmony chose not to attribute these delicate sounds to the mild breeze that came in at the open windows. No, she preferred to call it an unseen presence.

“It’s the Spirit of Seventy-Six,” she thought. “It’s like a fairy. No one can see it, but it’s here just the same. It stays



with all these strange old things. It's what made that soldier a hero. It's what makes people do great deeds. It's courage. It's patriotism. It's very wonderful. It burns in your heart and then the light comes in your face, and then you do something noble. And people love you for it, and they keep all the things you wore and the things you used, in remembrance. And a little of the spirit stays with them always."

She took a sleepy survey of the room, then closed her eyes.

"How Grandfather must love these things, to save them and lock them away in a treasure chamber all these years," she mused, reaching, by her child's pure sympathy, one of the secrets of Grandfather's gruff and worn old heart.

"When he knows I love them, too, he'll forgive me for breaking into his treasure chamber," she reassured herself. Then her interest returned to the meaning of it all.

"I wonder when I shall know all about



it. I wonder if the secret's in the chest. Was the hero one of Grandfather's ancestors? Why, he'd be one of mine, then, too! Oh, how wonderful to have had a hero in the family—a man who was brave, who did great deeds. I wonder if hero's children's children are brave, too. Am I brave? Could I do something wonderful, such as saving my country? Do girls ever do things like that? Oh, I'd love to try. I'd like to have that wonderful look in my face! And have every—every—body—love——”

Harmony was fast asleep.



## CHAPTER V

### THE ESCAPE

**I**T was puzzling to awake in the long treasure chamber the next morning.

Harmony blinked, and rubbed her eyes. Then she sat up and stared. She couldn't remember ever waking up in any room other than the back one on the second floor.

The treasure chamber looked very different by daylight. It was dusty and cluttered, but Harmony decided, as she slipped into her dirty gingham frock, twisting and struggling to fasten its few buttons, that it was, if anything, more full of interest than she had thought.

How many things she had overlooked in the dark! The small articles in the table cases, for instance.



Among the yellowed manuscripts and letters, frayed at the edges, were preserved a big, fat gold watch and a fob heavy with seals and keys; a snuff box with the picture of a handsome man on the lid, and a little white satin shoe, that had belonged to some dainty lady, the satin now the color of the spinet's keys.

"O dear, I'll never, never get through looking," sighed Harmony.

The little fear that had caught her throat last night was all gone.

She pushed the cannon ball with her toe and sent it thundering across the floor on a long journey.

"I was afraid of that, last night, hero-o'-mine," she remarked confidentially to the wooden soldier. "Wasn't I a silly?"

She nodded at him merrily. "I want to thank you for keeping me safe," she continued.

She examined him critically by the sunny daylight. Time had robbed his cheeks of



all their ruddiness, and moths had eaten little holes and furrows in his regimental garments. The trusty sword was rusted tight into its scabbard.

“Dear, dear, poor fellow. I don’t admire you nearly as much as I did last night,” she confessed, “but I love you even more. You used to be so fine, and now——” She just patted the pale cheek in sympathy.

“Some day, you shall tell me all your wonderful story. I’m sure it’s fascinating.”

She wandered over to the chest and tugged at its heavy lid. It gave a little to her strength, so that she knew it wasn’t locked, after all.

“But I really can’t stop now,” she continued, nodding over her shoulder. “Hero-o’-mine, I’m dreadfully hungry this very minute. I must make my escape from this terrible prison. You wouldn’t like to see me starving to death before your very eyes, would you?”



She laughed, but a serious look came into her face.

“I *must* get out,” she said to herself. “I’ll come again. Oh, yes, I’ll come again, perhaps this very day, but I must get out now. I’m—I’m hungry!” She blinked fast.

She ran first to the door and opened it. The iron gate was still locked. Should she shout? What good would that do? The window! That was the place.

She hurried to one of the windows, dragging a chair noisily behind her. She climbed up, and, by lying on her stomach across the sill, could just peek over the edge of the parapet. She stared down into the street. Not a soul was in sight, not even Grig. She had hoped to see him.

Harmony was getting desperate, and she decided not to wait on his chance appearance. Yes, she would call him.

She filled her lungs and then let go a piercing yell.

“Grig, Grig! Oh—oh, Gri—i—ig!”



She waited what seemed to her time enough for him to arrive from the ends of the earth, and shouted again.

“Grig!”

Then she nearly fell out of the window from sheer surprise, for a voice very close to her said suddenly, “For the land’s sake, Harmony, don’t shout so. You’d wake the dead!”

A tousled head with the blackest hair imaginable, a pair of twinkling brown eyes, and a wide, grinning mouth, was peering at her from the window next door, not six feet away.

“Oh, Grig, how you frightened me!” she exclaimed.

“Well, what do you want, shouting a fellow out of bed at this hour of the morning?”

“What time is it?”

“Not more’n half-past four, and, unless you tell me what you want, quick, I’m for my downy couch again.”



“Is that your room?” asked Harmony irrelevantly.

“Sure. Good night.” The black head disappeared.

“Oh, Grig,” came the appealing call.

“Well,” answered a voice, no head showing, “I said I was going back to bed.”

“But I’m so hungry, Grig. I haven’t had any supper or breakfast.”

“Weli, who’s to blame? Why don’t you go and get ’em? Eileen ain’t exactly dead or disappeared, is she?”

“No, but I’m a prisoner, locked in.”

The head reappeared, and the grin deepened.

“Jiminy fishhooks, what a lark! Who locked you in?”

“I did.”

“You? How?”

“Never you mind, Griggetty-Grig. I want to escape, that’s what. I’m hungry.”

“I’ll come right over in a minute and a half,” and the head disappeared once more.



“Grig—you can’t!” shouted Harmony.

Grig’s head popped out again.

“Well, I’d like to know why not?”

“’Cause if Eileen or Dear-Me or Grandfather saw you, you’d catch it!”

Grig snorted his indignation.

“Who’s afraid?” he jeered. Finally he suggested, “Well, s’pose you wait till Eileen’s up. Then I’ll go tell her to let you out.”

“No, no,” pleaded the girl. “Grig, you’ve got to rescue me some other way. This is a secret, a deep, deep secret. Nobody in the whole world, but you, Grig, must know that I was locked in here all night. They mustn’t know a thing about how I got here—or—or anything!”

The secret nature of the enterprise appealed to Grig, so the grin faded a little as he gave himself up to earnest thought.

“If you weren’t a girl——” he began, then stopped.



“Being a girl isn’t anything against me,” Harmony retorted.

For an instant, her vision of heroism of the night before came again. She had wondered then if girls couldn’t do heroic things, too. She would show Grig how she could do brave deeds, quite as well as any boy. He only had to tell her what.

“Being a girl doesn’t make the least bit of difference,” she insisted.

“But if you were a boy, you could escape easy,” Grig taunted.

“Tell me how. See if I wouldn’t do it!”

Grig enjoyed her spirit.

“Well—you’d just climb out onto the parapet—it’s lots more’n a foot wide—and then you’d crawl along it until you reached my window, and in through that,—and here you’d be.”

Grig paused. “I could reach you a stick, or something, if you are afraid,” he suggested wickedly.



Harmony put one knee up on the sill. As she tipped forward, it seemed as if the street below slanted up to meet her. Oh, could she ever do it?

“I say, Harmony, you’d better not,” cautioned Grig, as he saw this move.

“Who’s afraid? I’m not,” asserted Harmony, smiling sidewise at the boy. Grig didn’t see the sudden twitch in the smiling lips, but he did see Harmony draw up the other knee and poise herself in a bunch on the sill.

“Harmony, don’t do it!” shouted Grig, really frightened now. “Oh, I’ll take it back, Harmony. I never meant——”

“You keep quiet, Grig!” commanded a determined girl’s voice. “Keep quiet and don’t give me any advice. Sit still and don’t talk.”

Grig gasped, but had sense enough to obey her orders.

He saw her turn herself carefully, on hands and knees, in his direction, and give



her short skirts a jerk so that they would be free and not impede her progress.

“Ready now. I’m coming.”

Slowly, a few inches at a time, she crawled toward Grig.

The parapet was fifty feet above the stone pavement. Harmony could see the sunny stretch of street lying so far below. Her straight look ahead at her goal faltered a little. There was a second of dizzy wonder whether she could go on.

Grig saw her falter, and choked. She was not yet within reach. He didn’t take a long breath for fear of startling her. Suppose she should fall! He would be to blame.

Then he saw her find herself and come on once more, steadily, surely.

The inspired countenance of the young hero in the picture had come into Harmony’s mind. It steadied her. She could do brave things, too, even if she was only a girl.



“My,” thought Grig, “but she’s plucky! She—why—here she is!”

He grabbed her by both arms, and with a mighty jerk, had her over the sill and into his room, quite safe.

They both gurgled with frightened laughter, and Grig found himself patting her on the back, repeating, “Good girl! Couldn’t have done it better if you’d been a boy! Couldn’t have done it better myself!”

It was a foolish and unnecessary escapade, but successfully accomplished, and Grig knew he was the one at fault. He was very thankful that it was so quickly and safely over.

Strange to say, Harmony didn’t feel the uplifted and prideful state of mind she had anticipated. Grig’s praise didn’t sound as fine as she had thought it would. She was a little bit ashamed. She felt also a little bit cross. Somewhere inside of herself, she knew that it wouldn’t have mattered so very



much if Eileen had been let into the secret and allowed to unlock the gate. Eileen would have saved her, though in a very unromantic way, and would have kept her secret faithfully.

All this flashed through the back of her mind while Grig was congratulating her, and it gave a rather bitter taste to her triumph.

“You’re a real sport!” he finished, offering her the finest compliment in his power.

Harmony sniffed in disdain.

“Thought I wouldn’t dare to, didn’t you? Well, I fooled you.”

She looked critically around the room. Grig’s attic was small and uninteresting. After the many exciting experiences of the past twenty-four hours, Harmony did not feel at all inclined to stay.

Grig was teasing to hear about her adventures.

“I think you’re horrid!” he concluded, when she refused point-blank. “After my



saving you from imprisonment, you won't tell me how you got there, or the secret about it."

"Huh!" said Harmony, "I saved myself. You didn't do a thing but tell me how. Some time, perhaps, after years and years, I can let you know the whole secret. I can't now. Besides, I'm awful hungry."

"Eileen won't be up yet. I'll tell on you, if——"

"Why, Griggetty-Grig! I'm ashamed of you! Tell tales on a *girl*?"

Grig lowered his flag.

"No, sure. Of course, I wouldn't. You know that. But if you're not the meanest thing——"

Harmony escaped down the staircase.

Eileen was up. She was tired, for she'd been out late the night before, and she asked no questions when Harmony appeared.

Harmony ate a big breakfast in complete silence.



Grig, left alone, his curiosity unappeased, felt very much put out.

He climbed up into his window again and looked back over the path the girl had taken to his room that morning. Now that Harmony had conquered it, the perils did not seem to him so great.

“Never you mind, Miss Harmony Hale,” he communed bitterly, “I’ll find out your old secret yet. Some day I’ll climb over into your attic, and then I’ll see what it is you’re so mysterious about.”

With this, Grig’s feelings seemed relieved. The wide grin that had brought him his name settled back upon his features.

“You’d better look out for me!” he chuckled. “I’ll play Old Sleuth!”



## CHAPTER VI

### THE NEW LODGER

“WELL,” said Eileen crossly, one day in September, as Harmony came in from school, “your mean old grandfather has gone and done it, just as he said he would.”

Harmony looked her sympathy. Grandfather was always doing things that irritated Eileen. It was a wonder that the girl stayed. She sometimes wondered, herself, for her “steady company,” a good-looking, hard-working mechanic, was very urgent about their starting a little home of their own together.

But every time Eileen was about to say “yes” to him, a little girl-face with gray eyes would wistfully appear to her mental



vision, and she'd answer, "Aw, I can't leave her yet, Larry. Poor little kid, she ain't got nobody but me." And because there was a good big heart in Larry, to match Eileen's, he'd wait another month before he asked her again.

Harmony said simply, "What's the matter, now, you dear, cross old bear, you?"

And Eileen growled. "Lodger. Front room on your floor."

"Oh!" exclaimed the little girl, interested in spite of Eileen's indignation. "What is he like?"

"'Tain't a he. It's a she—a little, half-old lady. That is, she's small, and just as spry as you or me, only her hair's gray and she has twinkly wrinkles around her eyes and mouth."

Harmony seated herself at the table.

"I think that sounds quite nice. Did she come to see you?"

"No, I was upstairs, taking away Dear-Me's breakfast things, and as I passed your



grandfather's office, she came out, nodding and smiling. Why, even the sour old miser had a kink in one corner of his mouth, almost like a smile."

Eileen, recovering from her wrath, was heaping up Harmony's plate with mashed potato and creamed codfish.

"Then after she was gone, your grandfather hollered down the stairs that she was the new lodger, that she was taking the second floor front room, and that she would move in Monday."

The prospect of the new lodger provided Harmony and Eileen with material for considerable speculation for the rest of the week. Her coming was an event. The preliminaries to her arrival were exciting.

One day she made a little call on Eileen, who apparently proved an unwilling hostess. She told her how she was sending a cleaning woman and paper-hangers to make the room look neat and cosy before her furniture and trunks should arrive.



“But I don’t want to be any extra trouble to you,” she said, and the twinkly wrinkles around her eyes and mouth at last found their answer in Eileen’s sullen blue eyes. “I will take care of my room myself, and once a week I shall have a cleaning woman in,” she assured the girl.

“I shall get my coffee and egg for breakfast, go out for dinner, and have a little tea and toast in my room for supper. That will be a very comfy way to do, will it not, Eileen?”

Eileen was smiling most hospitably when the little half-old lady tripped up the area steps, nodding back over her shoulder to the girl watching her from the doorway.

So the days sped on. It must not be supposed for an instant that Harmony had forgotten the treasure chamber, in all the hours since she first discovered it. No, indeed. But it was marvelous how things combined to keep her away from it. The day after her imprisonment, she returned to



the attic stairway for the key, but Grig was so persistently on her trail that she dared not stay long.

Time after time, when she thought she should have several undisturbed hours in the wonderful room, either Dear-Me would send her on errands, or 'Seppy would appear with his enticing piano, or Grig would plan a long and elaborate game, or she feared Grandfather would suddenly walk into the place and find her at play there. So her visits were short and far between until school began, early in September.

If chances to visit the attic room were few during the vacation, they were still scarcer after school began, and when the new lodger's coming was announced, a real interest sprang up, which for a short time was stronger than that of the treasure chamber. Harmony spent every odd moment while the paper-hanger was present, watching his deftness with the long strips of paper, scissors, and paste.



Saturday night, when Harmony peeped into the transformed place, she could scarcely believe that the beautiful room actually existed in the shabby old house. It was all blue and white. The mantel-piece of shining white marble, well scoured, stood out in bold contrast against the blue walls and dark blue carpet. There were white net curtains at the windows, with long inner ones of dark blue. The furniture had only just been moved in, but its dark cherry surfaces were beautifully polished and showed every finger mark.

Harmony had never been in such an attractive room before in her life. It stirred something in her heart. She gloated over it. She wanted something like it.

She went back to her own little bedchamber at the end of the hall and stared at it with wondering eyes. It was dirty. It was untidy. There wasn't a pretty thing in it.

Downstairs she went, and raided Eileen's



domain. Upstairs she came, laden with brooms, cloths, soap and bucket.

It was almost six o'clock, but Harmony courageously began her task. It was real work, too, and she swept her little nine by eleven bedroom so hard that a blister appeared in the palm of one dirty little hand.

Harmony persevered till it was dark. She washed the window. She washed the wood work. She washed the looking-glass. She hunted up some clean sheets and a pillow-case and dressed up her bed in a fashion it had not known for many months. She put away all the things that were lying carelessly where she had dropped them. When she finally lighted the gas, a very clean room was being grudgingly admired by a very tired and dirty little girl.

“Oh, you aren't one bit pretty, little room. You need a curtain, and a bureau-spread, and a rocking-chair, and—and—lots of things. But you're clean.”

She carted the broom and dustpan, and



pail, and soap, and cloths down to the basement once more.

“Been hunting for more treasure?” asked Eileen when Harmony presented herself for a belated supper.

“Nope. House cleaning,” said Harmony briefly, as she proceeded to absorb bread and milk without further explanation.

“Eileen,” said she at length, moving back from the table, “Eileen, have I got a clean dress with all the buttons on it?”

“Sure. Ye’ve got three clean dresses, but as for buttons, seems to me it’s time ye learned to sew ’em on fer yerself.”

Her eyes twinkled, as she made this suggestion, but Harmony was busy with her own ideas and did not notice.

“You see, Eileen,” she continued, as if pronouncing the result of considerable serious thought, “when I’m a big girl, I’ve decided to be a great favorite. Everybody is going to love me. It’s—it’s like a room,



you see. When it's clean and neat and pretty, folks love it better."

She intently regarded the blister in the palm of her hand. "So I guess it's time to begin. If you'll show me how, I'll sew on the buttons."

She sighed a little and looked questioningly at Eileen.

"Sure, ye're right, darlin', and I kin provide ye with a plenty of buttons and needles and thread. Did ye mean ye'd like to begin right now?"

Harmony nodded.

So Eileen brought an armful of shabby gingham frocks from the rack of freshly ironed clothes in the kitchen, and out of a basket of sewing materials, all higglety-pigglety, selected a large brass thimble, an assortment of crockery and pearl buttons, and a bulky needle which she deftly threaded with coarse white cotton.

The tedious process was auspiciously begun, and continued for a long, long time.



Harmony patiently stabbed for elusive holes in the buttons, and Eileen patiently untangled the knots in the double thread.

But Harmony felt proud when, the last button securely in place, Eileen folded the three little frocks and gave them into her arms.

“Only, next time, Eileen, it would be prettier if the buttons all matched, wouldn’t it?” Harmony suggested.

“Fancy noticin’ that, now,” exclaimed Eileen admiringly, gazing at the small girl across the pile of gingham. “Sure, I’ll see to it meself, next time, that the buttons are all of one family,” and she laughed at Harmony’s pleased smile.

“You’re a dear!” cooed Harmony pressing a flushed cheek against Eileen’s ruddy one, “and I love you. Good night.”

Eileen watched her as she left the room, a wistful light in her kind eyes.

“She says, when she’s a big girl everybody is going to love her,” she mused as she



bundled the sewing things back into the basket. "Seems to me it's a pretty hard heart that wouldn't love the little thing now."

Mrs. Goodwin moved in Monday, while Harmony was at school.

For several days the little girl saw nothing of the new lodger. The latter seemed determined to prove that she would make no trouble for anybody.

Dear-Me was sure she'd be very disagreeable,—drop her shoes on the floor and walk about in the middle of the night, or leave her blinds open to bang if a wind came up. The week of the cleaning woman and the paper-hanger had been a great trial to Dear-Me, and her lamentations over her sufferings had irritated Eileen and worried Harmony not a little.

But after the bright little half-old lady really moved in, for days one would hardly have known she was there.

Harmony was overcome with a form of





HARMONY PATIENTLY STABBED FOR THE ELUSIVE HOLES IN THE  
BUTTONS.—Page 83.







bashfulness, and avoided meeting her in the halls.

Nevertheless, she and Grig had great sport guessing what was in the trunk, the two packing boxes, and the barrel, that had been carried in with the furniture.

One day when Harmony came home from school, Eileen told a very circumstantial tale of how a piano had been moved into the house and up the stairs to the second floor front.

“My, but Dear-Me nearly threw a fit,” laughed Eileen gleefully. “She came to her door and ordered the men out of the house, piano and all, while the little lodger-lady stood at the stair head and smiled and tapped the toe of her shoe against the banisters. And finally I had to sneak around the house to the side entrance and call your grandfather out of the office. ‘What’s the matter?’ he growled, ‘sounds like a lunatic asylum!’, and I said it did resemble one. And he told me to stop talkin’ unless I



could tell him what all these goin's-on were about. Then he just stalked into the front hall, and frowned at your ma hard, and told the movers to go ahead about their business. The piano went up. Dear-Me returned to her room and had hysterics, and I don't think you'd better go near her again to-day. I've got her quieted down, now, and have put her to bed."

"I'm sorry about Dear-Me," said Harmony, but she couldn't help thinking she was glad the piano was allowed to come in.

"Don't worry about Dear-Me, darlin'," comforted Eileen.

"A real piano in the house!" Harmony murmured. "I've never touched a real piano, Eileen. Isn't it wonderful? Do you s'pose she'd play for us?"

Eileen shook her head. If Mrs. Goodwin did play, and Dear-Me "took-on" as she had this afternoon, the house wouldn't be livable for any one. She was a little



troubled, although she had told the story with considerable spirit.

Mrs. Goodwin did not play for some time.

Meanwhile, grief and deprivation overtook the little girl, who had so few joys and made such happy use of those few. Harmony fell into deep disgrace.

It was a cool September evening, and dusk was coming on, when 'Seppy and his street piano stopped a few doors from the Hale's house.

People with shawls and jackets huddled around their shoulders were sitting out upon the steps, only too ready for a free spectacle.

Harmony and Grig had been having a comfortable spat about the relative merits of being a lodger in a house (as Grig was, next door), or keeping lodgers in the house (as Grandfather Hale was doing.)

The disagreement had reached a high-voiced stage, when "tum-te—te—tum—tum" went 'Seppy's piano. Neither waited



for the quarrel's conclusion, but sped down the street to meet the Italian and his little audience.

“One, two, three, one, two, three,” into the music whirled the slender figure of the girl, and she danced like an elf in the half light. Her curls bobbed, her eyes sparkled, she flung out her hands in exquisite curves. She was enchanting.

Grig beat a soft accompaniment with his palms and attuned a flute-like whistle to the timpan-timpan of the organ.

Suddenly the admiring circle was parted by two strong hands, a gray haired man strode within and clutched the little dancer by the shoulder.

Harmony spun 'round face to face with her grandfather; not Grandfather in his ordinary surly mood, but Grandfather in a rage.

“What does this mean?” he shouted, his rough voice rasping into the merry strain of the piano.



'Seppy held the crank still, and the music ceased abruptly. Grig gave a last pat of his hands and looked sharp.

“What do you mean, you little minx, dancing, dancing in the public street?”

He jerked the child by the shoulder, out of the melting circle, towards home.

“Go home and go to bed, this instant!” he thundered. “I’ll teach you! Dancing in the street like—like——” he swallowed down whatever epithet he had intended to call her. “Don’t you ever let me catch you dancing again! Hear me? I’ll—I’ll—I won’t be answerable for what I’ll do to you, if you disobey.”

He sped her on her way with a violent push, but Grig caught her arm and hurried along with her.

“Don’t you care, Harmony. He’s a brute, everybody knows. Don’t you care,” he consoled her.

Harmony ran on. She held her breath. She was thoroughly frightened. She was



angry. She was heart-broken. She longed for the solitary little bedchamber and the pillow with the still fresh pillow-case. She would let go then and cry——

Harmony's tears were not frequent, but her heart was breaking. She ran into the house. Grig stood irresolutely on the porch steps, abandoned. Grandfather stamped around through the side door, to his office.

Onto her bed dived the little girl, and let the tears flood. She stuffed the pillow corner into her mouth. It wouldn't do to have the new lodger hear her cry like that! But the sobs were those of a bereaved soul.

Finally her hand pushed under the pillow. Something touched her fingers—the picture of the lovely lady. A little comfort from that contact helped the big sobs to soften, but the tears kept on.

And then there was a tap on the door. Somebody came in. Somebody lifted the heart-broken child into motherly arms.



Somebody mopped the muddy tears away and kissed the forlorn little face.

Harmony caught her breath, and opened her swollen lids.

She looked up into gray eyes not unlike her own, the gray eyes, very tender and sweet, of the new lodger.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE FAIRY GODMOTHER

**H**ARMONY was too astonished to understand what had happened to her, except that the motherly embrace in which she lay was so novel and comforting that she had no desire to break the spell.

Mrs. Goodwin did not speak at first. She let Harmony rest softly until the storm of tears was spent.

“Dear-heart,” she laughed cheerily, “but wasn’t that a terrible thunderstorm!”

Harmony stirred. “Where?” she asked, looking towards the window, where the blue night-sky shone serenely.

The little lady laughed again. “Here, right here in my arms.”

Harmony was interested. “It was terrible,” she agreed, sniffing valiantly against



the last few tears, "but—but it's all over now."

"Then, suppose we go into my room and have a little visit. You and I haven't become acquainted yet."

Harmony tucked the lovely lady's picture under her pillow and started up.

"Oh, how nice!" she exclaimed, her gray eyes shining even through the puffed lids. "I think you must be a regular fairy godmother—are you?"

"Perhaps. I'll try hard to be, if you will let me," assented the new lodger, as she and the little girl walked up the hall, hand in hand.

"I never had a fairy godmother, I'm afraid," said Harmony, carrying on the fancy. It was a pretty new game, and she was enjoying it. "I think you came to me just in time. I was very sad."

Mrs. Goodwin could not help smiling in the dim light of the hall. The child's words were quaint.



"Yes, you seemed to be," she agreed. "If you like, we'll talk things over together, and perhaps we can see sunshine behind the clouds."

Harmony continued to feel astonished. Had she made a friend, a real friend at last? It was a new and exhilarating experience. She felt a laugh bubbling up out of her excitement. Harmony wasn't much given to laughter, and the sensation was a new and pleasant one.

They entered the big blue-and-white room together, and Mrs. Goodwin made a light in the shaded lamp that stood on a table in the center. Then she gently pushed the child into the cushioned depths of an easy chair.

She took her own seat opposite in a rocker, and, picking up some pretty white muslin thing, began to sew.

Harmony watched her quietly for a few minutes. Then she said, "I've learned to sew the buttons on my own dresses." She



wanted this good lady to know that she could do something.

“It’s well to be able to keep oneself neat and tidy,” responded Mrs. Goodwin. “A woman must always be that. It’s an important part of her charm for others. No woman can be really pretty unless she is perfectly neat.”

Harmony listened to this as to an oracle. No one had ever talked to her in this way before. Something of the kind she had thought out for herself some days ago. She was right, it seemed, and she felt a glow of pride at having thought it first. She said nothing, however, for the bliss of her present position was so great that she did not care to interfere with it.

Mrs. Goodwin sewed and rocked for several minutes before she spoke again.

“Do you want to tell me what caused the thunderstorm?” she asked at length.

Harmony roused herself sharply.

“Grandfather,” she answered quickly,



and the gleam in her eyes was not sunshine, but lightning. "He found me dancing in the street, to 'Seppy's piano, and he shouted at me, and dragged me away by the arm, and told me never, never to let him catch me dancing again." Harmony's mouth and eyes took on a look of mutiny that did not argue well for obedience.

Mrs. Goodwin dropped her work and leaned forward, staring at the angry child.

"Dancing?" she said.

"Oh, yes, I love it," exclaimed Harmony, jumping to her feet. "I could dance forever, like this," and she made a few swift steps and swept a curtsy to the lady in the rocking-chair.

Mrs. Goodwin was silent. She picked up her work again and sewed with quick stitches.

Harmony waited a moment, watching the flashing needle, then catching sight of herself in a long mirror between the front windows, fell to bowing and pirouetting before



it with the abandonment of a child of three.

“Who taught you to dance?” asked Mrs. Goodwin at length.

Harmony turned.

“Who taught you to dance?” Mrs. Goodwin repeated. “Your—your mother?”

“No,” replied Harmony. “Oh, no, not mother. She’s always in bed—that is, most always. I’ve always danced, I guess. Nobody ever showed me how. Can’t everybody dance? Can’t you dance?”

Mrs. Goodwin smiled a little, then bent her head over her work. “Some day, Harmony, if you and I remain good friends, I will tell you a story about a little girl who danced—a true story. No, dear, not everyone can dance. Very few, as you do—or as she did.”

Harmony was sure she saw a tear fall upon the pretty white muslin. Was her dear fairy godmother crying? But why should she, when they were talking about such a joyous thing as dancing?



The child came close, with an awkward impulse to caress the delicate old hands of the little lodger-lady.

“Won’t you tell the story now?” she asked, patting the hand upon which she distinctly felt a teardrop. “Aren’t we good enough friends, now?”

“Not quite, but we will be soon. Of that I’m sure,” said Mrs. Goodwin, looking up and smiling serenely again. “Besides, we must consider how we are to deal with Grandfather’s command. Let us think a bit. He says you must not dance again. I believe he meant in the street, and, if that’s true, I really think Grandfather was right about it.”

Harmony was perplexed. Here was her new friend taking the part of her ancient enemy. Was that friendly?

“Yes, the street is no place for you to dance,” continued Mrs. Goodwin. “A little lady never lets herself be conspicuous or stared at in the street. She is quiet and



gentle and dignified. Nevertheless, dancing in itself is not wrong. Perhaps, though, Grandfather has some reason for not liking dancing. That may be so. Many people do not approve of it. And because he is your grandfather, and much older and wiser than you are, little girl, we must respect his wishes. So, no more dancing in the street, not alone because Grandfather forbids, but because you wish to please him, and because now you know he is right."

Harmony scuffled one of her feet on the floor and held her head down. She only half agreed with Mrs. Goodwin, because she was still a little bit angry.

"Some day you may know just why Grandfather wishes you not to dance. Won't you be a good girl and forget that you were angry at him?" Mrs. Goodwin peered up into the frowning face so sweetly that Harmony yielded on the spot and came down on her knees before her, planting her arms right in among the white muslin folds.



“Yes, yes, I’ll try,” she said, “and if I’m good about Grandfather, don’t you think perhaps, some time, he will love me a little?”

The wistful face at her knee was very touching, and Mrs. Goodwin cuddled it between her hands and kissed it. Was it not worth while to befriend a little heart-hungry child like this?

“Surely, dear,” said the good lady, promising boldly for the cross-grained old man, “surely, he will some day. Meantime we will make it a study how to please him. Shall we? A great game that will be, to see how many joints he has in his armor of crustiness. The fairy sword of loving kindness will pierce it at a thousand points.”

Harmony smiled. This was talk she could understand.

“But I’m ’fraid my feet will dance in spite of me,” gurgled Harmony, after they had pictured Grandfather in rusty old armor, with a linked mail shirt ready to drop in pieces before the valiant sword of a



little Knightess, "what ever shall I do?"

"Well," said Mrs. Goodwin, drawing out the word into many syllables, "we'll just have to train those feet. Suppose we ask Grandfather some day, when you've pierced him just above the heart, if he will let his little girl go to a real dancing school."

"O-o-o," breathed the child.

"But mind you, it won't be right away, because it may take you a long time to pierce him in just the right spot."

"Well," assented Harmony. "I can only try the harder," which was very old-fashioned philosophy for a very young girl.

"Meantime, perhaps we can find something for your hands to do that will keep the feet quiet for a little while," suggested Mrs. Goodwin. She bundled the armful of muslin onto the table and rose. When she went across to the piano and opened it, Harmony felt that heaven was near.

"Are you going to play for me?" she whispered.



“Listen,” said the fairy godmother, and she seated herself at the piano and trailed her delicate fingers over the keys. “If you like music well enough to practise hard on the simplest exercises for the sake of some day making music like this,” her voice took on the measure and cadence of the thing she was playing, “I will teach you, and you shall have harmony in your hands as well as in your feet and in your heart and in your name.”

“Oh,” gasped Harmony. “Me? Do you mean me, Fairy Godmother?”

“I certainly do,” responded the little half-old lady, accepting in the best spirit the ecstatic hug which Harmony gave her. She put an arm around the child and drew her to her side, kissing the soft smooth cheek that pressed against hers. “I certainly do, Harmony, and no time is better than this to begin. What do you say to having your first lesson now?”

Harmony was in a tremble of eagerness. Yet she felt a sudden shyness and helpless-



ness come over her when she was actually seated on the piano stool with her fingers on the cool white keys.

Mrs. Goodwin drew up a chair beside her and began to explain the mysteries of the keyboard, striking clear, sweet notes from time to time.

The lesson was short, for it was the hour that little girls should be abed. Besides, Harmony had been greatly excited and exhausted by her crying spell.

“You are to come to me every day,” admonished the fairy godmother with mock severity, “and you shall practice under my very nose. I shall rap your knuckles with my pencil when you hold your hands badly, and I shall turn the clock’s face away from you so that you can’t stop until I say, ‘Time’s up for to-day.’ Oh, I shall be a very ogreish person indeed.”

Harmony laughed happily. “You can’t frighten me, Fairy Godmother. I shall just love to practice.”

This was promising a great deal, as Mrs.



Goodwin well knew, for she had given lessons to many other little girls and boys.

After the lesson, the aspiring musician was treated to cake, a most delicious kind made in three layers with chocolate between and spread thickly on the top. Harmony was not accustomed to such articles of diet. She had seen such cakes in bakery windows, but never had she set tooth in one, and Mrs. Goodwin smiled as she watched her little guest dispose of it.

Harmony's gray eyes were wide open with the wonders of the evening. She was even serious over the eating of the cake. So much unusual had happened to her that night! The fairy godmother had set ajar for her the door of the future. She could catch fleeting glimpses of wonderful things within. Her heart, her mind, her soul, even her body, had been hungry and unsatisfied until the fairy godmother came. And the great wonder of it all was that the fairy



godmother seemed to know what she needed and had given it to her.

She sat looking dreamily at nothing and marveling for many seconds after the last cake crumb had disappeared. Then Mrs. Goodwin spoke.

“Come, dear, it’s late. You must go to bed now. We’ll have other nice times together, you and I. This is only the first.”

“The first,” sighed the happy child, wakening from her vision. “Only the first! I do love you so,” and she raised her soft, smiling mouth to the little half-old lady. For the first time that she could remember, Harmony was going to bed with a loving good night kiss upon her lips.

When she finally ran down the hall to her own room, a bar of light from Mrs. Goodwin’s open door made for her a golden pathway.



## CHAPTER VIII

### HERO-O'-MINE

“**W**HAT are you going to do to-day?” called Grig, one Saturday morning.

It was glorious Indian summer, the sun shining through a beautiful grayish haze.

Grig was leaping back and forth over the water hydrant, in exuberance of spirits, while he questioned his little friend and neighbor, Harmony Hale.

Harmony had just returned from the store, her arms burdened with Eileen's Saturday shopping.

“Oh, I don't know 'specially,” she replied, pausing at the top of the steps of the area-way. “Only, of course, I must practise, and clean my room, and sew on buttons, and study my lessons, and——”



“Aw, fudge, what you givin’ us? Come on out and play,” commanded Grig.

Harmony, however, had her time all planned, although she didn’t mean Grig to know it. She was going to spend the whole delightful day in the treasure chamber, just coming out of it long enough for luncheon and her music lesson, so as not to arouse anybody’s suspicions.

“Oh, I’ve got too much to do, Grig. I can’t possibly play to-day,” Harmony insisted firmly, and went down the steps.

Grig came to the area and shouted after her indignantly, “All right for you, Harmony Hale. You’re getting to be a reg’lar sissy since that lodger came to your house. You used to be some fun, but now——”

His scorn was wasted. Harmony had closed the door between them.

It was a week or more since Harmony had even peeped into the attic room. Days were so very busy now, and life had developed so many pleasant duties.



To-day, however, the fascination of the treasure chamber drew Harmony again with compelling force, and, as she climbed the last flight of stairs to it, her heart beat in anticipation.

As she opened the door, Harmony saw the room flooded with the autumn sunshine, just a little hazy. She drew a long breath of delight.

At first she walked about on tip-toe, so as not to break the charm of the perfect stillness. She pushed up the window, where the chair still stood, and stopped a moment to look down into the street far below.

Grig was sitting on the steps next door, doing nothing. This was a bad sign. Grig was never really doing nothing. When quiet, plans were hatching under his thick black hair. Harmony couldn't help wondering what he'd do.

Suddenly he lifted his head and looked up directly towards her, as though her eyes had attracted him. She dodged back,



laughing, not daring to peek again, and turned away from the window and all thought of Grig.

Then she held a long conversation with hero-o'-mine, and dusted him off until she sneezed.

“I wish I had some paint with me,” she said. “I’d paint you up good again.” Hero-o’ mine stared glassily over her head. Perhaps his feelings were hurt at her familiarity.

At length she approached the chest which was at the far end of the long room and almost concealed by the spinet, the spinning-wheel, and one of the table cases. Dust lay thick in the deep crevices of the carvings, and the lid looked heavy and defiant.

To-day, however, Harmony was not to be balked by any circumstances. If the chest was not locked, the lid must come open. That was all. So, like the wolf in the little-pig fairy tale, she “huffed and she puffed” until she managed to lift the lid. A jammed



finger, which had been caught in the crack when the lid fell back once, was the only casualty, and Harmony hung over the edge, short-breathed but triumphant.

The treasure trove was at first glance disheartening, for the chest was large and long and very sparsely packed. On top lay a shallow pasteboard box, tied with heavy twine. Under it was a pile of clothing, and in one corner several bundles of letters, yellow and time-worn.

The box was marked in her grandfather's large, irregular hand-writing, "Data Concerning Nathan Hale."

She placed it on the top of the spinet, for future consideration, and explored further.

She lifted out the first garment. It was a silk gown, so old that the color had almost vanished, leaving it a dull yellow like a faded rose petal, and the cut of it was so strange that Harmony stared at it, shook out its rustling folds and stared at it again.



At length, girl-like, she decided to try it on. First she slipped off her own frock and tied up all her loose curls with the hair ribbon on top of her head. Then she put on the silken gown. It whispered softly of the long ago, as she raised it above her head and let the circular folds of silk settle softly down around her, until they lay in rings upon the floor at her feet. She pushed her slender arms through the oddly located armholes, and managed, by much twisting, to fasten the waist at the back.

While she was getting into the dress, it seemed as though the unseen presence she had felt the first night had come once more into the room. She heard little creakings and shufflings, faint and far away, by the window, and again near the old mahogany sofa.

Once, one of the sounds was so distinct that she stopped and listened sharply and even stepped out of her barricade of furniture to glance down the room. The dust



motes danced in the sunshine' and the bead-black eyes of a tiny mouse audaciously returned her glance from behind the stack of bayonets.

"Between Mr. Mouse and the 'Spirit of Seventy-Six'," she laughed, "I'm almost getting scared."

But immediately her thoughts returned to the gown that curled softly around her feet. She put her hand to the breast of it. "Some one once wore you, whose heart beat just like mine," she murmured, feeling the soft pit-pat against the old, yellow silk. "I wonder if she was the mother, or the sister, or the wife, or the sweetheart of the hero. I wonder if she felt proud and high when he went away to fight for his country."

She began further excavations into the depths of the chest.

"Here's a bonnet," she exulted, drawing forth a prim little affair with strings, no-color like the dress. She promptly put it on tying it over her ears. The odd soft



noises in the room sounded more mysterious than ever.

She curtsied and minced across the floor in great glee, bowing in an exaggerated fashion to hero-o'-mine, who couldn't appreciate how quaint the child appeared with her fresh girl face and tendrils of curls peeping forth from the ancient bonnet.

Then Harmony sat down upon the hair-cloth sofa, spread her skirts, straightened her back and, pretending she was the original wearer of the old dress, made prim conversation with hero-o'-mine.

“ Yes, thank you, my health is excellent,” she said formally.

Something followed unheard from the soldier.

“ You see,” she continued, “ I've had such a long rest—I've been asleep like the Sleeping Beauty, many and many a year. Don't you get tired of always standing? ”

She paused, while the gentleman was supposed to answer.



Then she nodded her head sympathetically.

“Just as I thought. You poor thing! And the moths! Aren’t they troublesome? Do they disturb you much? They don’t like silk you know, so my dress was safe. It’s terribly faded though. I think it used to be pink, if I remember correctly. Do you remember?” And she cocked her head coquettishly and gave the mute figure a mischievous glance, while she awaited his imaginary reply.

But in the short silence that followed, there came a queer sound from directly under the sofa, that caused the little colonial dame to jump.

“Mercy me!” she exclaimed, “that naughty mouse!” and she scuffled her feet noisily to scare him back to his hole. In that instant, the lady of the eighteenth century had vanished and a little girl of the twentieth was sitting in her place on the



hair-cloth sofa. The pretty game had been spoiled by a mouse!

Harmony returned to the region of the chest. Here the spinet attracted her attention, and she sat down and began to play.

Several weeks of music lessons had taught her a few scales and simple exercises, and these easy things were just suited to the little piano. Harmony tried them, and they sounded so well that she jumbled them together into what seemed to her a noble improvisation. To this accompaniment she chanted:

“Hero-o’-mine, I love you. I love you for all your noble deeds. I love you for your brave heart. I love you because you saved my country for me.”

And loving him so much, her song naturally went on to include other things that she loved.

“I love this treasure chamber of Grandfather’s. I love everything in it. I love



my fairy godmother. I love my music lessons. I love dear old Eileen, and I love 'Seppy's street piano. Only I can't dance to it any more. I love the picture of the beautiful lady. I love—I love Grig——”

There was another soft noise in the room. Harmony stopped, her attention diverted for a moment. Then she finished in her natural voice. “Sometimes,” she said, and rose from the spinet.

“O dear, I wish I could have Grig up here,” she mourned, “it would be such fun. Oh, well—— Let's see, what's in this.”

She picked up the box she had found in the top of the chest and carried it over to the sofa.

Carefully arranging her gown and untying her bonnet strings, Harmony prepared herself for a long, quiet hour.

She slipped the string off the box marked by her grandfather,

“Data Concerning Nathan Hale,”  
and lifted the cover. There, on a pile of



papers and printed pages, lay a large modern photograph of a statue.

Underneath it were the words:

“NATHAN HALE

The Ideal Patriot.”

The photograph of the figure on the pedestal had the effect of a picture from life. Harmony studied it with rapture. The secret of the chest lay revealed—the name, the face, the story of her hero. Harmony had found him, tangibly, at last.

The wooden figure had only the soldier's clothing, the young man in the engraving had his spirit. Here were combined all parts, made one. Here he was embodied and named. Here was Nathan Hale, the ideal patriot.

All the passion of hero-worship possessed by little visionaries and dreamers, like Harmony, rose in a tide. Her face flushed, but she could do nothing but gaze at the young hero's exalted countenance and whisper his name to herself.



“Hale,” she said at length, “my name! Grandfather’s name! Grandfather will tell me all about him. He was a real, real man.”

The child was satisfied. The treasure chamber had at last shown to her its heart.

The papers and manuscripts contained in the box all had to deal with Nathan Hale. She saw the name repeated in them again and again, but compared with the picture they lacked interest. She preferred her own imaginings. Moreover, she was determined to “hold up” Grandfather for the true story.

Absorbed in her thoughts, Harmony was very quiet, the room still.

Suddenly somebody sneezed.

“Kerchew!”

There was no doubt about its being a hearty, human sneeze.

“Kerchew!”

Harmony screamed, dropped the photograph and jumped to her feet. Surely there was no one in the room! She looked



suspiciously at the wooden soldier. He was stiffly saluting her as he had been for an hour past.

The ensuing silence was terrifying. Harmony held her breath. Then the sneezer sniffed. Harmony, trembling, had been standing rooted to the spot directly in front of the sofa.

At the sound of the sniff, a little smile crept into her face. Without moving, she looked sharply at the floor beneath the couch. There, just discernible in the shadow, she saw the tips of two grimy fingers.

Quick as a flash she planted her foot heavily upon these intruders.

The sneezer was trapped.



## CHAPTER IX

### AN UNEXPECTED ATTACK

“OUCH! Aw, let up, Harmony,” begged a voice from under the sofa.

Harmony set her teeth and stepped harder.

“Oh, I say, perhaps you think you’re a lightweight,” pleaded the voice.

Suddenly a second hand shot out from beneath the sofa, caught Harmony’s left ankle, and down she came upon the sofa, all in a heap.

The intruder then crawled out and stood up to his full height. It was Harmony’s friend and neighbor, Grig Winslow, rather dusty, but very triumphant. He regarded the crumpled defender of the stronghold and nursed his trodden hand.



Harmony sat up, straightened her bonnet and preened her tumbled silks.

“Perhaps you think you’re smart?” she observed sarcastically.

“Perhaps you think you hurt me?” replied Grig, thrusting his hands into his trousers’ pockets and trying not to grin at the angry lady.

“Thought you’d scare me, didn’t you?” she continued, attempting to hide her injured dignity as he was concealing his injured fingers.

“No thought about it,” scoffed Grig. “Scared you stiff, and you know it.” Then like a generous foe, he assured her, “But really, I didn’t mean to scare you, Harmony. I hoped you’d go before you found me.”

Harmony’s curiosity was strong, and her indignation short-lived.

“How did you get in?” she demanded eagerly.

“The window,” came the prompt answer.



“Oh, Grig, weren't you frightened to death?”

“Well, I like that!” remarked the young man. “Why, you did it one day yourself, Harmony, and you're only a girl.”

“But you told me I was a sport,” she said, greatly hurt to think he had duplicated her exploit so easily.

“So you were,” he acknowledged, “but such things are easier for a boy to do. I thought surely you'd hear me when I stepped on the chair. It wiggled and screamed a little.”

Harmony laughed.

“I did hear you,” she said, “but I thought it was either a mouse or—or—something else.” She had almost said, “the Spirit of Seventy-Six,” but caught herself just in time.

Grig would never understand.

“Think you might say you're glad to see me,” complained Grig, beginning a deliberate investigation of the place.



“I don’t know that I am,” replied the hostess, tartly.

Grig grinned mischievously over his shoulder.

“ ’Twasn’t ten minutes since you were wishing I was here. I heard you.”

Harmony grew very pink in the face.

“At any rate, it was rude of you to come without an invitation,” she retorted.

“I gave you fair warning. I said I’d find out your old secret, and I did,” responded Grig in justification. Then, “Jiminy fishhooks, Harmony,” he exclaimed, abruptly letting the argument slip away, in face of keener interests, “isn’t this a queer old museum? Look at the junk in these cases! What do you say to my dressing up, too, and we’ll have some jolly game, like ‘Surprised by the Indians’ or ‘The Defense of the Colonial Maiden,’ or something of that kind?”

This was so exactly what Harmony was aching to do that it seemed uncanny of Grig



to have thought of it, too. But she was also much afraid of being caught up here playing with Grig, and her common sense told her that she was running a risk to allow him to stay another moment.

“I don’t know,” considered Grig, with a huge riding boot in one hand, a bow and arrow in the other, “which I’d rather be, the governor of the colony or a wild red Indian. Which do you say, Harmony?”

“Oh, s’pose you play you’re an Indian, and——” began Harmony, but with delightful contrariness, Grig interrupted.

“No, I’ll be a soldier, a Revolutionary soldier, like that duffer over in the corner, and I’ll rescue you.”

Harmony, unaware that her suggestion had been nipped in the bud, assented cheerfully to the cavalier’s decision.

“All right. Then what?”

“You—you—I’ve got it! You’re to be in your cottage, over there by the chest, playing on your piano——”



“Spinet,” corrected Harmony.

“Your thingumajig, I don’t care—Say, Harmony, what’ll I do for a hat?”

Involuntarily Harmony’s eyes glanced at the three-cornered affair adorning hero-o’-mine’s wig.

“That’s it!” Grig cried, catching the implied suggestion, and without ceremony, whipped it off the figure’s head and crammed it down upon his own thick mop. “Then I’m to come dashing along upon my horse’ on my way to Boston with important dispatches— How do you think I look, anyway? Ain’t I the ticket, a regular top-notcher?”

Grig stalked heavily and slowly down the room in the enormous riding boots with the clanking iron spurs. He wore a handsome coat with tarnished epaulets that hung unevenly from his boyish shoulders. The sleeves had to be turned up at the cuffs. He had buckled on a sword whose scabbard jangled on the floor as he walked. At the



window, Grig turned, and with his drawn sword gravely saluted the little dame.

“Oh, Grig, you’re lovely!” exclaimed the lady, clasping her hands in admiration. This gratified Grig, and forthwith he had an inspiration—an unusual one.

“So are you,” he exclaimed, lowering his sword and staring at her.

She curtsied and smiled.

Then in very dramatic accents, Grig continued, “I lay my life at your feet!”

Harmony giggled.

“Go on,” she said, “what comes next in the game?”

The gallant soldier clanked heavily toward her once more.

“Well,” he continued, “as I’m riding along keeping sharp watch for the enemy, I catch sight of four Indians, creeping, creeping, slyly up at the back of your cottage. I can see you at your spin—spinning-wheel and I know you are in terrible danger.”





“OH, GRIG, YOU’RE LOVELY!”— Page 126.







Harmony softly sighed, "Oh!" The game took on qualities of realism from Grig's thrilling manner.

"Then I draw my pistol," Grig with difficulty brandished a great horse pistol nearly eighteen inches long, in a blood-thirsty fashion, "leap from my horse and make a sudden rush upon the Indians. They are taken by surprise, so I kill two. Then you scream, and I am engaged with two of the villains. Then——"

Grig stopped a moment to catch his breath and a new idea, so Harmony took up the story.

"Then I run and grab up a rifle that is standing in the corner of the room, and I shoot through the window and kill one of the Indians," she invented glibly.

"Yes, and then I whack the other fellow over the head with the butt of my pistol—And there you are!" concluded Grig.

"Oh—and then I'm so thankful to you that I run out of the door and hold out both



hands to you and say, 'Oh, sir, how can I thank you for saving my life!'" cried Harmony eagerly.

"And I say, 'I do not want you to thank me. It is reward enough to have been of service to you.' And I mount my horse and ride away," finished Grig.

"Oh, but that isn't all," exclaimed Harmony. "I must know your name, so I call out, 'May I not know the name of my preserver?'"

"Ought I to give you my name?" asked the gentlemanly hero. "Shouldn't I ride away without telling it?"

"Oh, no, Grig, you must say modestly, 'If you would know it, my name, fair maiden, is Nathan Hale.'" "

"Not on your life," exclaimed Grig indignantly. "I'm not going to take the part of that spy."

"What do you mean, Grig Winslow? He couldn't have been a spy. He was an ideal patriot." Harmony flew to the rescue



of her hero's name, with flashing eyes.

"He was a spy! I can prove it to you by my United States history. Haven't you studied about him in school yet?" persisted Grig.

"No. But I've got a picture of him, and it says he's a hero. He looks like one, too, and I don't believe you at all." Tears stood in Harmony's eyes.

"Somebody's been kiddin' you. Come on, Harmony. I don't mean to hurt your feelings. Truly, that's what it says in my school history. He went into the British camp, disguised as a school teacher, to find out the force of the enemy and to get the plans of their fortifications and send them back to General Washington. True as I live, Harmony Hale, that's what they say of him. He was an American spy."

"But he was a soldier, wasn't he?" queried the girl.

"Sure. He was a captain, I guess. He was only a young man teaching school,



when the war broke out. Then, when he was on his way back to the American lines, the British caught him and found the plans of the English fortifications in his shoes, and they hanged him for a spy."

"Oh!" Harmony gave a cry, and down came the shower of tears. "Oh, I knew he was a hero. I knew he was brave," she sobbed.

Grig, elated at the vividness of his story, continued.

"He said a pretty fine thing, though, just before he died. Want me to tell you, Harmony?"

"Yes," she sniffed.

"You'll have to stop crying then. It makes me nervous."

"I—I've stopped," Harmony stammered, mopping away the tears.

"It was just before he died," went on the boy, enjoying the valiant spirit of the patriot-spy. "They asked him if he had anything to say and his reply was 'I only



regret that I have but one life to give for my country. ' ”

Children are born hero-worshippers, and, although the heroic nature of these words was hidden from their youthful minds, both Harmony and Grig caught the perfume of great self-sacrifice and felt its inspiration.

After a moment of silence, Harmony said, “ I’ll show you his picture, now.”

She felt that, although Grig did not acknowledge it in words, he had begun to share her great admiration for the man.

She produced the photograph of the statue, and they sat down on the great sofa and studied it together.

“ I wonder why he didn’t have on a uniform,” said Harmony.

Grig enjoyed his role of instructor.

“ Oh, this was on his way to execution. He was wearing his ordinary clothes. I think his hands are tied behind his back.”

Grig turned the photograph over. “ See, it says,



## "NATHAN HALE.

"This statue of Nathan Hale, the ideal American patriot, was designed and executed by William Ordway Partridge and erected by the Alumni of Yale on the University Campus. It represents the young hero on his way to execution, wearing the simple garb of the schoolmaster, in which he was found by the British within their lines."

## "NATHAN HALE

"One hero dies—a thousand new ones rise,  
As flowers are sown where perfect blossoms fall;

Then quite unknown, the name of Hale now  
cries

Wherever duty sounds her silent call.

"With head erect he moved and stately  
pace

To meet an awful doom—no ribald jest  
Brings scorn or hate to that exalted face;  
His thoughts are far away, poised and at  
rest;



“Now on the scaffold see him turn and bid  
Farewell to home, and all his heart holds  
dear.

Majestic presence!—all man’s weakness hid,  
And all his strength in that last hour  
made clear:

“‘My sole regret that it is mine to give  
Only one life, that my dear land may live.’

WILLIAM ORDWAY PARTRIDGE.”

“Isn’t that beautiful?” murmured the  
little girl when Grig had finished reading.  
The boy nodded assent.

“I think he must be an ancestor of mine,”  
said Harmony in an awe-stricken voice.

“The name’s the same——”

“So it is—Hale,” said Grig agreeably.  
“Perhaps he was.”

“Don’t you think it’s very wonderful?”  
she asked wistfully. “You wouldn’t mind  
his being a—a spy, would you?”

“No,” Grig assured her, “the more I  
think of it, the more I think he was a sport.



Just fancy his walking calmly into the British lines and getting all the information Washington wanted, right under the enemy's nose. Whee! He was a smart one. I'd like to do something like that!"

Harmony's backbone stiffened under this praise, and her eyes danced proudly beneath the old-fashioned bonnet brim.

"I—I wish he was your ancestor, too," she said generously.

"Oh, don't you worry about me," laughed Grig. "You can keep your hero all to yourself. Father says we've got a whole raft of them in our family, somewheres. I must get him to tell me about them. Just because Father's a poor man's no reason I shouldn't be proud of my ancestors. Father's an inventor, Harmony, and do you know, they're always poor."

"Is that so?" asked the girl, all sympathy, "always and always?"

"Pretty nearly. But when I grow up, I intend to be a business man, and I shall take



up Father's patents and make him rich. Won't that be fine, Harmony?"

"Oh, beautiful! I didn't know you could do such wonderful things, Grig."

"Watch me!" said Grig, straightening his shoulders under the falling gold epaulets.

Harmony gazed at him in admiration.

Grig grinned at her. Suddenly he grabbed the photograph again.

"Jiminy fishhooks!" he exclaimed. "I believe you look like your hero. Let's see."

The two heads in their old-fashioned gear bent fascinated over the photograph, trying to search out a resemblance between the face of the hero and that of the little girl.

"I wonder what color his eyes——" began Grig, glancing up.

He stopped, petrified with surprise.

Harmony looked up, too.

There in the doorway stood Grandfather Hale and the fairy godmother!



## CHAPTER X

### DISCOVERED

**T**HE silence for a moment was appalling.

The children were stiff with fright.

The grown people stood and stared at the quaint figures on the sofa. Then Grandfather strode forward and roared at them like an angry lion. Harmony couldn't think, the catastrophe, now that it really had come, was so terrifying.

"What's the meaning of this?" he shouted. "Tell me that! What are you doing here?" He glowered at Harmony, and she rose to her feet, her knees shaking.

"Oh, Grandfather, we——" she faltered.

"You're a little minx!" he interrupted furiously. "How did you get here? Tell



me that! Breaking into a locked room! Where did you get the key? I'll punish you for this!"

"Why, Grandfather, I,——" she attempted once more.

"You're a nice pair of sneak thieves, you two," he broke in again. "Making a play-room of my museum! Destroying valuable property, priceless. I tell you' priceless——"

"Oh, but, Grandfather, we really haven't hurt a thing," Harmony shrilly announced. This brought his attention back to her.

"You're a meddlesome little imp! I'll teach you! Bread and water and your own room for a week. Hear that? You'll know better next time than to paw around among my things. I'll make you sorry."

He glanced keenly around the room from under his shaggy, frowning brows. Grig moved hastily down to the far end of the sofa. His clanking spurs and saber caught Grandfather's angry gaze.



“As for you, you young house-breaker, I’ll give you a lesson you’ll not soon forget. You won’t be so quick to trespass on your neighbor’s premises, after I get through caning you.” He pounded upon the floor with his stick and approached the horrified boy. “I won’t have my house broken into by street urchins and ragamuffins like you, without protest.” He reached out towards Grig, when Mrs. Goodwin gently interposed.

She touched the bitter old man on the arm, and said softly, “There, there, Mr. Hale, I am sure the children meant no mischief.”

He turned angrily upon her.

“You, too? Are you a party to this outrage? Can’t I punish two meddling children without your interference? Is it any of your business? Tell me that!”

“No,” answered Mrs. Goodwin, calmly eyeing him, “it’s really none of my business, of course. But I’m sure the children were



playing here quite harmlessly. While they had no right——”

“No right, no right? Now you’re talking common sense. I should think they had no right. Do you realize, madam, that this collection of Revolutionary relics is worth thousands of dollars? Thousands! And time. I’ve been forty years gathering it here. And now to have two little sneaks like these,” he indicated the culprits by a sweep of his cane, “break in upon it and turn it topsy-turvy; do you think I can stand by and look on with a smile? No, madam, no!”

Harmony, who had been gathering courage during this speech of Grandfather’s, now stumbled forward in her long gown and held up the large photograph.

“Grandfather, won’t you please tell us about Nathan Hale?” she pleaded.

“Nathan Hale? What do you know about Nathan Hale? Where did you get that photograph?” He scowled down



upon the picture Harmony held towards him, and then at the eager little face framed in the ancient bonnet.

“I found it in the chest,” she gasped, “and I do so want to know if he was one of our ancestors. Was he, Grandfather?”

“The chest? So that’s where you’ve been for your masquerade things? Not any place safe from your meddlesome fingers.”

He thumped down the room and peered into the chest. Then he leaned over and lifted out a long narrow package. He laid his cane upon the spinet, and with fingers that shook a little, took from its wrappings an old-fashioned sword.

“That,” he said proudly, holding it across both hands and pointedly addressing Mrs. Goodwin, “that is the sword of Nathan Hale, Captain. It’s been difficult work finding relics of Hale, but this is authentic. A great treasure.”

At the words “sword of Nathan Hale,” both children made short work of getting to



the spot and stood, wide-eyed with awe, staring at the narrow blade as Grandfather slipped it half out of its sheath.

“When I was quite a young man, I found that Nathan Hale and I were blood relations, though many generations removed,” continued Grandfather Hale, unconsciously speaking to his absorbed little audience. “I had a tremendous admiration for the man, oftentimes called a spy, and I made a determined effort to secure every bit of information about him that I could. I bought that uniform on the figure, with the assurance that it had been Hale’s and later found that it was not. But there,” he sheathed the sword quickly and wrapped it up again, “you don’t deserve to see it.”

“Oh, but it’s wonderful,” exclaimed Harmony, her eyes glowing. “Do tell us more. It seems as if everything here whispers little stories of the past, if only our ears could hear. You’ll tell us some of them, won’t you?”



Grandfather watched her from under his frowning brows.

“I couldn’t find many of Hale’s things,” he said gruffly, not answering her appeal, directly, “only some letters and books beside his sword. But I grew so interested in the Revolutionary period, that I made my collection include things belonging to the early colonists and the Indians. Every article here has its story. There isn’t a better collection of Revolutionary relics outside of the New England States.”

There was a gleam in his eyes that matched Harmony’s, as he gazed about among his treasures. He loved these things he had spent the best years of his life in gathering.

Suddenly his face became stern again. He picked up his cane and thumped upon the floor with it.

“A number of years ago,” he said loudly and roughly, “I lost interest in my museum. “I had——” He paused and looked down



at Harmony, who was lovingly regarding the picture of the patriot. "Trouble," he continued. "Since then I have bought few things, and all you see, are now neglected. I have books and maps and papers that are so precious, they would make the eyes of collectors bulge. But they are stowed away uncatalogued. My office is piled with valuable papers falling into tatters. I've lost interest." He said the last words sadly.

Harmony gasped. "Oh, Grandfather," she exclaimed, putting a tremulous little hand on the knotted one that held the terrifying cane, "Grandfather, I love all your treasures here, the way you do. I understand about them. Won't you teach me to take care of them and let me help you?"

"There, there," he muttered harshly, paying no heed to the fluttering little hand. "We'll see, we'll see. Come, get out of these fallals now, and be quick about it. By the way, where did you get the key?"

Harmony's fright came back.



“I—I—I found one that fitted. I—I’ve got a collection, and one of them fitted. You see—I was hunting for your treasure, your piles o’ gold’ and——”

“Piles o’ gold!” shouted Grandfather, in a rage again. “Whose piles o’ gold? What gold? What do you mean?”

“Why, yours, Grandfather,” faltered Harmony, retreating hurriedly and almost falling backwards over the trailing folds of silken gown. “People say, you know, that you’ve got heaps and heaps of treasure hidden away,” she continued bravely.

“I have, have I? Heaps and heaps of treasure! People say! And what’s that to you, you troublesome little imp?” he thundered.

But here Harmony’s spirit met his own.

“It was only a game, Grandfather,” she spoke up bravely. “I don’t think you should mind my hunting for the treasure. I didn’t find any gold, but I think the treasure I did find, all these wonderful things



and Nathan Hale, is much nicer than gold. And if I'm going to be your heiress, I'd a great deal rather have this treasure than piles and piles 'o gold."

"Didn't I tell you to take off those things?" demanded Grandfather, after a moment. "And put them away carefully. See to that. Nice-looking place you've made of it," he growled, "the two of you together, rummaging through my collection. Remember, this, Harmony. You may be my heiress, but the things are not yours yet, and it'll be some years before they are!"

"Oh, I know that," Harmony said sweetly, "and we'll put them all away, just as we found them." She turned to Mrs. Goodwin to help her out of the whimsical old gown.

Meantime Grig had been divesting himself of the huge boots, the sword and the coat with the epaulets. Now he tramped up to the fuming old man and addressed him gallantly.



“It was my fault, entirely, my being here, Mr. Hale,” he said, “not Harmony’s. I’m sorry. I oughtn’t to have come without your permission, and—and it was very wrong, my dressing up in your clothes.”

“Well, well,” snarled the old man, “go on.”

“I was angry,” continued Grig, “because Harmony wouldn’t tell me all about the secret. I thought I’d play Old Sleuth and find out for myself. So I climbed in at the window this morning and hid under the sofa. She thought it was a mouse, the noises I made, I mean, and I’m afraid I frightened her pretty badly when I sneezed.”

“No, you didn’t either,” declared Harmony stoutly.

“Go on, go on,” said Grandfather.

“So then I proposed dressing up and playing a game. Oh, it was my fault, Mr. Hale.”

“All right, all right. Go on, sir.”



Grandfather scowled at the boy.

“Well—that’s about all, Mr. Hale, except—Oh, do you know what color his eyes were?” Grig burst out earnestly.

“Blue,” the old man announced tersely.

“Oh!” exclaimed Grig and Harmony in a duet of disappointment.

“That’s too bad,” continued the boy, “I really thought Harmony looked something like Nathan Hale.”

“So she does, so she does,” exclaimed Grandfather unexpectedly. He walked towards the door, then turned abruptly and glowered at the children.

“Come, come,” he exclaimed. “Didn’t I tell you to take off your fancy dress and clear out? Do you suppose I am going to be patient under your meddlesome interference?” Then he turned to Mrs. Goodwin and bowed with an old-fashioned elegance of manner that contrasted sharply with his anger and rudeness of a few moments before.



“Madam, shall we go?” he asked.

Nodding to the children, with a smile, the lady preceded Grandfather Hale down the staircase.

The children followed at a respectful distance. Suddenly he turned back and addressed them roughly.

“You two little bandits, shut that window, pack away all your borrowed finery and see that everything is in perfect order before you leave. Boy, when you’re ready, come down the stairs and go out the front door like an honest man. Girl, I’ll see to your case later.”

The children watched his shaggy gray head disappear down the staircase. Then they turned to each other in astonishment and congratulation.

“He’s left us the key!” they exclaimed in unison.



## CHAPTER XI

### A QUARREL

**E**ILEEN declared that Mrs. Goodwin was a witch.

“Anybody that can get around your grumpy, old grandfather like she has, is a witch,” she assured Harmony. “Who’d ’a’ thought of wanting to visit his musty old museum? Nobody but her. She was crazy to go as soon as she heard tell of the place, and he took her. And then, when he found you two kids playing up there, did he snap your heads off, like he should have done? Not a bit of it! He was as mild as milk.”

“Not quite,” laughed Harmony, “although he didn’t forbid our going again. But oh, Eileen, it was terrible, the way he scolded and shouted.”

“He’d ’a’ been much worse if it hadn’t ’a’



been for Mrs. Goodwin. She's fair bewitched him. Saints preserve us, child, but you'd have got it hot and heavy if he'd been alone."

Harmony looked serious. She had hoped that Grandfather would be different after that day in the treasure chamber. But he wasn't. "Not so's you could notice it," as Grig said. If he had been secretly touched by her worship of his hero, he had not indicated it to her in any way, but passed her by as usual without greeting. He had not, however, insisted upon solitary confinement for her, with a bread and water diet.

"And look at your new clo'es," continued Eileen with a little grudging in her tones, "Do you s'pose I could have squeezed more'n five dollars out o' him for things for you? Not much. And bless you! She got twenty-five, if she got a cent, and you've actually enough now so't ye needn't be ashamed of yourself any more."

"I never was ashamed, Eileen," objected



Harmony proudly, "I didn't know any different, then. But I do like to look nice. Is pink becoming to me?"

She was not yet used to the big butterfly that crowned her silky crop of curls. Each time she caught a passing glimpse of it in a mirror, she would wonder for an instant what little girl that could be.

This morning, as Eileen buttoned the crisp chambray frock that matched the ribbon, she was especially anxious to look well. The world was hers, now. She was preparing to sally forth to make friends.

The matter of friends had had the serious consideration of Mrs. Goodwin.

"I don't understand, Harmony, why you do not have friends, little girl friends. That boy, Grig, and the Italian piano man seem to be the only ones outside the house. I don't like it. It's not natural. Everybody should have friends. There isn't a joy in life that is more to be cherished than friendship. What is the matter, Harmony?"



You say even your teachers don't care for you."

Harmony looked puzzled and a little sullen.

"P'raps because I was dirty and ragged," she suggested.

Mrs. Goodwin shook her head. "No, not entirely so. I remember, when I went to school, one of the most untidy little girls of my acquaintance was the greatest favorite. She was so merry and warm-hearted and sweet, that we all loved her. She grew into a splendid woman."

"Grandfather?" asked Harmony softly.

"No, I hardly think so. Children don't care who you are, if you are a good companion."

Harmony gave the fairy godmother a quick glance. "There's nobody I like," she exclaimed. "The teachers are horrid. They have favorites. One said once that I was dirty. The last one told me I was stupid. I can't help it. When they go on



and on, explaining things to the other children, I get to thinking about stories and—and things, and I don't hear what they're saying. Of course, then, I can't answer questions! They're so impatient. I always hate 'em. I like my new one the best of any. Yesterday she had a cold and couldn't read aloud to us the story of 'Beautiful Joe,' that she reads days when we're 'specially good. So she asked who'd take her place. I offered, and she seemed surprised. But she let me do it, and afterwards said that I'd read it wonderfully well."

Harmony waited a moment, but Mrs. Goodwin said nothing.

"There's a little girl in my room, this year, that I think I'd like to know," she continued wistfully. "Her name's Jean—Jean McLaren. She's got brown eyes and a great thick braid of brown hair. She's awfully smart, too. Doesn't miss a thing. She smiled at me the other day. I think I'd like to know her."



Mrs. Goodwin spoke. "Harmony, there is no reason why you shouldn't have Jean McLaren for a friend, or any other little girl, if you wish. It is your fault that you aren't friends with your teachers and schoolmates. How can you expect people to love you when you don't like them? It is selfish of you. You must try to like them. Offer them your friendship. It will seldom be refused. I'm sorry for your teacher. Of course she would be impatient and think you stupid when you fail to pay attention. It is not kind of you to hinder your teacher that way. She has enough really stupid, badly-behaved children to try her nerves, without your making more trouble. I wish you'd go to school to-morrow, Harmony, with the determination to like your teacher and your schoolmates and to keep your mind strictly on your work. No more dreaming in school hours! Will you try, Harmony?"

This was almost a scolding from the fairy



godmother, and, if it hadn't been given with the kind gray eyes looking tenderly into hers, Harmony would have felt some resentment. But the little girl knew that, somehow, the words were just.

Had she been selfish? Had she been unkind? If so, she had not intended it. She resolved to remember what Mrs. Goodwin said and to make a new beginning at school.

So this morning Harmony was full of her purpose and anxious to look her best.

When she was ready for school, Eileen said, "Darlin', would ye mind takin' the mornin' paper up to Dear-Me? I'd kind of like to have her see you lookin' as sweet as a peach."

So Harmony ran upstairs and knocked at Dear-Me's door.

"Come," drawled the fretful voice.

Harmony tried not to "bounce," as she entered and approached the bed.

"Here's the paper, Mother," she announced, laying it on the coverlet, "and



Eileen thought perhaps you'd like to see my new dress."

The black eyes of the woman on the bed looked critically at the small figure in pink.

"You do look nice, Harmonee. Mrs. Goodwin came and asked me, one day, if she couldn't help to get you fixed up for fall, knowing how ill I am. I told her I'd be only too thankful to have her do it."

She paused and closed her eyes wearily. After a moment, she opened them again and continued: "She's a nice woman—that Mrs. Goodwin. Dear me, I dreaded her so. I thought I'd mind her piano especially. But I don't. It's sort of company for me. I get so lonely, lying here all the time. Mrs. Goodwin has been very kind. I hope you thanked her, Harmonee."

"Oh, yes," responded the child, fairly dancing in her eagerness. "Indeed I did. I call her my fairy godmother."

"That's nice," said Dear-me, closing her eyes once more. "And now run along,



Harmonee. Dear me, you're so restless. To-night I shall want you to go to the library for me."

Harmony hurried away.

"My! look at the swell lid," shouted a boy's voice, as she turned the corner. It was Grig. "Where'd you get the hat, *and* the coat, *and* the new shoes? Jiminy fish-hooks! but you're dressy. May I walk alongside, or ain't I togged out enough to suit you?"

"Oh, Grig, how silly you are," protested the girl, flushing a little. "One'd think I never had anything new before."

"Well, I never saw you in any," said the boy bluntly. "You'll certainly knock the spots off all the other girls."

Compliments from Grig, even of this rough and ready kind, were unusual, and Harmony was pleased. She told him something about Mrs. Goodwin's kindness to her.

"She's all right! I like her, too. She treats a fellow like a gentleman," agreed



loyal Grig. "By the way, Harmony, who's that new girl in your room, the girl with the long braid?"

"That's Jean McLaren. There she is now, standing by the gate. I'm going to be friends with her, Grig. Good-bye. See you to-night."

Harmony flitted on ahead, her whole purpose intent on Jean. Jean saw her coming and smiled a welcome that was heartening. Nevertheless, when Harmony had reached the gate, bashfulness overcame her, and she hung back.

Not so Jean. She was ready to make friends at the first overture and called out, "Hello, Harmony. I was waiting for you. See what I've got in my speller!"

Harmony approached, her face aglow.

"Oh, Jean, were you really waiting for me?"

Jean nodded.

"I thought, yesterday, that I'd like to know you," she said. "Your hair's so



pretty. If you had straight brown hair, like mine, you'd realize how I envy a girl with curls. Do you play paper dolls, or do you think you're too old?"

Harmony shook her head. "I never had a doll in my life. I don't think I should care for them particularly. What's in your speller?"

Jean looked disappointed. "It's the prettiest paper doll you ever saw." She opened the book and displayed her treasure. "Isn't she a beauty? I wish you did like paper dolls just a little. Oh, dear, there's the bell!"

"I'll try to like them," reassured Harmony in an eager whisper. "Can't you come to my house, to-night?"

The new friend nodded affirmatively.

After school, when Grig was lingering near the corner of Elm and Spruce streets, waiting for Harmony to join him, he was rather chagrined to see two little girls frolic-  
ing gaily home together. Harmony and



Jean went straightway into the house, with a careless nod for him, and shut the door.

Grig lost his grin for thirty seconds. "They're too thick," he remarked. "'Twon't last," he concluded as he went away by himself.

Upstairs, in Harmony's bedroom, which now possessed a rocking chair, a bed spread, a bureau scarf, curtains and a few pictures, thanks to Mrs. Goodwin, the two little girls settled themselves for a good time.

Harmony had never played with another little girl before. Jean found her very amusing.

"I declare, Harmony," she laughed, "you are the oddest girl."

Jean, who loved to direct enterprises, was in her element. What lots Harmony had to learn that other girls knew! Jean determined to teach her.

For several days they played together happily. Grig hung around and grinned scornfully a while, but finally left with a





THE TWO LITTLE GIRLS SETTLED THEMSELVES FOR A GOOD TIME.  
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neighborhood baseball team. The break didn't come as soon as he had expected.

One day after school, Jean said she had to go right home.

"Mother wants me," she told Harmony. "I'm awfully sorry. Good-bye." She ran off in a hurry.

The same thing happened the next night. Jean seemed good friends at school, but Harmony missed the new playmate who was always so busy and so chock full of ideas.

When her friend started home the third night, Harmony knew that something must be wrong. She stopped Jean.

"Wait a moment," she said. "What's your hurry? Why can't you go home with me to-night?"

"Oh, because," Jean answered, balancing on one foot, ready to run.

"That's no answer. I don't believe you want to!" exclaimed Harmony.

"Oh, yes, I do. But Mother won't let—



I mean, Mother said I was to come right home."

"She won't let you?" questioned Harmony. "Why not?"

"Oh, I don't know—just because," responded Jean carelessly.

"You're just horrid! I don't believe you like me one bit! And I think your mother's horrid, too, not to let you come!" cried Harmony angrily.

Jean's dark eyes flashed.

"Don't you speak about my Mother like that!" she threatened. "She's got good reasons for not letting me! And she's enough sight better'n that mean old grandfather of yours!"

"Don't you dare to talk to me like that!" Harmony responded, getting very red in the face and stamping her foot.

"I'll say what I please to you. My mother says you wouldn't live in that dirty old house if you were real nice people and that I mustn't associate with you. So



there!" Jean tossed her head, turned on her heel and walked away.

For a moment Harmony was furious. Helpless to do or say anything more, she watched Jean out of sight. Then she started home.

So this was the way friendships turned out! She'd never make another friend as long as she lived! She'd just tell Mrs. Goodwin all about it and show her that there was no use trying. It wasn't her fault.

Wasn't any of it her fault? Wouldn't Mrs. Goodwin blame her some? Come to think of it, perhaps part of it was. She had said several mean things—not so mean, to be sure, as those Jean had said. But *she'd said them first*.

Grig met her at the corner.

"Hullo, Harmony," he called cheerily.  
"Where's your chum?"

"Gone home!" replied the girl shortly.

Grig opened his mouth to say, "I told



you so," then thought better of it. Instead, he said, "Come on. Let's play something."

"I—I don't feel like it, Grig. I guess I'll go in."

As the door closed behind her, Grig gave vent to a long whistle.

"Gee," he commented, "wonder what's gone wrong!"

He stood in deep thought for two minutes. Then he stuck his hands in his pockets and his chin in the air.

"Guess I'll take a walk," he said.

Presently he approached the house where Jean lived. The latter was just coming down the steps, two books under her arm.

"Hullo, there," called Grig genially. "Going to the library? So'm I. I'll carry your books for you."

A half-hour later he was back in his own neighborhood, a perplexed frown overshadowing his usual wide grin. He walked slowly.

"So it's to be war," he mused.



Suddenly he snapped his fingers and laughed in relief.

“I’ve got it,” he exclaimed. “Mrs. Goodwin! The proper method of settling wars nowadays is arbitration. We’ll see what arbitration will do.” And looking sharp that Harmony shouldn’t meet him, he vanished within the Hale house.



## CHAPTER XII

### AN INTERRUPTED PARTY

**T**HE following day was Saturday and Harmony spent many anxious moments trying to make up her mind what she ought to do about her quarrel with Jean. She said nothing of it to Mrs. Goodwin.

She hadn't quite decided what was best when the fairy godmother invited her to a tea-party that afternoon at five o'clock.

"You may come as early as four," she said. "Wear the pretty white muslin that I made for you, if you wish. There will be two other guests."

Harmony was quite excited. Invitations to any sort of festivity, even a tea-party, were rare occasions.

She wondered and wondered who could be coming, Mrs. Goodwin knew so few



people in the city. It seemed as if the clock would never reach the appointed hour!

Finally it struck four, and she ran down the hall to Mrs. Goodwin's room. She could hear several voices, and it sounded quite gay.

Mrs. Goodwin opened to her knock, and as she entered, she was caught in a pair of arms and squeezed almost to death.

"Oh, you darling!" cried a voice, so like Jean's that Harmony couldn't believe her ears. "I'm so sorry I was mean yesterday! You made me so mad!"

Harmony pulled away from the hug. It was Jean, Jean radiant in her best frock, apologizing for all she was worth.

"I was mean first," said Harmony valiantly. "I'm awfully sorry, too. I was going to tell you so, Monday." At that moment Harmony was sure she would have gone to Jean and made all amends in her power.



“ Well, you see,” went on Jean, swinging Harmony’s hands as she talked, “ I was real angry with Mother, because she forbade me to come here. And then, when you said she was horrid, I was mad at you. It was too bad all ’round. And if it hadn’t been for dear Mrs. Goodwin, I can’t imagine when we’d have gotten things straightened out. She just came over this morning and saw Mother and made it as right as right could be. I don’t know what Mrs. Goodwin could have told her, but Mother says I may come here whenever you want me and that I shall have you over to see me, too. Isn’t it lovely?”

Over Jean’s shoulder, Harmony caught sight of Grig, winking at her and grinning in the most provoking fashion.

It did seem as if Eileen was right, that Mrs. Goodwin was a witch and had a magic wand that made wrong things right and sad things happy.

She laughed at the two girls and called



them "silly," and told Grig to start some game.

When he proposed "parchesi," Harmony discovered that the board was in her room.

"I'll get it in a minute," she cried.

The hall was dusky as she scampered through it. Just as she reached her own door, she heard a sound. It seemed to come from the floor above.

She stopped and listened. There was another sound, very soft, further away! It was strange. Who could be going upstairs at this late afternoon hour? Certainly not Eileen, and Grandfather always made a great deal more noise.

Harmony was curious. She came back to the staircase and very quietly ascended to the untenanted third floor. There was no one in sight.

"It must be on the stairs to the treasure chamber," she thought. She went up two steps and looked. There in the dim light she distinctly saw the figure of a man. He



was stooping a little to work at the lock of the iron-barred gate.

Harmony was puzzled. That was not Grandfather. The man had dark hair and was too short. It must be somebody who had no business there. It must be a thief!

Just then she heard the lock click, and the man threw open the gate.

Realizing that if he looked over his shoulder, she would be seen, Harmony returned to the foot of the stairs and hid behind the pillar. She had scarcely concealed herself before he glanced sharply behind him. Seeing nothing suspicious, he turned his attention to the lock of the door, which took him a couple of minutes to unfasten.

Harmony stood still, wondering what to do. Should she shout, or run for help? Shouting would bring nobody but Mrs. Goodwin, Grig and Jean. Before Grandfather could get there, the man could easily escape. If she ran for help the intruder



would have plenty of time to get away.

O dear, what should she do! Grandfather's priceless treasures would be stolen unless she could act quickly. They were her treasures, too, in a way, and she loved them all.

She was about to venture up the stairs again when the man looked back once more. She was too quick for him.

Then he flung wide the door and stepped into the big room, which was light in comparison to the staircase and halls. Harmony could see him plainly.

She went cautiously up a few steps. The man must have heard her, for he turned to the door.

"Who's there?" he asked in a threatening undertone, peering down.

Harmony shrank against the wall, but he caught sight of her little white figure in the dusk of the stairway. He spoke again after a second's pause.

"Don't you dare move, girl, or I'll



shoot!" He reached towards his hip pocket, as though to find a pistol.

Harmony held her breath. Then she measured the distance to the top. There were about seven more steps to the threshold, but if she could take three of them she could reach the lower corner of the gate.

She gathered all her muscles for the dash. Then, like a shot, she scampered forward, caught the gate in a firm grip and swung it to with all the strength she had. It closed with a crash, and Harmony heard the lock click. She had turned the trick on the thief. He was a prisoner!

"Still, if he really has a pistol, he can fire through the meshes of the netting," she thought nervously.

The gate had closed so nearly in his face that the man started back to save himself from being struck by it. Before he could recover his balance, Harmony had scuttled down the stairs.

"Come back, you little fiend, come back,"



he shouted in a towering rage. But Harmony didn't wait to hear him. She was mortally in fear of the threatened pistol, now, and listened only for the shot.

It did not come, however, and she reached the foot of the stairs in safety.

When she burst into Grandfather's office, thirty seconds later, without knocking, there was a maddening yapping and snarling from Zip and Mose, before she could explain herself. Mose was on his shelf, where he could do no mischief, and a stranger was sitting with Grandfather. As she plunged into the room, both men were greatly astonished, and Grandfather was plainly very angry. He threatened the dogs, and they finally ceased from their noisiest demonstrations.

"There's — a — thief — in the treasure chamber," Harmony gasped, "locked in — I — I think he's — got — a — pistol!" She stopped to catch her breath.

"Good heavens, Harmony!" exclaimed



Grandfather, rising to his feet. "Talk sense. Say it again."

Harmony was angry. "There's a thief, I say," she repeated tartly, "upstairs. In your treasure chamber. Locked in. I saw him. I slammed the gate on him. Go—go get him! I think he's got a pistol."

There was no mistaking the message this time. Grandfather ransacked his desk for a revolver, finding one under the confused mass of papers. Then he and the visitor prepared to attack the thief.

"How did you happen to find him?" asked the strange gentleman over his shoulder, as they hurried upstairs.

"I heard queer sounds up there, so I followed them right up to the attic stairway. I found him, working at the lock. Then he opened it and went in."

Harmony was still short of breath. She gasped a little.

"An' then he saw me—an' he told me to stand still or he'd shoot—an' I was afraid,



but I ran quick up the stairs an' slammed the gate. It fastens with a spring."

"Gee, what a gritty kid!" the man muttered, but Harmony did not understand him.

"Don't come any farther," commanded Grandfather, so the little girl was obliged to wait at the foot of the last flight of stairs.

"Put up your pistol!" called Grandfather, as he proceeded towards the top. "Your game's up. There are several of us."

There was no sound from the man in the attic, so Grandfather opened the gate and entered the room, his friend close behind him.

The treasure chamber had been hurriedly ransacked, and the window was open, as though the man had made an effort to find something of value and then sought some means of escape. But when Grandfather entered he was sitting on the old mahogany sofa, his head in his hands.



Harmony knew, for when no shots were fired, she disobeyed and followed to the top of the stairs.

“So-ho, it’s you!” laughed Grandfather unpleasantly. “I’ve caught you red-handed. Give me your gun!”

“I haven’t any,” whined the thief.

“Here, Morris, keep him covered with my pistol till I see if he’s telling the truth,” said Grandfather, handing the other man his revolver.

“Now, sir! I want the letter you’ve taken the pains to steal,” announced Grandfather, after searching the culprit for fire-arms and finding none.

The man was sullen and resentful, but the muzzle of the revolver held by Morris was not a pleasant view. He reached in an inner pocket and took out a paper. This he handed to Grandfather Hale.

The latter looked at it carefully, keeping a tight grip on the thief’s shoulder, meantime. He turned to his companion.



“This fellow’s an agent for a collector,” he explained. “I’ve got a letter in my possession worth a thousand or so from his point of view. I showed it to this chap a few days ago, but refused to sell it. This man, here,” he gripped the shoulder until the fellow squirmed, “this man has been offered a huge premium if he can obtain it by hook or by crook. He’s chosen to do it by crook.” Grandfather grinned, but not kindly.

The thief began to whimper. He was evidently a novice in burglary.

“What you going to do with me?” he sniffed dejectedly. “Don’t lock me up, Mr. Hale. Don’t. It would disgrace me forever. It’s my first offense! Don’t be hard on me!”

Grandfather grunted something that Harmony couldn’t understand. Then he said sharply, “We’ll be going now.”

She never knew how the matter came out, for as the three men began to move toward



the door, she suddenly remembered that Mrs. Goodwin's guests were waiting for her. She hurried to her room, routed out the parchesi board and prepared to return to the party.

She had regained her breath, but her heart still beat fast, and her face was flushed. What fun it would be, she thought, to tell the company all about her capture of the burglar. My! but that would be thrilling! Wouldn't Grig's eyes stand out?

Then came a later thought. No, it would spoil Mrs. Goodwin's party entirely. Jean might easily be frightened, and Grig would want to go immediately to interview the thief in Mr. Hale's office.

She tried to look very demure, as she re-entered the room.

"My, but you were gone a precious long time," complained Grig. "Can I take the game?" He appropriated the parchesi board.

"Was anything the matter?" asked Mrs.



Goodwin anxiously. "We thought we heard some confusion."

"Oh, Grandfather had two men up in the treasure chamber," replied Harmony carelessly.

While the children were busy at their game, Mrs. Goodwin went downstairs for a kettle of hot water from Eileen's department. She was gone some time. When she returned, she gave Harmony a queer little look and then began to arrange the tea-table.

Soon after they sat down to supper. It was a merry party, and the children greatly enjoyed the various dainties that Mrs. Goodwin had provided. It seemed as if there was something that each one especially liked.

Just before it was over, Mrs. Goodwin said, "I have a piece of news for you, Harmony. I was talking with your grandfather, when I went downstairs. I think you've succeeded in piercing his armor just over his heart, little champion, for, guess what he has promised?"



Harmony clasped her hands, and her eyes glowed.

“Dancing school?” she asked eagerly.

“Yes, dancing school,” Mrs. Goodwin answered.

“Oh, how nice!” exclaimed Jean. “I guess, if I ask Mother, she’ll let me go, too.”

“That would be fine,” said Mrs. Goodwin. “I wonder if Grig couldn’t go, also.”

Grig grinned sheepishly. “With two girls?” he asked. “I don’t know about that.”

“The other boys would be jealous of you,” laughed Mrs. Goodwin. “You’d have with you the prettiest girls and the best dancers in the room.”

Grig chuckled. “That’s true,” he said. “I shall have to ask Father. He told me I might go to some gymnasium this winter. If it doesn’t cost too much, perhaps he’d let me go to dancing school instead.”

At seven, Jean’s big brother came for her, so the party broke up.

“Good night, good night,” she called all



the way down to the front hall. "I've had such a splendid time."

As Grig was leaving a few minutes later, he said mischievously, "You can't fool me, Harmony Hale. Something did happen while you were out of the room that time. If you don't tell me—I'll have to play Old Sleuth again."

Mrs. Goodwin laughed till all the crinkly wrinkles showed.

"You're a regular Sherlock Holmes, Grig," she said. "I think you'll have to tell him, Harmony. Or shall I, now that Jean has gone? It was very thoughtful of you not to break up my party by telling it when you came back."

Harmony grew very rosy. "I—I don't think I ought to let anybody know," she said bashfully.

"Now, Harmony——" began Grig.

"Very well," laughed the girl. "Some day, Grig, when you're especially nice, I'll tell you a real, true burglar story."

And Grig had to be content with that.



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE PROMISED STORY

“**A**RE we good friends for keeps now, Fairy Godmother?” asked Harmony, that night.

“I hope so,” answered Mrs. Goodwin, taking into hers the small hand that was furtively creeping across her knee. “I hope so, indeed, Harmony. Every day it seems to me we understand each other better and love each other more.”

They were sitting before the open fire in Mrs. Goodwin's room. The supper guests had gone, and the stillness of the place had a sort of tender peace that seemed to affect both the little half-old lady and the child. Harmony came closer until she had found a rather insecure seat on the arm of Mrs. Goodwin's chair.





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“Do you really love me?” she whispered.

“Yes, I really do. I love you dearly,” answered Mrs. Goodwin, smiling.

“Then—won’t you tell me to-night the story of the little girl—who danced? You remember, you promised to, when we were real friends.”

“I remember,” answered Mrs. Goodwin. There was a pause. Then she continued slowly, “Yes—yes, dear, it shall be to-night. Get that footstool and sit close to my side, where I can touch your hair.”

Harmony fixed herself comfortably. “There,” she said finally, “I’m ready. I won’t wiggle. Begin.”

“Once upon a time,” commenced the fairy godmother, “there was a dear little girl named Patricia. She was not unlike you, Harmony, only her hair was golden and her eyes were blue and large. She was such a fairy that many of those who loved her called her The Fay. As she had no brothers or sisters of her own age, she spent



much of her time with her mother, who thought her small daughter quite the most wonderful little girl in the world."

"I think I'd like to have known her," put in Harmony as the story-teller paused.

"She did have one brother, though," continued Mrs. Goodwin, "ten years older than herself, but when she was ten, you see, he was going to college. After that he became an engineer and went away to South America to build bridges. When Patricia was a mite of a thing she began to dance, and her mother was so proud of her that she had her take dancing lessons."

"Hadn't she any father?" inquired Harmony.

"Oh, yes," answered Mrs. Goodwin, "but he died when she was seven years old."

"What a pity!" exclaimed the child. "He would have been so proud of her, too."

"She danced so well by the time she was fourteen," Mrs. Goodwin went on, "that



people began to talk about her and say that she was very gifted. One day she came to her mother. 'Mother,' she said, 'I'd like to dance upon the stage and travel all over the world.' The mother was very unhappy over this. She didn't want her dainty little daughter to go on the stage. She was afraid she would lose her pretty, gentle ways and her modest manner. For some time, the mother and Patricia could not agree, although they talked and talked and talked."

"I know how she must have felt," interrupted Harmony. "She couldn't help it. Could she?" and she turned to look up into Mrs. Goodwin's face. But the fairy godmother was gazing into the lively flames as though she saw in their fluttering golden banners a vision of Patricia herself.

"So it went on," continued Mrs. Goodwin, after a while, "so it went on until she was fifteen. Then the mother took the girl abroad and had her study dancing and



music three years. No money was spared to make Patricia an artist. At length people began to hear about Patricia, and one day, when she was just eighteen, a famous play-manager from America came to see her dance. Then and there he made an agreement to have her dance in a fairy play he was to bring out that winter in New York. So Patricia and her mother had to pack up and go back to America. The New York manager decided that *The Fay* was a perfect stage name for her, so only her intimate friends ever knew her as Patricia. Of course, the young girl was much excited and pleased. She was lovely, Harmony, with her golden curls and her big blue eyes. She was less than medium height and very slim and girlish. On the big stage, dancing, she did look just like a fairy. How you would have loved to see her! And she could dance like no one I have ever seen." There was a long, long pause.

Finally Harmony tired of the pictures



that she saw in the fire. She wanted to hear what happened next. So she gently patted Mrs. Goodwin's hand.

The lady started and sighed. "Well, Patricia and her mother took the big ocean steamer for New York, and on the voyage Patricia met Dick. He was a young American who had been in Paris for some time studying architecture. Dick was a nice boy, a very nice boy. He had a 'way with him' that won people's hearts. And he won Patricia's. It was just as if they were made for each other. He was a musician, more than anything else, and would have followed music rather than architecture, if it hadn't been for his father. His father, it seems, was a severe old man and insisted that his son should take up a profession that was not all art. His mother had been dead many years.

"As I said, the two young people fell very deeply in love. But as Dick had not even begun to practice his profession, and



Patricia was altogether too young to think of marriage, it was decided that they should separate for at least two years, and each carry out the plans that their respective parents had made for them."

There was another long pause, but Harmony sat as still as a mouse, this time. Somehow, she felt as though the story was a hard one for Mrs. Goodwin to tell. She paused frequently and often hesitated in finding the words she wished to use.

Of her own accord, Mrs. Goodwin at length took up the thread of her tale. "It was hard for the young people to part, but they were brave and full of enthusiasm, and thought the two years would pass very quickly, if they worked hard. So, for a year Patricia danced and made a name for herself all over the United States, as *The Fay*; and Dick opened an office and tried to get houses to build. It was really harder for Dick than for Patricia, because he had a



stern father to please, and it was very slow getting a start in his business. Besides, he wanted to play and sing, not to build houses and factories.

“After a little more than a year had passed, Patricia’s mother was obliged to leave America and go to her son, who was in Brazil. He was in trouble. She didn’t know what to do with Patricia. The girl had never been left alone in her life. Moreover, she had a series of contracts that she had to fulfill and could not break them to go with her mother. They wrote about it to Dick, and on the next train he came. ‘I’ll marry Patricia, now,’ he said, ‘and travel with her until her contracts are closed. Then, either she shall leave the stage, or I will find something to do so that I may stay with her,’ he decided. So the mother saw the young people safely married, before she went on her long journey to South America.

“But trouble began to come to Patricia



and Dick before the mother had been on her way a week. Dick's father, when he found out that his son had left his profession and married a little dancing girl, was in a rage. He demanded that Dick give up Patricia, or he would disinherit him. He was a rich man, and this was a serious blow to Dick. He wanted to take Patricia to see his father, for Patricia could have won the heart of a stone statue. But the father refused to see her and Dick as well, unless he came alone. Oh, it was a sorry business, Harmony, from beginning to end. They did not write the mother about their trouble. She had anxieties enough without that. Patricia just bravely kept on dancing until all her contracts were fulfilled. And Dick played the piano or gave lessons—anything he could find to do. Then the dancing stopped, because, dear, a small daughter came to Patricia and Dick. She was a delicate little flower, and for months they had difficulty in keeping her from fading quite



away. And then — then — Patricia fell ill——”

Mrs. Goodwin was weeping. Harmony looked up and saw the tears in her fairy godmother's eyes. Her heart swelled with sympathy, and then, suddenly, the meaning of the story came to her.

She arose and put her arms gently around Mrs. Goodwin and laid her face close to the one that was wet with tears.

“Was Patricia your little girl?” she whispered.

“Yes, Harmony,” was the answer, and Mrs. Goodwin drew the child into her lap. “Yes, and I never saw my darling again. One day the little baby was motherless. Dick was alone.”

Pretty soon, the tears stopped flowing, and Mrs. Goodwin smiled, a gentle smile that didn't make use of the crinkly wrinkles around her eyes. Harmony noticed that.

“There isn't much more,” she said, as she wiped away the last tears. “Only poor



Dick was heartbroken and ill. He didn't know what to do for the baby, and so, one day, he married again. The one he married was only the wardrobe woman in the theater where Patricia had been dancing. She loved Dick and took care of him when he was sick, after Patricia died, and seemed to know just what to do for the baby. But it wasn't for long. The baby was scarcely two years old when Dick followed Patricia and the little thing was wholly orphaned."

"What became of her?" Harmony asked breathlessly.

"Well, when I got back from South America, I tried to find Dick's new wife and the baby, but it was difficult. It took me years. I—it——" She stopped.

"Oh, and did you find her? Tell me!" exclaimed Harmony.

"Yes, I found her, Harmony, after a long time. But now, dear, that is another story, and I cannot tell it to you, to-night. Some day I may, but it will not depend



upon either you or me, when I tell it. Now, don't tease."

Harmony agreed. "No, it wouldn't do at all to mix up the two stories. I wouldn't like to have you spoil the lovely, sad one about dear Patricia, with any other. O, I can just imagine how beautiful she was!" The little girl clasped her hands around her knees and began dreaming over the fire again.

Mrs. Goodwin spoke. "I have pictures of Patricia, dear. Would you like to see them?" she asked.

"Oh,—oh, yes," assented Harmony with a little hesitation, "only, do you suppose I shall be disappointed? Pictures, sometimes, are not really so good as what you imagine for yourself."

The fairy godmother smiled softly. "I hope you won't be disappointed," she said, as she took the photographs out of their resting-place. "I don't believe you will."

She turned up the lamp and then with



considerable care selected one from among the pictures.

“Come here, Harmony, come and let us look at Patricia, together.”

She encircled Harmony with one arm and held the photograph before them.

Harmony looked and gave a little gasp. Then she looked longer, and finally, with an ecstatic cry, clasped it to her heart.

“Oh—oh, Fairy Godmother, are you sure that’s Patricia? It’s—it’s the picture of my lovely lady!” She turned wide, startled eyes upon Mrs. Goodwin.

“It’s the picture of my pretend mother!”



## CHAPTER XIV

### MANY CHANGES

**F**OR about three months the current of Harmony's life was pleasant and peaceful.

She had made friends with her teacher and found that school possessed many delightful aspects.

It was exciting to vie in scholarship with Jean, who, at first, was acknowledged the class leader. Harmony's pride was pricked, her ambition aroused, so she set her teeth and plunged in.

It was hard work at first, for she had never made much of a practice of studying. Half-prepared lessons had suited her well enough heretofore. But not now! After a bit, she overhauled Jean in spelling. Jean smiled patronizingly. Next she came to



the front in geography. Jean was astonished. A little later she pulled ahead of Jean in grammar. Jean looked serious and began to regard Harmony as a dangerous rival. Arithmetic was the real stumbling block. Nevertheless, there was something in Harmony that wouldn't let her give up. She slaved along, harder and harder, and at last began to share honors with Jean. Finally, it was a see-saw between them, a pretty race and inspiring to the teacher.

Outside of school the girls were the best of friends. It was a rending of hearts, therefore, when, about the first of February, Mr. McLaren unexpectedly gathered up his family and removed the household to a far distant part of the town. Ten miles of city streets separated the girls and put Jean into a new circle of schoolmates.

Harmony mourned her sincerely.

At first they met weekly at the Saturday dancing-class. This was some consolation, and they could scarcely dance, so busy were



they exchanging bulletins of the week's events. Grig, whose father had found means to send him, was indignant at the girls for spending their time gossiping. But there came a day when these weekly meetings ceased, and the occasions for visiting each other were few.

The winter had been stormy, with much snow. It seemed as if it lingered far after its appointed time. Mrs. Goodwin and Harmony spent many hours of it together.

The music had progressed finely, and Mrs. Goodwin spoke highly of her pupil. This encouragement helped the little girl to put forth her best efforts.

"I do love to see that pleased look on your dear face," Harmony would say affectionately.

One blustery March day, when the two were discussing a difficult place in the sonata before them, Eileen put her head in at the door.

"If you please, Mis' Goodwin," she said, looking perplexed and troubled, "would



you mind a-comin' down to Dear-Me? She's takin' on terrible, and I'm feared she's sick, for sure, this time."

Mrs. Goodwin said, "I'll come immediately." She quickly removed her lawn cuffs and tied on a big white apron. Then she gathered together her alcohol lamp and its belongings, a hot water bag and a roll of flannel.

"Can't I do something?" whispered Harmony, appalled at these business-like preparations.

"You can come with me," answered Mrs. Goodwin, "and help me carry these things. Somehow, I have a feeling that she's very ill. I didn't think she looked quite right this morning. You may have to go for the doctor."

They went quickly downstairs.

Mrs. Goodwin gave the patient a searching glance and felt of her head and wrist. Then she turned to Harmony.

"Yes, we want the doctor," she said



promptly. "Harmony, go to Dr. Fuller and ask him to come immediately. If he is out or cannot come within an hour, go on to Dr. Lindsay's and get him."

Tears of fright filled Harmony's eyes.

"There, dear, don't worry," soothed the fairy godmother. "Eileen and I will do all that we can to make her comfortable. Now trot along."

Harmony put on her wraps and went out into the wintry day. She would run jerkily a few steps and then walk. Everything looked queer to her. She seemed wrapped in a sort of gray horror through which all sights and sounds came vaguely.

She did her errand at the Doctor's mechanically, and when he said briskly, "I'll come now, and you can ride back with me," she had no thrill at riding the few blocks in Dr. Fuller's electric coupé. Any other time she would have been wild with concern to have Grig see her coming home in such state.



The Doctor said, "Pneumonia," and shook his head. A nurse in her blue and white uniform and snowy cap was installed. The sick woman's bedroom was hastily cleared of everything but the necessary furniture, and the vigil, divided between Mrs. Goodwin and the nurse, began.

Harmony had never seen illness before. Dear-Me's former condition, always accepted by her as real and by Eileen as pretended, was nothing like this. The gray horror seemed to fill the house for several days. Eileen was dismal and said a great many things that Harmony did not understand. Grandfather frowned and shook his shaggy head. He seemed worried, too, in his cold, silent way.

The fairy godmother had few minutes for the forlorn little girl, but at those times the gray horror was for an instant dispelled and she was comforted.

"Dear-Me is very sick, Harmony," she would say gently. "You must not worry.



We are doing our best to keep her with us.”

But the “best” was feeble before the devastating force of the enemy, and on the third day Dear-Me closed her tired eyes on the world that she had found so wearisome.

In the presence of death, Harmony felt the gray horror melt away. She was sorry, and she missed Dear-Me. It seemed impossible to believe she had gone. But it was not as terrifying as the days of illness had been.

A few weeks after the death of Dear-Me, Eileen came to Mrs. Goodwin. She seemed nervous, and when she said abruptly, “Larry and me think we’ll get married next week,” Mrs. Goodwin realized that Eileen had found her decision hard to tell.

The little half-old lady reached for Eileen’s fumbling hand.

“I’m glad for Larry’s sake, Eileen, and I hope you’ll be very happy. Larry has been good and patient. And as for you,



nobody can thank you enough for all your goodness to a sad, lonely little girl."

Eileen began to cry. "I don't want to go, Mis' Goodwin, really, an' yet I do. You know I love Harmony and you," she managed to say between sobs. "I couldn't leave when the child needed me. Dear-Me did, too. There wasn't anybody to look after her, you know. Now she's gone and you're here, it don't so much matter."

Mrs. Goodwin kissed the weeping girl.

"We'll never forget all you've done, Eileen. And we'll come to see you in your pretty new home. Some day, dear, I hope you'll have a little daughter like Harmony. Then you will realize what you've done for her."

"I've been cross at her, many and many a time," sniffed Eileen. "I wish't I hadn't. I got a cousin, Norah, just turned eighteen. She says she'd like my place, if you'd put the washin' out. She ain't very strong."

Harmony found Eileen's wedding full of



romantic interest. To be sure, she was married in a green and black hat, trimmed by Mrs. Goodwin, and a bright blue satin dress. But love for Eileen made these garments the proper and only ones for the occasion, in the eyes of Harmony.

They, Mr. and Mrs. Larry O'Shea, set up housekeeping in the upstairs of a two-family house, and their plush furniture, Brussels rugs, crayon portraits, and other shiny new things made Harmony's eyes fairly bulge.

"My, but you must be rich, Eileen, you and Larry, to buy such a lot of elegant things," she said admiringly. Eileen was proud and contented.

"To be sure, we're rich," she exclaimed. "Don't my Larry make four dollars a day, when he's workin'?"

The house missed Eileen's cheerful clatter, for Norah, though willing, was not merry. She did the work that was to be done, hurriedly, and spent as many of her



evenings as possible away from home.

“Oh, Harmony Hale, you can't imagine what dreadful thing has happened to me!”

This wail came from Grig one day, soon after Eileen's wedding.

Harmony was inclined to think that he was making fun, until she saw his face. Then she knew better. It was a grief-stricken, overwhelmed Grig who stood before her. She even thought she detected tears in his eyes.

“No, it's no use, you can't guess, possibly,” he continued drearily. “We're going to leave the city, Father and I.”

“Leave—the—city?” cried Harmony, “Oh, Grig!”

“Yes, but that isn't the worst of it! It's bad enough to leave here, but we're going to a small town to live. A small town! Imagine me there!” His scorn was beneath the reach of his words. Even his tone of voice couldn't express what he felt.

“Oh, Grig, what'll I do without you?”



Harmony with difficulty kept from crying. The only point of view she could see was what his going meant to her. To Grig, almost every angle of the proposition had its tragedy.

Finally Harmony asked, "What for?"

Grig pulled himself together.

"It's one of father's inventions," he explained. "Some men have taken it up and made a company to manufacture it. Father is to have a salary in the works to keep on perfecting his machine, besides having a share in the company."

"But, Grig, oughtn't that to make you rich?" interrupted the girl.

Grig tossed his head. "Oh, that part's all right. It's the only part that is. Of course, Father's as pleased as Punch. I don't s'pose we'll be exactly rich, but——" He stopped to observe the vision of riches, and then came back to the main issue. "But think of burying ourselves in Randolph! Five thousand people! Ugh!"



To Harmony the number of people meant nothing. "Is that where the factory is?" she asked. "It isn't very far away, is it?"

"Twenty-five miles," vouchsafed the boy.

"Perhaps you'll like it," consoled Harmony, while her heart ached.

"Like it? Fiddlesticks! I tell you it's awful, Harmony. I'd—I'd like to run away," he said desperately.

"Oh," exclaimed Harmony, "that would be worse still—a strange city, nobody you know, and no money. Why, Grig, you couldn't think of doing that! You'd have to work."

"I guess I could earn my living fast enough," he boasted, but not as confidently as he wished.

"I'll tell you what to do," counseled the little girl, sagely. "You go with your father to Randolph. Perhaps you can earn money in doing some special kind of work. Anyway, your father'll have more to give you. And when you're older, and



have money saved up, and are able to earn your living, then come back to the city again."

"That'd take me years and years," objected Grig, "and all that time I'll be living in Randolph—a tuppenny little town!"

"Well, you won't be half as lonesome as I'll be," said Harmony, and she retreated into the house in tears, to take refuge in Mrs. Goodwin's comforting arms.

"You're all I've got left," she sobbed. "Jean's gone, and Eileen, and now Grig. You're all I've got left."

Mrs. Goodwin smoothed the curly head.

"What's the good of making friends if you've got to give them up?" she mourned.

The fairy godmother tried to explain.

"But you're not really giving them up, dear. The spirit of real friendship cannot die. The love of these friends, Harmony, will always be with you, and will, let us hope, bring you together again. You must remember that it is doubtless for their best



interest to go away. Come, dear, wipe your eyes and be thankful that you have made these dear friends, even though you may have to be separated from them some times."

Grig departed, and, aside from an occasional picture post card, on which he mentioned nothing more important than the state of the weather or the local baseball team's score, he gave no details of his new life.

Two weeks later, Harmony's strength of character was put to the severest test of all, through the fairy godmother herself.

The signal came one day in April in the form of a letter followed by telegrams. Harmony delivered the letter herself, before she went to school.

When she came home, Mrs. Goodwin was dressed ready to go out, a trunk was standing, locked and strapped, in the hall, and on it was a traveling bag.

Harmony ran into the room.



“Why, Fairy Godmother, it looks as if you were going traveling,” she exclaimed with an unsteady little laugh. “Tell me, you’re not going away, are you?”

“Yes, I am, Harmony,” answered Mrs. Goodwin, drawing the child down onto the couch beside her. “I must go to-night, dear. Now, I want you to show how brave you are! You are a brave girl, Harmony, and unselfish. When I tell you I must go, you will understand that only something very important takes me away from you.

Mrs. Goodwin had to be a little stern, for fear she, herself, would break down.

“How—how long shall you be away?” asked Harmony.

“I wish I could tell. But I really don’t know, except that it may be some time. I’d better not even guess at it, for we’d both be disappointed if it didn’t come true.”

Harmony sat in a silence that was stony, so strong was her effort to preserve her self-control. She listened without response



to the many plans Mrs. Goodwin detailed for her comfort.

“I’ve told your grandfather. I’ve explained to him that I’d like to keep my room, just as it is. I thought perhaps, he might enjoy sitting here sometimes. And you, of course, you’ll have to go on with your practice. Norah says she’ll take the best kind of care of you, and I’ve sent word to Eileen to come over occasionally and see that Norah keeps her word.”

The baggage man called for the trunk.

As it thumped downstairs, Harmony could have shrieked with grief. Every bump seemed to hit her heart. But she only gripped her hands hard and sat still, waiting for the terror that approached.

Mrs. Goodwin finally returned.

“I’ll write you very often, dear,” she said, “and you must write me. Suppose you keep a sort of diary, and write a little every day. Then, once a week, or oftener, gather up all the papers and send them on



to me. That will be like visiting together. Will you do it, Harmony? I'll put my address, here, with your music lesson, on the piano rack. You'll see it every time you begin to practice. Now, let's see, what else? Why, Harmony, you've grown so helpful and so capable that, as far as that is concerned, you can do splendidly alone."

Harmony's wistful eyes searched hers. They seemed to say that being helpful and capable wasn't much of a comfort when one was lonely.

"Then there's your grandfather. Perhaps—well, Harmony, I'm hoping you and he will be great friends yet."

Mrs. Goodwin paused and glanced at her watch.

"Eileen's coming to have supper with you. She's going to set the table up here. It's time for me to go."

The parting was simple. Both were brave. Harmony's hurt was deeper than tears, for the moment. She was stunned



at the thought of her bereavement. She couldn't imagine the future without Mrs. Goodwin.

“Good-bye, my brave little girl. Good-bye. And take good care of yourself,” the latter whispered, kissing Harmony tenderly.

“Good-bye—dear—Fairy God—mother,” choked Harmony, swallowing the tears. “I’ll—I’ll try.”



## CHAPTER XV

### HARMONY PREVAILS

**M**RS. GOODWIN left on Tuesday. It was a blessing for Harmony that the week contained so many school days. The things that must be done saved her from an overwhelming loneliness. Of course, it was hardly to be expected that Grandfather would be company for her.

Among the fairy godmother's many thoughtful arrangements for Harmony's comfort was this: she was expected to stop at Grandfather's office each morning, before she left for school. At night, when school was over, she was to go to him once more and report for herself. In this way, Grandfather would be kept apprised of her good health and general condition.

He received these two daily greetings



very much in his usual manner. The dogs also sustained their reputation.

One day, after the exchange of good-mornings, Grandfather asked, "Getting along all right?" And one evening, he said, "How's everything going?"

As for Zip—one day he stopped yapping, and sniffed curiously at Harmony's friendly hand. Mose was consistently ungracious.

When she saw him Friday, Harmony thought that Grandfather looked tired and old. On her part, she extended a courteous interest and asked gently, "Aren't you feeling well, Grandfather?"

"Yes, yes, I'm all right," he responded gruffly. "Got a little cold, that's all."

When Saturday came, Harmony was disconsolate. She practised, and studied, and read, and mended, and yet the hours dragged. She tried the charms of the treasure chamber. Never before had it looked to her dusty and cluttered and cold. Not a spark of enthusiasm was kindled





SHE GENTLY PUSHED OPEN THE DOOR, THEN STOOD AMAZED AND SILENT UPON THE THRESHOLD.—Page 215.







within her. Even Nathan Hale's face seemed sad and her pity for his untimely fate welled up in her heart and tears threatened.

Drearily, she turned away, and with soft step went back to the fairy godmother's room. She gently pushed open the door, then stood amazed and silent upon the threshold.

There sat Grandfather! He was sunk in Mrs. Goodwin's great easy chair, his hands lying slackly on its arms. At first she thought he was sleeping, for his chin rested on his breast. But as she watched him, she realized that he was gazing intently at a large photograph of Patricia, that stood on the mantel-piece. It had never been there before. Harmony wondered about it.

She stood quite still. The little fire in the grate crackled pleasantly. But aside from that, the whole atmosphere of the room seemed sad.

To Harmony's keenly sensitive nature,



the loneliness of the man seemed greater than hers. She longed to comfort him. Stealing forward, she stood close to his chair. Her timid fingers just touched his rugged hand, like the brushing of a butterfly.

He did not move. He seemed not to know that she was there. Back upon her own heart flowed the tide of sympathy. He had not noticed her first delicate overture. Her own desolateness was doubled at this disappointment. She turned away and walked towards the door.

“Harmony!”

The little girl jumped in surprise and turned.

“Come here,” continued Grandfather.

She approached the side of his chair.

“Why did you come?” he asked abruptly.

“I—I was so lonely,” she whispered.

“Lonely? Did you come to me for company?” he asked keenly.

She nodded and looked away from him.



He studied her averted face for a moment and then asked, "But why were you going away?"

She turned to him wistfully.

"I thought perhaps you wouldn't like me to disturb you," she confessed frankly.

Grandfather frowned. "I'd like to have you stay," he said briefly.

Harmony began to feel better. There was a stimulating effect about conversation with Grandfather. She smiled down at him.

"I'm so glad," she murmured.

"You are very like your mother, Harmony," he said as he watched her face brighten.

"Like Dear-me!" she exclaimed. "O, but she had such dark eyes and black hair." She turned to look at the picture on the mantel-piece.

Grandfather sat up with an expression of surprise on his face.

"Like Dear-me?" he said. "Don't



you——” He stopped and leaned back again.

There was a pause. Harmony broke the silence.

“I wish I looked like her—my pretend Mamma,” she said. “Did you know that I’ve called her my pretend Mamma for years, ever since I found her photograph?”

Grandfather watched her like a hawk from beneath his shaggy brows. She seemed to puzzle him.

“Did the fairy godmother give you that beautiful picture of Patricia?” she questioned.

“If you mean Mrs. Goodwin, yes,” answered Grandfather.

“How kind of her. But then, she’s always doing nice things for people. Did she tell you that Patricia was her little girl?” continued Harmony.

Grandfather nodded.

“And—and did she tell you that dear



Patricia died and left a little baby daughter?" she whispered.

"Yes," replied the old man.

"O dear," sighed Harmony, "and that was the beginning of the story she never told me. I wish she had let me know how it all came out, before she went away."

"What story was that?" asked Grandfather crustily. But Harmony wasn't to be easily frightened by his manner now.

"Oh, the story of Patricia and Dick's baby. Dick married again, you see, after Patricia died, and then he died, too. Wasn't it sad? And the new mother took the baby and went away. Mrs. Goodwin found them after years and years, she said, but she couldn't tell me the story until—until—well, really, I don't know why. She didn't explain." Harmony looked around into her Grandfather's face. "I did so want to hear what became of their little baby."



“Suppose I should tell you?” asked Grandfather, drawing the little girl in front of him. “What would you do?”

Harmony thought a moment. “I might give you a great big kiss,” she said archly. “But how could you know about this story—unless, of course, she told you.”

“Well, I do know it,” asserted Grandfather, “and I’ll tell it to you. Who did you say Dick was?”

“Oh, he was Patricia’s husband, you know, the baby’s father,” explained Harmony. “I thought you knew the story.”

“There, there,” he grumbled. “You mustn’t interrupt.”

He thought a moment and frowned fearfully.

“After Dick—was—gone,” he began haltingly, “the new wife took the baby and—and—sold all of Patricia’s and Dick’s things. Dick didn’t leave her any money. She was poor. She was angry because she had no money and yet had to take care of



somebody else's child. She didn't want to work for it, and she was lazy. One day, she found out—she found out that Dick had a rich father. He had cast off Dick, when,—when he had married—against his will.”

“Oh, yes, I remember,” interrupted Harmony eagerly. “Wasn't it too bad? If he'd only been willing to see Patricia he'd have loved her. Don't you think so?” she asked.

“Perhaps, perhaps,” he answered testily. “Do you want to hear the rest?”

Harmony nodded demurely. “Yes, please,” she said.

“So that woman,” went on Grandfather, scowling again, “hunted up Dick's father in the city and took the baby with her. ‘You are Dick's father, and here is your granddaughter,’ she said, leading a toddling girl at her side. ‘We have come to live with you.’”

Grandfather stopped and seemed to forget all about his little audience.



“Yes, Grandfather, what then?” asked Harmony, clasping her hands in ecstasy. “Wasn’t he glad? How he must have loved Dick’s little girl!”

Grandfather repeated, “Glad?” after Harmony, in a strange tone of voice. “Glad?” he said again. “Oh, yes, probably.”

After another pause, he continued.

“They lived with him nine years. The woman became an invalid. The little girl began to grow up. Mrs. Goodwin spent eight years hunting for them. Then she found them living in the—in the grandfather’s house.”

The man watched the child sharply from under his bushy brows.

Harmony began to change color. Her heart beat fast. The smile died out of her face. She leaned forward.

“What was the baby’s name?” she whispered tensely.

“It was—Harmony,” he replied.



“Of course,” she breathed.

There was a long pause.

Unconsciously, Harmony drew away from her Grandfather's chair. His story had turned her world upside-down. It took some time for it to right itself.

A tide of memories swept over her. She thought of her years of loneliness, her craving for affection, Grandfather's daily neglect, his coldness, his direct unkindness. Then the coming of the fairy godmother with her magic wand of love. Since then, how different her life had been! And now, now the dream of the beautiful pretend mother had come true. It was too wonderful! What could matter to her now?

She turned back to the old man. There he sat hunched up in the easy chair, oblivious of her presence, his cold, stern eyes seeming to gaze into the shadows of the past. She was sorry for him. How much he had lost! Dick's love and Patricia's—and now hers.



Harmony's gaze returned to the photograph on the mantel.

"Dear, beautiful mother," she thought, her glance resting wistfully on the sweet, happy eyes of the young woman in the picture, "if only you could come back to me. You would make it all right. But you're just a lovely dream, and I'm all alone. Everybody's gone—Jean and Grig and Eileen, and now my dear fairy godmother. Grandfather's all I've got left and he—he doesn't care. He'll never love me." The tears in her eyes hid the picture from her. "Oh, mother dear," she murmured, "I'm—so—lonely!"

From the street, distant but clear, stole in the strains of 'Seppy's street piano, playing a melodious waltz. But there was no thrill in the heart of the little girl, no tingle in her feet to answer to its rhythmic measure.

Forlornly she listened, when, suddenly a



hand stole across her shoulder. Grandfather was standing beside her. It was his arm that drew her gently to his side.

She looked up wonderingly into the stern eyes under the shaggy brows. In them a deep tenderness met her gaze.

“Harmony,” murmured the old man brokenly, “little granddaughter.”

There was a short pause, while the music continued.

“Won’t you dance for me, Harmony?”

THE END













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