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Title: Marjorie Dean at Hamilton Arms

Author: Josephine Chase

Release date: July 23, 2016 [EBook #52626]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Roger Frank and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net> (This book was produced from images made available by the HathiTrust Digital Library.)

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Phil, as the fiddler, presently came forward to play for the dance.

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(*Marjorie Dean at Hamilton Arms*)



# MARJORIE DEAN AT HAMILTON ARMS

By PAULINE LESTER

AUTHOR OF

"The Marjorie Dean High School Series," "The  
Marjorie Dean College Series," "The Marjorie  
Dean Post-Graduate Series," etc.



A. L. BURT COMPANY  
Publishers      New York  
Printed in U. S. A.

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# THE MARJORIE DEAN POST-GRADUATE SERIES

A SERIES FOR GIRLS 12 TO 18 YEARS OF AGE

BY PAULINE LESTER

MARJORIE DEAN, POST-GRADUATE  
MARJORIE DEAN, MARVELOUS MANAGER  
MARJORIE DEAN AT HAMILTON ARMS  
MARJORIE DEAN'S ROMANCE

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MARJORIE DEAN AT HAMILTON ARMS

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CHAPTER I.

WAITING FOR MARJORIE

"They'll be here before long." Jerry Macy's eyes calculatingly consulted the wall clock.

"And, oh, what a surprise!" Veronica Lynne spoke from the deeps of her own mischievous enjoyment.

"It's going to be an occasion of surprises," predicted Lucy Warner with the solemnity of a young owl. "Now why are you laughing, Muriel?" This very severely as she caught sight of Muriel Harding's mirthful face and heard sound of her soft chuckle.

"Why am I laughing? You know better, Luciferous Warniferous, than ask me such a—well—such a leading question." Muriel failed to make her laughing features match her reproving tones.

"You're both up to mischief. Think I don't know the signs?" Jerry accused with a long-suffering air. "Luciferous looks too solemn to be true and *your* special variety of giggle is a dead give-away."

"What special variety?" demanded Muriel with blank innocence.

"I wouldn't attempt to classify it," was Jerry's withering retort. "I can only say, 'it is.'"

"Of course it is." Muriel light-heartedly furnished a rippling little sample. "Hark!" she held up an arresting hand. "Someone's coming."

Three energetic raps on the door followed her announcement. Then the door opened sufficiently to admit the laughing face of Leila Harper.

"Enter the Empress of Wayland Hall," Leila heralded. She flung the door wide and bowed in Miss Remson. She and Vera Mason followed the little manager. Dressed in her best black satin gown, Miss Remson appeared signally amused at the honors done her. Leila was wearing an exquisite frock of orchid broadcloth. Vera, doll-like and dainty, looked like a cunning Dresden figure in a frock of gentian blue taffeta, the faint blue field scattered thickly with tiny pink rosebuds. Their light-hued dresses pointed to a celebration, as did those of the other girls gathered in ever-hospitable Room 15.

"The Empress of Wayland Hall." Jerry bowed to the floor, pretended to lose her balance, but miraculously recovered it without accident. "Allow me to conduct you to the throne." She offered her arm at a stiff angle. "Bow down, all the rest of you. Where are your court manners?" She briskly arraigned the smiling empress's openly giggling subjects.

"Kindly give us a sample of court etiquette," Ronny begged with mock humility.

"I thought I had." Jerry exhibited deep surprise. "Am I crazy, or are you blind?"

"Ahem! My eye-sight is exceptionally keen," Ronny said sweetly.

"I'll have it out with you later," promised Jerry. "Now don't interrupt me again in the midst of my royal duties. Will your majesty please be seated?" She turned gallantly to the empress. "I would call your attention to the throne. Observe it closely. Would you even suspect it of having been ever anything but a throne?"

"*Never*," Miss Remson made gratifying assurance. She feigned the most flattering admiration for the throne. It was composed of Jerry's couch as a foundation, with all the bedding from Marjorie's couch stacked upon it. Ronny had contributed a wonderful cloth of gold couch cover which her father had lately sent her from Lower California. Each one of the festive group had contributed her pet sofa pillows. Three fat velvet ones had been laid on the floor in front of the dais. The throne had blossomed into additional gorgeousness by the profusion of rich-hued pillows which graced it.

"It is a gorgeous and most imposing structure," pronounced Miss Remson, her eyes dancing as she surveyed the metamorphized couch. She prodded its up-piled softness with an investigating hand, then raised herself with a nimble little spring to the place on the right to which Jerry had obsequiously bowed her.

"Thank you for them kind words. Praise is sweet, particularly when there are those about who are shy of proper appreciation. I won't mention any names, your Majesty. I'm not speaking of myself, or you, either. I have too much delicacy to make disrespectful remarks about *us*." Jerry peered knowingly at her majesty who nodded significant return.

"I trust your Majesty will not see fit to show partiality," Ronny said very severely. "All here are entitled to your royal favor."

"I see already the difficulties which attend royalty." Miss Remson made a dismayed gesture.

"Don't let it agitate you," said Jerry. "Such—" She broke off to answer the door. Robin Page flitted across the threshold with a frisky little bounce. "Almost late! Not quite, thank fortune." She glanced about the room with visible relief. "They haven't come yet. I was so afraid I'd miss the fun. Two

Craig Hall seniors called on me. They asked me to sing at a musicale they intend to give after the holidays. Miss French, one of them, has discovered a prodigy at Craig Hall. She's a freshie named Miss Oliver. She can play divinely on the piano. But she is shy, and hangs backward when she should come forward. No one at Craig Hall suspected her of being a musical genius until one night last week."

"Oh, I know her," cried Muriel. "She's a little girl with black straight hair and gray-blue eyes. I danced with her at the freshman frolic. She seemed to be rather timid, so I thought I'd encourage her by putting down my name on her card for three dances. I danced one with her then she suddenly disappeared and didn't re-appear. I inquired for her. Some of the freshies said she was shy. Some said she was snippy. I didn't think her the least bit snippy. I wrote a note to her on the strength of her being shy. She answered it in about two lines. That was rather snippy, I thought. Now I am all at sea about her. Is she shy, or is she snippy? That is the question." Muriel ended with a laugh.

"She's bashful," Robin declared. "Wait until I salute the Empress of Wayland Hall, and I'll tell you more of her." Robin knelt on a plump blue velvet cushion at Miss Remson's feet. The manager had thriftily set a small foot on each side of the cushion rather than use it as a foot rest. "Please pardon your admiring subject for being so neglectful." She kissed the manager's hand in approved gallant style. "Let me venture to remark, noble lady: Your throne is a daisy. Why oh, why, am I not of royalty?"

"Everyone can't be. We'd not have thrones enough to accommodate the royal gang, if you all qualified," Jerry pertinently reminded.

"Restrain your ambitions," advised Lillian Wenderblatt cruelly.

"I'll make a stagger at it," sighed Robin. "Now let me finish telling you about my musical freshie before the rest of the royal party arrive. Where was I?"

"Your last remark on the subject was that no one had suspected Miss Oliver of being a musical genius until one night last week," repeated Katherine Langly in her quiet, accurate fashion. "See what splendid attention *I* was paying to you."

"I'm charmed by it," Robin gushed. "There are times, Kathie, when you are almost respectful to me. One might think, that, having gained such gratifying respect from a member of the faculty, I should be more than entitled to marks of respect from lesser college lights. Not so." Robin looked vaguely about, not daring to allow her eyes to stop at any single member of the grinning group of girls.

"Another unhappy subject with a chip on her shoulder." Jerry waved a hand toward Robin, thumb out.

"It behoves the lesser lights of college to be very careful upon whom they shine." Lillian's chin was raised to a painfully dignified angle.

"I wonder just *who* the lesser lights of college are?" Muriel said in a sweet child-like voice.

"As Empress it appears my duty to quell such disturbances as may lead to internal war in the kingdom," put in the helpful Empress.

"Please, your Majesty, I want to keep on talking," instantly petitioned Robin. "Kindly order this gang—pardon me, I mean your unruly subjects—to listen to me. Make them understand that if they don't listen *now*, I sha'n't tell them a single thing later."

"We got that, your Majesty. Will you allow me to implore your miffed courtier to go right ahead. So pleased." Jerry favored Robin with her far-fetched conception of a gracious smile.

"I can't resist such a dazzling display of teeth and affability. May I ask what toothpaste you use?" Robin's own pearl-white teeth showed themselves in an equally affable smile.

"Same as you do. Now proceed with your tale. The great moment is rapidly approaching." Jerry indicated the clock. "Let us hear about this new musical wonder before the reception begins all over again."

"One night last week," Robin took up her narrative precisely where she had left off, "Miss French heard someone playing the living room piano. The Craig Hall girls had gone over to Hamilton Hall in a body to that illustrated lecture: 'America South of Us.' Miss French had stayed in her room. She had a severe headache.

"When she suddenly heard some one playing Chopin's Second Nocturne on the piano in the most divine manner she slipped out of her room and downstairs to see who it might be. It surprised her even more to find there was no light in the living room. She was determined to find out who was in there in the dark, playing so entrancingly, so she sat down on the hall bench to wait for the unknown pianist to finish playing and come out."

"And that odd little black-eyed freshie is a musician!" Muriel exclaimed. "I knew she had it in her to be something unusual. She is a dandy dancer. I suppose that is because of her well-developed sense of rhythm."

"Yes, your black-eyed freshie is a musician. She's more than that. She will be the greatest woman pianist in this country, I believe, before she is many years older," Robin asserted with conviction. "She played that marvelous concert waltz by Wieniawski while Miss French was listening to her. Then she gave a little thing by Schumann, and then"—Robin paused—"she came out of the living room into the hall and Miss French *simply grabbed her* and shook hands with her and told her she was a genius."

"What did she say?" came as a general breathless query.

"Oh, she was awfully confused. Miss French asked her to come to her and Miss Neff's room and spend the evening. She went. Miss French made cocoa, and nobly drank some with Miss Oliver. She said she supposed it would give her the headache all over again. Her headache had stopped magically when she heard Miss Oliver playing. She surprised it out of her system, maybe," Robin said, laughing. "Anyhow she didn't have a new headache, which was a reward of virtue for being nice to Miss Oliver."

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"Has anyone at Craig Hall been mean to her?" Muriel inquired rather threateningly.

"No; only the house has so many more sophs and juniors than freshies," Robin explained. "The juniors there are rather a smug self-satisfied lot, it seems, and Miss Oliver says she knows the Craig Hall sophs think her awfully stupid. She's not used to being among a lot of girls. She hardly knows how to talk about the things that interest them. She was educated at home by her father and two older brothers. Her father is a noted ornithologist. One of her brothers is a geologist and the other is curator of a New York museum. Her father has given her the very best musical advantages, but he insists that she shall put college before even her music."

"The Olivers must be a decidedly interesting family," was Kathie's opinion.

"Miss Oliver's mother died when Miss Oliver was a child. Her name is Candace Oliver. Isn't that a nice name?" Robin asked animatedly.

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There was a murmur of agreement.

"Have you heard her play, Robin?" asked Miss Remson from her throne. The manager of Wayland Hall was not a bit less interested in the "find" than were the others.

"Twice, Miss Remson. I can't find words to describe her playing. You must hear her. She is so obliging about playing. She loves to please. She was too timid to touch the piano with a crowd of girls in the house. She stayed at home purposely the other night for the opportunity to play a little. I told her about my piano in my room, and advised her to have one put in hers. She has a single, second story back. She said, 'no,' her father would not like her to do so. That shows what an honorable little person she is," Robin concluded with approval.

"To change the subject for only a minute, today is not the first time I have heard 'smug' and 'self-satisfied' applied to the junior class. Such conditions don't help democracy along. I speak of it now because Robin has mentioned it, too. A crowd of "comfies," who are either too lazy or else too well pleased with themselves to care what happens to the other Hamilton students are as detrimental to democracy as are snobs." Leila advanced this opinion with considerable emphasis.

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"The juniors were enthusiastic enough about the Beauty contest," commented Muriel Harding. "I'm not disputing your opinion, Leila. They made a lot of fuss over it, I suppose, because it happened to appeal to them. If you consider the junies smug and self-satisfied, then they must be. I never knew you to make a mistake, Irish Oracle, in going straight to the root of a matter."

"I am not making one this time, Matchless Muriel." Leila's blue eyes flashed Muriel a quick, bright glance. "This year's junies are so complacent of their new, high estate. They are pleased as children with everything that happens so long as it suits their fancy. You may recall they were much the same in disposition when we did station duty and welcomed them to Hamilton as freshies."

"I remember *that* of them," declared Lillian Wenderblatt. "We thought them so amiable and easy-going. Later in the year they grew to have a kind of class stolidity that was positively exasperating at times."

"I have watched them this year as junies. They have not changed. They are not interested in fighting for the right unless it might mean some gain for the class. They are partial to glory, but not to principle. It is a new weed patch in our democratic garden which we must root out." Leila's mobile face showed a hint of her mental resolution.

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"Oh, what a job," groaned Jerry. "Do you mean to tell me, Leila—"

"Sh-h-h-h! They're coming down the hall." Vera breathed a sibilant warning. "Ready, everyone with the new yell. Don't one of you dare make a flivver of it."



## CHAPTER II.

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### AT HAMILTON HALL

While Marjorie's chums were buoyantly preparing a surprise tea for her she was seated beside Miss Susanna Hamilton in President Matthews' office at Hamilton Hall. An expression of quiet happiness radiated from her lovely face as she listened to the heart-cheering words she had never expected to hear from the embittered grand-niece of Brooke Hamilton: "I have decided to give the world my great uncle's biography."

It had all happened so quickly, she was thinking. She was glad Miss Susanna had allowed her to tell her closest friends the good news. Though it had been near to ten o'clock she had gathered them into Room 15, and enthusiastically imparted it to them. Jerry had heard it with Marjorie's first exclamatory utterance as she entered their room. It yet remained to tell Kathie and Lillian the next morning.

While she made an early morning call on them, the following morning, her intimates gleefully arranged a tea for her. Into the midst of the preparations came a surprise for Jerry, who was heading the tea celebration. The welcome surprise was hastily bundled out of sight before Jerry had a suspicion of it. Such lecture periods as claimed the post graduates were, for once, to be ignored. Even Kathie had arranged with an obliging member of the faculty to take her last class for the afternoon.

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Marjorie, sitting demurely beside Miss Susanna in the president's office, a lovely symphony in warm brown velvet and furs, was wishing her intimates could be with her on the great occasion. They had overflowed with high spirits over this latest, greatest gift to Hamilton. Small wonder they were elated. They had fought loyally for true college spirit.

Regarding herself as Brooke Hamilton's biographer, Marjorie's emotions were jumbled. One moment she was exalted by Miss Hamilton's steady assertion that Marjorie Dean was the one best equipped mentally to present her distinguished kinsman simply and truly to the world. Next moment a wave of utter panic would follow, sweeping away her newly-formed confidence in herself. She grew aghast at the bare idea of presuming to take upon herself so difficult a task. She had never done any notable theme work in college. How then could she hope to present the world with a finished biography to which the great man, Brooke Hamilton, was entitled?

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"I am amazed, Miss Hamilton!" President Matthews' eyes were riveted upon Miss Susanna's face in polite bewilderment. They next strayed to Marjorie. His thought became self-evident. Marjorie turned very pink.

"Yes, Doctor Matthews; you are right," the old lady said with a fleeting smile. "I am here this afternoon because of Marjorie. Because of her, you and I have come to speaking terms. The years were going fast, and I was not growing less bitter against the college. Then I met this child. She has led me back to old Hamilton Hall. I'm here at last, but still selfish. I came here today to please myself, even more than her." It was as though Miss Susanna had uttered a grim kind of confession.

"Miss Susanna is not selfish, Doctor Matthews," Marjorie gently contradicted. "She's unselfish, and altogether splendid. She came here to do honor to Mr. Brooke Hamilton's memory, and give happiness to us all. It has not been easy for her to thrust away the barrier of years. Yet she has done it. She has been heroically unselfish." Her voice rang triumphantly. Her fond smile at Miss Susanna brought unbidden tears to the old lady's eyes.

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"I am happy in agreeing with you, Miss Dean. Miss Susanna has today demonstrated her complete unselfishness." The president bowed to Miss Susanna.

"I forbid you both to make any more personal remarks about me," broke in Miss Susanna's concise utterance. "I have been selfish and unfair to Uncle Brooke's memory. It is time I did something to make up for it." She wagged her head ruefully. "May I ask, Doctor Matthews, have you ever heard the story of my disagreement with the Board?"

"I have heard a story which had to do with your being rudely treated, a number of years ago, by a member of the Board whose estate adjoined yours. The churlish behavior of this member of the Board was the cause of your refusal to place in the hands of Dr. Burns, who had been selected to write Brooke Hamilton's biography, the data for the biography," the doctor stated in pleasant, impersonal tones.

"True enough so far as it goes," Miss Susanna acknowledged tersely. "The member of the Board with whom I quarreled was Alec Carden. A greater scamp never lived. We quarreled over Uncle Brooke's will. It seems a long long time ago." She gave an impatient little sigh.

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"It was before I accepted the presidency of Hamilton College. I have been informed by the two gentlemen, still serving on the Board, who were members then, that it was a deplorable period for the college during which the Board engaged in one wrangle after another. They frankly criticized Mr. Carden as having behaved more like an unscrupulous politician than as became a dignified member of a college board. I have never doubted but that your grievance against the Board was sound." The doctor sat back in his chair and surveyed the little upright figure in gray opposite him

with one of his encouraging, kindly smiles.

“Thank you, Doctor. The only way in which I may show proper appreciation of your confidence in me is to tell you the story from beginning to end.” Miss Susanna sat very still for a moment after her electrifying announcement. It was as though she were trying to choose her words for a beginning.

An anticipatory silence hung over the president’s office. Dr. Matthews awaited the revelation with profound relief. It would mark the laying of the unwelcome ghost which had walked the campus all these years. Marjorie found herself filled with an odd kind of astonishment. She was at last to hear the story which for years Miss Hamilton had stubbornly locked behind her lips.

## CHAPTER III.

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### THE REAL GUARDIAN OF HAMILTON

"Alec Carden was a man of middle age when I was a young woman." Miss Susanna's characteristically brusque tones shattered the brief silence. "He had never liked Uncle Brooke, simply because Uncle Brooke was upright and he was not. Neither had my uncle liked him. As an older man of wide experience Uncle Brooke once or twice advised Alec Carden against certain enterprises in which he had engaged. Each time the advice was flouted. Carden chose to regard him as an interfering old meddler.

"Uncle Brooke made his will years before he died. He never changed it. From the time he built Hamilton College he knew precisely what was important to its welfare. He knew, too, what would be best for it in time to come. He went over the will with me, often and carefully. He was determined that I should thoroughly understand every clause of it." Every sentence of the old lady's narrative fell clear-cut from her lips.

"He had divided his wealth, which was very great, equally between me and the college, aside from a few bequests to the servants and a special legacy to Jonas. He used to say to me whimsically, on occasion: 'I've already given my college a large fortune, Susanna, and I've only given you a home and a little spending money. But you can get along with a little, and my college cannot. Besides, I'm here to look after you. When I'm gone, it's you and my college; share and share alike.'"

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"Miss Susanna," Marjorie spoke as the old lady paused briefly, "may I please put that in the biography?" Forgotten for the moment were all her misgivings. She was not thinking of herself as biographer. She was desirous that such valuable matter should not be left out of the biography itself.

"So you've decided to make the best of it," laughed the old lady. "Oh, I knew what I was doing when I chose you as his biographer. Since I've surrendered, I've surrendered unconditionally. I wish the world to know his little quirks and turns, his fancies and his whimsies."

"It is indeed a pleasure to contemplate the thought of Miss Dean as Brooke Hamilton's biographer," gallantly supplemented President Matthews.

"I thank you both." Marjorie's sunshiny smile flashed briefly forth. It faded, leaving her beautiful features unusually grave. "Perhaps hearing these delightful personal memories of him will give me the inspiration to do him justice," she said very humbly. "I can only try to write his story. If I fail—"

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"You can't fail," broke in Miss Hamilton. "There is no such word as fail in your vocabulary." She reached out and patted Marjorie's arm. "Now you and the doctor are to listen to a letter of instruction which Uncle Brooke gave me, sealed, a year before he died."

She took from a morocco handbag a letter, held it up and pointed to the superscription: "For Susanna. Not to be opened until after my death:" she read. She drew the letter from its envelope. "I prefer to read it to you," she explained. "You may examine it afterward as much as you like." She began:

"DEAR SUSANNA:

"I have just come from an afternoon spent with Mr. Walpole, my lawyer. I have arranged with him in a codicil certain matters pertaining to Hamilton College. I must now acquaint you with these. You must be fitly equipped to carry out my wishes in regard to my college when I have gone on to a world of blessed fulfillment, which can never be here.

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"I love my college, Susanna. Because I love it I must leave nothing undone to safeguard its welfare. My ancestors left me the land. I gave the site, my money erected the buildings, endowed the college. My brain, heart and mind acted as one in bringing beauty to the campus. It is the child of my heart, Susanna. It must not, shall not depart from the near perfection to which I have raised it. I have gloried in the spirit of democracy that has developed among the students as a result of my own thoughtful planning. But the past three years have marked a change. A certain element of arrogance and false pride has stolen into the college with the enrollment of a few students who come from homes of affluence.

"The present Board are not in favor of conducting Hamilton College on the basis of nobility which I believe should be particularly the foundation of an institution of learning. They are desirous of commercializing the campus. They are possessed to ruin its natural beauty by dotting it thickly with ornate halls and houses. Such as these for the accommodation of a few students who can afford to pay extravagant prices for board and lodging. These sordid schemers are eager to take advantage of the fact that I have fitted and endowed Hamilton magnificently. They intend to put their stupid, ignoble ideas into force as soon as I am gone. I overheard one of them say to another at a Board meeting not long ago: 'When he is out of the running we shall have a free sweep.' They imagine that with my death Hamilton College will achieve freedom from the direction of

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a Hamilton, and with it a vast fortune. The board dreams of unlimited power to spend my money, and with no restraint.

"You are to assume my responsibility, Susanna. It is a great deal to ask of you. But to whom else can I turn? You know I have divided my wealth between you and the college. Its half of the inheritance may be distributed to the Board as a whole, or in payments; at your discretion. Nothing is to be either added or taken away from the campus without your consent. You are to retain the right to administrate my estate as you are convinced would be pleasing to me. The fees of the college are never to be increased. With Mr. Walpole you will find complete directions in regard to the offering of various scholarships which I have arranged to be offered in the course of time. I have also left, with him certain other welfare plans for the college. It will be your task to fulfill these for me should the Messenger come for me before I have had the time and opportunity to act.

*"Never allow the Board to intimidate you or beat you down.* It is the old story of the man who took home the frozen viper and warmed it, only to find that when life returned to it it had no will save to sting. So it is with the very men I have helped to present membership of the Board. There will one day be bitter resentment when these same men learn that I have protected Hamilton College against their vandalism. Remember, Susanna, resentment can break no bones; neither can it change that which was written to remain unchanged. I feel more at ease since I have written this to you. I rely upon your pride as a Hamilton, your loyalty and your good judgment to uphold the work of my hands.

"With constant affection,  
"BROOKE HAMILTON."

"A letter in keeping with what we have known of Brooke Hamilton before today," was the president's thoughtful attribute to the founder of Hamilton College.

"It was his mind in the matter. By it you can understand the situation as it was then better than from an explanation of it on my part," rejoined Miss Hamilton. "It remains for me to tell you what happened between the Board and me after Uncle Brooke had passed away. Mr. Walpole appointed a day and hour for the reading of the will at the Arms. The Board attended the reading to a member in the interest of Hamilton College. They raised a hub-hub immediately they learned that Uncle Brooke had secured the college against their commerciality.

"Alec Carden was infuriated. He lost his temper, shook a fist in Mr. Walpole's and my face and shouted that no fool of a girl should stand between the college and its rights. He rushed from the house shouting: 'I'll find a way to break that fool will!'" Miss Susanna's eyes flashed as she recalled the affront. "All but two of the Board members hurried after him. William Graves and Caleb Frazer had taken no part in the fuss. They had been true friends of Uncle Brooke's. They assured Mr. Walpole and me of their regret in the matter."

"Afterward, they refused to discuss the unfortunate incident with anyone," commented Dr. Matthews. "This I learned from Doctor Burns. They were his staunch supporters during his long service as president of Hamilton College. The doctor had a great deal of trouble with Mr. Carden."

"I am aware of that," nodded Miss Susanna. "It was frequently remarked in the borough that how Alec Carden managed to keep himself on the college Board was a mystery. He was a violent man. He quarreled disgracefully with both of his sons. One of them stuck to him and inherited Carden Hedge when his father died. The other took a package of bonds which belonged to him from the family safe and ran off to California. He changed his name, so the story goes, engaged in a lucky speculation and grew rich. He never came back to Carden Hedge. His father never saw him again, though he wrote him repeatedly to come home. Alec died of apoplexy. Indulging in one of his fits of rage, he had a seizure. John Carden still lives at the Hedge, off and on. He turned out as disagreeable as was his father. Peter was a multimillionaire at last accounts of him.

"Alec Carden kept his word. He tried to break the will and have the codicil set aside. Just when I needed his help most Mr. Walpole died. Then I engaged Richard Garrett, a young lawyer, but very brilliant. He stood between me and Carden's worst attacks. But I had plenty of disagreeable scenes with Alec Carden and his Board sympathizers. They got it through their scheming heads at last that Uncle Brooke had been too wise for them. Then they tried to patch up their quarrel with me and wheedle me into letting them have their own way about things. I soon sent them all about their business. From that time it was war to the knife between us. I refused ever to admit the belligerents to the Arms or to meet them elsewhere in the interests of college business. All checks for disbursements and papers were forwarded to me by Richard Garrett.

"At the beginning of my trouble with Carden I had talked with Doctor Burns about the writing of Uncle Brooke's biography. Uncle Brooke had greatly liked the doctor. I wished him to undertake the biography. Before I had collected the data for it I got into the thick of the fight with Carden and the Board. Carden circulated calumnious reports about Uncle Brooke. Uncle Brooke had been a miser; he had made his fortune in slave trading in the South Seas. He had also been suspected of piracy on the high seas. He had commanded South American filibustering expeditions. It was grossly false; outrageous. And all because he had been in the exporting business in China.

"Such reports reached the students of Hamilton College. I came in for very brutal criticism from the girls there. I could not go for a walk along the highway without meeting some of them and encountering everything from covert to open ridicule. So I came to despise those whom he had

wished me to like. The story's almost done." Miss Susanna's face, shadowed by the sorrow of the past, brightened beautifully.

"I still intended that Doctor Burns should begin the biography until one day Alec Carden and I met on the highway near the Arms. He stopped me and said I would be sorry if I attempted to publish a biography of Uncle Brooke. He threatened to follow it with what he declared would be a true story of 'my sneak uncle's pirate doings in the East.' He said he had gathered enough information against him to make a most interesting pamphlet which he intended to have printed and published at his own expense to follow the biography. He was as explosive in his talk as usual. He declared that Doctor Burns was in sympathy with *him*, not me; that he had merely consented to write the biography to keep in my good graces. There was a chance that I might be flattered into turning over to the Board the authority they lacked.

"I did not believe a word he said. I told him so. I went straight to the Arms and wrote to Doctor Burns." The old lady paused. She brought one small hand down over the other with a sharp little smack. "I never received an answer to that letter. I wrote him two others. One I sent to him at this office." She glanced about the large pleasant room. "The other I sent by Jonas to his campus residence. He was away at the time, but his secretary, a young man, promised to give it to him as soon as he returned.

"When I had been ignored by him a third time, I closed my heart against Hamilton College, forever, as I thought. I could not conceive of how a man like Doctor Burns could be in sympathy with Carden's cheap villainy. Still, I had given him an opportunity to clear himself and he had made no sign. He was therefore not the one to write Uncle Brooke's biography, and I knew no one else whom I considered qualified to do so. It was not until years afterward, quite by accident, that I learned that Alec Carden's nephew was Doctor Burns' secretary at that time. Then it was too late. The years had passed, and Doctor Burns with them. I believe now that he never received the letters I wrote him."

"I am sure he did not," Doctor Matthews said quickly. "I am convinced that he had no knowledge of such a calumnious pamphlet as Mr. Carden threatened to have published. He attributed your failure to bring forward the data for the biography as the result of your having had an altercation with the Board. He was not in sympathy with the Board. You had asked him to write the biography of your great uncle. He preferred to await your pleasure."

"He died not more than a year before Alec Carden." Miss Susanna's usually crisp tones were tinged with melancholy. "And he never knew!"

Marjorie had sat listening to the last of the Hamilton's story, a lovely, absorbed figure. Her vivid imagination had visualized Miss Susanna as she had probably been in girlhood. Across her brain flashed the dramatic scenes which had occurred between Miss Susanna and the hated Alec Carden. Here was a real story infinitely more fascinating than one which was the product of imagination.

"I think I never knew of a more deplorable misunderstanding." There was poignant regret in Doctor Matthews' assertion. "We have, however one thing for which to give thanks. No calumnious word was ever published against the memory of Brooke Hamilton. Yet, if you had found the opportunity to talk with Doctor Burns, he would have advised you to go boldly ahead with the biography. I would say the same today in a similar situation."

"Ah, that is precisely the point for which I blame myself!" the old lady cried out regretfully. "I should never have given up until I had seen the doctor. I have read Uncle Brooke's letters and journals, over and over. They are the essence of truth. No slanderous reports could live beside them. I know that now. But I was young then, and alone in a great empty castle. I was more or less bewildered by the responsibility which had become mine. I despised Alec Carden, and I was full to the brim of Hamilton pride. I had never talked with Uncle Brooke about the biography. It was an issue that came to the fore after his passing. When I had been rebuffed, as I thought, three times, I retreated into my shell and stayed there."

"But you are out of it, forever, and ever!" Marjorie exclaimed, her brown eyes beaming luminous warmth on the wistful old face of the mistress of the Arms. "You've been out of it a good many times in the past two years, too. All the years you were tucked away in it you were true to the trust Mr. Brooke Hamilton placed in you. You felt that you hated his college, but you guarded its welfare just as faithfully as though you had loved it. You are the most amazing person in the whole world, Miss Susanna. You're the real guardian of Hamilton."

## CHAPTER IV.

36

### OUR BELOVED GUESTS

"And now, Marvelous Manager, you and I will continue our walk on the campus."

It was almost four by the chimes clock on Hamilton Hall when Marjorie and Miss Susanna issued from the president's house, arm in arm. Neither would ever forget that wonderful afternoon. It marked for Miss Susanna the re-union with a valued friend of long ago—Hamilton College. For Marjorie it marked the answering of a most perplexing question. She believed buoyantly that with the answer was bound to come a new era of fellowship on the campus, far greater than had ever before manifested itself among the students.

"I can't really believe it's true, Miss Susanna," she said happily; "that you and I are actually walking together across the campus. I feel as though, all of a sudden; whisk! there'd come a magic wind and you'd disappear and I'd wake up to find myself walking along alone."

"Not quite so bad as that. Let me tell you, I'm very real." Miss Susanna gave Marjorie's arm an only half gentle pinch. "There," she said, "was that hard enough to convince you that I am not a campus sprite. I'm a crabbed old woman, ready to pinch if the occasion demands it."

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"I'm glad as can be you are real. I'm glad I know more now of how splendid you are than ever I knew before. I'm glad you'd rather have your own Marvelous Manager write the biography than even Prexy Matthews. I'm glad you have at last condescended to come and see me." Marjorie had begun enthusiastically, gathering more enthusiasm as she rushed from one gladness on to another. She ended with a satisfied little exhalation of breath.

"You are a compendium of gladnesses, child." Miss Hamilton smiled very tenderly at the glowing, graceful girl at her side. "Well, it is good to be here; to walk the old green again, even though it isn't very green at present. I used to love the campus, Marjorie. I experienced a queer little thrill that day when you told me your best friend at Hamilton was the campus. I loved it in the same way when I was a student here."

"And you never told me you were a graduate of Hamilton," Marjorie lightly reproached. She stopped short on the campus. "I think you ought to be pinched on that account."

38

"You never asked me where I was educated," Miss Susanna replied, chuckling.

"I always meant to. Somehow I never did." Marjorie looked reflective. "You see, at first, I never felt you would like me to ask you any personal questions. After I came to know you well we had so many other things to talk about I never again thought of asking you. That must be the reason." She gave a positive little nod.

"It must be," the old lady agreed half jestingly. "I know that I used to be afraid you would say or do something, when first you came to the Arms to see me, that might cause me to dislike you. But you never did until the day we fell out about that snip of a girl who tried to run her car over me. I was a pig-headed, obstinate old chump that day, child."

"Oh, no you weren't. Now I *shall* pinch you for calling yourself names." Marjorie affectionately made good her threat. "I'm going to keep on with these crab-like nips until you promise never to mention such ancient history again."

"I had no idea you were such a bully. I'll have to pretend good behavior. I never supposed anyone would care if I called myself disrespectful names," giggled the amused old lady.

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"You never know what may happen," Marjorie blithely told her. "Look, Miss Susanna." She pointed out a mammoth elm tree just ahead of them at their right. "That's my favorite campus tree. During the spring and summer, until late in the fall, there are seats placed underneath it. Whenever I find a few minutes to relax and be downright lazy, I steer straight for that tree. Jerry calls it the Bean tree and the seats the Bean holders. She says all Bean supporters belong to the genus Bean. Hence the name Bean holders."

Marjorie continued to entertain Miss Susanna in this gay strain as she proudly conducted her across the campus and toward Wayland Hall. On the stone walk leading up to the Hall the distinguished visitor halted for a prolonged look around.

"The same old Hall," she half sighed. "I've lived for years almost in sight of it without having once seen it. I've cared for it more than the others because he liked it so well. And I never even suspected why he cared until I went over some of his papers after he died. You'll read the story for yourself, Marjorie, when you come to the Arms to stay with me and write the biography. When do you think that will be, child?" she questioned, an eager, hungry light leaping into her eyes.

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"I—I don't know, Miss Susanna." Marjorie looked concerned. "Not really to stay, perhaps, before spring. When we come back from Sanford after the holidays I'll try to come almost every afternoon to the Arms. I'll stay until about nine o'clock in the evening. Promise to give me my dinner, and plenty of it, O, Lady of the Arms? I'm always ravenous when dinner time comes." She merrily endeavored to stave off disappointment from Miss Susanna.

"You may have a dozen dinners every night since that is all you demand," the old lady assured with reckless hospitality. The slight shadow, called to her features by Marjorie's first doubtful words of reply, faded instantly. "Half a loaf is better than no bread," she quoted with a kind of resigned content. "I hope you and Jerry will be able to settle down with me at the Arms by the first of March. I'd like you to see spring awaken at the old place. It is a memorable experience; to live and breathe with the return of spring in a beauty spot like Hamilton Arms. I look forward to and pass through it each year with wonder and gratitude toward my Creator," she ended reverently.

"I promise you, Jerry and I will surely be with you at the Arms to greet the spring," Marjorie declared impulsively, imbued with the inspiration of her elderly friend's deep sentiment. "It's so comforting to know that Jerry is to come to the Arms with me. I'd hate so to leave her to room alone. The other girls would baby her and rush her if I were not at the Hall. She would miss me dreadfully, only she would try not to let me or anyone else know it."

"Jerry can keep Jonas and me amused and in good humor," Miss Susanna said humorously. "I expect to enjoy her company hugely while you are tucked demurely away in the study, living over life at Hamilton as Uncle Brooke found it. I shall make Jerry help me organize a grand social campaign. We'll have the Travelers, old and new, here often to dinner and tea. And we'll entertain the dormitory girls some fine spring afternoon and evening."

Marjorie drew a long, ecstatic breath. "Oh, splendid!" she cried. "It's simply one glorious good fortune piled on another for the Travelers, Miss Susanna."

"You forget how much more it means to me. I am a greater gainer than the Travelers. I'm still looking strictly out for my own interest," was the half joking reminder.

"Oh, you!" Marjorie gave the arm she held a playful shake. "I wish you felt it was strictly to your interest to go with me to Room 15, Wayland Hall, to visit Jeremiah and me this afternoon."

Her inflection was wistfully coaxing. On the afternoon previous, Miss Susanna had announced, that, on the following afternoon she and Marjorie would together call upon President Matthews. Marjorie had then joyfully urged her to take tea afterward in Room 15, Wayland Hall, at a jollification in honor of her. The mistress of the Arms had refused, saying rather pessimistically that she doubted if she would be in the humor for a social tea after her interview with the president of Hamilton College. She promised instead to walk across the campus as far as Wayland Hall. She declared musingly that she would like to have a good look at the Hall again.

Now the momentous visit had been made and Miss Susanna was apparently in a very delightful humor. Marjorie could not resist the golden opportunity of making a last coaxing plea.

"I have changed my mind about not going to your room with you, Marvelous Manager," the old lady announced, to Marjorie's amazement. They were still standing on the stone walk in front of the Hall.

"I'm going to whisk you into the Hall before you have time to change it again." Marjorie took resolute hold of the arm she had just gently shaken and began hurriedly marching the last of the Hamiltons up to the veranda.

Already she was planning an impromptu reception for her beloved guest. She hoped Miss Remson would not answer her ring of the bell. She frequently answered the bell if she chanced to be downstairs when it rang. To summon Miss Remson to Room 15, and have the manager and Miss Susanna meet there should be one feature of the reception. Tea should be another. She would levy upon Leila for maccaroons from the five pound box she had bought yesterday. Ronny still had plenty of Mexican candied fruit on hand. Jerry should be stripped of a precious glass jar of salted pecans. She would ruthlessly commandeer the jar of blackberry jam which Lucy had that morning received from home, provided it hadn't been devoured already. There was always a supply of crackers, saltine and soda, on hand in 15, she reflected comfortably.

Nellie, one of the maids, answered the bell. Marjorie stretched forth a hand and conducted Miss Susanna across the threshold in gallant fashion. An impulse to tears rose within her as she saw an unbidden sadness steal into her companion's face the moment she stepped into the old-fashioned hall. It passed instantly. Miss Susanna poked her head into the living room and remarked on its tasteful furnishings in the most matter-of-fact tones.

"If I had dreamed that you would positively set your magnificent foot in my kingdom today I would have made elaborate preparations for you," Marjorie presently apologized, her hand on the door knob of Room 15. "As it is, I'll have to seat you in state in my best easy chair and rush Jerry out for Leila, Vera and the rest of the Sanfordites. There are certainly going to be some decidedly surprised Travelers."

## CHAPTER V.

### A COLLEGE GIRL AGAIN

In the very next minute there was one decidedly surprised Traveler. As Marjorie stepped after Miss Susanna into her room a rising tide of jubilant sound assailed her ears.

“Hamilton, Hamilton, staunch and true:  
Great Brooke Hamilton founded you.  
Great Brooke Hamilton—that’s his name!  
Great Brooke Hamilton—sound his fame.”

Twice the merry company shouted out this welcome. Miss Susanna laughingly acknowledged the honor done her with a flourish of small hands and many bobbing bows. Far from showing surprise at the festal scene into which she and Marjorie had walked she irradiated only chuckling amusement.

“The Empress of Wayland Hall has already arrived and been conducted to her place on the throne.” Ronny tripped to the middle of the room with this announcement as soon as the hub-bub attending the new Hamilton yell had subsided. She was attired in a green velvet page’s costume which she had confiscated from a trunk in the attic. Her fair features were animated with mischievous light as she went through a kind of ceremonious dance before Miss Susanna. She gracefully beckoned the old lady to the throne and grandiosely pointed out the middle vacant place on it.

“What is all this about?” demanded Marjorie. She grandly waved Ronny off when the latter returned from escorting Miss Hamilton to the throne to perform the same kind office for her.

“Ask no questions, pretty maid, but gently follow your leader,” was Ronny’s lofty advice. “You are about to be ranked with royalty.”

“I shall remain a commoner all the rest of my life unless you explain some of this thusness,” defied Marjorie threateningly with an anything but threatening expression. “How did *you* know Miss Susanna was coming here today, when I didn’t? How does Miss Remson happen to be here to meet her? You never made up that dandy Hamilton yell on the spur of the moment. Look at this room! I know you’ve been fixing at it ever since I went out to meet Miss Susanna. You’re all conspirators, the dearest, bestest, dandiest old plotters under the sun.

“*You’re* as guilty as they are.” She leveled an accusing finger at Miss Hamilton. “You didn’t know a thing about it last night. I guess a flock of little birds flew over to the Arms this morning. That would account for why you changed your mind.”

“What a terrible tirade,” commented Ronny in a shocked tone.

“Why don’t you introduce us to the royal party you’ve just called down?” inquired Jerry, her cheerful smile in evidence.

“Judging from the preparations you’ve made for her, I’d say you know her better than I,” was Marjorie’s laughing rejoinder. “Now I’m going to do something I’ve longed to do for two years. I’m going to introduce the Empress of Wayland Hall to the Lady of Hamilton Arms.”

Marjorie walked up to the make-shift throne and salaamed profoundly before it to its two occupants. Then she lifted one of Miss Remson’s hands and placed it in one of Miss Susanna’s. The crowd of laughing girls had drawn close to the trio as she did thus. “We love you both so much,” she said in her clear enunciation. “I know you are friends already.”

Approving applause went up from the more humble subjects. Their compact movement toward the throne had not been without an object. Marjorie felt herself suddenly seized and shoved into the throne’s vacant left-hand place before she could make the least resistance.

“Now will you be good?” Muriel Harding threatened the flushed giggling addition to royalty. “Don’t fail to notice that I am hanging over you with my most menacing air.”

“You look about as menacing as a peaceful sheep,” Lillian Wenderblatt promptly criticized.

“If you had said a lamb I shouldn’t have minded. I’m very certain I *do not* look like a sheep, peaceful or ferocious,” Muriel asserted with vast dignity.

“A ferocious sheep,” pleasantly repeated Vera. “How very entertaining; the idea, I mean.”

“Oh, start on someone else. If you don’t treat me with more respect I shall tell the royal party what the throne’s made of,” warned Muriel.

“I could do that, but I won’t.” Marjorie beamed knowingly at Jerry. “How you must have hustled, Jeremiah Macy, to do all this.” A comprehensive sweep of an arm not only included the throne, but also the study table, flower-trimmed and set out with a tea service. There were two gorgeous bunches of roses, one on each chiffonier. Scattered about the room was the pick of decorative treasures from each Travelers’ room.

“Oh, I hustled a little bit. The girls did a lot, too. After Leila and I called up Miss—” She clapped her



hand to her mouth in merry dismay.

"So it *wasn't* a flock of birds that told you." Marjorie bent a gaily disapproving glance upon Miss Hamilton. "And I was the only one surprised of all this crowd. I'm still more surprised at being royalty. Would you mind mentioning my royal title?"

"The Royal Countess of Bean," Jerry instantly supplied. "I hope you like and appreciate it."

"I'll try to," Marjorie promised with a plaintive meekness which produced a gale of ready laughter in which she joined.

Miss Remson and Miss Susanna had clasped hands and taken but one straight survey, each of the other, before knowing that they were destined to pass quickly from acquaintanceship to the estate of friendship. "My girls," as the old lady loved to call the special little coterie to which Marjorie belonged, would be the fragrant, youthful bond between these two elder sisters of Hamilton.

While royalty took its ease on a plumped-up throne the hard working subjects of the imperial trio prepared the feast. Leila made the tea, boastfully asserting that no such tea had ever been made before in the history of the world.

"My, *such* an equivocal statement! It might mean either the best or the worst tea that was ever made," Kathie pointed out, grave as a judge.

"Rather sweeping, *I* should say," was Vera's ironical opinion.

"I am not sorry I praised my own tea. Now I know that nobody else would have done it," Leila remarked loudly to the teapot as she set it on the table. "Even Midget has a grudge against my sayings."

"Oh, never mind about Midget. I approve of you and your sayings, Leila Greatheart," consoled Jerry. "Do say something to me now."

"That I will." Leila dropped into a brogue. "I'll be askin' a favor of you, Jeremiah." There was a mirthful gleam in Leila's blue eyes which Jerry happened to miss. "Go to Marjorie's closet and bring out of it the box of maccaroons I placed there a while ago."

Jerry obediently started for the closet. Her progress was followed by several pairs of laughing eyes. Leila watched her with an amused show of white teeth.

"Aa-h-h-h!" Jerry emitted a sharp yell and made a headlong dive into the closet. She kicked the box of maccaroons, which reposed on the closet floor at her feet, nearly overturning it. She had forgotten everything except the tall slender girl stowed away in the closet whose unexpected appearance in such a place had given her a startling surprise. Both plump arms wound around Helen Trent. Jerry was now giving a bear-like demonstration of affection.

"Helen; good old Helen Trent!" she was crying out in delight. "How long have you been lurking in that closet? Come out of it, this instant. Leila Harper put you there, of course. That's why she sent me for the maccaroons."

Fondly escorted by Jerry, Helen emerged from Marjorie's dress closet to become the center of attraction in the room for the time being.

"So glad to get out of that stuffy old closet," she sighed, with her ever attractive display of dimples. "Leila told me to stay in there until she sent Jerry to let me out. I could hear all of you talking. How I wanted to butt in. For Jeremiah's sake I was noble and silent."

"Cut out being noble and silent. Talk," urged Jerry. She was bubbling over with good cheer at sight of pretty, easy-going Helen whose cheery disposition was always toward the funny side of life.

"I will. First let me hug Marjorie and Miss Susanna. I haven't hugged them yet. Then do give me some tea and a chair over which to drape my weary frame." Helen grew ridiculously pleading.

"You talk like a one-piece dress," Jerry snickered.

"Well?" Helen lazily opened her limpid blue eyes. "You know you didn't specify as to the kind of talk, Jeremiah. You simply said: 'Talk.' It's werry fatiguing, Jeremiah, to stand up indefinitely in a dress closet. I don't aspire to a seat on the throne. I am too modest. I think your arm chair might be nice." Helen sent an ingratiating smile to Muriel who was complacently occupying the coveted arm chair.

"I'll tip Muriel out immediately." Jerry swaggered over to the grinning occupant. "Vacate gracefully, or be tipped out bodily?" she asked with dangerous suavity.

"You can't tip me out of what I'm not in." Muriel made an agile bound from the chair and dodged Jerry's reaching hands.

"Let Muriel have the chair. Take my place on the throne, Helen. Miss Susanna wants to monopolize you." Marjorie came forward and escorted Helen to the dais. Muriel instantly retrieved the chair and jeered at Jerry.

"It's a wonder you didn't see me when I came in this morning," Helen laughingly told Marjorie. "I dodged into Miss Remson's office just as you came downstairs to go to the laboratory."

"I was too obliging to see what I wasn't supposed to," Marjorie made jesting return. With her usual love of action she began helping Leila serve the tea. The spread was a lap collation with the guests informally occupying, for the most part, cushions on the floor. Paper napkins, paper plates and tea cups balanced on knees were leading features. But Leila's tea was above reproach. The tiny toothsome sandwiches made by Ronny and Vera disappeared like magic. Ellen's famous caramel

cake was delicious as ever and the salted nuts, olives and cheese straws appetizing relishes.

None of the effervescently gay company in 15 was enjoying the party more hugely than Miss Susanna. She ate the delectable fare offered her with hungry heartiness, drank two cups of tea; laughed and chatted with the happy abandon of girlhood.

Because she loved these girls who had loved her and revered the memory of her kinsman, the once-prejudiced, only living representative of a grand old colonial family, suddenly experienced a new and overwhelming sympathy toward all girlhood. Little by little the rusting bars of prejudice had worn away against the friendly assaults of "her girls." For that she owed girlhood a debt which she purposed to pay.

More than once as her eyes strayed to Marjorie, to rest with content on the young girl's glowing, sunshiny face she was reminded of the lines of a favorite old song. She found exquisite happiness in fitting the worshipping words to Marjorie.

"Like the sun thy presence glowing  
Clothes the meanest thing in light:  
And when thou like him art going,  
Loveliest objects fade in night.  
All things look so bright above thee—  
That they nothing seem without thee:  
By that pure and lucid mind  
Earthly visions are refined."

## CHAPTER VI.

55

### A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

"Yes, Bean, there is nothing like efficiency. And I am *so* efficient. I didn't hear you say a thing." Jerry cupped a hand to an ear and eyed Marjorie hopefully. Marjorie was frowningly occupied with a page of maddeningly abstruse French. "I certainly have worked hard at this schedule." Jerry continued her self-laudatory remarks. "But the results are *celostrous*, Bean; *simply celostrous*! Ha! I thought my new word would prove irresistible!" she exclaimed in triumph as Marjorie looked up in mild surprise at Jerry's latest coining.

"Something sounded new and queer," Marjorie averred with the gurgling little laugh Jerry liked to hear.

"Now that I have your attention, never mind about my new descriptive adjective. I've been frisking gaily about the room, dropping things on the floor, growling as I picked them up. And why? On purpose to be noticed by you. Seeing you're now seeing me, may I venture to ask if you know the reason for my nice new adjective?" Jerry pursued blandly.

56

"I never heard you frisk a single frisk, Jeremiah, or drop a single drop, or growl a single growl. This page of French is awful! It's an odd old religious argument between two Norman priests. I'd say it couldn't be lucidly translated into English, but it can, or we wouldn't be stuck with it for a study."

"Go and ask her frozenness, the Ice Queen, to give you a lift," innocently proposed Jerry. "Muriel says she is a wonder in French. Due to having had a French governess ever since she could hot-foot it around the nursery."

"I'd like to ask her about this very thing," sighed Marjorie. "If I wanted to know about it for someone else I suppose I might. I don't feel inclined to go to her on my own account."

"I get you, Bean. Don't take my advice. I wouldn't take it myself. You could ask Muriel to ask her about it. That ain't no way to do, either." She shook a reproving head at herself in her dressing table mirror in front of which she had paused to fluff and pat her hair.

"This translation would really be a good excuse for going to see Miss Monroe," Marjorie reflected aloud. "I wonder what she will do during the holidays? She told Muriel she had no friends in the United States besides the Hamilton girls she knows."

57

"I suppose she includes Leslie Hob-goblin Cairns among the Hamilton aggregation." Jerry swung disdainfully around from the mirror.

"Um-m; probably." Marjorie sat chin in hand, staring ruminatively at Jerry. "Leslie Cairns may ask Miss Monroe to spend Christmas with her," she advanced after a moment's silence. "I don't mean in the town of Hamilton, at the Hamilton Hotel. I mean away from there; New York or Philadelphia, or even Chicago."

"She may have asked her long before this." Jerry spoke rather impatiently. "Suppose she hasn't, Marvelous Manager?"

"Then some of us should take her home with us," Marjorie said with conviction.

"Uh-h-h-h. I knew it," Jerry groaned. "But it can't be you, and it won't be me. At least I hope it won't. You ought not attempt to entertain Miss Susanna at Castle Dean and run a welfare bureau there at the same time."

"You're positively outrageous, Jeremiah, but there's fatal truth in what you say," Marjorie smiled at Jerry's humorous injunction. "It would complicate things to have Miss Monroe visit me while Miss Susanna is at the castle. I am so anxious, for Miss Susanna's sake, to have the perfect spirit of Christmas in the house. Leila, Vera and Robin will help it along, but Miss Monroe wouldn't. There'd be a strain on everything that would spoil all the joy and dearness of Yuletide. It would worry General and Captain. I—I couldn't do it and be fair to them." The laughter had died out of her face.

58

"How do you know she'd come if you asked her?" quizzed Jerry. "It's only recently that she's discovered you are on the college map. She hasn't discovered me yet. Can you blame me for not being crazy to welcome her to the Macy's humble hut? Suppose I did, and she fell in love with Hal? I'd have put myself in line for the lasting reproach of an injured brother."

"You're a nonsensical goose." Marjorie felt her face grow rosy at mention of Hal Macy. She was provoked with herself for blushing.

"I suspect it, but you've said it. Nothing can be done about it either." Jerry drew a chair up to the study table. She sat down opposite Marjorie, leaned her elbows on it in imitation of her chum and stared at Marjorie with a refulgent smile. She drew from a pocket of her serge dress a little blue book. "Every blessed thing we have to do, person we have to see, or place we have to go on the campus within the next ten days is down in this book," she said with satisfaction.

59

"Oh, let me see it!" Marjorie reached out eagerly for the book. She examined it with growing enthusiasm. "It's a treasure, Jerry. How did you happen to think of doing it?"

"Past sad experience, my child. I'm growing old." Jerry gave a muffled sob. "I can't rush around and

do ten days pre-Christmas celebrating, shopping, calling, and get away with it, all within three hours before train time. This lovely schedule includes everything and everybody who it is up to us to include on the campus."

"It's—" Marjorie paused: "celostrous," she said with a laugh. "There, Jeremiah, I remembered your new adjective. If we stick to that program we'll be wonders. If we half stick to it we'll avoid a rush at the last minute. I'm so glad the dormitory girls are beautifully taken care of. That was another of your inspirations."

On the evening following Miss Susanna's visit to Wayland Hall the original Travelers had held a meeting in Leila's and Vera's room. Its purpose was to discuss what should be done in the way of Christmas entertainment on the campus for the students who expected to remain in college during holidays. Persistent scouting for two weeks previous among the students, by both chapters of the Travelers, had established the fact that not more than a dozen girls on the campus would spend the holidays at Hamilton College. Again the dormitory girls became the main problem for consideration.

Jerry had solved the problem by proposing that each Traveler should make herself responsible for the holiday amusement of two dormitory girls. "Find out what they'd like to do over the holidays and then help them do it," she had advised. "Some will want to spend Christmas in the city. Others would probably love to be invited to spend the holidays in the kind of homes we have, where there is lots of Christmas cheer. I'll take four dorms home with me. Let me hear from the rest of you."

Hailing Jerry's suggestion with the good will attending the season, Page and Dean, the dormitory girls' main stand-bys, called a meeting of the "dorms" in Greek Hall and electrified the off-campus girls with their unexpected proposal. Before the favored company of students left Greek Hall each had confided either to Robin or Marjorie her choice in regard to how she would prefer to spend the Christmas vacation. Fifteen of the dormitory girls had already made plans to spend the holidays at their own homes or those of friends. Forty of them wistfully declared for the joy of a family Christmas, but demurred in the same breath as being "afraid of causing too much work and trouble for others." The comparatively small remainder consisted of the more independent and adventurous contingent of "dorms" who welcomed the experience of seeing New York, Philadelphia or Washington, D. C., the three cities among which they were given choice.

Leila, Vera, Kathie, Helen, Robin, Phil Moore and Barbara Severn were among the Travelers Sanford bound. Leila, Vera and Robin were to be Marjorie's guests as well as Miss Susanna. Kathie was to be Lucy's company. Helen fell to Jerry, who would also entertain the four dorms. Ronny had arranged to go to Miss Archer. Phil and Barbara would share her hospitality. So would two of the dormitory girls. Lucy had also invited Anna Towne and Verna Burkett. She was highly edified at the prospect of entertaining three girls instead of one.

Jerry's whole-souled proposal had now been successfully carried out so far as the preliminaries of choice went. It now remained to the Travelers, original and of the new branch of the sorority, to look out for the off-campus girls who longed for a home-like Christmas. As seven of the Travelers themselves were to be guests of the Sanford girls they could not be counted upon, therefore, to furnish the holiday pleasures of home to the dormitory girls. They did their part by taking upon themselves the financing of the modest city expeditions planned by the off-campus girls. Nor would they allow their chums to contribute a penny toward it.

"You heard what I said, Jerry Macy." Marjorie suddenly bounced up from her chair and made one of her funny, little-girl rushes at Jerry. "Don't pretend you didn't." She pounced upon Jerry, threatening: "I'm going to muss up your hair, since you took so much trouble to fix it. The only way you can save your nice fluffy coiffure is to say: 'Yes, Marjorie, it was another of my inspirations.' You may notice I don't refer to my precious self as 'Bean,' either."

"Sorry, but I never could talk like you, Bean." To complete her defiance up went Jerry's hands in a backward reach. She caught Marjorie wrists. The two girls were engaged in a friendly grapple when the door opened and Muriel Harding came in, her arms piled high with packages, her smart little hat set far back on her head, two or three loosened curling locks of hair hanging over her face.

"What have we here?" Jerry demanded pleasantly. "Just what one might expect would drift in without knocking."

"You're doing the knocking now; why worry," chuckled Muriel. She walked over to Jerry's couch bed; dumped her packages upon it with a great sigh of relief. "I made port at the front door with my cargo beautifully, but I fell up two steps of the stairs. You can see what a wreck it made of me." She sat down on the couch beside her bundles, whipped off her hat and began tucking up her unruly locks of bright hair. "Every last present that I intend to buy for campus dwellers is in this heap," she declared with stress.

"Is there anything for me there?" Jerry showed sudden flattering interest in Muriel. "If so, let me see it."

"No, there's nothing for you," mimicked Muriel. "I'm going to buy your Christmas present at home, in the Sanford ten-cent store."

"Perhaps we'll meet there." Jerry arched significant brows. "I had thought of some nice little ten-cent token for—" She made an effective pause.

"I didn't come here to talk to you." Muriel tossed her head. "I came to see Marjorie. I've had bad luck about my two Christmas dorms, Marvelous Manager. The same nice thing has happened to them both. Their families have sent them the money to go home for the holidays. Neither of them had expected any such good fortune. The rest of the dorms have their plans all made. Not a single, double, triple or quadruple dorm will grace the would-be hospitable hearth of Harding. I'll bet you

couldn't make up a sentiment as effective as that, Jeremiah."

"A double dorm would be twins. A triple dorm would be a freak. A quadruple dorm would constitute material for a side-show," was Jerry's reflectively satirical observation. "Oh, I forgot. Kindly confine your conversation to Bean."

"Go away, Jeremiah," Muriel firmly requested. "Go and see Ronny. A big box for her from California is downstairs in the hall. Tell her I saw it first and politely sent you to hand her the news. It will show Ronny how helpful my disposition is. You can square yourself with me at the same time." Muriel opened her eyes, showed her teeth and bobbed her head at Jerry in what she termed her "delighted" expression.

"Tell her yourself; I'm no news herald." Jerry made no move to perform the squaring act Muriel had suggested. In the next two minutes she changed her mind and hustled to tell Ronny of the box. 65

"I happen to remember that you are just the person I want to talk to, Muriel," Marjorie said. "Jerry and I have been wondering what Miss Monroe is going to do over the holidays. Last time I asked you about her you hadn't been able to find out her plans. What do you know about them now?"

"Not a blessed thing except this. She said yesterday she might spend Christmas in New York. I had asked her outright what she was going to do over the holidays. It was inquisitive; maybe." Muriel shrugged her shoulders. "I knew you were anxious to know."

"If she is going to New York, it means Leslie Cairns has invited her. That's too bad; after the encouraging signs she's shown lately of thawing toward us." Marjorie's tone was rather gloomy. "It will quash everything we've tried to do to draw her away from Leslie Cairns. I'd invite her to go home with me for the holidays, but I have Miss Susanna to consider first of all. If I hadn't, Miss Monroe wouldn't accept a Christmas invitation from me," Marjorie ended with a trace of self-mockery.

"To hear you talk one might think you were a tabooed character." Muriel's gurgle of laughter brought a smile to Marjorie's troubled features. 66

"I feel so cross sometimes when I think about that aggravating girl." Marjorie's answer rang with vexation. "I've not been in your room since you came back to Hamilton. Neither has Ronny, Jerry nor Lucy. She snubbed the four of us thoroughly in the beginning. Now proper pride won't allow us to put ourselves in direct line for further snubs. She's been fairly nice to Robin. Yet Robin hasn't cared to try calling on Miss Monroe yet. She doesn't wish to risk a snubbing, now that she's made a little headway with our enchanted princess."

"I could like her if she'd let me," Muriel said bluntly. "We don't meet often in the room except just before old ten-thirty, and in the morning. We're both out a good deal. She is brilliant or she couldn't cut study the way she does and not be conditioned." There was a hint of admiration in Muriel's observation.

"Oh-h!" Marjorie swung round in her chair until she was facing Muriel. "Why couldn't—I wonder if you—it doesn't seem fair to ask you, Muriel, but, since both the dorms have gone back on you, would you care to ask Miss Monroe to go home with you for Christmas?" 67

Marjorie fairly held her breath as she finished asking the question. This splendid way of helping the strange, beautiful girl in whom she had become so thoroughly interested she was inclined to regard as a positive dispensation of a kindly Providence.

"I might." Muriel stared contemplatively at the anxious questioner. "I was so disappointed when my two dorms flivvered and renounced me I never thought of my old friend the Ice Queen." She looked rather sheepish then smirked at Marjorie and said: "'Charity begins at home.' If I mentioned Charity in my invitation to the Ice Queen, br-r-r, she'd freeze Matchless Muriel solid at one glance. Then I couldn't go home for Christmas. Neither could she go with me. Think how sad it would be! Two cold, shiny, slippery, glittery Ice Queens, friz solid over the holidays."

Giggling at her own weird fancy, Muriel rose and began gathering up her packages. "I'll ask her directly, if she's home, dear Bean. I'll let you know as soon as I can escape from her royal presence to tell you."

"You're a darling, and the most obliging person in the universe. If you'd said you'd rather not ask her, I shouldn't have blamed you in the least. I thought, after the idea popped into my head, that I ought to ask you for Miss Monroe's sake," was Marjorie's honest avowal. "Let me give you a basket to put your stuff in. Here's the laundry basket." 68

Marjorie proceeded to stack the piles of clean laundry on the couch and place Muriel's packages in the basket instead. The two girls performed the little task with the usual amount of light talk and laughter. After Muriel had gone Marjorie sat down again at the table to indulge in a kindly little daydream which had to do with helping Muriel entertain Doris Monroe should she become Muriel's Christmas guest.

Jerry presently drifted into the room to announce that Ronny had cruelly refused to unpack the box from California before her and Lucy. "She made us help her upstairs with it, then she coldly turned us out." Jerry complained plaintively. "I'd have raged like a gale at such treatment only she gave me some Mexican candied fruit. It was very celostrous. My new adjective just describes the candied banana I had. What became of Matchless Muriel? I see she's beaten it."

"She'll return presently," Marjorie made mysterious answer. 69

But it was fully an hour afterward before Muriel suddenly popped into the room, closing the door quickly but soundlessly after her.

"Excuse my conspirator entrance," she began just above a whisper. "I didn't care to have the Ice Queen know where I went. I ducked out of our room without saying a word. I promised to tell you what she said, Marjorie, to our plan." Muriel's eyes were bright with the importance of her information. "Don't turn all colors with surprise. She says she'll go to Sanford with me for Christmas."

## CHAPTER VII.

70

### UNFLATTERING COMPARISON

While Marjorie Dean and Muriel Harding had been earnestly discussing a welfare invitation for difficult Doris Monroe, the latter had been spending a couple of very disagreeable hours with Leslie Cairns. Leslie had seen fit to assume the particularly dictatorial air which of all her category of unpleasant moods Doris most thoroughly detested.

To begin with Leslie had come to meet Doris at the Colonial fresh from a hot argument with the Italian, Sabatini, whom she had seen fit to call on at his garage and scathingly upbraid for being a "cheating dago quitter." Leslie argued that, for the amount of money she had paid Sabatini he should have stood out against the threats of Signor Baretto and declined to put the busses back into service.

"You are no lady, but the creza girl; thick head you have," Sabatini had finally shouted at Leslie when his temper broke all bounds. "You are the foolish. I don' run the busses when Baretto say I must, I get my franchisa take from me. Then don' run, anyhow. You get that through your head, you can."

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"Then give back part of that money, and cut out the pet names," Leslie had blazed back at him. "You'll find out who you're talking to, you thieving dago, before you are many weeks older. I'll *break you*. Put you out of business. *Just like that!*" Leslie had given her usual imitation of what she fondly believed would have been her father's way of dealing with the situation.

As a matter of fact her father, Peter Cairns, would never have figured personally in any such affair. He would have placed it in the hands of a subordinate below his rank as financier, who would have in turn detailed his subordinate to act and so on down until one competent to deal with the Italian had been secured.

Leslie was not ignorant of her father's methods of procedure but she was ambitious to prove her own power over people and circumstances. She was determined to prove to her father that she could bring about any consummation she desired either by her own clever maneuvering or by force of will. Her idea of will power was—"make other people do as you say."

Sabatini's parting, furious speech had been: "You try make troubla I make you the troubla, too. You see. I tell about you to the paper man. Everabuddy read 'bout you in the paper." He had already refused to return a penny of the money she had given him. Leslie's humor as she lounged out of the garage with an air of lofty indifference was ferocious.

72

This had been her third and most trying interview with the Italian, Sabatini, since the busses had again begun to run. She reflected morosely as she drove her car along Hamilton Pike to keep her engagement with Doris that not a single thing she had planned since first she had come to Hamilton College as a student had ever turned out advantageously to her. She did not in the least blame herself or her methods. She was conceitedly sure of herself. Someone or something had always "butted in" at the wrong time. Or else the persons on whom she depended to do their parts in her various schemes had failed her.

She wondered if her father had received the letter she had written him. She was confident that it would be forwarded to him if he were not in New York. She was particularly anxious to know where he was. She hoped he was not in New York. For weeks, a scheme, the most ambitious plan to make trouble which Leslie had yet concocted, had been foremost in her thoughts. It had kept her busy ever since Thanksgiving, daily visiting her garage property and prowling in the immediate neighborhood of the dormitory building. The gray stone walls of the dormitory were well started and steadily reaching upward, a fact which seemed to furnish Leslie with deep though frowning interest.

73

Coming within sight of the dormitory that afternoon she had glanced toward it and given a short angry laugh. She had then stopped her car for a moment to compare the activities on the dormitory lot with those going on at her garage site. The operation of tearing down the old houses in the block she had purchased, and afterward clearing the ground, had gone very slowly. The contractor who had charge of that part of the work had dragged it, so as to benefit himself. Under honest management the operation should have been far enough advanced at least to show the garage cellar dug. As it was the ground she owned was yet partially littered with the debris of demolition.

When she had finally arrived at the Colonial there to find Doris waiting for her at one of the tables she had reached a point where nothing could please her. On the way from the dormitory site to the Colonial she had decided to go to New York alone over the holidays. She had important work to do. She did not propose to allow entertaining Doris to interfere with it.

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Her first words to Doris on seating herself at the table had been: "The trip to New York is off, Goldie. I can't take you with me, I mean. I have to go, but entirely on business, I must go alone."

Her disappointment very keen on hearing such depressing news, Doris had received Leslie's announcement with bad grace. More, she had accused Leslie of not being a person of her word. The

two girls had argued and squabbled as was their wont. Doris was particularly incensed over the fact that she had refused two invitations from adoring freshmen to go home with them for the holidays. Three different sophs had also extended her invitations. She had refused them all because she most fancied the New York trip. Now Leslie had changed her mind and she, Doris Monroe, would be the only loser.

Leslie had relied on her most sarcastic, overbearing manner to cope with Doris's indignant explosion. As before, when they had stood out against each other, Leslie found her match. Doris proved herself so utterly, scornfully thorny that Leslie finally backed water and volunteered the sulky promise that if she possibly could she would take Doris to New York as she had first agreed. Doris herself had not asked it. Neither had she appeared to take note of the promise. When she left Leslie at the door of the Colonial, refusing to enter her car, she had merely said "good-bye" in the iciest of tones. This did not worry Leslie. It was not the first time Doris had walked away miffed.

Doris, however, was not only angry at Leslie for her wilful unreliability, she was experiencing a healthy contempt for Leslie herself. She contrasted Leslie's standards and ideals with those of the girls on the campus whom she was beginning to know, understand and like. She liked the jolly, worshipping freshmen who had made so much of her. They were an honorable set. She liked Louise Walker, Calista Wilmot and Charlotte Robbins particularly among the sophs. She admired Gussie Forbes, though she never went near her. She knew Gussie to be devoted to Marjorie Dean. She had quite a secret crush on Robin Page, though she would have died rather than admit it. She liked Phyllis Moore and Barbara Severn. She also liked Muriel and admired her for her sturdy principles. She kept these likes to herself, however, pretending to be more indifferent than she was.

She could not be among such girls long without discerning the difference between their ethical standards and those of Leslie Cairns. She detested Leslie's unscrupulousness, yet there were times when she admired the ex-student's sang froid. She saw the really humorous, clever side of Leslie and felt vaguely sorry for her because she was so unprepossessing. She realized Leslie's power through money, but she had lost her respect for the lawless girl on that head.

She had hurried into the early winter twilight from the tea room feeling as though she never wished to see Leslie Cairns again. All the way from the campus gates to Wayland Hall she continued to think darkly of what she had lost by Leslie's selfish tactics. She had announced so confidently, in refusing other Christmas invitations, that she expected to spend the holidays in New York. Now she would not humble her pride by letting it be known that she had been disappointed.

In consequence Muriel's invitation, delivered immediately after she reached her room, came as a consoling surprise. Instantly followed remembrance that Muriel was one of the Sanford five whom Leslie detested. She recalled her own antagonism toward Marjorie Dean. To accept a Christmas invitation to Muriel's home meant the acceptance of Muriel's chums as friendly acquaintances. It flashed upon Doris in that moment of self-examination that there was no reason why she should not accept as her friends the four Sanford girls who were Muriel Harding's intimates.

Following that illuminating flash came a thought far from noble. It took strong hold of Doris. How piqued Leslie Cairns would be were she to accept Muriel's invitation. It would serve Leslie right. It would show her that she, Doris Monroe, had the courage of independence. She had no faith in Leslie's final grudging assurance that the trip to New York should be made as they had planned it. Leslie had changed her mind once, she was likely to disappoint her again.

Thought of Leslie and a resentful desire to exasperate her completely outweighed consideration of the purely social side of Muriel's invitation. Doris's momentary hesitation after Muriel had invited her did not arise, as Muriel had surmised, from regretful embarrassment at her lack of cordiality toward Muriel's chums. Doris's mind was fully occupied with one idea—the beneficial effect her trip to Sanford would have upon Leslie. She would write Leslie a note informing her of the astonishing change in her Christmas plans. If Leslie chose to rage over the matter, she must rage it out alone. Doris resolved that she would not see Leslie again until after she had returned to the campus from the trip to Sanford.



## CHAPTER VIII.

79

### LOOKING FOR TROUBLE

Doris's thoughts were so entirely centered on the disagreeable effect her decision would have upon Leslie Cairns she did not stop to consider what her freshman and sophomore admirers might think of her change of plans. She decided to wait two days before writing to Leslie. She had been rather shaky in mathematics for a week past and needed to devote herself assiduously to it until she was beyond a stage that courted being conditioned. She had sweetly assured Muriel that she would not change her mind at the last minute.

She put off the writing of the note to Leslie until she had finished her self-appointed review in mathematics. She wished to have a free mind in which to write Leslie. Her note should be a triumph of cleverness. On this point she was determined.

In the meantime Muriel had circulated the news that Doris was to be her Christmas guest, with an innocently smiling face. Clever Muriel did not propose to give her sophomore catch an opportunity to wriggle out of her agreement at the last minute. "It's just as well to publish the Ice Queen's thaw from the housetops," she gaily confided to Jerry and Marjorie. "The amazing fact that the Ice Queen and I are chummy will have a soothing, beneficial effect upon such revolutionists as the Phonograph, the Prime Minister, and such."

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"There is some truth in your disrespectful remarks about these erring sophie sisters," Jerry had reluctantly agreed. "We can only trust, Matchless Muriel, that you may always get away with your reckless use of pet names. I believe I've mentioned this hope before."

While Doris, having coolly mapped out her own course, was as coolly pursuing her own way, Leslie was impatiently waiting to hear from her. She believed that Doris was too greatly bent on going with her to New York to remain miffed. Doris would soon write or call her on the telephone.

Instead of two days it took Doris three to complete her mathematical review. During that time she kept a "Busy" sign in frequent display upon the door, a proceeding which Muriel had advised her to do. Since her acceptance of Muriel's invitation the two girls had become far more friendly than before. Both felt the relief attending the change and welcomed the pleasant interest it permitted them to exhibit in each other's campus affairs.

81

On the fourth afternoon following her quarrel with Leslie Cairns, Doris hurried to her room from her trigonometry period, bent in writing the letter to Leslie. It lacked only three days of the closing of Hamilton College for the holidays. It was high time she wrote it, she reflected. During the next three busy days there would be little opportunity. She sighed audible satisfaction as she entered the room to find it deserted. She hoped Muriel would remain away until dinner time. Prudently she brought out the busy sign from its place in the table drawer and affixed it with a brass tack to an outside panel of the door.

Having finally settled herself at the study table to write she spent several minutes in thoughtful deliberation before she wrote:

"DEAR LESLIE:

"You know, of course, in what an annoying position you placed me by disappointing me about our New York vacation. I had been invited by a number of other girls, some of them upper class, to spend Christmas at their homes. I refused the invitations—saying that I had already been invited by a dear friend to spend the holidays in New York. Naturally, after you had failed me, I could hardly have the bad taste to go to any one of these friends, stating that I had changed my mind.

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"Since you disappointed me, Miss Harding, my roommate has invited me to spend Christmas with her at her Sanford home. I have accepted. Although you said, just before I left you the other day at the Colonial, that you had re-considered, and would try to arrange the New York trip, I was not impressed. I doubted your intention to keep your word. You have a habit—"

A forceful fist applied to the door, regardless of the "Busy" sign, brought Doris to her feet with a displeased "Oh!" She stood for a brief moment, hesitating, before she made any movement toward the door. While the sign was warranted to keep away other students, it was not prohibitive to Miss Remson, the maids or the laundress.

"Oh!" she exclaimed again as her eyes took in the tall, severe figure of Julia Peyton.

The yellow-white of the sophomore's complexion turned to dull red under the bored scrutiny of Doris's sea-green eyes. "I saw your sign." She rolled her black eyes toward it. "I simply had to disregard it. I knew you were alone. It was too good a chance to miss. I really had to see you."

83

"Why?" was Doris's close-clipped question. She had not yet invited the other girl into the room. She knew she was rude, but she did not care. She did not like Julia Peyton, although Julia was one of her most annoyingly devoted admirers.

"Oh, for a very important reason. To prove to you that I am a true friend, Doris," Julia wagged her

black head in time to her last four emphatic words.

"I don't in the least understand you," Doris returned stiffly. "Come in. I am really awfully busy. I have an important letter to—"

"I won't stay long," Julia assured, entering with an alacrity which indicated the importance of her own mission. Without waiting to be invited she sat down in a wicker chair and burst forth: "You're not really going home for Christmas with Miss Harding, are you? I was told so yesterday, but I didn't believe it. I heard the same silly report today. It worried me. I simply had to come to you with it."

"Why should such a report worry you?" Doris demanded half in disdain.

"Because I'd hate to see you put yourself in a position where you might be ridiculed." Julia eyed Doris with mysterious pity.

"Ridiculed?" Doris's greenish eyes widened in instant offense. Her exclamation was one of haughty unbelief. "Do say what you are trying to say, directly," she commanded. "I have yet to place myself open to ridicule."

"That's just what I told Clara," cried Julia. "I was sure you wouldn't go home for Christmas with that horrid Miss Harding."

"But I *am* going home with her," Doris returned with elaborate unconcern. A tantalizing impulse to nettle Julia seized her. "She is not horrid. She is clever, and rather good fun." Doris drew the chair, in which she had been sitting when Julia knocked, away from the table. She sat down and cast a measuring glance at her tiresome caller.

"You won't think so after you know why she has invited you to her home." The sophomore's black brows drew together. Her round black eyes assumed their most "moony" appearance. "She invited you because she couldn't find anybody else at Hamilton to invite. I have found out positively that she has invited four different off-campus girls *and everyone of them has turned her down.*" Julia's voice rose in shrill triumph. "What do you think of that."

Without waiting to hear Doris's opinion she rattled on maliciously. "Miss Dean and that crowd Miss Harding is chummy with have been pretending to be the ones who have invited those off-campus beggars to their homes for the holidays. I know for a fact that none of them have done much in that direction. Miss Dean, who's supposed to be such a sweet little model of goodness and generosity, is going to entertain at home—not the off-campus frumps. Oh, no! She is going to take Miss Harper, Miss Mason, Miss Page home with her. Miss Macy will lug home that tall, blue-eyed, lazy-looking girl that's visiting Miss Remson. Miss Lynne has invited Miss Moore and Miss Severn. Even grouchy Miss Warner is going to entertain Langly. That's the way they benefit their precious 'dormitory girls' that they are always crowing about."

"I fail to see how all this applies to me." Doris showed plain signs of becoming frosty. She was only half interested in Julia's lengthy, spiteful argument.

"I'm only trying to show you how selfish and what fakes that crowd of priggies are. Just the same what I said about Miss Harding having invited you because she couldn't get anyone else applies to you," was Julia's dogged assertion. "I heard she felt sorry for you because you—well, had no home influences—er—that you came clear from England alone and—that—and—" Julia floundered desperately, then paused.

"What does Miss Harding know of me? Nothing." Doris sprang to her feet in a swift blaze of wrath. "Who told you she said such things of me?"

Julia solemnly shook her head. As a matter of truth she was merely repeating several of her roommate's, Clara Carter's, vague suppositions. "I can't tell you that. She—er—I only heard she felt that way about you. You see, Doris, I asked you to go home with me for the holidays, but you said you were going to New York," she reminded in reproachful tones. "I supposed you would go with Miss Cairns. All of a sudden you turned around and accepted Miss Harding's invitation. I thought it rather unfair in you, when I had asked you first of all. I thought you might at least have come to me and said—"

"I will not be lectured by anyone!" Doris cried out angrily. "I don't care what you thought. I could explain to you precisely why I accepted an invitation from Miss Harding to spend Christmas with her at her home, but I shall not do it."

"I shouldn't call a friendly confidence, such as I've just given you, a lecture. I'm sure I haven't asked you to explain anything. I think I'd better go now. I've done my duty as your friend, even if you can't understand that now. You will sometime soon, I hope." Julia rose, stalked to the door; a picture of offended dignity. "You'll be sorry if you go home with Miss Harding." She could not resist this last fling. "You'll lose caste on the campus. Remember, she has invited you as a last choice."

"I am *not* going home with Miss Harding." Doris brought one slippered foot down with an angry stamp. "I suppose I ought to thank you for telling me what you have. I don't feel like thanking anyone for anything. I shall go to New York for Christmas."

"With Miss Cairns?" eagerly quizzed Julia.

"Yes, with Miss Cairns," Doris answered; then added bitterly: "She has invited me to go there with her because we are friends; not because she feels sorry for me."

## CHAPTER IX.

88

### DEFEATING HER OWN HAPPINESS

When the door had closed on her gossiping caller Doris sat down again at the table. She leaned her beautiful head on her white, dimpled arms and gave herself up to brief disconsolate reverie. Now that she was alone she wondered whether what Julia Peyton had said about Muriel Harding was strictly true. There was one way in which she could find out with certainty. She would ask Muriel point-blank if it were true that four off-campus girls had refused her invitation. She would ask Muriel, also, where she had gained so much information regarding herself. When she endeavored to recall Julia's exact words she found they did not mean much. Julia's reluctant inflections, her stammering pauses, had implied so much more than words.

Julia's object in warning Doris against Muriel had been double. Since the evening when she had made complaint against the noise in Room 15 she had shown marked hostility to the knot of post graduates at Wayland Hall. She and Clara Carter had encouraged Doris in her half fancied dislike for them. She had noted the new spirit of friendliness growing between Doris and Muriel with every intention of crushing it if she could. She kept up a zealous watching and longing for an opportunity to create dissention between them. She had a habit of dropping in on Doris in her room when Muriel was there purposely to see how things were between the two. She never spoke to Muriel, however.

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About the time she had begun to despair of making mischief between them she was delighted to overhear a group of chattering freshmen in the gymnasium one afternoon gaily discussing their Christmas plans. What most pleased her were the remarks of one of them: "Isn't it too bad? Miss Harding can't find a single dorm to trot home with her. They are all attached. It's too bad for her. I mean. Of course it's lovely for the dorms."

The jealous, prejudiced girl had chosen to place an entirely different construction upon the remarks from that intended by the merry little freshman. By the time she had repeated the remarks to Clara Carter, her roommate, with embellishments, they had assumed an ugly tone. Clara also contributed a few opinions which did not improve matters.

90

Added to this it needed but the rumor that Doris Monroe was going home with Miss Harding for the holidays to set the mischief-making pair of sophomores to work. Julia was of the opinion that since Doris had planned to go home with Muriel she and Miss Cairns must have quarreled. If she could only set Doris against her roommate then Doris would go home for the vacation with her. She would have the pleasure of boasting that she had entertained the college beauty. She was confident that she would gain socially by having entertained Doris as her guest. With so much to be gained to her interest Julia had picked her hour and boldly braved the "Busy" sign and Doris's "royal" manner. At the last she had not dared propose to Doris that her wrathful classmate should spend the vacation with her. She returned to her room to inform Clara, who was watching for her, that she had just missed getting into an awful mess.

With a pettish little jerk of her head Doris straightened in her chair. She picked up the letter she had been writing from the table and began reading it over. Then she sat staring reflectively at it, as though deliberating some very special course. Next instant and she had torn the unfinished letter in pieces. With the peculiar cresting of her golden head, always a sign of defiance, she reached for her fountain pen where it had rolled to one end of the table.

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"Dear Leslie:" she wrote, her green eyes darkening with her unquiet thoughts. "If you really meant what you said when I left you the other day at the Colonial, then I will take you at your word. Miss Harding, my roommate, has invited me to go home with her. I prefer to go to New York with you, provided you will not feel that I am an incumbrance to your plans. Let me know immediately what you wish to do.

"Sincerely,  
"DORIS MONROE."

She read the brief note, folded it and prepared it for mailing. Then she tucked the envelope in her portfolio, but without a stamp. She glanced up at the clock. It was nearing six. Muriel would soon arrive. Of late she and Muriel had exchanged the cheerful, careless greetings of girlhood when they met in their room or on the campus. She had lately begun to find a roommate might be a congenial comfort instead of a tiresome inconvenience. Now it was all spoiled. Muriel had pretended pity for her to other students. Of all things detested, Doris most disliked being pitied.

92

In spite of her anger against Muriel, Doris could do no less than admit to herself that Julia Peyton's word was not to be taken above Muriel's. Yet she was sullenly convinced that Muriel must have said something pitying about her to someone. How else could Julia have heard it? A bright flush dyed her face as she thought of herself as being a last-resort guest. Perhaps Muriel had been asked by Miss Dean to invite her, merely as a welfare experiment. She had heard that Miss Dean was fond of making such experiments. It was outrageous that *she* should have been selected as the victim of one. Other far-fetched, flashing conjectures visited her troubled brain as she waited for Muriel's coming. She could not decide whether to treat Muriel with friendliness, asking her frankly for an

explanation, or to resort once again to her old-time haughty indifference.

Muriel's sudden breezy entrance and accompanying cry: "Where, oh, where, are the lickerish lights?" took Doris's mind off herself for a moment. Muriel had already pressed the switch near the door. She made such an attractive study in her gray squirrel coat and cap, cheeks carnation pink, dark eyes snapping with sheer love of life Doris had no desire to be haughty. 93

"I forgot the lights," she said with a little shrug. She continued to watch Muriel who was removing coat and cap. "I should like to ask you something," she said as Muriel hung up her wraps and commenced smoothing her ruffled hair before a mirror.

"Ask ahead." Muriel waved affable permission with her hair brush.

"Is there—are there—am I the only guest you have invited for Christmas?" Unconsciously Doris's voice had taken on a shade of its former icy quality.

"You're the only one who's coming," laughed Muriel. "You're by no means the only one I invited."

"Oh!" Doris gave a queer little gasp.

"Did you hear about my dormitory girls? I invited them, and they accepted. Then they had unexpected checks sent them from home and away they went. I wandered around looking for some checkless, invitationless dorms. There were no such stoojents." Muriel declared good-humoredly. "I supposed of course you were dated ahead for the holidays. Then I asked you, and found you weren't. I was so glad. I'd have felt sorry to think of you poking around the campus over Christmas alone. You're so far from home, you see. Marjorie said the same and—" 94

"I don't wish anyone to be sorry for me." Doris's almost fierce utterance checked Muriel's flow of cheery volubility.

"All right. I'm not sorry a bit. You only dreamed I was," she retorted in a tone of gay raillery.

"I'm not jesting. I am serious." Doris drew herself up, a slim figure of affronted dignity. All that Julia had said of Muriel was true. Only one question, and Muriel had then practically admitted saying almost the exact words Julia had quoted as hers.

"Oh-h-h?" Muriel voiced the monosyllable questioningly. Her bright expression faded into concern. "Serious about what?" she asked.

"About not wishing you or Miss Dean or any of your friends to be sorry for me. I have plenty of friends—delightful friends. Why, I've refused half a dozen Christmas invitations! I have changed my mind about going home with you. I'm not going. I shall go to New York instead. I might have liked you, if you hadn't tried to pity me behind my back. That was worse than to my face. Please tell Miss Dean to mind her own affairs. I am not a welfare experiment." 95

Doris delivered the long answer to Muriel's question in a voice that grew more scornful with each word. She busied herself as she sputtered forth her displeasure with the donning of hat and coat. With "experiment" she snatched the letter she had written to Leslie Cairns from the portfolio, hastily affixed a stamp to the envelope and rushed from the room. Muriel watched her go, divided between vexation and perplexity. What under the sun had happened to the Ice Queen?

## CHAPTER X.

96

### THE COMING OF ST. NICK

"You know, if you are good, Santa Claus will surely visit you on Christmas eve," Marjorie was gravely saying to the bright-faced, alert little old lady ensconced in a big cushiony chair before the cheerful open fireplace. Marjorie emphasized her injunction with gentle little shakes of a forefinger.

"How good do I have to be? Will Santa Claus come down the chimney?" anxiously questioned Miss Susanna in a high treble that evoked a burst of merriment from the rest of the little group gathered about the fire. "Miss Susanna's bodyguard," Vera had lightly named Leila, Robin, Marjorie and herself.

"How good do you think you can be?" Marjorie paused to allow her question to take effect.

"That will depend upon the reward of goodness," chuckled the old lady.

"You are altogether too precautious." Marjorie simulated disapproval. "But you can't fool Santa. He will know the minute he sees you just what sort of little girl you are."

97

Miss Susanna peeped through her fingers at Marjorie in a funny, abashed, child-like fashion that elicited fresh laughter. "You can't fool me, either. He never *could* come down the chimney and out of that fireplace. I'm going to tell him what you said, when I see him. Then maybe he won't like you," she predicted in juvenile triumph.

"Oh, I didn't say he'd come down *our* chimney," reprovngly corrected Marjorie. "I only said he *might* visit you. He always *used* to come in at that window over there." She pointed to one of the living room east windows which opened upon a side veranda.

Miss Susanna appeared impressed at last. "Yes; he could get in here that way. I guess I'd better be good." A little shout greeted her reluctant admission. "Such a day as I've had, children." She gave a sigh of perfect happiness. "I'm certainly beginning to make up for some of the customs and rites of old Christmas I have missed."

The jolly Christmas company from Hamilton College had arrived in Sanford in the evening of the previous day. They had separated briefly at the station to go to their various destinations blithely promising Marjorie to be on hand by ten o'clock the next morning to go to a neighboring woods on a winter picnic. The express object of the picnic was the securing and bringing home of the Christmas tree to Castle Dean.

98

The hard labor part of the expedition had fallen to General Dean. He had complained of the detail in a loud, ungeneral-like manner as a "one-man, wood-chopping stunt," and had immediately engaged the services of Hal Macy, Charlie Stevens and Danny Seabrooke. The wages they demanded were: "Lots of good eats, and a chance to hang around with the crowd." The wily general affably agreed to their demand without consulting either the commissary or entertainment departments.

It had proved a memorably merry day. The fun began when the rollicking, cheering forest expedition had piled onto the two long bob sleds, each drawn by four big, satin-coated field horses. It had continued until the young foresters had come singing home through the dusk, the sleds laden with fragrant balsam trees and boughs.

Bred to thrive in the great outdoors the sturdy mistress of Hamilton Arms had enjoyed the winter picnic no less than her youthful companions. While there had been sufficient snow to permit the use of the bob sleds, it was of the frost-like crystallized kind. The sun had peered curiously forth from his winter quarters, had apparently approved the gay winter cavalcade. He had flashed in and out of fleecy clouds at them on their way to the woods. Later, when they had hilariously disposed themselves on the bob sleds for an al fresco luncheon he had come out in all his glory to shine on them.

99

What most amused the girls was the crush which Miss Susanna and Hal immediately developed for each other. Miss Hamilton and Hal had met at the June Commencement of Hamilton College of the previous summer. Devotion to Marjorie had formed an instant, though unspoken bond between them. Hal had somehow gained the comforting impression that Miss Susanna approved of him for Marjorie. The shrewd old lady had not miscalculated his worth. She had been too wise, however even to mention him to Marjorie. Nor had Marjorie ever mentioned Hal to her save as an old friend, or as Jerry's brother.

The wise old Lady of the Arms had seen too much of heartache, misunderstanding and vain regret not to appreciate the wonder of the love which Hal held for Marjorie. Miss Susanna had had her own romance. It had ended summarily in her girlhood when she found the man she had loved unworthy. In true love itself she still believed, though she skeptically rated it as so rare as to be almost extinct. Then had come Hal, with his clean-cut good looks and wistful blue eyes. She could only receive him into her interested regard with the hope Marjorie might one day "wake up to love."

100

Friends of Marjorie Dean knew the quartette of stories relative to her doings at Sanford High School. They form the "MARJORIE DEAN HIGH SCHOOL SERIES." These friends have also followed her through her four years at Hamilton College by medium of the "MARJORIE DEAN COLLEGE SERIES." Her

subsequent return to Hamilton campus as a post graduate has been set down in the first two volumes of the "POST GRADUATE SERIES," entitled respectively: "MARJORIE DEAN, COLLEGE POST GRADUATE," and "MARJORIE DEAN, MARVELOUS MANAGER."

"It has been a good day; now let it be—good night," declaimed Leila with a dramatic gesture.

"Good night," Vera sweetly responded. "So sorry you are going." She smiled honeyed dismissal of Leila.

"But I am not going. Now why should you think I was? I see little sadness in your round face, Midget," was the satiric retort.

"You said 'good night.' Of course, if you didn't know what you were saying—" Vera shrugged eloquently.

"Can you not allow your Celtic friend to quote from that most celebrated of all playwrights, Leila Harper?" demanded Leila, with an air of deep injury. "Is not that the hero's parting speech from my latest and best house play? I can prove it by Robin. Did I not nearly ruin my fine Irish voice drilling the hero to say it with expression?"

In process of delivering this scathing rebuke to Midget Leila bent down and swept Ruffle, Marjorie's stately Angora cat, into her arms. "It is you and I who will now have a talk about Santa Claus," she genially informed the straggling, fluffy-haired captive.

"N-n-u-u-u!" objected Ruffle in a deep displeased tone.

"So you can say 'no.' Well, it is 'yes' you should say. Let me tell you it is not about Santa Claus, but about Ruffle Claws we should be talking. You have a fine sharp assortment." Ruffle had threateningly spread his claws but had refrained from using them. "You are more gentle than I should be if some tall, wide person had the boldness to swing me up off my feet." Leila willingly released the big, handsome gray and white puss.

Ruffle immediately sidled over to Miss Susanna, waving his plummy tail. He began a slow walk around her chair, keeping his luminous gray-green eyes fastened persistently upon her. Presently deciding that his mute plea was in vain he hopped up into her lap and settled himself upon it.

"Here comes General. Look out, Miss Susanna. He is more dangerous than Ruffle. He would as soon tip you out of that chair as not." Marjorie sent out this timely warning.

"Oh, I heard you." Mr. Dean had stepped briefly into the living room on his way to the street. "I can't stop to assert myself. Tomorrow I'll spend a Merry Christmas dumping usurpers out of my chair. Anyone found sitting in it will be eligible to dumping. All persons thus dumped must pick themselves up without the slightest assistance from me."

"Your hear that, Ruffle?" Robin Page laughingly reached forward and gently tweaked one of Ruffle's white whiskers.

"Tomorrow never comes," Marjorie said teasingly. "But, here's an unofficial order for you, General Dean;" she pointed a forceful finger at her father. "Pick up your detachment as soon as you can and hike for—you know where," she added with mischievous lights dancing in her brown eyes.

"Yes, Lieutenant," Mr. Dean saluted. "Never give your superior officer orders. Under the circumstances, however, I will overlook your lack of proper military respect."

"Thank you, General." Marjorie saluted with a great show of respect. Her parting injunction to her superior officer, delivered in the next breath was deplorably lacking in that particular military requisite. "You'd better overlook it and obey my order," she called after him as he left the room, laughing.

"Something is going on here besides a possible visit from Saint Nick," asserted Vera positively. "The air of mystery in this barrack has been growing ever since dinner. Why did Captain disappear so suddenly, right after dinner, without a word to anyone? And Delia went with her. They slid out the front door in such a rush!"

"It's Christmas Eve, you know." Marjorie made this trite explanation with great cheerfulness. "All sorts of remarkable things are likely to happen on Christmas Eve."

"Then the rest of the crowd must have been lost in this mysterious atmosphere," commented Leila with naive conviction. "It is eight o'clock, and not one of them here. I have my suspicions of you, Beauty. You are too full of mystery to be reliable. Who knows what dark Christmas contraption you have framed for the poor Lady of the Arms and three more of us?"

"Who knows but I?" Marjorie tantalized. "Oh, well; it wasn't so very long ago that I walked into a campus contraption all of you had set for me. Please don't forget to remember that."

The prolonged peal of the door bell sent her running on light feet to the door. A sound of soft voices and smothered giggles in the hall, then she and Muriel Harding entered the living room.

"What is it you know that you think so funny?" Leila began on Muriel. "I always supposed I knew more than you. It seems I do not."

"Of course you don't," Muriel was quick to assure. "You now see what conceited delusions you've cherished. For further delusions consult the stars."

"I should be ashamed to consult them about such foolishness." Leila's smiling urbanity matched Muriel's own bland assurance. "They might choose to rate me as a dummy."

"Both doors into the drawing room are locked." Robin Page now added to the case against

Lieutenant Dean. "I was going to charm you with an after-dinner Christmas carol and, bing! Robin was locked out."

Muriel and Marjorie treated Robin's plaintive announcement as a huge joke. They locked arms, sat down on the davenport exactly together with a frisky jounce and shed beaming effulgence on their companions.

"There has been a villain's convention somewhere," growled Leila in the deep rumble she called her "Celtic double-bass." "Speak, Lady of the Arms. Name the arch villain." She made a sudden melodramatic lunge toward Miss Susanna, who had been following the exchange of exuberant raillery in enjoying silence.

"Sh-h-h-h." Miss Susanna raised a small, cautioning hand. "I'm trying to be good. Don't break the spell."

Simultaneous with her warning came a new sound. It proceeded from the very window Marjorie had pointed out to Miss Susanna as a possible entrance for Santa Claus. The window was slowly rising, shoved upward by a pair of energetic arms. Came a flash of shiny black, cherry red and snowy white. Into the room bounced Santa Claus, resplendent in high black boots and long-coated scarlet suit. His rosy face was framed in the venerable whiteness of luxurious cotton locks. His flaming costume was also lavishly trimmed with the same useful cotton.

"Good evening, all," he piped in a high, cheerful voice. "I have come to find a little girl named Susie Hamilton. I am going to take her and her little playmates to the North Pole with me to spend Christmas Eve."

## CHAPTER XI.

107

### OFF TO THE NORTH POLE

The amazed hush that followed Santa Claus's hospitable declaration was lifted by a gleeful chuckle from Miss Susanna. With the appearance into the room of the fabled Kris Kringle she had hastily set Ruffle from her lap to the floor and risen to her feet. Ruffle placidly took advantage of the situation to gain the coveted chair.

Leila and Vera were hardly less diverted over the sight of Santa Claus than was the last of the Hamiltons. Neither of them knew home as Marjorie, Robin, Muriel and their intimates knew its fond meaning. Leila's Celtic love of the mystic, fanciful and fictional, had been shared by Vera during their years of comradeship at Hamilton College.

"I'm that little girl. I'm Susie Hamilton." Miss Susanna walked slowly toward Santa Claus with a droll assumption of shyness.

"You don't say so? How are you, Susie?" Santa gave the supposed little girl a gripping handshake. "I heard you had been very good. I hope these other little girls have." He turned very blue, very suspicious eyes upon Muriel, who merely beamed at him familiarly and inquired: "Where's your friend?"

108

"I see trouble ahead for one of these infants," remarked a voice from Santa's beard that sounded strangely like that of Jerry Macy. Immediately recovering his high-pitched voice Santa announced: "My friend, the King of the North Pole is outside. As my reindeer are all very busy tonight he is going to give me a lift."

The King of the North Pole evidently yearned for an introduction. A head covered with a peaked, close-fitting hood of glistening, glittering white, followed by a pair of broad shoulders, draped in the same glittering, frost-like material, appeared in the window frame. The reigning monarch of the North Pole, after a brief struggle in passage with a voluminous white cape, landed triumphantly among the admiring company.

A conspicuous bulge in the right side of his glittering cape disappeared as he drew forth a fluffy white worsted coat and held it open for Miss Susanna to slip on. Next moment he had picked her up, carried her across the room, swung her through the window and to her feet on the porch floor. Gathering his cape closely about him, he launched through the open frame after her. Again he caught her up, laughing and unresisting, and ran down the walk with her to where a little, old-fashioned cutter, painted bright red and with furry white lap robes awaited her. A large, mild-eyed white horse was harnessed to the cutter, his harness gay with scarlet ribbon rosettes. The King lifted Miss Susanna into the cutter, tucked the furs about her then stood looking laughingly down at her. Nor would he utter a sound. He merely waved a re-assuring hand toward Santa Claus, who had dashed out the front door and was now running down the walk at a kind of wild gallop.

109

"You're next," Santa shrieked over a plump shoulder at the knot of pursuing girls. Reaching the sleigh the juvenile patron saint made a lively leap into it beside Miss Susanna, gathered up the reins, clucked to the horse and whirled away with the Lady of the Arms.

"No time like the present." The King of the North Pole found his voice. "Either get into my chariot, or be bundled in," he threatened with smiles. The chariot had been parked behind the sleigh. It greatly resembled Jerry's limousine.

"I'm not ready to go to the North Pole, your Majesty," blithely petitioned Marjorie. "I haven't yet locked up my castle."

110

"Delia was at the back door when I came in the window. Want to be bundled in?" The King sent significant glances from the car to Marjorie and back again. He had already gallantly assisted the other girls into the limousine.

"No, indeed." Marjorie followed her companions into the back of the machine. There they found a collection of Jerry's wraps placed to meet the emergency. Marjorie smiled to herself as she draped a wide fleecy scarf over her silk-clad shoulders. As the King of the North Pole, Hal had the old, teasing school-boy manner she liked best in him. She hoped he would keep to it throughout her stay in Sanford.

It presently developed that the King of the North Pole had decided to move his icy domain over Christmas to the Macy's ball room. There it was that Santa also had his headquarters. Miss Susanna was whisked to the top of the Macy's big house in an elevator and escorted into the ball room, now festally decorated from end to end with fragrant balsam boughs, long trails of sturdy green ground pine and glossy-leaved flaming-berried holly. From the central electric chandelier depended a bunch of pearly mistletoe berries.

111

Santa Claus's eight reindeer had reached home ahead of their master. Jerry's four "dorms," Ronny's two, Lucy and Kathie, had chosen this detail. Their costumes had been planned for them by Jerry and carried out by Mrs. Dean and Mrs. Macy several days before the arrival at Sanford of the celebrated reindeer themselves. Their brown cotton flannel suits of bloomers and close-fitting knee coats, together with brown hose and sneakers were quite realistic when topped by brown cotton



flannel antlered hoods. The antlers were triumphs of pasteboard ingenuity. Their only drawback was their tendency to wobble at times, thereby giving their wearers an appearance of recklessness not attributed to the famous Santa Claus eight. Harnesses strung with little bells completed their costumes.

At the far end of the room in one corner stood an immense Christmas tree, resplendent with its glitter of gilt, silver and gorgeous-hued ornaments. At the foot of the tree was stacked a wealth of festively wrapped, ribbon-bound bundles. The eight reindeer escorted Santa Claus and Miss Susanna gaily up the hall to where a deep, garnet velvet Sleepy Hollow chair stood awaiting an occupant. She had hardly been established in it when the King of the North Pole and his party arrived.

112

"My reindeer will entertain you with a song and dance," Santa Claus piped up, when the first buzz of voices and echoing laughter had died out in the big room. "After that my fiddler will furnish music and we will all have a dance. I will lead with my little friend, Susie. Please don't all try to dance at once with the King of the North Pole."

"No one except Jeremiah Macy would offer such simple advice," Muriel pleasantly told the king himself. "Too bad you have no gentleman friends besides Santa Claus."

"Oh, but I have," was the king's cheering disclosure.

"Really?" Muriel showed deep interest. "Where do you keep them?"

"That's a secret." The king put on an aggravatingly wise expression. "There are lots of good hiding places at the North Pole."

"Just as I thought!" Muriel exclaimed in triumph. "I knew you and Jeremiah couldn't stay away from home all day at the picnic and do this decorating between dinner time and eight o'clock. You had help—h-e-l-p!"

"Certainly I had," the king admitted. "General and Captain were here and helped the Governor and Mother trim the tree. So did Delia. But they've gone home now to trim Marjorie's tree." He regarded Muriel with an innocent candor which the sparkle in his eyes contradicted.

113

"You can't fool me, Mister King of the North Pole Macy," she said as the eight reindeer trotted out upon the waxed floor to do their bit toward entertaining. Before they had time to begin their song Muriel's fingers flashed to her lips. Twice she sounded the sharp clear whistle which she and Jerry had long ago made Hal teach them how to blow on the fingers.

"Now you have done it!" The king laughed nevertheless as the ball room door swung open and a troop of joyfully grinning young men filed in, led by Danny Seabrooke. "Who told you the signal?" he demanded.

"I knew if Danny Seabrooke was within hearing of it, he'd come at that whistle. And he did," laughed Muriel. "You had Danny and his crowd tucked away in the garret next to the ball room."

"You should have seen them work after we brought the decorations up here from the wagon. We had only about an hour and a half for the job and I had to leave before it was finished and go with Jerry—Santa Claus, I should say." Hal exhibited boyish pride in the success of the decorating. "I'd have invited the fellows anyway, on my own say-so. Think Danny and I are crazy to be the only fellows in such an aggregation of girls?"

114

At sight of the troop of joyful intruders panic overtook two of the reindeer and they fled to the safety of Miss Susanna's protection. One of them was Lucy Warner, who was noted for her bashful fear of young men. The other was Neva Worden, an equally timid dormitory girl. Neither would consent to perform for the benefit of the newcomers. Jerry and Ronny, in giggling distraction over this unexpected hitch in the program finally posed them, one on either side of Miss Susanna's chair, ostensibly as ornaments, while their six unabashed companions sang a jolly English roundelay, at the same time executing a lively little dance around the Lady of the Arms, waving their antlers and jingling their bells.

Phil, as the fiddler, presently came forward to play for the dance Santa Claus had graciously announced. Her usual picturesque style was intensified by a costume consisting of baggy black velvet knickers, a velvet coat of forest green with a skull cap to match. Her white cotton blouse fell away from her firm white throat in a wide rolling collar. Two peacock feathers were thrust through her cap. Black stockings and brown suede sandals lent the last touch of the artistic unusual to her. Her violin swung from her shoulder on a broad green ribbon. Her bright loosened hair under her tiny cap gave her a thoroughly Bohemian appearance.

115

Tucking her violin under her chin she drew forth the familiar marshalling strains of the Virginia reel. She raised her head a little from her violin and laughed softly as her quick ear caught the sound of another violin besides her own. As she continued to play a slim black-eyed boy with a shock of heavy black hair thrown off his forehead came forward from where he had been concealed behind the Christmas tree. Under his chin was a violin. He was playing the old reel in perfect time with Phil. This was her introduction to Charlie Stevens, now a "big" boy and qualified to play in "a big band."

Miss Susanna and Santa Claus led off in the reel. The King of the North Pole followed with tiny Vera. Leila accepted Danny Seabrooke as a partner and Robin fell to Miles Burton. Ronny danced it with Mr. Macy, who had come up to "see the fun," and Mrs. Macy danced with Harry Lenox. The rest of the girls paired off with the remainder of Hal's delegation of Sanford boys, and the house rang with the laughter and cheer of the occasion.

116

Marjorie's partner chanced to be Danny Seabrooke's brother Donald, a junior at Weston High. As she stood between Leila and Barbara Severn in the merry line of girls awaiting her turn to dance she was reminded of the changes that had taken place since the first time she had danced a Virginia reel in the Macy's ball room. She sorely missed Connie and Laurie. This was the second Christmas Eve without them. She recalled how she and Laurie and Connie had worked to make a happy Christmas for little Charlie when first she had known Connie and him. Now here was Charlie, a tall, sturdy boy, with not many years between him and manhood.

Three girls were missing tonight from the old happy sextette. Connie, Irma and Susan Atwell. Connie was far away across the ocean. Irma was visiting her aunt in New York and buying her trousseau. The Atwells had moved to San Francisco. Harriet Delaney, the seventh chum the sextette had invited into their close little band, had made a successful New York debut in grand opera. Mary Raymond, her first chum, had long been in distant Colorado. And Mary was going to be married!

They were all dearer to her than ever, she reflected. A warmth of fresh affection for her absent friends surged up in her heart. Followed a sense of tender exultation as she looked up and down the rows of gay, valuable dancers. How very rich in present friends she was! Present and absent, they were all hers; to have and to hold. Surely love, the love of which Hal had wistfully talked to her, could not be more wonderful than friendship.

117

Involuntarily her eyes strayed to Hal, vividly, romantically handsome in his sparkling white regalia of the frozen zone. "He looks like the hero of a Norse myth," was her thought. "When we go back to Hamilton, I'm going to ask Leila to write a Norse play and call it—" Marjorie deliberated. Her gaze continued to rest un sentimentally on Hal as he stood at the foot of the line, exchanging humorous sallies with the two fiddlers. "The Knight of the Northern Sun," she decided inspirationally. "Gussie Forbes can play the part of the knight. Her shoulders are almost as broad as Hal's."

Occupied with the fun of the moment, Hal failed to note the admiring, concentrated gaze of the sparkling brown eyes he loved best. He had resolutely steeled himself to play the part for which Marjorie had cast him in the drama of life—that of devoted friend. Nor did Marjorie dream that in visualizing Hal as a magnificent Norse knight she had challenged a romantic side of her nature of which she had not believed herself possessed.

118

## CHAPTER XII.

119

### CHRISTMAS AT CASTLE DEAN

“Have peace my lambs on Christmas Day,  
The white light shines across the way.  
The angelkind look down and sing  
Upon the little new-born King.  
The manger’s straw—a sorry bed  
For Him to lay His baby head;  
Yet, sweet, my lambs, the light streamed free  
Across man’s lost eternity.”

Miss Susanna awoke on Christmas morning with the sound of fresh, young, tuneful voices in her delighted ears. Her door stood half open which explained why she could understand so clearly the quaint words of the old Irish carol which floated up to her on an harmonic tide from downstairs.

She was so raptly engaged in listening she neither heard Marjorie’s light step or saw her witching face framed for a brief second in the half-open doorway. Marjorie gleefully tiptoed down stairs to report the awakening of the Lady of the Arms.

120

“Let us sing Brooke Hamilton’s favorite, ‘God rest you merry, gentlemen,’ though it is one merry little lady who will get no more rest in bed this day,” Leila said drolly, after hearing Marjorie’s report.

“You should have seen her! She was sitting straight up in bed, looking so happy, and as though she was loving the music. After we sing this carol, I’ll take her breakfast up to her. After breakfast we’ll escort her downstairs to see our tree and—”

“You can’t lose me,” remarked a matter-of-fact voice from the doorway. Miss Susanna trotted toward the group at the piano, looking smaller than ever in her warm, blue eider down dressing gown.

“So we notice,” laughed Vera.

“And I notice you have been booning, as the Irish say, with Jeremiah Macy,” was Leila’s sly comment. “Such slang!”

“Something like that,” impishly returned Miss Susanna. She showed marked enjoyment of her own lapse into slang.

“What is your pleasure first, Lady of the Arms?” Marjorie inquired, as she led Miss Susanna to a brocade chaise lounge, the nearest seat to a gorgeous heavily-laden Christmas tree.

“Sing me his favorite carol.” Miss Susanna gently tweaked one of Marjorie’s brown curls. To please the girls she had allowed her curls to hang, decorated by a pale pink satin topknot bow, which matched her pale pink negligee.

121

“With pleasure.” Marjorie dropped a light kiss on the old lady’s hand, then joined the group at the piano. Robin instantly touched the light opening strains and started the stately English carol.

They sang it as they had sung it many times before with all the expression and animation of youth for its old-world charm. When they had finished Robin slipped from the piano stool with: “No more carols after that for a while. *N’est ce pas*, Miss Susanna.”

“*Oui*,” responded the last of the Hamiltons absently. She glanced immediately at Robin, however, with her quick bright smile. “I will tell you some day why it was his favorite carol,” she said. “Not today. It is too sad a story for today. I wish only to be happy while I am at Castle Dean.”

“And you’re going to be. The next happiness today will be breakfast. You upset Captain’s and my plan to serve it to you in bed. And the next happiness after that will be our Christmas tree.” Marjorie caught Miss Susanna’s hands and pulled her to her feet with a frisky show of energy. She placed light hands on the old lady’s shoulders and marched her ahead to the dining room.

122

Miss Hamilton was the only late breakfaster, the girls having been up and stirring early. Each had had a mysterious visit to the drawing room tree to make, there to deposit under its spreading branches her own consignment of holiday bundles. Miss Susanna’s consignment had been turned over to Captain Dean with due secrecy, shortly after her arrival at Castle Dean.

Her bodyguard trailed faithfully in her wake to the dining room there to supplement the breakfast they had already eaten with sticky cinnamon buns and coffee. “Not because we are stuffers,” Robin carefully exonerated; “merely to keep you company, Miss Susanna.”

Afterward they went upstairs in leisurely fashion to dress for the day. It was to be “a regular dress parade,” each girl having brought with her from Hamilton what she considered her prettiest afternoon gown. General Dean had ordered assembly in the drawing room at eleven o’clock sharp. He had placed conspicuously in the hall a large notice which stated:

"The Army is hereby ordered to appear in the assembly room of the barrack at eleven o'clock A.M. in full dress uniform. Any one appearing in forage cap, sweater, boudoir cap or goloshes will be severely disciplined. No carrying of canes, bumbershoots or other civil impedimenta will be tolerated. Tardiness and failure to comply with orders will be punished by loss of presents. Forfeited presents will be confiscated by General Dean as chief nabbing officer of the day. Signed. GENERAL DEAN."

The worthy general himself presently appeared and took a determined stand in the hall where he could keep an eye on matters. Frequent ringing of the door bell kept him occupied in hustling to the door. Before long he had admitted Lucy, Kathie, Ronny, Jerry, Helen, Hal, Charlie Stevens and Muriel.

Upstairs Miss Susanna and the four girls wondered as they completed their Christmas toilettes what was the occasion for the treble shrieks of mirth which invariably followed the opening of the heavy front door.

"What is that ridiculous general of yours up to now, I wonder?" Miss Susanna said to Marjorie and her mother, who had come into the old lady's room to admire her in the beauty of an imported gown of wisteria satin, paneled and further embellished with rose-patterned deep natural silk lace.

"Let's find out this minute. Come, my fair lady in silk and lace." Marjorie crooked her arm invitingly to Miss Hamilton. "Ready, girls?" she called back, as the two began a buoyant descent of the stairs, with Captain, smiling indulgently, in their wake.

"Te, he, he," Miss Susanna's own special chuckle was heard as she caught sight of General Dean.

The high executive of military maneuvers of the Dean Barrack had obeyed his own order to appear in full dress. He wore a pair of leaf green trousers and a scarlet uniform coat heavily trimmed with gilt braid. On his head perched a bright green fez with a long scarlet plume curving around it and far down on one shoulder. Added to the plume a sprig of holly had been neatly fastened on the front of the fez.

"I see nothing to laugh at," he sternly reprimanded the mirthful trio on the stairs. "I am giving what I consider a faithful representation of the holiday spirit."

"You look like a chocolate nut nightmare," Lieutenant Dean disrespectfully compared.

"I never saw one, so how can I possibly know how I look."

"A two-pound ration of chocolate nuts eaten before Taps will introduce you to one," retorted the lieutenant.

"Two hours in the guard house for disrespect to a superior officer," penalized General Dean. "Forward march. Don't block the highway. Discipline must be preserved in the Army. Three at the head of the stairs—quick time, March," he rumbled as he spied Leila, Vera and Robin about to descend.

Miss Hamilton's entrance into the drawing room was the signal for a chorus of Christmas greetings from the lively company now in possession of the apartment. Jerry led her under the mistletoe bough, which decorated the top of the indirect dome, and kissed her on both cheeks. The others followed her example.

"What have you done with your guests?" she demanded of her affectionate callers. "I am surprised at you for running away from them! What must they think of you?" She drew down her small features in exaggerated disapproval. Her bright, bird-like eyes wandered from one to another of the frolicsome group. She read pleasant, suppressed excitement in every face. She innocently attributed the cause of the mysterious, smiling air of the callers to a probable delightful conspiracy on their part against General and Captain Dean. She did not stop to consider herself. She was of the grateful opinion that she had been already surfeited with generous, loving attention.

"We have to obey orders." Lucy Warner volunteered this over-solemn information. "Obedience is a soldier's first duty," she quoted tritely.

"When the bugle calls, et cetera, et cetera, you know," Jerry helped the old saw along. She waved a plump hand by way of furthering her vague explanation.

"I never heard a bugle call et cetera, et cetera," General Dean remarked in interested wonder. "I shall investigate the matter as soon as I am off duty."

"I'll help you," offered Miss Susanna, to the open and pronounced glee of the high executive officer. "Such a phenomenon should be investigated."

"We may need the services of these two civilians," General Dean airily indicated Hal and Charlie Stevens. "Let me see. What was it we were going to investigate? I have so many important matters on my mind, I—" He grew cheerfully apologetic.

"Don't try to implicate us," warned Hal.

"Please, sir, we're only a couple of Christmas strays," Charlie Stevens rolled humorous black eyes at Mr. Dean. He was still the droll youngster of early childhood days, but now coming into a boyish appreciation of the spirit of humor which always prevailed in the little circle of young folks unconsciously dominated by Marjorie's friendly ways.

"Sh-h-h! I know it." The General whispered loudly to Charlie behind his hand. "I hadn't intended to mention it." He elevated his heavy eyebrows to an alarming degree. "Since you've given yourself and your partner away you'd best try to become social successes."

"Much obliged, old top." Hal indecorously lifted the General's Christmas fez from his head, then jammed it down again on the presiding officer's crown. "I'm going to offer the season's greetings to my little lavender Lady." He and Charlie at once began to pay extravagant court to Miss Susanna.

General Dean continued to buzz about among the congenial little throng with a great deal of loud remark concerning "the promoting of good behavior in the Army." At length he succeeded in seating the animated, festive detachment to his liking. He assigned Miss Susanna to the center of the gold brocade chaise lounge and ranged Marjorie and Leila on each side of her. The others he ordered into an open group about the golden dais. Finally he appeared satisfied. He crossed the room to the gift tree at a magnificent military strut:

"Attention," he boomed in a voice so stentorian it set the chattering formation to laughing.

In spite of laughter the Army obeyed the command with gratifying promptness. They stood up, saluted; remained standing. Every pair of bright eyes was fixed on General Dean. Only one pair, however, betrayed curious speculation. Their owner had suddenly become canny. Miss Susanna decided the conspiracy was not against Mr. Dean, since he appeared to head it. Captain looked as though she knew all about it, too. The old lady concluded with affectionate vexation that it must be against herself.

General Dean had returned the salute. While the Army still remained at standing he went over to the Christmas tree and took from it a large, oval, canvas-wrapped object. He loosened the canvas wrapping, but did not remove it. Then he came forward with it and took up a position still well away from Miss Hamilton, but exactly opposite her.

As he faced the sturdy little figure in the chaise lounge his levity dropped from him. "Miss Susanna, the Eleven Travelers wish you a very merry Christmas," he said, his tone impressive in its pleasant sincerity. "They have traveled far and wide in the country of College to find a fitting expression of their love for you. They now feel sure they have found the one thing under the sun which will please you most."

A sudden swift movement of one hand and the enveloping canvas fell from the oval, plain gold setting of a portrait. Life size and wonderful from out of the oval frame smiled a lovely, familiar face. There was a life-like quality about the portrait of the beautiful girl in the violet-shaded evening frock, with the huge bunch of purple English violets pinned to the waist of her gown. It was so utterly natural as to wring a sharp emotional little "Ah-h-h!" from Miss Susanna. It claimed a united breath of admiration from the others as well.

"I'm going to—to—cry, Marvelous Manager," quavered Miss Susanna. "I don't—want—to—"

"Cry right on Marjorie's shoulder." Marjorie cuddled the old lady's head against her breast. "Only I'd rather you laugh."

"I shall weep myself. Now I know why General set me foreinst Miss Susanna," Leila grew unduly Irish. "Now for my tears, and I know I can weep the loudest." She sent out a sudden melancholy banshee wail that raised a shout from the Army and sent Miss Susanna into wild, hysterical mirth.

"Start something jolly and keep it going," counseled Jerry of the other girls. "We won't give her a minute's chance to be sad and splashy over beloved Bean's beloved portrait."

She stretched out a hand to Ronny, who took it and offered Muriel her free one. Next minute she had gathered up Mrs. Dean, Helen, Lucy, Robin and Kathie. They took hands and pranced about in front of the chaise lounge. Jerry led them vocally, loudly and a trifle off key with: "Come choose your east; come choose your west. These are the three we all love best." The dancers were soon singing it at top voice.

General Dean, not to be outdone, hospitably formed another prancing little circle with Hal, Charlie and Delia, which gyrated so rapidly despite Delia's giggling protests, and executed such quaint pas-seuls as to turn what might have been a tearful moment into one of wild hilarity.

"No, I couldn't cry to save me," Miss Hamilton presently declared. "I'm glad of it. I hate tears as much as a man hates to see them. I shall love my violet girl every day in the year, and hang her in my room where I can see her first thing in the morning; last thing at night. It is a magnificent study, child. Who painted it? When did you ever have time to sit for it?" The old lady showed decided curiosity upon this point.

"I posed for it at the beach last summer, Miss Susanna. The Travelers thought you might like it best of anything we could choose. It was Leila's idea. We planned it at Commencement. Raoul Verlaine, a friend of the General's, painted it. He is famed for portraits. He was in Sanford after I came back from Hamilton in the late summer. I gave him the last sittings then. That's all." Marjorie paused, overtaken by the sense of embarrassment which visited her whenever she stopped to realize that she had figured as the central object in the affair.

Placed upon a light easel which had held the portrait since completion, the party of friends gathered around it to admire afresh both the work and subject. Marjorie, overwhelmed by her own importance, left Miss Susanna's side and slipped from the room. She went into the living room, and, standing at a window, looked out happily. She was glad to forget herself in a rapt contemplation of the wide snow-covered lawn, the tall bare trees, the deserted pagoda; all her treasures of home. She thought Miss Susanna could not love Hamilton Arms better than she loved her own Castle Dean.

Reminded that the tree was yet to be stripped of its Christmas bloom, she turned from the window to go back to the merry, buzzing company in the drawing room. She slipped back into the room as quietly as she had left it. General was calling for attention and making ready to bestir himself as a kind of military Santa Claus.

On the way across the room to her father, who was standing near the tree, Marjorie's eyes came to rest on Hal. He and Charlie Stevens were standing back from the portrait in an interested viewing of it. Charlie was talking animatedly and gesturing like a foreigner. Hal was listening with apparent gravity. In his face, as he viewed the portrait, was an expression of repression that cut Marjorie to the heart. It was the look of a man, smiling under torture. She came into a new and depressing understanding of the depth of Hal's love for her.

## CHAPTER XIV.

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### THE PURSUIT OF PLEASURE

Muriel Harding had gone home on the Christmas vacation more puzzled than hurt over Doris Monroe's sudden swerve from affability to hostility. It was not in Muriel's easy-going nature to trouble long over anything, no matter how serious.

Since Marjorie had wished her to invite Doris to go with them to Sanford she had promptly acquainted her chum with "the Ice Queen's return to the glacial period." When Marjorie had perplexedly questioned "Why?" Muriel had replied with good-natured impatience: "Why does it rain? Because it does? Why is the Ice Queen? Because she is."

During the last two or three busy days before vacation claimed them Doris and Muriel had employed monosyllables in addressing each other. Of the two Doris was the more greatly disturbed over the strained relations she had brought about. She had more real liking for Muriel than for any other student on the campus. Underneath her cold, indifferent exterior she had a critical appreciation of Muriel's quick wit and extreme cleverness. The majority of the students whom she graciously allowed to admire her she took small interest in. Her approach and Muriel's toward mutual friendliness had been very slow. It had progressed, however, in spite of the groundless dislike she persisted in holding against Muriel's intimates.

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She had gone furiously out of the Hall to mail the letter to Leslie Cairns vowing that she would never speak to Muriel again. Her tempestuous resolve was not so much the result of anger as of wounded pride. What a poor opinion Muriel Harding must have of her had been her chagrined thought as she crossed the campus to the mail box. Muriel had invited those wretched, beggarly off-campus students to her home first. *She* had only served Muriel as a last resort. Besides Muriel had discussed her with Marjorie Dean; no doubt had belittled her. Miss Dean had chosen to regard her as a welfare problem. Very likely Miss Dean was jealous of her because she had won the Beauty contest.

Though Doris did not suspect it the full-grown soul she possessed was awakening and beginning to clamor for attention. The true depths of her nature were trying to rise and overflow her more superficial side. Selfish indifference alone was the barrier that stood between her and a fuller, freer, happier college life.

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She had found the admiration she had been accorded, first at the old-time hop, later at the Beauty contest, far more satisfying than merely being trotted about the campus by over-fond freshies as a "crush." There had been a spirit of fun and frolic about both social affairs which had appealed to her girlish imagination. She was only eighteen and in spite of her bored, sophisticated air rather childish at heart.

For this very reason she had never really approved of Leslie Cairns or her unscrupulous, high-handed methods. She had been a little dazzled at first by Leslie's expensive clothes, lavish expenditures of money and apparently boundless liberty. At the time when Leslie had offered her the use of the white car she had named the Dazzler, Doris had felt some degree of liking for the ex-student of Hamilton. She had more reluctantly accepted the gift of the smart white costume and furs which Leslie had insisted upon giving her. She had demurred even more strongly against allowing Leslie to open an account for her at the Hamilton Reserve Bank. Leslie had over-ruled her in the matter and had deposited in the bank five hundred dollars to the account of Doris Monroe. She had assured Doris that she regarded the transaction as "a business proposition."

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Her chief argument had invariably been: "Make yourself popular on the campus and it will be worth a lot more to me than a few dollars, togs or buzz-wagons. I need you to keep me posted as to what goes on at the knowledge shop. Leave Bean and her Beanstalks alone, though. When I need news of them you can get it in a roundabout way. I'll help you, and I'll expect you to help me—when I need you."

Just what Leslie meant by frequent covert allusions to a future day when she would need Doris's help was something Doris occasionally pondered. She had firmly refused to interest herself in the tentative proposal Leslie had once made that certain anonymous letters should be written and sent to Marjorie Dean. Since that occasion Leslie had never suggested any other unscrupulous work for Doris to do.

While Doris accepted dinner and luncheons from Leslie and allowed Leslie to pay for the upkeep of the Dazzler, she was wary about spending Leslie's money. She knew her father would be righteously enraged with her for accepting a penny from either stranger or friend. Her own allowance was a comfortable one for a girl of her age. The money she saved by sharing her room with Muriel also augmented it. She had a very fair wardrobe and had therefore done no shopping in particular since entering Hamilton. She developed no crushes. Consequently she did not spend much money. She was not mean or stingy in this respect. She was too selfishly indifferent and too indifferently selfish to care to give pleasure to others. Her beauty had always demanded for her, and met no denial.

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Since she had come to Hamilton College she had cherished two ambitions. The first had been



toward popularity. The second was to achieve a trip to New York City. Popularity, because of her beauty, had quickly found her. The trip to New York had not been so easy of fulfillment. She had hoped to go to New York with Leslie at Thanksgiving. Leslie had disappointed her. More, she had utterly discouraged the idea when Doris had defiantly asserted that she would visit the metropolis alone. Leslie's half sincere promise to show Doris about New York during the Christmas vacation was one on which Doris had fondly built. Her anger, on hearing from Leslie that she did not intend to fulfill the promise, had been so scathing as to cause Leslie to reconsider and try to make peace with wrathful "Goldie."

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Muriel's invitation had been offered at the psychological moment in Doris's affairs. The step in the right direction which she had planned to take would have wrought an admirable change in her before the dawn of New Years. Instead Doris had received a call from Julia Peyton which had completely uprooted her healthily growing good will toward Muriel and again thrown her upon the society of Leslie Cairns for amusement.

Leslie had received Doris's note with a silent hobgoblin laugh and a contemptuous: "Pouf; I thought she wouldn't stay peeved." Deciding to keep the sophomore in suspense she had not answered the note until the very last moment. It had reached Doris on the morning of the day when college closed for the holidays, leaving her barely time to pack a trunk and arrange her affairs. Long since determined on the New York trip at some time or other, Leslie or no Leslie, Doris had saved a certain sum each month from her allowance. She had not therefore drawn on the account in Hamilton bank for the trip, nor did she intend to do so. The very sight of the bank book in the top drawer of her chiffonier gave her a feeling of uneasiness. At the time when she had burst upon the campus in her white suit, furs and shining white car she had used in the neighborhood of seventy-five dollars of the sum in bank to her credit. Since then she and Leslie had quarreled and bickered so much she wished she had never used a cent of the five hundred. She planned to return it from her own income after the trip to New York was over.

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"I wish you had let me know sooner what you intended to do," had been Leslie's grumbling words to Doris as the two met at the Hamilton station. On receipt of Leslie's belated note Doris had obeyed its instructions to call Leslie on the telephone at the Hamilton House. Over the telephone the trip had been hurriedly arranged.

"Why didn't you let me know?" had been the ruffled sophomore's strongly emphasized question. "You could have answered my note sooner than you did."

"You should have written me long before you did." Leslie's emphasis had been stronger and more displeased than had Doris's. "I told you before you left me at the Colonial that I would go to New York. You never said a word. It's your own fault, Goldie, that you had to rush around like mad at the last minute."

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Such had been the discordant basis upon which the two girls had met at a time when all the world of light and love was pleading for "Peace on earth, good will toward men." Once they had settled down in the train for the journey they had grown a trifle more amiable. They were both too fond of pleasure not to look forward to a two weeks' stay in New York. Leslie had soon miraculously recovered her good humor and had proceeded to lay out a program of amusements for the first week of their stay in the metropolis. She had decided privately to "ship Goldie back to the campus the day after New Years." That would leave her a few brief days in New York alone to go about her own affairs. Time was flying. She had difficult and important work to do which must be done soon.

She planned to humor Doris to a round of holiday gaieties. They would dine and lunch at the smartest restaurants and tea rooms. They would occupy box seats at the theatres, and at the opera. Leslie even considered introducing Doris to Natalie Weyman. That would mean an entree for Doris into New York's most exclusive younger set. Her objection to this proposal was that Nat was "such a snip when she was jealous." Of course she would be jealous of Doris. She was capable of "snubbing Doris off the face of the earth." That would mean Doris in a towering rage again.

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Leslie was not anxious to arouse a fresh spirit of antagonism in Doris. The self-willed sophomore was her only reliable source of campus information. Besides, Doris was more truthful than the majority of girls with whom she had chummed. She had also the virtue of silence. Goldie could be trusted not to "tell everything she knew, and a lot she didn't know, to the mob." Like the majority of untruthful persons, Leslie was quick to note and appreciate truth in someone else. Again, she did not fancy losing the companionship of the one girl intimate she had at Hamilton. She had spent time, patience, effort and money in cultivating Doris's friendship. She did not propose to be a loser.

Beyond the usual brief letter which Leslie had received every Monday morning from Mrs. Gaylord, her obligingly absent chaperon might as well have been a myth. Since Leslie had settled down for a protracted stay in Hamilton, and at the Hamilton House, Mrs. Gaylord had spent an enjoyable period of visiting her relatives and friends. Leslie demanded a weekly letter from the chaperon. She answered it only as she felt inclined. It had been earlier arranged between them that, should anything of moment occur suddenly of an adverse nature to either, the other was to be immediately notified by telegram.

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The one contingency which both feared was the sudden wrathful interference of Peter Cairns. Such a calamity must be shrewdly guarded against. Neither was desirous of giving up an arrangement which suited both so admirably. They had prepared a telegram against the emergency. It was: "Hamilton House Central." It signified that they were to meet in Hamilton at the Hamilton House as soon as possible.

On the Sunday before Christmas Leslie had seen fit to write Mrs. Gaylord at Greenwold, where she was visiting a friend, informing her of the proposed trip to New York.

"Now don't think you have to drop everything and hit up a pace for New York," she had written with slang insolence. She had stopped to snicker after setting down thus much as she pictured plump, dignified Mrs. Gaylord proceeding on foot toward the metropolis at racing speed. "My sophy pal, Miss Monroe, and I, will stay at the Essenden. It's exclusive enough to suit even P. G. He'll never know we're there, so you should fidget. I shan't look up Nat. Deliver me from soreheads like her. At least she would be one, if she saw me with a new chum. That will cut out the society part, so don't throw a scare over that. I think the grand old grump is out of town. Since he can't see me in the family circle I'd rather he'd sail across the pond and disappear for a while. I heard he was going to London soon. Don't know. I'll write you from New York. Do as I say, and stay where you are, unless we have to telegraph. Get me? L."

Although Leslie had put the pertinent proviso, "unless we have to telegraph," in her letter to Mrs. Gaylord she did not anticipate any such contingency. She had a comfortable conviction that her father was probably too deep in his own affairs to think of her. Mrs. Gaylord had not heard from him. She was sure of that. Her chaperon had had instructions, in case Mr. Cairns were to write her, to inform Leslie of this by the statement: "X equals the unknown quantity." Safeguarded by what Leslie chose to consider her own great cleverness, she felt herself a match for even her financier father.

## CHAPTER XV.

145

### "I USED TO KNOW HIM"

Quite the contrary, Mrs. Gaylord did not share Leslie's optimism. She received Leslie's characteristic letter with lively misgivings. She knew she had no right to accept a handsome salary from Peter Cairns for chaperoning his daughter without living up to the position to the letter. Prodding conscience jarringly informed her that she had abused and was now abusing the financier's confidence in her. Should he discover the fact he was more than likely to dismiss her and make it hard for her to find another such position.

She had intended to return to Leslie at Hamilton directly after the holidays, there to remain. She had been growing daily more and more uneasy for fear Peter Cairns might have discovered her delinquency. Continued silence on his part seemed an assurance that she had not been under a surveillance ordered by him. She knew that he might resort to such methods. He had engaged her privately to watch Leslie after Leslie had engaged her as a chaperon. He was quite likely to keep in close touch with her comings and goings.

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She thought it very rash and inconsiderate in Leslie to go to New York with "one of those reckless, hair-brained students" for company instead of asking her to go. Mrs. Gaylord had no great fondness for girls. Of the Hamilton students she had met only Lillian Walbert, Alida Burton and Lola Elster; not a representative trio of Hamilton girls. She frowningly wondered who Miss Monroe was. She had not been in Hamilton enough during the fall and winter to meet Doris. She was now doubly vexed because she was fond of New York. Much as she enjoyed visiting among her small town friends she liked better the life and stir of the great eastern city.

She at once wrote Leslie an indignant letter expressing her displeasure at Leslie's new move and accusing her of taking an undue advantage of her leniency. She was not sanguine that Leslie would receive the letter before she started for New York. She supposed it would have small effect upon her if she should receive it. She knew that Leslie would be furious with her if she took it upon herself to go to New York and resume her duties of chaperon when they were not welcome.

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Mrs. Gaylord had met Leslie's father, Peter Cairns, only once. He had sent for her to come to his New York offices not long after Leslie had engaged her as chaperon. She had walked through a maze of shining mahogany furnished offices to one behind the rest, plain and almost bare in its austerity. There she had talked with the great financier, a tall, broad-shouldered, gray-eyed man with a stern mouth and a thatch of black hair tossed off his forehead. He had said very little to her, but she had understood precisely what he expected of her. She had left the office feeling decidedly in awe of him. She discovered afterward that was the only vivid recollection she had of him.

Mrs. Gaylord resignedly resolved to make the best of the annoying situation and return to Leslie as soon as her lawless charge should return to Hamilton. She could only hope Leslie would not stay in New York beyond New Years. What a selfish girl Leslie was! She had not even wished her a Merry Christmas. Suppose Leslie were to run across her father in New York, and Mr. Cairns should inquire for her? Mrs. Gaylord felt a kind of chill go up and down her spine each time that particularly unpleasant supposition occurred to her mind. There was only one grain of comfort. Leslie would not let him know the true circumstances if she could help it. It would be to her own interest to protect those of her chaperon.

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The day after Christmas Mrs. Gaylord received a letter which threw her into a panic of despair. It was a three-line letter from Peter Cairns, in his own black, jagged handwriting, ordering her to join his daughter, Leslie, in New York, immediately. He had also furnished her with Leslie's address at the Essenden, the exclusive apartment hotel at which Leslie and Doris were registered as guests.

The uncompromising brevity of the letter was dismaying in itself. Not a word more than was necessary to convey the order had been employed. It contained neither address nor date. The envelope bore a New York postmark. She assumed that it had been written in New York. She had the office address of the financier. He had given it to her with the injunction that any letter which she might feel called upon to write him should be sealed and marked: "Personal, by order of Peter Cairns." She resolved to write him, explaining matters. She soon found she could summon no satisfactory explanation of her absence from Leslie. The financier had engaged her to watch over his daughter; not allow her to do as she chose, regardless of convention.

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Mrs. Gaylord arrived in New York and at the Essenden on the evening after the receipt of Peter Cairns' curt message. She was tired and cross after her long journey and resentfully ready to tell Leslie a few plain truths. Her one consoling thought was that Leslie had had the good judgment to register for herself and companion at the Essenden. It was at least above the criticism of even Peter Cairns.

Leslie had taken Doris to dine at the Luxe-Garins, a vast marble pile of a hotel which New York boasted as its latest triumph in hostelry. The two girls had sallied forth to dinner in a hotel taxicab much to Leslie's disapproval. "There are a dozen cars in our garage at the town house, and we own enough others scattered about this burg," she had said with snappish resentment. "Just because my father—" She had stopped abruptly, recollecting in time that Doris knew nothing of her

estrangement from her father.

Doris, lovely in her crystal-beaded white frock, which was Parisian, had attracted more attention at dinner than any other woman in the room. She seemed in truth a dazzling fairy-tale princess with Leslie opposite her as a wicked wizard. Leslie had chosen to wear a white velvet gown, banded with black velvet and fur. It had a beaded, oddly-cut bodice and was bizarre in effect. It lent her a dark, sinister appearance which Doris's white beauty made more noticeable. 150

The two girls had so much enjoyed the flattering notice their presence in the luxurious restaurant had created they dawdled over their dinner until it was too late to go to the theatre. Both would have liked to join the dancers on the perfectly polished floor, but knew no one. Leslie had an odd excess of family pride quite at variance with the rest of her lawless nature. She could always be trusted never to form acquaintances whose social standing she did not know. When they had finished their demi-tasse she marched Doris from the restaurant like an attendant dragon without so much as a glance at more than one plainly admiring young man. Leslie cared nothing whatever about either sentiment or young men. What she had enjoyed was the little stir Doris's golden beauty had created.

"Tomorrow, Goldie, we'll go to luncheon at the Gilbraithe. It's a wonder of an eat shop. It's the spiffiest tea room I know in New York."

Leslie made the announcement as they stepped from the walk into the waiting taxicab. She had engaged a car from the Essenden for the evening and had planned a ride up Fifth Avenue by way of showing Doris a glimpse of the great city after dark. 151

"We'll never get clear of that string of hay carts," she predicted, motioning her head in the direction of the waiting line of automobiles. At the corner above, where the line began, the starter was working diligently to put the line in motion.

Doris merely glanced at her and again turned eager eyes to the street. They sparkled with pleasure as she took in the beautiful main entrance of the white marble hotel at her leisure.

"Ah, on the move at last." Leslie gave a kind of satisfied growl as she felt the taxicab begin to move. It started, then came to a quick jarring stop. The starter shouted out a sharp order. It mingled with the chugging purr of the engine and the voice of the taxi driver, raised to an incensed yell at some progress-impeding object.

With her usual impatience Leslie jerked open the nearest door of the machine. She was too much of a motorist not to investigate. Her driver's start had been blocked by a car which had been parked in front of it. The driver of the other car had boldly attempted to get under way first. She bent forward and leaned far out of the open doorway to see what was going on. The starter and her driver had united in abusing "that fresh boob." She grinned sardonically as her driver flung a last word or two at the disappearing car. With a sharp, surprised "What?" she suddenly dodged back and into the sheltering darkness of the tonneau. 152

From the ornamental main entrance of the Luxe-Garins she had spied a man emerging. He stood before the great entrance doors briskly turning up the collar of his brown fur motor coat and pulling a brown fur cap down over his head as though preparing for a high-speed spin. He was a tall man, broad-shouldered, with gray eyes and a stern mouth.

From the dim cavern of the tonneau Leslie peered out at him with a curious, reverend timidity. She was careful to keep the ermine collar of her evening wrap well up about her face. So her father was in New York instead of Europe. Leslie watched him, her dark features lighting to wistful admiration. How she wished she dared open the door of the car and call out to him! No; that could not be. There was only one way to bring back his love for her. That way was to work and win it. She drew an audible sighing breath.

"What is the matter, Leslie?" Doris had heard her companion's surprised exclamation. Now she heard the sigh. 153

"Oh, nothing," Leslie affected carelessness of tone. Her gaze was still on her father. She kept hungry eyes riveted on him as he left the hotel entrance, swung down the broad stone walk and out of her sight. "Did you notice a man standing in front of the hotel with a brown fur coat and cap?" She forced a casual question.

"No; I didn't. I didn't notice anyone. I was thinking about whether I liked New York better than London. Of course I could never like it as well as Paris. It is a wonderful city though," Doris said honestly. "I wish we knew some interesting men here like the explorers my father knows. He and I often have had luncheon and dinner with Jacques Fandor, the great French explorer. Do you know the man you asked me about, Leslie?" she added with intent to be polite.

Leslie did not reply at once. She hesitated for a moment then said in an odd, repressed tone: "I think I used to know him."

## CHAPTER XVI.

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### ONLY OBEYING ORDERS

"Will you kindly tell me why you are here?" Leslie Cairns surveyed her chaperon, Mrs. Gaylord, with an anything but welcoming face. "Didn't you understand my letter? It was written in English. At least, I thought I wrote English." Leslie used sarcastic emphasis.

"Yes, Leslie, your letter was in English, I suppose your rude slang might be classed as English." The chaperon's voice was bitingly dry. Her florid, usually placid features were stiff with resentment of Leslie's cavalier manner. "You took advantage of me in a most unfair way. Instead of writing me that you thought of going to New York to spend the holidays, you simply notified me at the last minute, completely ignoring me as your chaperon."

"Oh, cut out the lecture!" Leslie made a derisive motion as though to push further rebuke from her. "What is the matter with you? Doesn't our agreement hold good in New York as well as in Hamilton? Couldn't we have got together in a few hours if necessary? I allowed for all that when I wrote you. I didn't think it urgent to put it down in black and white. I gave you credit for having some gray matter. Who engaged you in the first place, my father, or I? He saw fit to butt in to my arrangement with you. Of course I'm not supposed to know that. Still it wouldn't take me long to remind him of it, if he began to be fussy with me." Displeasure of her father's private understanding with Mrs. Gaylord momentarily banished Leslie's regret of their estrangement.

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"*Leslie!* I hope you would not be so treacherous as to let your father know that you—that he—that you know he and I have a private understanding about you," stammered the chaperon in reproachful alarm. "*That* is a secret agreement between him and me."

"Was a secret, you mean," satirized Leslie, laughing with a kind of grotesque amusement. "A secret isn't much of a secret after it goes as far as a third party."

"*Leslie!*" Mrs. Gaylord repeated the name with exclamatory half-hearted wrath.

"Yes, 'Leslie,'" mimicked her amused charge. "What's the use of puffing, Gaylord? You know you always lose out with me in a talk contest. Sit down, take off your hat and your head will cool off. Registered at our village inn?" she raised ironic eyebrows at her chaperon.

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"Yes; I have registered," was the frigid return. Mrs. Gaylord tried not to show approval of the dainty Dresden apartment she was in. She had caught only a fleecing glimpse of Doris. The latter had promptly retreated to the bed-room she was to occupy of the expensive Dresden suite of small salon, two sleeping rooms and bath which Leslie had extravagantly engaged. "I engaged a room with bath on this floor, but—" She glanced about the smart salon.

"No room here," supplied Leslie. "Oh, you are welcome, of course, to inhabit the salon with Goldie and me," she added flippantly.

"Thank you. You know, Leslie, that I have tried not to stand in your way." Mrs. Gaylord spoke with reproving bitterness. "I am here now, not because I wish to be, but because—" The chaperon made an impressive pause.

"Now we are getting down to brass tacks." Leslie simulated genial encouragement.

Mrs. Gaylord frowned, but resisted bandying further words. "Your father ordered me to come to New York, Leslie," she said with a direct simplicity which had more effect on her discourteous charge than had her air of affront.

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"What?" Leslie almost screamed the question.

From the adjoining bed-room Doris heard the cry and wondered. She knew that Leslie had a chaperon, named Mrs. Gaylord, who amiably permitted Leslie to do as she pleased. While she had retired to her bed-room and closed the door, on the arrival of the chaperon, she had caught enough of the salutatory remarks between Leslie and the other woman to establish Mrs. Gaylord's identity in her own mind. The fact that the caller had come at so late an hour further convinced her.

"Just what I say," stiffly confirmed the chaperon. "I received this letter from him. You might as well see it." She had opened her small seal traveling bag as she spoke. Now she handed Leslie the letter from Peter Cairns.

"Uh-h-h-h!" Leslie dropped down on a gilt-framed, pale-hued Dresden settee with a pretense of total collapse. Next second she sat up with a jerk. "Gaylord, I beg your pardon for ragging you. You seem to be a good sport," was her half-humorous apology.

Mrs. Gaylord with difficulty maintained a grave face. Strangely enough, at heart she did not dislike Leslie. Constant companionship with the financier's long-neglected daughter from the standpoint of a duenna had shown her plainly all Leslie's faults and virtues. When first she had come to Leslie she had resentfully labeled her as having all faults and no virtues. Presently she discovered that Leslie was generous, not of spirit, but in a material way. She also had a virtue of minding her own affairs beyond that of any other girl or woman of Mrs. Gaylord's acquaintance. Of Leslie's intriguing, unscrupulous side the chaperon knew little. She admired the girl's peculiar originality and thought

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her sayings distinctively clever or funny. She respected Leslie for being neither foolishly sentimental nor flirtatious. Leslie's rudenesses she soon learned to overlook because Leslie was as civil to her as to anyone else, perhaps more civil.

"What are you going to do about it?" Leslie inquired with rueful curiosity. "He's in New York. I saw him last night in front of the Luxe-Garins. Don't think he saw me. I was in a taxi. Goldie and I had been there to dinner."

"You shouldn't have gone there—just you two young girls!" cried out the chaperon despairingly.

"Oh, stuff. I'm not a minor. Think the Luxe-Garins is a jungle full of black-whiskered lions and unicorns? We didn't dance, or speak to a soul. We only had eats. That's not a social blunder, is it?"

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"No-o-o." There was a certain amount of relief in the reply. "I shall do nothing, Leslie. Your father has ordered me to come here to look after you. I am here. I thought before I came I would write him and explain why we were not together. I could find no proper explanation. I dare say he is very angry with me." Mrs. Gaylord's tone grew rather plaintive. "As your chaperon I should insist on your compliance with strict convention at all times. But it is as you say. You are not a minor, you have the right to go where you please and do as you please. Since your father has—well—has—." The chaperon halted lamely.

"Cut me off his card index," supplied Leslie with forceful moroseness.

Both chaperon and charge had spoken louder than they were aware. In the next room the last few sentences of their talk had come clearly to Doris's ears. While she was not specially curious she could not help being impressed by what she heard.

"If I had been like some of the girls I've known I'd not have engaged a chaperon at all after he turned me down," Leslie defended darkly. "I'm supposed not to know he has ever showed a spark of interest in me since he cut me out of his life. Don't you let him call you down because I told you to visit your head off if you liked among your friends while I was at Hamilton. You may tell him I hired you and chased you away from me when I felt like being alone for a while. He owes you a debt of gratitude for telling me that he didn't quite efface himself from my map. Tell him," she snickered faintly, "that I pay you a salary for acting as a friend instead of a priggish frump. Tell him he ought to double your salary from his end of the deal for the same reason."

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"Why—Leslie!" Grateful amazement this time prompted the chaperon's exclamation. "I had no idea you felt that way about me."

"I had no idea myself," Leslie retorted. She cast a half sheepish glance toward Mrs. Gaylord. She was experiencing the peculiar sensation of physical glow which invariably attends the moral defense of another person. For the first time in her wayward career she felt moved to defend someone for whose offense she was strictly to blame.

## CHAPTER XVII.

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### "NERVE"

Mrs. Gaylord took up her temporary abode at the Essenden expecting at almost any hour to be summoned to Peter Cairns's offices or else receive a call from him at the hotel. Neither the summons nor the call came.

Following her spirited moment of defense of her chaperon Leslie returned to her usual half domineering, always wilful manner. Since her father had seen fit to order Mrs. Gaylord on the scene, she had decided that the chaperon would be more of an asset than a hindrance. Under Mrs. Gaylord's wing she and Doris could go about more freely to tea rooms and hotel restaurants, and the theatres. They could stay out later in the evening with a certain feeling of assurance which neither had possessed during their first evening venture into New York's gaities.

The day after New Years Leslie announced to her chaperon and Doris that she wished they would go where they pleased and do as they pleased through the days that remained to them of the Christmas holiday, but without her company.

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"Gaylord can show you the village as well as I can; maybe better," she assured Doris with a droll twist of her mouth. "She won't be peevish with you. I would, if you made me sore, which you'd probably do. I have special business to tend to here in the next few days. It concerns my garage proposition and is very important. I'll hustle around through the days so as to go out to dinner with you in the evenings."

Doris was as well pleased with Leslie's new arrangement though she kept her satisfaction carefully hidden behind her politely indifferent features. She and Mrs. Gaylord had grown friendly from the start. The chaperon admired the sophomore's unusual beauty and enjoyed the covert appreciation it drew wherever they went. She thought Doris's poise remarkably high-bred and was satisfied that Peter Cairns could but approve of her as a friend for his daughter. He was still in the city, she believed. Leslie was of the same belief. "Don't doubt he knows our middle names and what time we come back to the hotel every night," was her shrewdly humorous opinion.

The special business to which she devoted her days was typical of the intriguing side of Leslie. While her father was presumably keeping an eye on her, she was even more anxious to trace his movements. She burned to know how long he intended to stay in New York, and whether he was staying at the family residence far out on Riverside Drive, or at his club.

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There was another man, too, besides her father, whose whereabouts in New York she was eager to learn. He was a man to whom her father had more than once intrusted certain business about which she thought she knew a good deal. This man had come to their home twice as a dinner guest. He was tall, slim, with aquiline, foreign features, deep set dark eyes and iron gray hair. She could recall distinctly his courtly manners. What she could not recall was his full name. It was Anton— There memory failed her.

After she had unsuccessfully racked her brain for the missing surname she came into startled knowledge of a way to gain it. Dared she take it? Leslie's heart beat faster every time she thought about it. She could not make up her mind to take it until she had definite information concerning her father's plans. She decided that she would at once try to obtain it from his offices.

On the day after New Years she left Mrs. Gaylord and Doris directly after breakfast and hurried from the Essenden to start on the trail of the "special" business. It was a fairly long drive from the Essenden to her father's downtown offices. Leslie grew perceptibly nervous as she neared her destination. There was no one to witness her uneasiness, however. There was only one chance against a hundred that she might encounter her father. She could not imagine what she would do if she were to come suddenly face to face with him. And in this thought lay her inclination to panic.

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She arrived at last before the skyscraper, two floors of which housed the executive and clerical forces necessary to Peter Cairns's several speculative interests. Leslie ordered the driver of the taxicab to wait and made a bold entrance into the building. She could hear her heart begin to thump against her side as she dodged into the cage of a waiting elevator and dodged out again at the third floor. Presently she had walked a little way down a wide corridor and opened a door which in the past she had opened many times.

It led to an outer office, given over to the keeping of a solitary office boy. When she inquired for Mr. Carrington, one of her father's important managers, and gave the youngster her name, he stared at her with blue startled eyes and made a zealous dash for a door leading to an inner office.

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"How are you, Mr. Carrington?" she drawled to a clean-cut pleasant man of perhaps forty, who had instantly emerged from the office to greet her and now ushered her into his private business domain.

"Very well, Miss Cairns; thank you. And you? It has been a long time since you visited these offices."

"Yes;" Leslie smiled affably. She was speculating how long it might take to "pump Carrington, and beat it." "I was at college for several winters, you know, and away from New York summers. I'm not

at the Riverside Drive house much. It doesn't pay to keep it open. My father is there so seldom for any length of time."

"So he tells me. He doesn't stay even in New York for any length of time, for that matter," laughed the manager. "It isn't an easy proposition, getting hold of him when I need him."

"I should imagine not." Leslie smiled in apparent sympathy. "Even I lose track of him for days at a time. I am at the Essenden, at present with my chaperon, Mrs. Gaylord. I came down town this morning to see if you would help me with a little steamer surprise I am planning to give my father. That is, if he goes to England soon. I thought you would let me know the day and hour he'd plan to sail. Then I wouldn't need to ask him a single question, beforehand. He is likely to start for England in a hurry without coming to the hotel to say good-bye. Then where would my surprise be?" Leslie put just the right amount of dejection into the question.

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"Oh, he has changed his mind about the trip to England, Miss Cairns. He doesn't intend to go across the pond until he comes back from the coast. That will be two weeks at least. I will let you know, nearer the date of sailing," was the pleasant promise.

"The western trip? Oh, yes." Leslie nodded wisely. "I have no surprise ready for him for that. There'd hardly be time for one, would there?" she asked innocently.

"Hardly." The manager consulted his watch as though amused at his own reply. "His car was to pull out from the B. R. P. at noon today. It's almost noon now."

"You mean for the west; to the coast?" was Leslie's double question. It was asked with a drawling inflection that nearly robbed it of interrogation.

"Yes. Where shall I address you, Miss Cairns, about the England matter?" Mr. Carrington questioned courteously.

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"At the Essenden. Thank you so much, Mr. Carrington. You are always so kind to me. Not a word to my father that I was here!" She raised a playful forefinger. "You understand why."

"Absolutely discreet, Miss Cairns." The manager raised a hand as though taking an oath.

After a further brief exchange of pleasantries Leslie rose to depart. She was in nervous haste to be gone. It had taken "nerve," according to her way of thinking, to lead up to the information she had sought, then to ask the right questions at the right time. She had not devised until the last moment a way of exacting secrecy from the manager that would not arouse him to suspicion against her. She knew that her father's lieutenants of years were chary of speech and still more chary of information. It was evident that her father's harsh stand in regard to herself was not known in his offices. Since Mr. Carrington did not know it, Leslie was sure he did not, then none other of his staff of financiers knew.

She would have liked to ask Mr. Carrington to give her the surname of the man, Anton. She remembered that the manager had once dined with them on the same evening as the foreigner. She had not dared ask about him. Nor did she believe it would be wise to call again at her father's offices to interrogate Mr. Carrington further. She recalled the old fable of the pitcher that went once too often to the well and was broken. She did not intend to risk losing what she had already gained. There was still the other way of learning the name.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

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### ON THE OUTSIDE LOOKING IN

Leslie stopped for luncheon at an odd French restaurant, the Fontainebleau. It was a Gallic triumph in soft grays and rated as being more Parisian than any other restaurant in New York. After luncheon she ordered the driver of the taxicab she was using to take her for a spin on Riverside Drive.

"Keep on going out Riverside till I tell you to turn around," she ordered the man. "If you hear me tell you to go slow, then go slow. I'm interested in certain properties out on the Drive."

Even by prosaic daylight Leslie felt a strange new sentiment for New York which had never before visited her. What a wonderful life she might have in the splendid city of her birth if only she were her father's assistant. Perhaps she might be, and before another year had passed. If she could successfully carry out at Hamilton the project which was now occupying her thoughts he would be forced to admire her for her audacity and brilliancy. How he would laugh at a certain feature of her undertaking. Not unless she were clever enough "to get away with it." That was a foregone conclusion.

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Leslie's swarthy features stiffened with stubborn determination. This time there was to be no failure. Her small dark eyes were engaged in keeping a concentrated watch on the residences lining the Drive as the taxicab slipped easily along on the smooth paving.

It would be a great day for her when her father forgave her and took her back into his confidence. Before she devoted herself wholly to a career in finance under her father's generalship she would make him take her for a long cruise to the South Seas in his superb, clean-lined yacht, the *White Swallow*. So Leslie promised herself as the car sped on.

Presently she had come within pleasantly familiar territory. Since earliest childhood she had seen the palaces she was now passing. In them lived families she had known and associated with as neighbors. She had played with the girls and boys of these vast, cheerless castles. They had all had the same dancing masters; had attended one another's parties. They had later formed the younger set with whom she had moved socially. Like herself many of them lived only to please themselves.

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There it was; her old home! It was the house in which she had been born; the house from which her mother had passed to Heaven, leaving behind a baby girl to be brought up by nurses and governesses and surfeited with riches out of all healthy proportion.

Leslie snatched the speaking tube from its accustomed place and called through it to the driver. "Slow down," she ordered, "but keep on going." She had spied the house from a distance of half a block away. In consequence the driver had begun to slacken speed before the machine had passed the "show shop," as Leslie had whimsically named her home because of its ornate splendor of architecture and breadth of rare-shrubbed lawn.

"Go ahead and park," she again ordered through the speaking tube. "Any place along here will do." The instant he had obeyed her and brought the machine to a stop she hopped out of it and quickly gained the sidewalk. The Cairns's residence took up a half of one block. Another massive gray stone residence claimed the remaining half of the same block.

"Thank fortune," she muttered as she strolled along at the slow swagger she affected. "There's no place like home, Leslie, old top. Peter the Great can lead a merry life at the show shop, but *I* should fidget, for all *he* cares," was her bitter reflection. "Rather than see the place boarded up like a disused barn. Gee whiz! Then I would have my troubles. Wonder how much of the menagerie is at large inside?"

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Leslie paraded up and down the entire block several times. From the street she could see nothing about the exterior of the house to challenge her interest. An ornamental iron fence squared the Cairns's property. The entrance gates were closed, apparently locked. She stopped before them during one of her patrols and pretended to lean against them. As she did so she investigated them. They were securely fastened.

She stood eyeing them with sullen dismay, her forehead corrugated by a deep scowl. Of a sudden she appeared to have laid hold of a forgotten fact. Her brows cleared like magic. Thanks to a crafty provision against such an emergency in time past she could cope with this latest obstacle.

She lingered at the gates as long as she thought prudent, her avid glance roving from point to point of the house, searching for signs of the servants about the place. She smiled grimly to herself as she recalled how often in her childhood days bright-eyed groups of "common kids" would pause on the sidewalk outside to peer wistfully through the iron interstices of the fence at the spring glory of crocuses, hyacinths and tulips which graced the Cairns's garden beds in colorful, fragrant loveliness. How contemptuous she had been of the famished little beauty worshippers! Now she was "on the outside, looking in." She was "on the wrong side of the fence." She was "barred out" of the show shop as effectively as had been "those common kids."

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## CHAPTER XIX.

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### A STRANGER IN THE HOUSE

Next day Leslie repeated the visit to her home. The second expedition to it was made in a small black car which she boldly requisitioned from a garage located not far from her father's offices. There he kept several cars, immediate to the use of himself and one or two of his lieutenants.

The call Leslie had made at her father's offices had proved advantageous to her. She had not only gained important information from Mr. Carrington, she had also received a fresh supply of temerity to bolster her for further daring deeds. She knew the manager of the garage to which she went only slightly. He had treated her request with the respect due Peter Cairns's daughter. She calculated there was small possibility that the proprietor and her father would ever discuss her visit to the garage. She preferred that risk to the annoyance of being watched by a curious taxicab driver.

On the second occasion she was free to park her own car. She made one deliberate patrol of the block. Then paused before the gates. From a pocket of the leather motor coat she wore she pulled a heavy medium-sized brass key suspended from a brass ring. Without an instant's hesitation she fitted the key to a fat brass padlock which secured the gates against intruders.

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"Whuh-h-h!" Leslie blew a breath of relief. "Easiest thing I ever tried to do," she murmured with satisfaction. "Wonder who's home, or if anyone saw me?" She drew the key from the open padlock, fastened it in place from the inside of the gates through which she had just triumphantly passed and snapped it energetically back on guard. "This time," she laughed her silent selfish laugh, "I'm on the inside, looking out."

In spite of her bold manner and ready laughter Leslie was experiencing a certain amount of trepidation. She fought it down with all the sternness she could summon against herself. The night before, long after Doris and Mrs. Gaylord had retired, Leslie had sat at a little table in her room arranging the peculiar expedition to which she had now committed herself. She had drawn a sketchy little plan of the first and second floors of her home. With a lead pencil she had lightly traced on the plan precisely the course by which she would proceed when she had once passed through the vestibule of her home and had set foot in the great entrance hall with its lofty ceiling and grand stairway.

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Knowing her father's secretive nature she was reasonably sure that such of the servants as might be in the house knew nothing of the strained relations between herself and her father. Parsons, the steward, might be there, possibly the second cook and two or three of the maids. The others had probably been sent to the country house on Long Island which was never closed. When in or near New York, summer or winter, this was her father's favorite haunt.

Leslie had resolved to brazen matters out, if, when she entered the house, she should suddenly encounter any of the servants. Her objective was a certain room on the second floor. It held something she wanted; needed; must have.

"Go to it," she mutteringly encouraged the reluctant side of her brain. With this spur to action she sauntered away from the gate and up to the short drive which soon curved to the left and continued on to the garage behind the house. She left the drive for the wide stone walk leading up to the deep, central pillared veranda. Her cool, self-possessed manner, her walk, indifferent, swaggering, was at variance with the excited beating of her heart and her private distaste for the visit she was about to make. This distaste was not of moral persuasion. Leslie was merely afraid that her father might have changed his mind about going west at the last minute. It was "Peter the Great," not the servant she dreaded encountering. If her father were afterward to learn from any of the servants whom she might encounter of her visit to the house, it would show him that she was a force not easy to control.

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To gain access to the house itself would be a simple matter since the doors and windows had not been sealed. Leslie had several latch keys on a special ring which fitted various doors of her stately home. She was well prepared, but chose to use the main entrance for the sake of appearances, should she be observed.

She stepped presently into the great rosewood reception hall with its vast crystal sheet of mirror, occupying the whole lower end of the apartment; its two grim guardian Norman suits of armor. A richly cushioned bench extended the length of one side of it. Leslie paused beside the bench, listening for sounds of human presence other than the thump of her heart and the excited sigh of her own breath. Not a sound disturbed the church-like quiet which pervaded the hall.

She dropped down on the bench and carefully restored to a small leather handbag the latch key she had just used and which she still held in one hand. For as much as ten minutes she sat still, watching, waiting, listening, hoping no one might come. During that time her eyes roved ceaselessly about the hall and from the magnificent archway, lightly draped with velvet of a rosewood tint, to a lower smaller arch at the rear of the hall which stood open into a sun parlor.

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She rose, at length slipped silently as an Indian to the grand archway and made a comprehensive survey of the French salon beyond the arch. Satisfied that no one was there to spy upon her she next inspected the sun parlor. There her father always established himself in the morning, when at

home, with the morning papers. The long mahogany library table was stacked with an orderly array of newspapers and magazines. That in itself was significant proof to Leslie that "Peter the Great" was "missing from the show shop."

Without pausing to explore further the main floor of the house she turned and darted noiselessly back into the hall and up the grand stairway. Straight as an arrow she directed her steps on reaching the second floor landing to a wide solid looking door of black walnut which stood part way down a short wide corridor hung on both sides with nothing but marine paintings. It was Peter Cairns's famous marine collection; the pride of his heart. Leslie ran her fingers up and down one side of the knobless black walnut door. Silently it slid to the left, disappearing into a space cleverly designed to receive it. She was across the threshold in one long step and the door was moving back into place again. 179

This time she indulged in a burst of silent merriment as she collapsed into an immense leather arm chair. She "had got away with it." She was now safe from any possible intrusion of servants. She was in Peter the Great's own den. No one other than they two knew the secret mechanism of the walnut door. When she left the house it would be by a private stairway leading directly to a side veranda which no one but herself and her father ever used. She had not been able to enter by this means. There was only one key to the veranda entrance to the stairway and this was carried by the financier. The long room behind the walnut door, furnished comfortably rather than luxuriously, was Peter Cairns's den. In it were his rarest books, a collection of priceless ancient coins, one of cameos, and numbers of unique treasures picked up in all parts of the world. Leslie could open the door from the inside by manipulation of a little steel knob, like that of a safe. The door would close after her, securing itself automatically. 180

When her flash of victorious amusement had subsided she let her gaze travel slowly about her. Quickly her features changed to a somber cast. She was once more in the good old "playroom" of happier days. It was in this very room that she had best learned to understand her father. Peter Cairns had then treated her more as though she were his son instead of his daughter. Her grotesquely plain little face and lawless domineering ways as a youngster had appeared to please and entertain him. He had called her his "ugly little beauty kid" and "the boss" and "Cairns II." He had, as she had grown older, and come home from prep school, then college, spent long hours with her in the den. Sometimes they had played chess or backgammon of which they were both fond. Again he would talk freely to her of his financial operations. It was a school into which the maxims of Brooke Hamilton would not have fitted. Peter Cairns had made Leslie's mind up to his own way of living as he was one day to learn.

Realizing the flight of time she gathered herself together for the final episode of her surreptitious errand. She rose, crossed the room to where a rare etching hung and lifted it from its hook. The space thus left vacant showed the indentation of a wall safe. Leslie manipulated the tiny knob with sure fingers. She next pulled open the safe's door and moved a tiny switch inside the cavity. A bright light flooded it. She ran a finger down a stack of small, black, leather-bound notebooks, bindings out, lettered in gilt, A to Z. She drew the third book, I to M, from the little pile and sat down with it in the nearest chair. 181

"So that's his name—Lavigne! It sounds French, but he looked more like a dago. He's probably forgotten his real name," Leslie mused satirically. "All right, Anton. I'll proceed to tell your fortune. You are going to receive a visit from a dark woman who knows all about you."

Leslie copied the address from her father's very private directory into a note book of her own. She replaced the little black book, closed and locked the safe and made business-like preparations to depart. She purposed to call at the address she had obtained that same afternoon. It was not yet four o'clock. She could reach Anton Lavigne at the Central Park West address in good season if she started promptly. If he were not at home she would leave a note of appointment with him for ten o'clock the next morning.

She let herself out of Peter the Great's den by a curtained door at the back of the room. It also had a spring lock, its key was also in the financier's possession. The stairway was in darkness but Leslie knew her way without switching on a light at the head of the stairs. Sure-footed, she quickly made the descent and went cautiously onto the veranda. Still no one in sight. 182

Leslie kept as close to the house as she could until she reached its front. There she crossed a strip of frozen lawn to the drive and hurriedly followed it to the gates. She could hardly believe as she got back into the car that she had spent over an hour in the show shop without having seen sign of a servant. The house was in perfect order. She was confident that Parsons was still caretaker. She had seen signs of the steward's expert domestic management as soon as she stepped inside. She moodily wondered when she would see home again. She afterward brightened a little under the dogged determination to "make things come her way."

When she reached the somewhat garish apartment hotel which housed Anton Lavigne she was of the opinion that her good fortune had held. She received the cheering information that Mr. Lavigne was in and was soon shaking hands with the dark-faced, suave, but keen-eyed foreigner. He came downstairs to the lounge to greet her and conduct her to the family apartment on the fifth floor. He inquired with the courtliness Leslie so well remembered in him for her father. He had not seen or heard from him in some time. He waited with admirable reserve for Leslie to state her errand. 183

"My father is away from New York at present," Leslie began when he had ushered her into a small reception hall furnished in a manner which suggested its use as office as well. "I am through college now and starting a business career for myself."

"Indeed," Lavigne raised polite commendatory brows. "May I ask, how long you have been engaged

in such an enterprise. You American girls are so amazing. The English girls, too, for that matter. In France every woman is a business woman, so we say, but American girls are the business adventurers. They plan business on a large scale, and really accomplish what they plan."

"I hope I shall," was Leslie's fervent reply. "My father isn't helping me at all. I don't wish him to do so. I am using my own money, and he isn't giving me a word of advice. All I claim from him is a free use of some of his most private successful methods. That is why I am here. I know you can be as useful to me as you have been to him." She suddenly fixed her eyes on Lavigne with an expression startlingly like that of Peter Cairns, though she bore small physical resemblance to him.

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"You speak with great confidence—with frankness." Lavigne's thick dark brows drew together. "I knew when you were announced that you wished something out of the usual. Only your father, Mr. Peter Cairns, and a few of my special friends have this address." He gazed steadily at her as though waiting to hear a certain assurance from her which his foreign mind toward caution demanded.

"I have just come from the house on Riverside Drive. I took your address from its usual place. Do you get me?" Leslie spoke in the best imitation of her father she could muster.

"Ah, yes." There was relief in the response. "I understand the situation, I believe. What can I do for you, Miss Cairns?" It had long been known to Lavigne that Peter Cairns's greatest interest in life was his daughter. Such a calamity as an estrangement between the two would have seemed impossible to this man who had been one of the financier's ablest allies for many years. He now believed that his best interests lay in serving Leslie.

Leslie could tell nothing of the man's thoughts by watching his face. No expression or emotion contrary to Lavigne's will was allowed to appear on his dark features.

"My business operation is the building of a garage not far from the campus of Hamilton College. Hamilton is my—er—the college I went to." Leslie always stuck at the words "Alma Mater." "I had a good deal of trouble obtaining the site, due to the underhandedness of a crowd of would-be welfare students who tried to make me give it up to them. They wanted it for a dormitory."

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Lavigne smiled with heartening sympathy and made a gesture of understanding regret for Leslie's troubles.

"I found out what their scheme was and managed to get into touch with the owner of the property before they did. Before he closed with me they let him know they wanted the site and he charged me sixty thousand dollars for what I should have paid not more than thirty-five or forty thousand. When they discovered I had won out over them they made a great fuss. They circulated very hateful gossip about how dishonorable I was, and so forth. A rich old crank at Hamilton, the last of the Hamilton family, sided with these students against me, though she'd never met me, and presented them with a dormitory site right next to the property I had bought. Can you beat that?" Leslie had forgotten dignity in slangy disgust for the way the matter had turned out.

"Incredible, yet true." Lavigne lightly raised a hand. "But proceed, Miss Cairns. I am deeply interested."

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Leslie went on to explain regarding the old houses standing on both pieces of property. "These students have the advantage of the services of the only builder and architect of ability in that part of the country. He knows the labor situation there. He has had plenty of men since the start. I have a New York firm on the job and they are slackers. They claim they can't get the laborers. My ground hasn't been cleared off yet. My garage building isn't started. The old dormitory is half up. I must do something about it. Two-thirds of those laborers are Italians, from an Italian colony outside Hamilton. I want them to work for me. I'll pay them double, triple, if necessary, to quit the other operation."

She stopped. Not for an instant did her gaze leave Lavigne's face. He was now looking at her very shrewdly, an odd gleam in his black eyes. Leslie thought they twinkled. It put her on her mettle.

"This isn't a schoolgirl quarrel I've had with these other students, Mr. Lavigne," she said a trifle sullenly. "If you want to know the secret truth it's a fight between another student and myself for—to bring about a certain result. I have as much right to the use of these men as she—as they—these students have. I don't care what I pay you to have you help me. I have a large fortune in my own right. I can soon prove it to you. This business is really a race to see which side wins. I'll win, if you'll help me. No one need even suspect you of being concerned in the matter. I want you to engineer it. That's the way you've always worked for my father, isn't it?" Leslie asked the question with innocent ingenuousness. She understood, however, precisely how much depended upon it.

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"Your father's and my transactions have always been conducted with great discretion," was the indirect admission.

"I know that. I know *all about certain deals between you and him in the past*. If I didn't, would I be here now? It's not simply a question of the garage operation with me. I'm fighting to assert myself. I'm going to follow my father's methods. They've been absolutely successful. What I want I intend to get, if those who can give it to me are willing to sell out." Leslie asserted boldly.

"Of course, of course. You are like your father. You are not a minor, Miss Cairns?" Lavigne inquired tentatively.

"Hardly." Leslie smiled. "And you don't have to consult my father. He has told me to do as I pleased with my own money. I'll ask you to observe absolute secrecy in the matter. When the battle is won, then he is to be told."

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"You may trust me to serve you as best I can, Miss Cairns," Lavigne declared with flattering

sincerity. "In a few days I will go to Hamilton and look over the situation. I can tell you then what ought to be done. Where shall I address you?"

"At the Essenden until day after tomorrow. Then I'm going back to Hamilton. My address there is the Hamilton House." Leslie rose to conclude her call. She was reminded that her father's interviews with others were always brief. She was experiencing all the sweetness of vengeful exultation. At last she was going to "get back at Bean."

## CHAPTER XX.

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### MARJORIE'S CALLER

"I thought you were never coming back, Jerry Macy!" Marjorie dropped into the depths of the nearby arm chair with a weary little flop. "I've worked like mad for as much as an hour getting up my share of the eats for Ronny's birthday spread." She poked out her red under lip and tried hard to look aggrieved. The sparkle in her eyes contradicted the pretence.

"How could you harbor such disloyal thoughts of me, Beautiful Bean? You are beautiful, even if your lip is away out of place," Jerry tenderly assured.

"Being beautiful doesn't make me feel rested." Marjorie still searched for cause to complain. "For why did you stay away so long, Jurry-miar?"

"There's the cause of my lingering longer." Jerry held up a good-sized pasteboard box tied with stout string. "Just wait till you see it. I had to toddle all around Hamilton in search of a cake. When all seemed lost we bumped into this glorious, scrumptious cocoonut layer cake." She set the box on the table and untied the string.

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"It's a white splendor." Marjorie stood beside Jerry peeping at the cake as her chum removed the box lid. "I've made the sandwiches." She nodded toward a side table carefully covered with a snowy lunch cloth. "I cracked the walnuts for the brown bread ones and also my thumb." She ruefully put the injured member in her mouth.

"How you must have suffered!" Jerry solemnly exclaimed. Both girls began to laugh. "Leila was in one of her fine frenzies because we couldn't find a real cake or any stuffed dates."

"I was that," notified an affable agreeing voice from the opened door. "Did not the people of Hamilton all have their mouths set for sweet cakes today?" Leila closed the door and joined her chums. "We could find nothing we wanted."

"Until in despair we went over to a new bakery on Gorman Street that just opened yesterday. The woman who keeps it is German. She has yellow hair and looks just like a pound cake," Jerry described with enthusiasm.

"And our dream of a cake was in the window!" exclaimed Leila. "We thought we would eat it ourselves and tell no one, but we have such honor about us. We could not bear to think of those who would have no cake." She smiled broadly upon Marjorie.

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"You are a pair of fakes. You've been out having a fine spin while I've been in working hard. The minute dinner's over you two may make the fruit salad. That will be your job," Marjorie sternly pronounced sentence on the buoyant, hilarious pair.

"I will make forty fruit salads to please you, Beauty, though I do not know how to make one. Behold in me a helpful Harper."

"You mean a harpful helper," corrected Jerry.

"If you mean I am a harp, then I must tell you you are right. I do not know how you guessed it." Leila gazed at Jerry in mock admiration.

"Dinner won't mean much to us tonight," commented Marjorie as she proudly raised the lunch cloth to allow the girls to see the tempting generous stacks of small, three-cornered sandwiches, the relishes and various other toothsome viands always welcomed by girlhood at a spread. "Remember, we are to take nothing but soup at dinner. It's to be cream of celery. I asked Ellen."

"Oh, Marjorie, I almost forgot to tell you," Jerry suddenly cried out. "Something has happened to the Hob-goblin's Folly." This was Jerry's pet name for Leslie's garage enterprise.

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"Happened?" Marjorie's question contained little interest.

"Yep. There's a new gang of men at work on the garage. Leila and I noticed them when we went to town. They were gone when we came back, but it was after five-thirty. There were as many as your gang on the dormitory. I think they were Italians. Don't you, Leila?"

Leila nodded. "They must be a new addition to the Italian quarter," she surmised. "Signor Baretta said last fall that nearly all the men of the quarter were working on the dormitory. He said they had refused to work for Leslie Cairns's builders. They would not pay them enough by the day. Perhaps the new ones are glad of the work. But how can I judge when I am no boss of Italians, or of any one but Midget. I shall certainly give her a tart and terrible lecture when I see her again. I left her entertaining Gentleman Gus. Now I believe they have eloped."

Leila's dark suspicion of Vera set the three girls laughing. Gussie was the tallest girl at Wayland Hall and Vera the tiniest. The elopement of the pair was a joy to contemplate.

"I haven't been near the dormitory for three whole days," Marjorie confessed ruefully. "I've been so busy since we came back from Sanford trying to make up for a lot of things I let slide before I went that I'm a no good manager. Robin is coming early tonight, so she'll know what has been going on over there. We may thank our stars we have such a splendid manager as Mr. Graham to look after

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the dormitory for us.”

“And such a Marvelous Manager as Bean to look after the sandwiches for us,” supplemented Jerry, imitating Marjorie’s tone.

“I thank my stars they’re made, and made without your help, Jeremiah Macy.” Marjorie waved a finger before Jerry’s face. “There’s Robin now, I’m sure.” She sprang from her chair and ran to the door.

“Were you at the dormitory today?” Her lips framed the question before Robin had more than stepped into the room.

“No-o.” Robin’s tone was one of self-accusation. “It’s neglectful in me, but I’ve not been there since day before yesterday. I must turn over a new leaf tomorrow. What about you, Dean? I know you’ve done better than I.”

“But I haven’t,” Marjorie protested. “I’m a day behind you, Pagie. Jerry and Leila saw Leslie Cairns’s builders have at last gathered up a supply of workmen. The girls noticed them today when they drove to town.”

“Her garage will be about as successful there as it would be in Thibet,” predicted Robin scornfully. “It’s too far from the campus to be convenient.”

“I wonder if she intends to run it herself?” remarked Jerry. “I can see the Hob-goblin proudly marching around her own car roost.”

Conversation about Leslie Cairns came to a halt with Jerry’s remarks. None of the Travelers liked to discuss her. When they did it was because of some way in which her affairs chanced to touch theirs.

The lively entrance into the room of the “elopers” who had gone for a ride in Vera’s car, and returned at the last minute before dinner, brought a welcome diversity of subject.

“What do you care whether we have dinner or not? Think of the spread we have for Ronny.” Jerry reminded them. “You may have only soup for dinner. We’re going to have the eats soon after the party begins so that nightmares won’t be popular along the hall tonight.”

“You try to be kind-hearted, don’t you, Jeremiah?” said Vera, with a patronizing smile.

“Oh, yes, I try,” mimicked Jerry. “It’s not my fault if my kindheartedness doesn’t register. Some people are positively thick, and—”

The ringing of the dinner gong sent Vera and Gussie scurrying to their rooms to remove their wraps. Marjorie, Jerry, Leila and Robin made leisurely way down stairs to the dining room. Dinner began and ended with soup for the Travelers. The ten original Travelers were invited to the spread, as were also Phil Moore and Barbara Severn. Marjorie had invited both of the latter to come over early to “soup.” Both had nobly refused in favor of study so as to be free to spend the evening at Wayland Hall without including “unprepared” in next day’s vocabulary.

“The first thing for us to do to start the party is to move the eats into Ronny’s and Lucy’s room.” was Marjorie’s brisk decision, as she and Jerry returned to Room 15 from the dining room.

Robin had strolled down the hall to see Ronny and give her a birthday present of a curious, vellum-bound book in Spanish, which she had commissioned her dilettante uncle to buy for her in Washington at a fancy price.

“We might all heave-ho and lug the table into the other room with the eats on it,” proposed Jerry dubiously. “On the other hand, there might be a grand heave-ho-ing of eats on the floor. I don’t like to take such a risk, Bean. Think of my goloptious, celostrous cocoanut cake.” Jerry had added “goloptious” to her new vocabulary of one word.

“Think of my scrumptious, splendiferous sandwiches,” retaliated Bean with promptitude.

“I’m thinking about them,” Jerry said mournfully. “I could eat one now, if I had it. So near and yet so far.” She lifted the lunch cloth and made eyes at the stacks of sandwiches. “This is the result of only soup for supper. I yearn to gobble the spread.”

“I’ll feed you a sandwich with my own hand.” Marjorie proffered a nut sandwich, Jerry’s favorite kind, to her hungry roommate.

“Thanks, kind lady. I wasn’t—”

“I know all about you,” cut in Marjorie with an unsympathetic laugh. “Hurry up, and eat that sandwich. Then help me move the eats; by hand; not by table.”

Marjorie went to the door and opened it. She came back to the table, picked up two plates of sandwiches and started with them for Ronny’s room. Part way to it she encountered Annie, one of the maids.

“Oh, Miss Dean, I was just coming after you.” The maid’s broad good-humored features broke into a pleased smile. “There’s a gentleman down stairs in the living room wants to see you.”

## "WE MUST WORK TOGETHER"

"A gentleman to see me?" Marjorie repeated wonderingly. She turned a look of mild inquiry upon the maid. "Didn't he give you his name, Annie?" Marjorie's thoughts at once flashed to her general. Perhaps he had come to Hamilton to give her a surprise. Business might have brought him near the campus. Her cheeks flushed. Her eyes sparkled at the fond thought.

"Please, Miss Dean, I asked him his name once and he said it, but I couldn't understand what he said. He said it kind of low and rumbly. I hated to ask him again," Annie confessed, looking her confusion.

"Oh, never mind, Annie." Marjorie smiled away the maid's discomfiture with winsome good nature. "I'll go down and see for myself. Please say to the gentleman that I will be down directly."

Marjorie returned to 15 with the two plates of sandwiches. If she carried them on into Ronny's room she would not go down stairs for the next ten minutes. Oddly enough she thought also of Hal as a possible visitor.

"Have you changed your mind about letting Ronny have these sandwiches?" Jerry asked humorously as Marjorie hastily re-placed them on the table.

"No, I haven't, Jeering Jeremiah," Marjorie laughed. "You are to have the sandwich-moving job. There's a gentleman downstairs to see me."

"What?" Jerry showed mild surprise. "A gentleman in this girl-inhabited burg! It takes my breath. I mean to have one call on you at the Hall. Who is he, or is that a secret?"

"I don't know who he is. I'm going down to see."

"It might be a book agent who has just heard that you go to college. It might be a tin peddler who suspects we cook in our room and wants us to try his tin dishes. It might be a carpet sweeper pest who has a carpet sweeper that operates in mid air and simply coaxes the dust up from the floor. Only those gentlemen always hunt by day. It might be—"

"Good-bye. I'm going downstairs. I can't stop to listen to any more of your weird theories, Jeremiah. I'll be back soon, I hope." Smiling over Jerry's ridiculous suppositions, Marjorie made a hasty start for downstairs.

The man who rose to greet her as she entered the living room bore no resemblance to either her general or Hal. Her caller was Peter Graham.

"Why, good evening, Mr. Graham." She held out her hand. "This *is* a surprise, but always a pleasant one. You must have wondered what had become of Miss Page and me."

"No, I knew you were busy, Miss Marjorie." Peter Graham's fine face lighted beautifully at sight of her. "You and Miss Robin have been very faithful. It has been of the greatest assistance to me. Now we must work together, more than ever."

He ceased speaking and looked at her with an intensity of expression which somehow filled her with vague alarm.

"What is it, Mr. Graham?" Her mind would have instantly formed the conclusion that this call had to do with some serious crisis in his personal affairs if he had not said: "Now we must work together more than ever."

"The majority of my workers have left me, Miss Marjorie," he said with a straight simplicity which marked him as a man worth while. "They have gone over to the garage operation. There is no question in my mind as to how the whole thing happened."

"Leslie Cairns." The words leaped involuntarily to Marjorie's lips. Immediately what Leila and Jerry had said before dinner returned to her mind with a rush. How precisely it fitted with that one pertinent sentence: "They have gone over to the garage operation."

"Yes, Miss Cairns is responsible." He spoke with quiet surety. "Still, I cannot understand how she managed so cleverly to keep me in the dark about her treacherous work until the mischief was done. Day before yesterday my entire force was at work on the dormitory. Yesterday three or four of my most useful Italians did not come to work. By noon today I was deserted except for four Hamilton carpenters and builders whom I have known and worked with for years. These four stood by me. Every last one of the others went over to the garage."

"Was there—did these men give their reason for going?" Marjorie asked with admirable composure. "Before you answer, Mr. Graham, may I go upstairs for Miss Page? She happens to be here this evening. It is her right to hear as well as mine."

"I am glad she is here. It is most fortunate for us. We shall be able to decide what we can do that much the sooner." The builder bowed abstracted acknowledgment as Marjorie excused herself and hurried upstairs. Peter Graham's mind had dwelt upon nothing else but what might be done to clear away the ugly situation resulting from Leslie Cairns's malice.



She found Robin in the midst of the party group in Ronny's room. Under Jerry's laughable supervision the eats had been transferred without accident to the immediate scene of the festivity. Ronny, as hostess-guest of honor, was in high feather. She was hospitably concocting a delectable mixture which she called "Encanta Manaña" as she chatted animatedly with her friends. It was a fruit punch founded on lemons and oranges and further improved by a blending of fruit syrups. These syrups had been made from the fruits of her ranch home and put up in the ranch laboratory. They were as welcome at a spread as was Leila's imported ginger ale.

Her own little coterie of friends had remembered her birthday that morning with lavish giving. The top of her chiffonier was covered with affectionate remembrances, each one selected with a view to Ronny's peculiarly strong, attractive individuality.

"I can't stay up here one minute, girls," Marjorie hastily told the revelers. They had listened in blank silence to her as she acquainted Robin with the dismaying situation. "Go ahead, and have a good time, minus Page and Dean. We'll be back within an hour, I think; perhaps before then." 203

A buzzing murmur arose from the group as the partners exchanged eye messages of undying loyalty, linked arms and marched together from the room. Page and Dean would fight gallantly beside Peter Graham for the good of the dormitory.

Entering the living room Peter Graham shook hands with Robin. The partners seated themselves side by side on a small settee, while Peter Graham drew a wicker rocker close enough to them to permit of low-toned conversation.

The builder then began an account of the chief happenings on the day before the trouble became evident. He followed it with a more detailed description of the desertion, first of the three or four Italians, then the rest of the force, except the four Hamilton carpenters.

"When I saw those fellows I had tried to do well by over on the other lot I knew there was only one thing had taken them there. They'd been offered a good deal more money than we were paying them. I knew Thorne & Foster hadn't offered it to them." The builder smiled, a quiet, scornful smile. "They are niggards." 204

"I decided to go over and have a talk with Pedro Tomasi, one of the older men of the quarter. He had always seemed very well disposed toward me. I went only as far as the edge of the garage excavation." He laughed, but in his laugh he showed his deep-lying indignation. "I was ordered off the lot by Thorne & Foster's foreman. What construction would you place on such an act on their part after what I just remarked of them." He looked levelly from Marjorie to Robin.

"There is only one can be placed upon it," Marjorie said tranquilly. "They are simply obeying Miss Cairns's orders and pocketing more of her money."

"That's it," nodded Peter Graham. "It will cost her a pretty penny before she is through with the affair. I'd like to know how long this business was brewing before it came to a head. Neither Thorne or Foster have been in town for weeks. Conlon, their foreman, is hated by the workmen, especially the Italians. What I can't understand is the smooth quietness of the whole outrage. They walked out of our employ and into that of Miss Cairns's like a carefully organized body of strikers. If Miss Cairns managed the walk-out she must have a certain amount of unscrupulous cleverness," he ended with grudging honesty. 205

"I haven't the least doubt but that she managed it," Robin made indignant assertion. "She has been known to go to great pains to gain her own way. On the campus, when she was a student here, she had a reputation for that sort of thing." Robin's information was meant to be impersonal. It was Peter Graham's right to know Leslie Cairns' measure as a mischievous force.

Marjorie had listened to Robin and the builder, her mind weighing every word she heard. As Robin finished with an angry little sputtered: "Oh, will we ever be free of that Jonah?" the gravity of Marjorie's beautiful face changed to meditative resolution.

"Mr. Graham," she said, "when first you told me of this I was really dismayed for a few minutes. I can understand how you feel in the matter. It is far harder on you than on us. Still, you know, and Page and Dean know, that nothing is going to stop us from finishing the dormitory outside God's will. I am sure we have that. We are building toward good, not evil. I suppose we couldn't get these men we've lost back again, no matter how hard we tried. They've gone the way of more money. We paid them all we can afford or will pay in future. We must not needlessly increase the dormitory obligation for the Travelers who come after our chapter." 206

"I wouldn't advise taking back any of these men at a cent more than we have been paying them. We have given them better wages than they ever before received," broke in the builder, defensive of the Travelers' rights. "I am glad we are of the same mind, Miss Dean. And you, Miss Page?" He turned to Robin, relief written large on his strong features.

"What is Page without Dean," laughed Robin. "What are we both without Graham?" She made a charming gesture of deference which pleased and heartened the white-haired builder.

"Whatever you think wise for us to do, we will do. We rest our case with you, Mr. Graham," Marjorie's voice rang with fine loyalty.

"Thank you both for your support," was the grateful response. "Our case will have to rest," he continued, his face wonderfully brighter, "until I can secure other workmen to take the places of those gone. It may be a long time before I can collect another force like the one we had. They were able fellows, and knew their business. I warn you, the dormitory cannot be completed in time for the re-opening of college next fall unless we should have the good fortune to find a new crew of men at once. That is the situation." 207

"We accept it with good grace." Marjorie's kindly cheeriness did much to lighten the secret dejection of the builder. "Don't worry over it, Mr. Graham. We sha'n't. We have had trouble with Leslie Cairns before. On each occasion she has been a loser. We have gone on, the stronger for experience. We shall rise above this vicissitude, just as we have risen above the others. Leslie Cairns never seems even to do wrong successfully."

## CHAPTER XXII.

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### GUISEPPE BARETTI'S THEORY

Regardless of her optimistic assertion to Robin and Peter Graham that right must triumph in the end, Marjorie found it hard to resign herself to watchful inaction in regard to the dormitory. The winter days came and went with no change in the situation save perhaps the addition of a dozen men to Peter Graham's working force. It consisted of himself and his quartette of carpenters. He scoured the region extending for twenty-five miles about Hamilton for men. Labor happened to be scarce. Workmen invariably demanded twice as much money for their services as he would pay. The affair of the walk-out had been circulated far and wide in that section. The numbers of workmen he talked with demanded as much as "the Thorne and Foster crew" were receiving.

Miss Susanna Hamilton sputtered volubly to Jonas, Peter Graham and Marjorie at the dire situation. She sent for Marjorie, Robin and the builder on an average of once in every three or four days to discuss the situation. She was at first for bringing in a crew of workmen from one of the large cities and paying them their own price within a certain limit to hurry the completion of the dormitory. She offered to pay the sum needed to do this from her own resources. To this neither Page and Dean nor Peter Graham would hear. In the end they won her over to their way of thinking.

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Marjorie's chief private disappointment lay in the fact that she could not conscientiously begin the compilation of Brooke Hamilton's papers, prior to writing his biography, until the dormitory question was settled and off her mind. This had been the chief reason for Miss Susanna's generous proposal.

"I want you and Jerry to come to the Arms in March, sure and certain," she said more than once to Marjorie. "You are such a conscientious child! You will not humor me at all. Suppose Peter should have to cripple along all spring with a handful of men? Then you and Jerry will miss the dawn of spring at the Arms. Let me tell you you will miss something."

"Miss Susanna, I've made up my mind to come to the Arms the first of March, whether or not the dormitory business is settled." Marjorie finally made this concession one February afternoon while taking tea with the old lady.

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"You are my own Marvelous Manager, and a dear child." Miss Susanna unexpectedly left her chair, walked around the tea table to Marjorie and hugged her.

"And you are the dearest of dears. I ought to come here by the first of March. I feel it as my duty. And I shall love to be with you. The girls are resigned to Jerry's and my move. They'll be here about half the time. I give you warning beforehand. I've nothing but chemistry on my list since the beginning of the semester. I only devote a few hours a week to it now. I do wish something would happen to bring some more workmen to the dormitory," Marjorie ended wistfully.

"Yes, so do I. I could take that Cairns girl and treat her to a good shaking with my own strength of arm." Miss Susanna resentfully straightened up from her embrace of Marjorie and vengefully worked her arms. "And to think, I've never seen her except once, and at a distance." Miss Susanna resumed her chair and continued: "It is too bad Baretti can do nothing with those Italians at the quarter. It's the old story. Money changes the color of everything."

"I was hopeful of Signor Baretti," Marjorie said, faint disappointment in her reply. "He went over to the quarter several times. He said some one besides Leslie Cairns herself had been influencing the Italians. He thought she might have hired someone. The Italians swore that only Thorne and Foster were responsible for the walk-out. They told Signor Baretti the bosses had offered much money to have the work done quickly. He says they are not telling the truth, but he can't get at the truth among them. I had a talk with him yesterday. Robin and I stopped at the inn for ice cream. He says he will try again after a while to make the Italians tell him the truth."

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"He is a fine little man," Miss Susanna said, nodding approval of the odd, whole-souled Italian. "He won't forget that promise, either."

Guiseppe Baretti had no intention of forgetting the, to him, solemn promise he had made Page and Dean. The nearly perfect management of his restaurant to which he had long since attained left him a good deal of time to spend as he pleased. Usually he pleased to be busy in the inn where he had achieved affluence. It was his workshop, and he loved it. Now that the "dorm," also grown into his peculiar affection, was in difficulties it behoved him to become a knight errant.

Imbued with this high purpose he went again and again to the Italian quarter, a patient, open-eared watchful little questioner or listener, as the case might be. February was almost ended when he at last learned something of importance. He came one evening upon Pedro Tomaso and Francisco Vesseli engaged in heated argument. He gathered from the torrent of angry words each hurled at the other the information he was seeking. There had been a "Maestro" at the quarter, it seemed. He had arranged the new scale of wages. Baretti heard over and over again the name "Ravenzo." When he left the quarter it was with four points fixed in his mind. There had been a "Maestro" at the quarter. His name was Ravenzo. He had come from New York. Then had come the desertion of the "dorm" by the workmen.

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What Baretto entertained as a positive belief, the Italians knew nothing of. This was Leslie Cairns's part in the dormitory trouble. They placed the odium on Thorne and Foster. The long-headed Italian inn keeper laid the primary blame upon Miss "Car-rins." He firmly believed if "that one" were made to "behave good" the troubles of the dorm would end. He had gleaned here and there enough of Leslie's past history to know that she was the only child of Peter Cairns, a well-known financier, and that her home was in New York.

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After his fruitful visit to the quarter he sat down in his tiny private office at the inn and wrote a long letter in Italian to a countryman of his in New York connected with an Italian confidential agency. The purpose of the letter was to establish the identity and business of one, Ravenzo.

When he had finished the letter he sat very still for a long time and thought about Leslie Cairns. Ever since he had first seen her as a freshman at Hamilton, he had detested her. Now he put her through a mental revue which did not redound to her credit. He wondered how her father could allow her to "boss herself all wrong." Perhaps her father did not know half she did. There were many such cases. He reflected with old-world wisdom that, "A father don't want his childr'n do wrong." He was also of the conviction that, "A father, he can't punish his childr'n they do wrong, he don't know they do it." Guiseppe Baretto was sure that Mr. Car-rins "don't know much 'bout what his daughter do."

His knowledge of Italian nature told him that if the scale of wages on the Cairns's garage was dropped to what it had been when begun by Thorne and Foster, the men of the quarter as well as the American and Irish workman would be glad to go back to the fair employ of Page and Dean under the management of Peter Graham. If Miss Car-rins's father knew her as she really was perhaps he would come and take her away from Hamilton. Miss Car-rins was of age, but a father was a father. Her father was a "big" man. He probably would have ways to make his daughter behave.

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Such was Baretto's view of the problem he was trying to solve. The next day he sat down and went over the same train of thought with the same deliberation. On the third day thereafter he resigned himself to the composition of a letter in Italian. It was a very long letter and the first draft of it did not please him. For several days he kept patiently at it, re-writing and re-vising. Finally he gave it into the keeping of his Italian manager who was also a high school graduate. Two days afterward the manager returned a neatly typed, well-phrased letter in polite English to the little proprietor. Guiseppe had the pleasure of addressing an envelope to Peter Cairns at his New York offices. Baretto's last thought in sending the letter was one of consideration for Leslie's father. He wrote on the lower, left-hand side of the envelope: "For Peter Cairns only."

## CHAPTER XXIII.

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### MOVING DAY

"Today's moving day, Jeremiah! We'd better pack before noon so that the man can come for our trunks soon after lunch. I shall pack for keeps. Truly, Jerry, we don't know whether we'll be back here again this year or not." Marjorie turned from a yawning trunk which she had pulled into the middle of the room and surveyed Jerry solemnly.

"Well, if not this spring, then next fall," Jerry said quickly. "Don't weep, Bean. You will make me weep, too. I want to go to the Arms, though, and you have to go. Would you go if you weren't going to write the biography?"

"For a little while, but not for more than that," Marjorie said very honestly. "I'm going to miss the girls terribly, and so will you. We'll see them often, but this is a kind of break in the good old democrat's platform."

"For larger hopes and graver fears," Jerry quoted. "That's the way things are. We have to go on, you know. Life hates loiterers."

"You're just as melancholy over this change as I am, Jeremiah Macy!" Marjorie cried out. "It's not fair to Miss Susanna."

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"She'll never know it," was Jerry's consoling rejoinder.

"Indeed, she never shall," Marjorie vowed energetically. "I am still a tiny bit blue about the dormitory trouble. I wish it had come to an end before we started our stay at the Arms. Mr. Graham feels worse about it than either Robin or I. I don't allow myself to dwell on the subject of Leslie Cairns. I feel like joining Miss Susanna in giving the Hob-goblin a good shaking."

"Your temper is certainly going to lead you to violence some day, Bean. That's the first time I ever heard you address the Hob-goblin by her household name. It shows rising ire on your part. Let me calm you by reciting a few Bean Jingles. Ahem!

"Oh, do not rave, then long you'll wave;  
Or with the goblin fight:  
Just keep serene, beloved Bean,  
You will come out all right.

I am your friend, unto the end,  
I'll stick to you like glue  
On me just lean, entrancing Bean  
And I will see you through."

"Thank you, oh, thank you!" was Marjorie's grateful reception of Jerry's improvised tribute. "I'd love to have a book of Bean Jingles."

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"You'll have to take them down as they are ground out, then, Bean. I never can remember them afterward. 'I consider them rather sweet little things.' Now I must stop entertaining you and get busy. If you hear blood-curdling wails outside the door today, don't collapse. Leila says she may give a farewell exhibition of true grief in the hall."

The very prospect of Leila's wails set the two girls to laughing. In spite of the coming separation from their close friends the both felt lighter of spirit as a result of Jerry's nonsense.

As the morning sped toward noon, one by one, Ronny, Muriel, Lucy, Leila and Vera sought Room 15, the headquarters of all their college years. They were invited to the Arms to dinner that night in honor of Jerry's and Marjorie's arrival. Now they hovered about Marjorie and Jerry, trying to be cheerful at the blow that had fallen. They had agreed among themselves not to flivver in the slightest particular. "But after they're gone," Leila had said somberly to Vera, "I shall howl my Irish head off." Anna Towne and Verna Burkett had been invited to take up their abode at Wayland Hall in Room 15 until either college closed or the two Travelers came back again to the Hall.

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"Robin wanted me to have lunch with her today at Baretto's, but I told her I'd meet her there afterward," Marjorie commented to her chum audience as she continued to pack. "She forgot for a minute that this would be Jerry's and my last luncheon at the Hall for awhile. I say that, but I'll probably be over for dinner or lunch about day after tomorrow." Marjorie straightened up and viewed her friends with a smile so full of sunshiny good-will Ronny exclaimed rather shakily:

"How silly in us to let ourselves be sad about losing you, Marjorie Dean. We sit here looking like a set of sad sentimental old geese. I will not do so. Here, let's dance." She pirouetted to the middle of the floor in her inimitable fashion and began one of the utterly original, graceful dances for which she was famed on the campus. Soon she had swept the others into it and they were all romping like children.

"If we're reported for this racket it won't do the reporter any good. We're vacating today. I suppose the Phonograph, the Prime Minister and the Ice Queen will be so pleased to know we've vamoosed."

Jerry smirked derisively in the direction of Julia Peyton's room.

Marjorie's face shadowed slightly at mention of Doris Monroe. Muriel was still in the dark regarding Doris's sudden change from gracious to hostile. Since her Christmas trip to New York with Leslie Cairns, Doris had been associating constantly with Leslie. More than once when driving with one or another of her chums Marjorie had seen the white car flash past them with Doris at the wheel and Leslie beside her. She sometimes wondered half scornfully whether Doris had not a very fair understanding of Leslie and her unfair methods. Then she would quickly reproach herself as having been suspicious and mean-spirited.

After lunch Jerry promised to see the trunks safely into the keeping of an expressman, leaving Marjorie free to meet Robin at Baretto's.

"I cut dessert at the Hall today," was Robin's salutatory remark as Marjorie presently breezed into the restaurant, her cheeks pure carnation pink from the sharp winter air. "I thought I'd like to have it here with you. I want some Nesselrode pudding. You know my weakness for it. Have some? What will you have?"

"I ought to say nothing, but I'll eat an apricot ice with you. Thank you, Page, for your invitation." Marjorie sat down opposite Robin at the table the latter had chosen. "I finished my packing before lunch. It seems queer to be going to Hamilton Arms to live for a while. None of us dared say much about it at the Hall today. A flood was in the offing. But no one flivvered after all. We smiled at each other at lunch like a whole collection of Cheshire pussies."

"The girls will miss you so dreadfully, Marjorie," Robin said with sudden soberness. She looked across the table at her partner and wondered if there could ever be anyone more likeable than Marjorie.

"I'll miss them, Robin. Jerry and I were ready to cry this morning until Jerry fell back on Bean Jingles and we laughed instead. Here comes Signor Baretto." Marjorie held out a gracious hand.

"What have you hear about the dorm?" was the Italian's first question after he had accepted the partners's united invitation to sit.

"Nothing encouraging," Robin answered with a dejected little shrug. "We are going over there today to try to keep Mr. Graham in good spirits. He has such frightful fits of the blues over this miserable set-back to the dormitory."

"Yes; the dorm has a verra bad time. I feel verra sorry. I have try to help you in some ways, Miss Page, Miss Dean. Maybe one thing I do have good after while. I don' know." The Italian did not offer to explain his somewhat mysterious reference.

"We know you are always ready to help us," Marjorie said with grateful earnestness. "Would you like to go over to the dormitory with us today, Signor Baretto? I am sure Mr. Graham would be pleased to see you. You know Robin and I would enjoy your company?"

"I think I go with you." The little proprietor accepted with a dash of pleased red in his brown cheeks. "I have bought the new roadster. I like you to ride in it, Miss Page, Miss Dean."

"Thank you for suggesting such a dandy way to escape the wind," smiled Marjorie. "The first day of March, and a real March wind. Miss Macy and I are going to Hamilton Arms today to stay all spring, Signor Baretto. You remember I told you before Christmas that I was going there in the spring."

"Yes, yes! I remem'er. You are to write somethin' 'bout this Brooke Hamilton. He is name for the college. Miss Macy—she make another write 'bout him, too?"

"No; she is going to the Arms with me because she is my roommate. I couldn't leave her behind. Miss Susanna wished both of us to come."

"I think your friends in the house you live on the campus verra sorry you go," commented the Italian.

"Thank you very much." Marjorie made him an arch little bow.

"You are the quite welcome." The solemn little man beamed happily upon her. Her merry graciousness put him at his ease.

He showed not a little curiosity regarding the biography of Brooke Hamilton. He asked a number of questions about the founder of Hamilton College and listened eagerly as Marjorie explained as lucidly as she could regarding the biography of the great man which she was to write.

When the partners had finished their ices Baretto escorted them, with proud lights in his black eyes, to his roadster, parked in front of the restaurant in shining newness. It was only a short run from the inn to the dormitory. The cutting sharpness of the east wind, however, made riding preferable to walking. Seated in the tonneau of the car Robin and Marjorie had hardly exchanged a dozen sentences when the car had reached the dormitory site and was slowing down for a stop.

"Look, Robin! What can the matter be?" Marjorie cried in an alarmed tone. Glancing out from the glassed door nearest to her she beheld a good-sized crowd of men collected in front of the dormitory building.

Before Robin could reply, Baretto brought the car to a stop and was out of it and at the door of the tonneau to assist them.

"What happen, I wonder?" he asked excitedly. "Mebbe is Mr. Graham or one his men hurt. You stay here. I go an' see. You don' go up there till I come tell you all is right. Mebbe is the fight."

"We will wait for you here," Marjorie cast concerned eyes toward the crowd of men in an endeavor to pick out Peter Graham in their midst.

As her gaze grew more searching she picked out the builder at the back of the crowd. He seemed to be the main object of attention. His hat was off and his thick white hair was being fluffed out on his head by the wind. He was waving an arm and wagging his head as though making a speech. Far from fighting, the gathering of dark-faced men was orderly. They were evidently listening to Peter Graham in an almost complete silence.

"Marjorie, is it—do you suppose Mr. Graham has been able to gather that crowd of men to work for him? I hardly dare believe it, but, oh, gracious, if it should be true—" Robin clasped her hands.

"If it should be," Marjorie repeated, hope flashing into her anxious face. "They are Italians—mostly." She added the last word as she made the discovery that a sprinkling of the crowd were American. Simultaneous with it she made another discovery. The tall Italian at the edge of the group was Pedro Tomaso. She began to recognize others among that attentive throng who had formerly been Peter Graham's men.

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"They're not *new* men, Robin!" she exclaimed. "They are the same ones who went over to Leslie Cairns's lot."

"There certainly doesn't appear to be any one left over at the garage." As Marjorie called out her discovery Robin had directed her attention toward the garage foundation which had risen since Page and Dean's workmen had gone over to the other enterprise. Only a few days before it had been humming with activity. Now the silence of a tomb hovered over it. Not a man was to be seen nearer to it than those who made up the crowd in front of the dormitory.

"If Signor Baretta doesn't come back this minute we'll simply have to join the crowd." Marjorie's voice was freighted with eagerness. "Something's gone wrong over at the garage and these men have fallen back on Mr. Graham. It must be that. See how respectful they are. Ah-h, here he comes."

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"Oh, Miss Page; Miss Dean; you see there!" The inn keeper pointed joyously to the crowd. "They are the ones to leave Mr. Gra'm. Now it is good enough for them. They have no job atall. Come a man this morning early. Fire these Italianos, fire the Americans, fire these men, Thorne an' Foster. Mebbe fire Miss Car-rins, too, she was here." He vented a funny little chuckle on the last remark.

"That is the most amazing thing I ever heard." Robin stared in a puzzled way at the deserted garage enterprise. "The only one I should imagine who could discharge the whole crowd of men would be Leslie Cairns herself. Perhaps she has sold the operation as it stands."

"No; she don't sell it." A curiously triumphant expression sprang into the Italian's face. "I don't talk yet to Mr. Gra'm, for he is too busy. I talk a little to Tomaso. He tell me this man who fires everybody come to the lot with Thorne and Foster. They both looked scare. He look here, look there. He is verra smart, big tall man. He laugh verra mad. He say to Thorne and Foster: 'You are the couple of skins. You done. Be glad I don't put you in jail. Now you get out!' Then Tomaso hear Foster say: 'You don't understan', Mr. Car-rins.' The big man say: 'Yes; understan' you two thieves.' So, that is Mr. Car-rins who come here. He is the father Miss Car-rins. Then mebbe he can fire Miss Car-rins so she don't come here more."

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

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### LESLIE TENDS TO BUSINESS

The arrival of the father of Leslie Cairns upon the scene of her business activities was, indeed, as Robin had declared, in the light of amazing. More, that he should have suddenly appeared like a devastating whirlwind and summarily discharged the working force engaged in the building of the garage seemed little short of incredible.

"Come on back to the car." Marjorie caught Robin by an arm. "I know you would like to join Mr. Graham, Signor Baretti. Don't think you must stay here with us. That's a man's meeting up there," she nodded toward the crowd. "They wouldn't feel at ease if we went up there. We might spoil the good effect upon them that Mr. Graham is trying for. We'll sit in the car and wait for you two. You go, and help him. You understand the Italian workmen better even than he."

"I go. That is what I want do, but I think I must stay by you." Baretti grew radiant. "Pretty soon I come back with Mr. Gra'm. Then you will hear more that he know." The inn keeper hustled toward the crowd of workmen. Page and Dean picked their way to the car over the rough frozen earth.

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It was fifteen minutes later, and the amazement of the Italian's report had not yet died out between the partners, when the throng around Peter Graham broke up and the workmen went their several ways. As a result of their unexpected discharge from their "fat" job they were a crestfallen set of men.

The Italians had led the movement of return to Peter Graham. With the stolidity of the foreign laborer, a job was a job. If they were thrown out of work in one place, they must find work in another. It mattered not at all to them that they had treacherously deserted Peter Graham. They waited on the scene of their disaster only long enough to learn from Conner, the foreman, that they would be able to collect their pay checks next day at the Hamilton office of Thorne and Foster. Their next move was straight to the dormitory. There they hung about in the cold until the arrival of Peter Graham, which had not been until shortly before Signor Baretti and the partners had arrived.

The builder had on that day been on an unfruitful and discouraging hunt for men. His surprise at finding a sheepish but anxious delegation of jobless men awaiting him had been mixed with grim amusement. He had seized the advantage which he had at once saw was his to lay down the law to them. Of the early morning episode which had brought him his old corps of workmen he had not yet a clear story. He was more interested just then in the effect rather than the cause. The men had asked to be allowed to take up their old work that day. The builder refused the request, and sent them home. "Don't come back tomorrow unless you feel that you are going to stick to me until this job is done," were his parting words to them.

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A little later the builder and Signor Baretti were walking toward the roadster where the partners patiently waited to congratulate Peter Graham on the sudden silver lining that a very gray sky had turned out. The inn keeper insisted that his three friends should go to the inn for something hot to eat and drink. Peter Graham had been too busy to stop for luncheon. He hailed the invitation. Page and Dean found hot chocolate and marguerites appetizing after their stay out in the cold. Even Baretti broke his rule and drank a cup of very strong black coffee.

Around the table the four discussed the unexpected eclipse of the garage operation at length. They hoped to arrive at a logical conclusion regarding the reason for Peter Cairns's high-handed procedure against his daughter's business venture. Greater than the knowledge that their work could now go on, was the wonder of the partners at the summary defeat of Leslie Cairns's dishonorable scheme. Peter Graham was more concerned with the return of the workmen than anything else. He had not passed through three trying years on the campus with Leslie Cairns always a menace. Guiseppe Baretti was filled with secret bliss over one lovely fact. Peter Cairns had received his letter.

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Meanwhile Baretti's new roadster had hardly made port at the inn when Leslie Cairns turned her car into Hamilton Pike, bent on a visit to her garage site. Her special interest, however, was in viewing the dormitory and exulting in the "crimp" she had "handed the prigs and digs." She was well pleased at having "put one over on that cotton-topped carpenter."

With her affairs progressing so smoothly Leslie had not troubled herself to visit the garage site for several days. All that Anton Lavigne had promised to do he had done. She had seen him but once in Hamilton. Then he had visited the Italian quarter as Ravenzo. He had telephoned her to pick him up with her car at a rather lonely spot on Hamilton Pike. A small mustache, shell-rimmed glasses and rough tweed clothing so changed his appearance that she had hardly known him. He had talked with her only as long as it took to reach the railway station where he took the first train for New York. He had assured her of having done his work thoroughly. As the winter wore on toward March and the situation he had promoted remained unchanged she grew more and more pleased with herself. She was not specially pleased with Thorne and Stone. In spite of plenty of help they dragged the building of the garage. She quarreled with them about it whenever she saw either partner. She retained them because of their lack of principle.

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Leslie spun her car along the pike with her usual disregard for speed laws. It was cold and she was



not anxious to remain out long in the sharp wind. She resolved to give the "flivver" and the "success" the "once over," then drive to the Colonial, telephone Doris and invite her to go back to town with her for the rest of the afternoon and evening.

The surprise which had met Robin and Marjorie on reaching the dormitory was a surprise. The situation which Leslie found herself facing was a shock. Her first glance of scowling consternation deepened as she went nearer the garage foundation and neither heard nor saw even a solitary workman. The stillness of the place depressed her. What had happened to her gang of men? Ah! She had it. Thorne and Foster had perhaps laid the men off for a day. She would be charged for the day's work they had not done. The builders would collect it and keep it. Nothing doing! She would drive to their town office and have it out with them.

Leslie shivered as a blast of wind cut through even her fur coat. She ran back to her car and sprang into it. She heard the sound of a hammer tapping away in the dormitory. She grinned derisively as she glanced up at the half completed edifice. Thanks to Lavigne, Bean's settlement house would go a long time without a roof.

## CHAPTER XXV.

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### THE LETTER

Following on the heels of her first shock came disappointment. She reached the three story building where Thorne and Foster had established temporary office to find the door of the office locked and a sign tacked to the outside door panel which bore the information: "Gone for the day."

"Who told them they could go?" she sulkily muttered. "Wait till I see that pair. All they do is loaf and rob me. They're slackers. That old cotton-top Bean has working for her is worth more than a dozen of these slackers."

Leslie swung petulantly down the one flight of stairs to the street. The wind whistled in her face causing her to duck her head into her high fur collar.

"It's too cold to drive back to the campus," she concluded. "I'll run the car into the garage and hunt for cover. The hotel for me tonight. I'll go there and stay there." She promised herself that next day she would make it a point to go to the garage site and see what was going on. She could pick up Doris then at the Colonial and take her back to town.

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She drove to the garage, saw the car housed and battled her way against the wind the distance of one block to the hotel. At the desk the clerk handed her a letter. Leslie stared at the address in fascination. Her face turned as nearly white as its swarthiness would permit. Her lips moved as though she were trying to speak and could not. Her hands shook so violently she dropped the letter on the tessellated marble floor.

She bent to retrieve it, and nearly lost her balance. Sight of certain black, jagged handwriting all but drained her of strength. She walked to the door of the elevator steadily enough, but her knees weakened under her as she stood and waited for what seemed an age for the descending cage.

"Great Scott!" she breathed in a voice not quite steady as the door of her room closed behind her. She stumbled over to a chair and fell into it. "I never had such a wobbly time in all my life before," she said aloud again. "I'm glad to see that writing."

Leslie was so staggered at seeing again the characteristic handwriting of Peter Cairns she had only one idea. Her father had written her a letter. In the exultant glow she experienced as she tore open the envelope she lost her first panic of agitation.

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Her hands began to tremble anew as she hastily tore the envelope across, in order to quickly get at the letter inside it. Two sheets of his club paper brought a sparkle to her eyes. She unfolded them and read with hungry concentration:

"LESLIE:

"So long as you minded your own affairs and did not involve others in your ridiculous schemes I decided to let you go on and see if you had any common sense. You have shown so little of this necessary quality I have been compelled to interfere and undo, if possible, the mischief you have done.

"There are two ways of doing business; a wise way and a foolish way. Business enterprises are conducted in order to bring wealth to their promoters; not for the purpose of "getting even" with another, or others. I know precisely what you have been doing since you disgraced yourself and me at college. I have not once approved of you. Your purchase of a certain piece of property near the college was typical of your business idiocy. Some day you may learn why.

"When you were a youngster I had some hope of helping you to the career you fancied. You are very far away from that point of intelligence now. Prudence should have taught you never to buck against an institution of learning of the traditional worth and material wealth of Hamilton College.

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"I have put a definite end to your silly, wasteful garage venture. You chose the last site suitable for a public garage. If you make an effort, no matter how small, or as you may believe, secret, to carry on this enterprise or to have another carry it on for you, I will wipe out your fortune and send you to business college. You have shown sufficient lack of gray matter to insure my closer guardianship over you, as your father. For the present Mrs. Gaylord will remain your chaperon. You thought no doubt in the beginning that you engaged her. I daresay you know differently now. Women seldom keep their secrets. You will arrange to be in New York not later than the fifteenth of this month. You are not to return to Hamilton. I have seen Lavigne and had matters out with him. You deceived him, but he should have known better than to bother with you. He has changed his address. You may be interested in this news.

"In New York you will select a suitable apartment for yourself and Mrs. Gaylord and resume your friendship with Natalie Weyman. She is a shallow creature, but at least has social pride. You are to devote yourself to society for a while. Perhaps in that way you may get over your business fallacy.

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With a kind of howl such as a mourning, solitary creature of the wild might utter, Leslie dropped her head on her arms. She had ever been careless of the feelings of others; always ready to sneer at even her friends. Now for the first time in her selfish life she had been cut to the heart by words.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

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### AT THE ARMS

A few days of work on the part of a steady and greatly chastened crew of men convinced Peter Graham that his return to good fortune was not a dream. At the garage site nothing stirred save the wind-swept branches of the trees and drifting dead leaves or swaying frozen weeds.

Leslie Cairns had not waited in Hamilton for the coming of the fifteenth of March. She and Mrs. Gaylord had gone to New York on the day following the receipt of her letter. She had not said good-bye to Doris. She intended to write the sophomore. Further she would go back to Hamilton later, if she chose. Her first grief at her father's cutting letter had changed into a slow-kindling resentment. It promised presently to dominate her future acts. She had determined to learn for herself when she returned to New York if her father could wipe out her entire fortune. It consisted of several gilt-edged investments. She was confident she would find a way to secure at least a part of it from him. She would fight him through the courts, should he try to impoverish her. He had cast her out of his affections. She would stamp out her regard for him.

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While she vengefully sulked and prepared for a hasty departure from Hamilton, Marjorie and Jerry Macy had joined the household at Hamilton Arms. Their first sensations had been those of strangeness of their roomy quarters after the closer confinement of Wayland Hall. They had a somberly beautiful suite of sitting room, immense sleeping room with twin carved mahogany beds and bathroom containing the luxury of a sunken bath.

They had made a triumphal entry into the Arms surrounded by their chums who had been invited to celebrate the arrival of the beloved guests. The Travelers had delivered Marjorie and Jerry into Miss Susanna's keeping with an exuberance of joy resulting from their appreciation of the triumph of Page and Dean over Leslie Cairns. From Baretta's, Robin and Marjorie had hurried to Wayland Hall, gathered their chums into Room 15, and joyfully told them the news. In consequence, the elation attending the disclosure served to banish the wretch of parting.

The Saturday afternoon following their move to the Arms Miss Susanna gave a reception in honor of the Travelers to the dormitory girls. The guests of honor assembled on Friday night, burdened with their reception finery. They stayed that night at the Arms and did their own decorating of the stately rooms the next morning. In honor of their senior "dorms" a flower scheme of daffodils and violets had been carried out in fragrant profusion in all the rooms and at the tables of the famous Chinese tea room where sweets, ices and tea were served. Purple and gold were the senior colors and the modest senior dorms were inclined to be somewhat abashed at this compliment to them. Anna Towne plaintively expressed their opinion when she said: "All this attention makes us believe we count. I hope we do!"

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Marjorie had been at the Arms a week before Miss Susanna mentioned Brooke Hamilton in connection with the literary labor to be performed. She understood Miss Hamilton well enough to guess that the peculiar old lady was not yet ready to talk about the biography Marjorie was to write.

"I suppose you've been wondering, Marvelous Manager, why you haven't been set to work as an author and biographer," Miss Hamilton addressed Marjorie from the sunny bow window of the old-time sitting room where she had been watering a fragrant rosy mass of window box sweet peas. She picked half a dozen dainty clusters of them and trotted over to Marjorie with them. She tucked them into Marjorie's thick curls, rolled up at the back of her shapely young head. "There, you look like the awakening of spring, child," she declared. "Come, now, you and I will go up to the study."

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"Really, Miss Susanna?" Marjorie sprang up from her chair, radiant at the prospect.

"Yes, really. You're not polite, or you'd take what I say for granted."

"Always, in future," promised Marjorie, holding up one hand. She wound her other arm about Miss Hamilton's waist.

"Jerry has gone to the garage with Jonas for the car. While she is bringing it up I am going to do something for you which seems important to me. I am going to introduce you to Uncle Brooke. He will welcome you as a friend and make over to you all his papers."

Miss Susanna paused, her eyes searching Marjorie's face in the bright, bird-like way which meant accurate appraisal.

"Go on; please do," Marjorie breathed, showing her utter fascination of the supernatural-sounding announcement. "It is such a beautiful thought, that of going with you to his study to be introduced to him as a friend. Afterward I will gradually come to the point where I can look over his papers and not feel—" Marjorie studied an instant—"like an old Paul Pry," she added, smiling.

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"Precisely my idea," emphasized the mistress of the Arms. "Let's be on our way." She wound an arm around Marjorie's waist. Wise youth and youthful age paraded out into the hall and up the broad staircase, clinging to each other in fond, school girl way.

The door of the study was a little ajar, as though someone within the room had anticipated the visit of Miss Susanna. The study door was generally closed. Marjorie knew Miss Susanna had set it to

suit her fancy.

The two paused before the door. Miss Hamilton gently drew herself free from Marjorie's arm. She lifted a hand and rapped lightly on a door panel. Then she stood in an attitude of alert listening. Marjorie knew she was re-acting a daily episode of the long ago. "He is there," she said softly to Marjorie. "I will go first. Follow me."

## CHAPTER XXVII.

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### THE INTRODUCTION

"Good morning, Uncle Brooke. I have brought my friend, Marjorie Dean to meet you. I hope you are feeling your splendid best today."

Miss Susanna's voice, gently modulated until nothing remained of its natural quick, brisk quality, filled Marjorie with an impulse to cry. It was not that gentle voice alone which awoke her emotion. She was looking straight toward a face, strong, proud, with an almost haughty set of noble dark head on broad but sloping shoulders. Eyes, startling in their blueness, a firm mouth, somehow suggesting humor and shaded by a close-clipped dark mustache.

Marjorie had seen portraits of Brooke Hamilton. She had never before seen this particular painting of him. She understood, instantly she beheld it, why Miss Susanna should take pleasure in regarding it as life-like enough to merit an introduction. It had been evidently painted when he was perhaps thirty and in the glory of his manhood. It was a life-size study of head and shoulders far finer than any other of him she had previously seen at the Arms.

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A choking sensation rose in her throat. She fought it back, clenching her hands and resisting sturdily the impulse to cry. It seemed an age since Miss Susanna had spoken. In reality it was not more than two minutes.

"Uncle Brooke, let me introduce Marjorie Dean. You wrote the fourteenth maxim for her, though you did not then know it. Marjorie Dean, let me present you to my great uncle, Brooke Hamilton. He wishes to give you his confidence." Again Miss Susanna's voice rose and fell gently on the sunlit study.

"Good morning, my friend, Brooke Hamilton. I accept your confidence as sacred. I will never disturb the inner deeps." Marjorie gazed at the handsome manly face through a mist.

"Because I have called you friend I will neither measure out friendship to you in quantity nor lay a restriction upon it." It was Miss Susanna who followed Marjorie's exalted promise with Brooke Hamilton's own creed of friendship.

"I thank you, Mr. Brooke Hamilton." Marjorie bowed sedately. Next instant her sedate air broke up in a winsome smile. She thought the man in the portrait looked as though he might have enjoyed fun and laughter as well as profound consciousness of responsibility.

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"And now you've been introduced," Miss Susanna said naively. "I had Jonas put this portrait away for awhile. It used to hang in my private sitting room. I was afraid you might see it before I was ready to have you. It was painted by a young Frenchman named Blaneau. He died at twenty-seven. He would have no doubt been ranked as the greatest portrait painter of his time had he lived. Such is the history of the most natural picture of my uncle I have. He claimed it to be such. If you like it, it is to stay here and be your inspiration. Truly, I think the presence of it in the room will help you."

"I know it will." Marjorie said fervently. "Oh, Miss Susanna, do you think I am great enough of spirit to do him justice?"

"I know you are." Miss Hamilton's tone was victoriously certain. "Would you be amazed if I were to say that you are like him in some respects? You are. Your ideals are in keeping with his. He believed most of all in the romance of deeds, rather than of love. He gloried in action; the kind that would most benefit the most people. Yet he found after all that love was love, that the romance of men and women—"

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Miss Susanna stopped. Came a tense hush. The idea of Brooke Hamilton as in love had never before presented itself to Marjorie. "The romance of men and women" repeated itself in Marjorie's brain. There it was again. It was not for her. She would write the biography of Brooke Hamilton, promote the interests of the dormitory. She would continue to hug the romance of deeds to her heart.

She did not know that romance was still waiting patiently for her around a future corner.

She did not know that beauty and romance hate separation; that true love seeks true natures. She had yet to earn that true romance was the inner heart of love. Her bold sister, adventure, belonged to deeds. How she learned the lesson of love from one who had learned it too late for happiness will be told in "MARJORIE DEAN'S ROMANCE."

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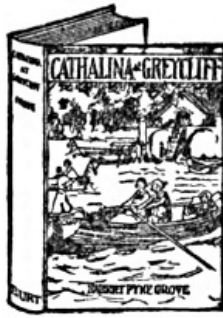
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Transcriber's note:

- Page 3, comma inserted after 'Warniferous,' "better, Luciferous Warniferous, than"
- Page 7, full stop struck after 'Such—,' "Jerry. "Such—" She broke"
- Page 8, comma changed to full stop following 'laugh,' "ended with a laugh."
- Page 8, 'Remsen's' changed to 'Remson's,' "cushion at Miss Remson's"
- Page 8, 'thrifly' changed to 'thrifily,' "had thrifily set a small"
- Page 10, opening double quote struck before 'Make,' "me. Make them understand"
- Page 11, 'rythm' changed to 'rhythm,' "sense of rhythm"
- Page 11, 'Wienawski' changed to 'Wieniawski,' "waltz by Wieniawski while"
- Page 11, 'querry' changed to 'query,' "general breathless query"
- Page 14, opening double quote struck before 'They,' "Leila. They made a"
- Page 14, 'Lelia' changed to 'Leila,' "your opinion, Leila"
- Page 17, 'menber' changed to 'member,' "an obliging member of"
- Page 18, opening double quote inserted before 'I,' "smile. "I am here"
- Page 18, opening double quote inserted before 'She's,' "contradicted. "She's unselfish"
- Page 24, 'Mamilton' changed to 'Hamilton,' "broke in Miss Hamilton"
- Page 32, opening double quote inserted before 'The,' "room. "The other I sent"
- Page 33, 'vizualized' changed to 'visualized,' "had visualized Miss Susanna"
- Page 36, comma changed to full stop following 'question,' "question. She believed"
- Page 38, opening double quote inserted before 'I,' ""I know that I used"
- Page 39, opening double quote inserted before 'That's,' "right. "That's my favorite"
- Page 41, 'embued' changed to 'imbued,' "impulsively, imbued with the"
- Page 41, opening double quote inserted before 'It's,' "sentiment. "It's so comforting"
- Page 43, 'Hamilton's' changed to 'Hamiltons,' "last of the Hamiltons"
- Page 44, 'magnificant' changed to 'magnificent,' "your magnificent foot in"
- Page 44, opening double quote inserted before 'As,' "Room 15. "As it is"
- Page 46, 'o' changed to 'a,' "Through a kind of"
- Page 52, opening double quote inserted before 'Vacate,' "occupant. "Vacate gracefully,"
- Page 63, 'flatter' changed to 'flattering,' "sudden flattering interest"
- Page 67, opening double quote inserted before "Charity," "said: ""Charity begins at"
- Page 68, closing double quote inserted after 'out.,' "us out." Jerry complained"
- Page 70, 'disagreable' changed to 'disagreeable,' "of very disagreeable hours"
- Page 71, 'manuevering' changed to 'maneuvering,' "her own clever maneuvering"
- Page 74, closing double quote inserted after 'alone.,' "I must go alone.""
- Page 77, 'Muried' changed to 'Muriel,' "after Muriel had invited"
- Page 80, 'sich' changed to 'such,' "Minister, and such"
- Page 84, 'Judia' changed to 'Julia,' "when Julia knocked"
- Page 93, 'commenecd' changed to 'commenced,' "her wraps and commenced"
- Page 98, 'Christmass' changed to 'Christmas,' "of the Christmas tree"
- Page 98, 'Lot's' changed to 'Lots,' "Lots of good eats"
- Page 99, 'crystalized' changed to 'crystallized,' "the frost-like crystalized"
- Page 100, 'Shool' changed to 'School,' "at Sanford High School"
- Page 103, opening double quote struck before 'Why,' "since dinner. Why did"
- Page 104, 'Lelia' changed to 'Leila,' "commented Leila with"
- Page 104, second 'stars.'" struck, "consult the stars.""
- Page 105, 'exhuberent' changed to 'exuberant,' "of exuberant raillery"
- Page 107, 'grippng' changed to 'gripping,' "girl a gripping handshake"
- Page 108, 'volumious' changed to 'voluminous,' "with a voluminous white"
- Page 109, 'threatend' changed to 'threatened,' "he threatened with smiles"
- Page 111, opening double quote struck before 'Santa,' "Santa Claus's eight reindeer"
- Page 111, 'therby' changed to 'thereby,' "times, thereby giving"
- Page 115, 'intrduction' changed to 'introduction,' "was her introduction to"

Page 115, 'pardner' changed to 'partner,' "Seabrooke as a partner"

Page 116, 'pardner' changed to 'partner,' "Marjorie's partner chanced"

Page 120, 'you, merry' changed to 'you merry,' "God rest you merry,"

Page 121, comma changed to full stop following 'Susanna,' "N'est ce pas, Miss Susanna."

Page 121, 'Hamilton's' changed to 'Hamiltons,' "the last of the Hamiltons"

Page 123, 'impedementa' changed to 'impedimenta,' "other civil impedimenta will"

Page 123, 'confiscated' changed to 'confiscated,' "will be confiscated by"

Page 124, 'bouyant' changed to 'buoyant,' "began a buoyant descent"

Page 124, 'manuevers' changed to 'maneuvers,' "military maneuvers of the"

Page 125, 'misletoe' changed to 'mistletoe,' "under the mistletoe bough"

Page 126, full stop inserted after 'tritely,' "she quoted tritely."

Page 127, 'apolegetic' changed to 'apologetic,' "He grew cheerfully apologetic"

Page 127, 'pardner' changed to 'partner,' "and your partner away"

Page 128, 'daiz' changed to 'dais,' "about the golden dais"

Page 130, 'to-to' changed to 'to—to,' "going to—to—cry"

Page 131, 'gryated' changed to 'gyrated,' "which gyrated so rapidly"

Page 140, 'uneasines' changed to 'uneasiness,' "a feeling of uneasiness"

Page 147, 'decidely' changed to 'decidedly,' "feeling decidedly in awe"

Page 149, full stop inserted after 'truths,' "plain truths. Her one"

Page 150, 'dwaddled' changed to 'dawdled,' "they dawdled over their"

Page 153, comma inserted after 'about,' "asked me about, Leslie"

Page 161, 'temperary' changed to 'temporary,' "her temporary abode"

Page 176, semicolon changed to comma after 'indifferent,' "walk, indifferent, swaggering"

Page 180, 'back gammon' changed to 'backgammon,' "chess or backgammon of"

Page 182, comma inserted after 'dark-faced,' "the dark-faced, suave"

Page 187, 'fightng' changed to 'fighting,' "fighting to assert"

Page 191, 'thought' changed to 'though,' "Beauty, though I do not"

Page 191, 'prouldy' changed to 'proudly,' "as she proudly raised"

Page 192, opening double quote inserted before 'Signor,' "she surmised. "Signor Baretti"

Page 193, opening double quote inserted before 'She,' "I'm sure. "She sprang"

Page 194, 'Traveles' changed to 'Travelers,' "None of the Travelers"

Page 196, 'room-mate' changed to 'roommate,' "her hungry roommate"

Page 200, 'speakng' changed to 'speaking,' "He ceased speaking and"

Page 205, 'unscupulous' changed to 'unscrupulous,' "of unscrupulous cleverness"

Page 206, opening double quote inserted before 'What,' "laughed Robin. "What are"

Page 208, 'voluably' changed to 'volubly,' "sputtered volubly to"

Page 209, 'conscienciously' changed to 'conscientiously,' "not conscientiously begin"

Page 209, 'consciencious' changed to 'conscientious,' "such a conscientious child"

Page 211, 'behooved' changed to 'behoed,' "it behoved him to"

Page 213, 'allaw' changed to 'allow,' "her father could allow"

Page 215, 'she' inserted before 'had,' "which she had pulled"

Page 215, 'Jerry' changed to 'Jerry,' "Jerry said quickly."

Page 215, opening double quote inserted before 'Don't,' "quickly. "Don't weep, Bean"

Page 217, full stop changed to comma following 'you,' "Thank you, oh, thank"

Page 217, 'It' changed to 'If,' "If you hear blood-curdling"

Page 220, 'pardners's' changed to 'partners's,' "the partners's united"

Page 221, 'room-mate' changed to 'roommate,' "she is my roommate"

Page 227, comma inserted after 'declared,' "declared, in the light"

Page 228, 'pardners' changed to 'partners,' "between the partners, when"

Page 228, 'pardners' changed to 'partners,' "and the partners had"

Page 229, 'stiick' changed to 'stick,' "going to stick to me"

Page 231, 'afternon' changed to 'afternoon,' "of the afternoon and"

Page 232, 'Lesliie' changed to 'Leslie,' "which Leslie found herself"

Page 234, 'latter' changed to 'letter,' "handed her a letter"  
Page 234, 'tessalated' changed to 'tessellated,' "the tessellated marble floor"  
Page 234, 'She' inserted before 'stumbled,' "behind her. She stumbled"  
Page 240, 'Sussana' changed to 'Susanna,' "Miss Susanna mentioned"  
Page 241, opening double quote inserted before 'There,' "head. "There, you look"  
Page 241, opening double quote inserted before 'Come,' "declared. "Come, now, you"  
Page 242, dash inserted before 'like,' "—like an old Paul"  
Page 244, comma inserted after 'Dean,' "Marjorie Dean, let me"  
Page 244, 'Majorie' changed to 'Marjorie,' "Marjorie gazed at"  
Page 245, comma inserted after 'Susanna,' "Miss Susanna, do you"  
Ad Page 4, 'ALLENS' changed to 'ALLEN'S,' "AT MISS ALLEN'S SCHOOL"

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK MARJORIE DEAN AT HAMILTON ARMS \*\*\*

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