North Grace May

Sisters

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Содержание

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CHAPTER I.
HOW IT BEGAN

Gold and blue were the colors that predominated on one glorious April day. Gold were the fields of poppies that carpeted the foothills stretching down to the very edge of Rocky Point, against which the jewel-blue Pacific lapped quietly. It was at that hour of the tides when the surf is stilled.

A very old adobe house surrounded on three sides by wide verandas, the pillars of which were eucalyptus logs, stood about two hundred feet back from the point. Rose vines, clambering at will over the picturesque old dwelling, were a riot of colors. There was the exquisite pink Cecil Brunner in delicate, long-stemmed clusters; Gold of Ophir blossoms in a mass glowing in the sunshine, while intertwined were the vines of the star-like white Cherokee and Romona, the red.

Mingled with their fragrance was the breath of heliotrope which grew, bushwise, at one corner so luxuriantly that often it had to be cut away lest it cover the gravel path which led around the house to the orchard. There, under fruit trees that

were each a lovely bouquet of pearly bloom, stood row after row of square white hives, while bees, busy at honey gathering, buzzed everywhere.

Now and then, clear and sweet, rose the joyous song of mating birds.

A little old woman, seated in a rustic rocker on the western side porch, dropped her sewing on her lap and smiled on the scene with blissful content. What a wonderful world it was and how happy she and Silas had been since Jenny came. She glanced across the near gardens, aglow with early bloom, to a patch of ploughed brown earth where an old man was cultivating between rows of green shoots, some of them destined to produce field corn for the cow and chickens, and the rest sweet corn for the sumptuous table of Mrs. Poindexter-Jones.

Then the gaze of the little old woman continued a quarter of a mile along the rocky shore to a grove of sycamore trees, where stood the castle-like home of the richest woman in Santa Barbara township. Only the topmost turrets could be seen above the towering treetops. The vast grounds were surrounded by a high cypress hedge, and, not until he reached the wrought iron gates could a passer-by obtain a view of the magnificence that lay within. But the little old woman knew it all in detail, as she had been housekeeper there for many years, until, in middle-age, she had married Silas Warner, who managed the farm for Mrs. Algernon Poindexter-Jones.

For the past fifteen years the happy couple had lived in the

old adobe house at Rocky Point, while at Poindexter Arms, as the beautiful estate was named, there had been a succession of housekeepers and servants, for their mistress was domineering and hard to please.

Of late years the grand dame had seldom been seen by the kindly old farmer, Si Warner and his wife, for Mrs. Poindexter-Jones had preferred to live in her equally palatial home in San Francisco overlooking the Golden Gate.

She visited Santa Barabra periodically, merely to assure herself that her orders were being carried out by the servants left in charge of Poindexter Arms and Rocky Point farm. Often Mrs. Si Warner did not catch a glimpse of their employer on these fleeting visits, and yet she well knew that the imperious mistress of millions was linked more closely than she liked to remember to the old couple at Rocky Point.

As she resumed her sewing, memory recalled to her that long ago incident which, by the merest chance, had made the proud woman and the humble, sharers of a secret which neither had cared to divulge.

It had been another spring day such as this, only they had all been younger by fourteen years.

While ploughing in the lot nearest the highway, Farmer Si had noticed a strange equipage drawn to one side of the road. He thought little of it at first, believing it to be a traveling tinsmith, as the canopied wagon was evidently furnished with household utensils, but, when an hour later, he again reached that side of the

field and saw the patient horse still standing there with drooping head and no one in sight, his curiosity was aroused, and, leaping over the rail fence, he went to investigate.

Under that weather-stained canopy a sad tragedy had been enacted. On the driver's seat a young man, clothed in a garb of a clergyman, seemed to be sleeping, but a closer scrutiny revealed to the farmer that the Angel of Death had visited the little home on wheels. For a home it evidently had been. In the roomier part of the wagon a beautiful little girl of three sat on a stack of folded bedding, while in a crude box-like crib a sickly looking infant lay sleeping.

Whenever Mrs. Silas Warner recalled that long ago day, she again experienced the varying emotions which had come to her following each other in rapid succession. She had been ironing when she had seen a queer canopied equipage coming up the lane which led from the highway. Believing it to be a peddlar, who now and then visited their farm, she had gone to the side porch, there to have her curiosity greatly aroused by the fact that it was her husband Si who was on the seat of the driver. Then her surprise had been changed to alarm when she learned of the three who were under the canopy. Awe, because she was in the presence of death, and tender sympathy for the little ones, who had evidently been orphaned, mingled in the heart of the woman as she held the scrawny, crying infant that her husband had given to her. Even with all these crowding emotions there had yet been room for admiration, when the little three-year-old

girl was lifted down. The child stood apart, quiet and aloof. She had heard them say that her father was dead. She was too young to understand and so she just waited. A rarely beautiful child, with a tangled mass of light brown, sun-glinted hair hanging far below her shoulders, and wide, wondering brown eyes that were shaded with long curling lashes.

But still another emotion had been stirred in the heart of Susan Warner, for a most unexpected and unusual visitor had at that moment arrived. A coach, bearing the Poindexter Arms, turned into the lane, and when the liveried footman threw open the door, there sat no less a personage than the grand dame, Mrs. Algernon Poindexter-Jones, on one of her very infrequent visits to the farm which belonged to her estate. She had been charmed with the little girl, and after having heard the story, she announced that she would keep the child until relatives were found. Then she was driven away, without having stated her errand, and accompanying her, still quietly aloof, rode the three-year-old girl. A doctor and coroner soon arrived, having been summoned by Mrs. Poindexter-Jones. The latter had searched the effects of the dead man and had found an unfinished letter addressed to a bishop in the Middle West. In it the man had told of his wife's death, and that he was endeavoring to keep on with his traveling missionary work in outlying mountain districts, but that his heart attacks were becoming threateningly more frequent. "There is no relative in all the world with whom to leave Gwynette, who is now three, and little Jeanette, who is

completing her first year." No more had been written.

After the funeral Mrs. Poindexter-Jones had announced that she would adopt the older child and that, if they wished, the farmer and his wife might keep the scrawny baby on one condition, and that was that the girls should never be told that they were sisters. To this the childless couple had rejoicingly agreed. The doctor and coroner had also been sworn to secrecy. The dead man's effects were stored in the garret above the old adobe and the incident was closed.

Mrs. Poindexter-Jones left almost at once for Europe, where she had remained for several years.

Tenderly loved, and nourished with the best that the farm could produce, the scrawny, ill-looking infant had gradually changed to a veritable fairy of sunshine. "Jenny," as they called her, feeling that Jeanette was a bit too grand, walked with a little skipping step from the time that she was first sure that she would not tumble, and looked up, with laughter in her lovely eyes, that were the same liquid brown as were her sister's, and tossed back her long curls that were also light brown with threads of sunlight in them. And ever after, there were little skipping steps to her walk, and, when she talked, it seemed as though at any moment she might break into song.

Jenny had never questioned her origin. She had always been with Granny Sue and Granddad Si, and so, of course, that proved that she belonged to them. She was too happy, just being alive, to create problems for herself to solve, and too busy.

There had been too few children on the neighboring ranches to maintain a country school, and Jenny had been too young to send on a bus to Santa Barbara each day, but her education had not been neglected, for a charming and cultured young woman living not far away had taught her through the years, and she had learned much that other girls of her age did not know.

When the weather was pleasant Jenny, her school books under her arm, walked to the hill-top home of her teacher, Miss Dearborn, but during the rainy season her grandfather hitched their faithful Dobbin to the old-fashioned, topped buggy and drove her to her destination in the morning, calling for her in the late afternoon.

But on one wild March day when Jenny had been thirteen, an unexpected storm had overtaken her as she was walking home along the coast highway.

Luckily she had worn her mackintosh, but as she was passing between wide, treeless meadows that reached to the sea on one side and a briary hill on the other, there had been no shelter in sight.

However, a low gray car had soon appeared around a bend and the driver, a youth whose face was hidden by cap, collar and goggles, had offered her a ride. Gladly she had accepted and had been taken to her home, where, to her surprise, Grandmother Sue had welcomed the lad with sincerest pleasure. That had been the first time Jenny Warner had met Harold, the only son of their employer, Mrs. Poindexter-Jones.

His visit had brought consternation to the little family at Rocky Point, for, inadvertently, he had told the old man that his mother planned selling the farm when she could find a suitable buyer.

The old woman sitting on the side porch dropped her sewing to her lap as she recalled that long-ago scene in the kitchen.

The farmer had been for the moment almost stunned by the news, then looking up at the boy with a pitiful attempt at a smile, he had said waveringly:

"I reckon you see how 'tis, Harry-boy. We've been livin' here at Rocky Point so long, it's sort o' got to feelin' like home to us, but you tell your ma that the Warners'll be ready to move when she says the word."

The boy had been much affected, and, after assuring them that perhaps a buyer would not be found, he had taken his departure.

When he had gone, Jenny had cuddled in her grandfather's arms and he had held her close. Susan Warner remembered that the expression on his face had been as though he were thanking God that they had their "gal". With her irrepressible enthusiasm the girl had exclaimed:

"I have the most wonderful plan! Let's buy Rocky Point Farm, and then it will be all our very own."

"Lawsy, child," Susan Warner had remonstrated, "it'd cost a power o' money, and it's but a few hundred that we've laid by."

But Jenny had a notion that she wanted to try out. "Granny, granddad," she turned from first one to the other and her

voice was eager, earnest, pleading: "Every Christmas since I can remember you've given me a five-dollar gold piece to be saving for the time when I might be all alone in the world. I want to spend them now." Then she unfolded her plan. She wanted to buy hens and bees. "You were a wonderful beekeeper when you were a boy, granddad," she insisted. "You have told me so time and again, and I just know that I can sell eggs and honey to the rich people over on the foothill estates, and then, when we have saved money enough, we can buy the farm and have it for our very own home forever and ever."

The old couple knew that this would be impossible, but, since they had not the heart to disappoint their darling, the scheme had been tried. Every Saturday morning during the summer that she had been thirteen, Jenny, high on the buckboard seat, had driven old Dobbin up and down the long winding tree-hung lanes in the aristocratic foothill suburb of Santa Barbara. At first her wares were only eggs from her flocks of white Minorka hens, but, when she was fourteen, jars of golden strained honey were added, and gradually, among her customers, she came to be known as "The Honey Girl" from Rocky Point Farm. And now Jenny was fifteen.

Susan Warner was startled from her day-dreams by the shrill whistle of the rural mail carrier. Neatly folding her sewing (and Granny Sue would neatly fold her sewing if she were running away from a fire), the old woman went to the side porch nearest the lane where the elderly Mr. Pickson was then stopping to leave

the Rural Weekly for Mr. Silas Warner and a note from Miss Isophene Granger for "The Honey Girl."

"I reckon it's a fresh order for honey or eggs or such," the smiling old woman told him. The mail carrier agreed with her.

"I reckon 'tis! There's a parcel o' new girls over to the seminary," was his comment as he turned his horse's head toward the gate, then with a short nod he drove away.

Susan Warner went back into the kitchen, and, feeling sure that the note was not of a private nature, she unfolded the paper and read the message, which was couched in the formal language habitually used by the principal of the fashionable seminary.

"Miss Isophene Granger desires six dozen eggs to be delivered this afternoon not later than five."

The old woman glanced at the clock. "Tut! Tut! And here it's close to three. I reckon I'd better be gatherin' the eggs this once. Jenny says it's her work, but it'll be all she can do to get there, with Dobbin to hitch and what not."

Taking her sunbonnet from its hook by the kitchen door, the old woman went out to the barnyard where, in neat, wired-in spaces, there were several flocks of white Minorka hens. After filling the large basket that she carried with eggs, Susan Warner returned through the blossoming orchard, and although she was unconscious of it, she smiled and nodded at the bees that were so busily gathering honey; then she thought of her girl.

"Dear lovin' child that she is!" The faded blue eyes of the old woman were tender. "Si and me never lets on that her plan can't

come to nothin'. 'Twould nigh break her heart. All told there's not more'n seven hundred now in the bank, an' the farm, when they come to sell it, is like to bring most that an acre, or leastwise so Pa reckons."

But later, as Susan Warner was sorting the eggs and placing them in boxes holding a dozen each, she took a more optimistic view of the matter.

"It's well to be workin' and savin', how-some-ever," she concluded. "Our darlin'll need it all an' more when her granddad an me are took." Then, before the old woman could wipe away the tears that always came when she thought of leaving Jenny, her eyes brightened, and, peering out of a window near she exclaimed aloud (although there was only a canary to hear), "Wall now, here comes Jenny this minute, singin' and skippin' up the lane, like the world couldn't hold a trouble. Bless the happy heart of her!"

CHAPTER II.
JENNY

Susan Warner turned to beam a welcome at the apparition standing in the open door of the kitchen. With the sun back of her, shining through the folds of her yellow muslin dress and glinting through her light, wavy brown hair, the girl did indeed look like a sprite of the springtime, and, to add to the picture, she held a branch, sweet with apricot blossoms.

"Greetings, Granny Sue!" she called gayly. "This is churning day, isn't it?"

"That's right, 'tis, Jenny darlin', or leastwise 'twould o' been 'ceptin' for a message Mr. Pickson fetched over from Granger Place Seminary. There's some new pupils come sudden like, I reckon, an' they need eggs a day sooner than ordinary. I've got 'em all packed in the hamper, dearie. You've nothin' to do but hitch Dobbin and start."

"Righto, Granny Sue; but first I must put these poor blossoms into a jar. I found the branch broken and just hanging by a shred of bark on that old tree 'way down by the fence corner."

Jenny took a brown jar from a cupboard as she talked and filled it with water from the sink pump.

"They'll be lonely for their home tree, like as not," she chattered on, "but perhaps they'll be a bit glad when they find

that they are to brighten up our home for a few days. Don't you think maybe they will, Granny Sue? Don't you think when we can't do the thing we most want to do, we still can be happy if we are just alive and doing the most beautiful thing that is left for us to do?"

This last was called over her shoulder as she carried the jar and blossoming branch toward the door of the living-room. Luckily she did not pause for an answer, for the little old woman always felt confused when her girl began such flights of fancy. Had she been obliged to reply, she no doubt would have said:

"Why, 'taint likely, Jenny, that branch of apricot flowers even knows it's broken off, an' as for that, the ones that are left will make all the better fruit with some of 'em gone."

While the girl was placing the jar on the living-room center table, close to the book that she had been reading, Granddad Si entered the kitchen for a drink, and upon hearing of the message from Miss Granger, he hurried to the barn to hitch old Dobbin to the cart, and so, when five minutes later the girl skipped out, laughing over her shoulder at her grandmother's admonition to go more slowly, lest she fall and break the eggs, there was Granddad Si fastening the last buckles. He straightened up, pushed his frayed straw hat to the back of his head and surveyed the girl with pardonable pride.

"Jenny, gal," he began, and from the expression in his eyes she knew just how he would complete the sentence, and so, laughingly, she put her free hand over his mouth.

"Oh, granddad, 'tisn't so, not the least bit, and you mustn't say it again. A stranger might hear you some time, and what if he should think that I really believed it."

But the old man finished his sentence, even though the words were mumbled behind the slim white hand of his girl:

"It's the Gospel truth, Jenny. I'm tellin' ye! Thar ain't a gal over to that hifalutin seminary that's half as purty as yo' be. I reckon I know, 'cause I watch the whole lot of 'em when they go down the road on them parade walks they take, with a teacher ahead and one behind like they was a flock of geese and had to have a gooseherd along, which more'n like they are. A silly parcel, allays gigglin'."

The last half of this speech had been more clearly spoken, for Jenny, having kissed him on the top of the nose from the wagon step, had climbed into the cart.

As she was driving away, she called back to him: "Wrong you are, Granddad, for I am only an egg and honey vender, while they are all aristocrats. Good-bye."

Then, a second later, she turned again to sing out:

"Tell Granny I'd like a chocolate pudding tonight, all hidden in Brindle's yellowest cream."

Long after the girl had driven away, the farmer stood gazing down the lane. An old question had returned to trouble him:

Was it honest not to tell her that she wasn't their own kin?

He couldn't do it. It would break all of their hearts. She was their kin, somehow. No own grandchild could be dearer. Then he

thought of the other girl, Jenny's sister. He had heard something that day about her, and he had been mighty sorry to hear it.

When his "gal" disappeared from sight, up one of the tree-shaded lanes leading toward the foothill estates, Farmer Si turned and walked slowly back to the kitchen. He delivered Jenny's message about the chocolate pudding to his wife, who, even then, was preparing the vegetables for supper. Crossing to the sink pump, the old man began working the handle up and down. A rush of crystal clear water rewarded his effort and, after having quaffed a long refreshing draught of it, he wiped his mouth with the back of his hand.

Then, after hanging his hat on its nail by the door, he sank down in his favorite arm chair close to the stove and sighed deeply as though he were very weary. His wife looked at him questioningly and he said in a voice and manner which were evidently evasive:

"Powerful poor weather for gettin' the crops started. Nothin' but sunshine this fortnight past."

Susan Warner was briskly beating the eggs needed for her darling's favorite pudding. When the whirr had ceased she turned and smiled across the room at the old man whose position showed that he was dejected. "What's worryin' yo', Si?" The tone of the old woman's voice promised sympathy if it were needed. "'Tisn't about the farm yo're really cogitatin'. I can tell that easy. Thar's suthin' else troublin' yo', an' yo' might as well speak out furst as last."

"Wall, yo're close to right, Susan, as I reckon yo' most allays are. I was mendin' the fence down by the highway when ol' Pickson drove up an' stopped to pass the time o' day, like he generally does, an' he says, says he, 'Si, have yo' heard the news?' I w'a'nt particular interested, bein' as Pickson allays starts off that a-way, but what he said next fetched me to an upstandin', I kin tell you."

Susan Warner had stopped her work to listen.

"What did Mr. Pickson tell you, Si? Suthin' that troubled you?" she inquired anxiously.

"Wall, sort o' that way. Mabbe it won't be nuthin' to worry about, and mabbe agin it will. Pickson said as how Mrs. Poindexter-Jones had gone to some waterin' place over in France for her nerves, an' not wishin' to leave her daughter in the big city up north alone with the servants, she'd sent her to stay in the seminary down here for the time bein', an', what's more, a flock of her friends from San Francisco came along of her. Them are the new pupils you was mentionin' a spell ago, as being the reason extra eggs was needed."

The old woman stared at her spouse as one spellbound. When she spoke her voice sounded strained and unnatural. "Si Warner, do yo' mean to tell me our Jenny has gone to fetch eggs for her very own sister an' her friends? They're likely to meet up wi' each other now, arter all these years, an' neither will know who the other really is. Oh, the pity of it, that one of 'em should have all that money can buy, and the other of 'em ridin' around peddlin'

eggs and honey."

But the old man took a different view of the matter. "Susan," he said, "if our gal had the pick of the two places, I reckon she'd choose stayin' with us. I reckon she would."

Susan Warner's practical nature had again asserted itself. "Wall, there's no need for us to be figurin' about that. Jenny shall never know that she has a sister. Who is there to tell her? An' what's more, she'll never have a chance to choose betwixt us and the Poindexter-Joneses." Then, as a tender expression crept into the faded blue eyes, the old woman added, "Jenny wouldn't leave us, Si. No, not for anyone. I'm sartin as to that, but I'm hopin' she'll never know as she isn't our own. I'm sure hopin' that she won't."

CHAPTER III.
FORLORN ETTA

Dobbin never could be induced to go faster than a gentle trot and this pace was especially pleasing to his driver on a day when the world, all the world that she knew, was at its loveliest. Having left the coast highway, she turned up the Live-Oak Canon road and slowly began the ascent toward the foothills.

There was no one in sight for, indeed, one seldom met pedestrians along the winding lanes in the aristocratic suburb of Santa Barbara. Now and then a handsome limousine would pass and Dobbin, drawing to the far side of the road, would put up his ears and stare at the usurper. He seemed to consider all vehicles not horse-drawn with something of disdain. Then, when it had passed, he again took the middle of the road, which he deemed his rightful place.

"Dobbin," the girl sang out to him, "what would you think, some day, if you saw me riding in one of those fine cars?" Then, as memory recalled a certain stormy day two years previous, Jenny continued, "I never told you, Dobbin, but I did ride in one once. It was a little low gray car and the boy who drove it called it a 'speeder.'"

Then, as Dobbin seemed to consider this conversation not worth listening to, the girl fell to musing.

"I wonder what became of that boy. Harold P-J, he called himself, and he said I mustn't forget the hyphen. He laughed when he said it. There must have been something amusing about it. He was a nice boy with such brotherly gray eyes. He hasn't been back since, I am sure, for he told granddad he would come to the farm the very next time his mother permitted him to visit Santa Barbara." Then Jenny recalled the one and only time that she had seen Harold's mother. It was when she had been ten. She had been out in the garden gathering Shasta daisies to give to Miss Dearborn, her teacher. She had on a yellow dress that day, she recalled; yellow had always been her favorite color and she had been standing knee deep among the flowers with her arms almost full when the grand coach turned into the lane. Jenny had often heard Granny Sue tell about the coach, on the door of which was emblazoned the Poindexter-Arms, and the small girl, filled with a natural curiosity, had glanced up as the equipage was about to pass. But it had not passed, for the only occupant, a haughty-mannered, handsomely-gowned woman had pulled on a silken cord which evidently communicated with the driver's seat, for, almost at once, the coach had stopped and the woman had beckoned to the child.

"Are you Jeanette Warner?" she had asked abruptly. The child, making a curtsy, as Miss Dearborn had said all well-mannered little girls should, had replied that her name was Jenny. Never would the girl forget the expression on the handsome face as the eyebrows were lifted. The grand dame's next remark,

which was quite unintelligible to the child, had been uttered in a cold voice as though the speaker were much vexed about something. "I am indeed sorry to find that you are so alike."

The haughty woman had then jerked on the silken cord in a most imperious manner and the coach had moved toward the farmhouse.

Jenny had never told anyone of this meeting, but her sensitive nature had been deeply hurt by the cold, disdainful expression in the woman's eyes. She had sincerely hoped she never again would encounter the owner of Rocky Point, nor had she done so. Time, even, had erased from her memory just what Mrs. Poindexter-Jones had said, since, at the time, the words had conveyed no real meaning to the child. All that was left in her heart was a dread of the woman, and she had been glad, glad that she lived far away to the north instead of next door.

Suddenly the impulsive girl drew rein. "Dobbin," she exclaimed joyfully, "stand still a moment. I want you to look at that wonderful stone wall around the Bixby estate. Isn't it the most beautiful thing that you ever saw with the pink and white cherokee roses, star-like, all over it?" Then she waved her hand toward an acacia tree beyond the wall that was golden with bloom, and called out to an invisible mocking bird that was imitating one lilting song after another, "I don't wonder that you shout hosannas of praise. It's such a wonderful world to live in. Trot along, Dobbin! We must get the eggs to the seminary before five."

The tree-shaded, lane-like road they were following had many a bend in it as it ascended higher and higher into the foothills, and, as they turned at one of them, Jenny again addressed her four-footed companion.

"Dobbin, do hurry! There's that poor forlorn Etta Somebody who pares potatoes at the seminary. I see her all crouched down over a pan of vegetables every time I go into that kitchen to deliver eggs and honey, but not once has she looked up at me. I know she's terribly unhappy about something. I don't believe she even knows that she's living in a wonderful world where everything is so beautiful that a person just has to sing. Please do hurry, Dobbin. I may never get another chance to speak to her and I want to ask her if she wouldn't like to ride."

Jenny slapped the reins on the back of the old dusty-white horse, and, although he at first cast a glance of indignation over his right shoulder, he decided to humor his young mistress, and did increase his speed sufficiently to overtake the tall angular girl who shuffled as she walked and drooped her shoulders as though the burden upon them was more than she could bear. She wore an almost threadbare brown woolen dress, though the day was warm, and a queer little hat which suggested to Jenny pictures she had seen of children in foreign lands. She had one day heard the cook address the girl as Etta in a voice that had expressed impatience, and so, pulling on the rein, Jenny called cheerily, "Etta, are you going up to the seminary? Won't you ride with me? I'm taking the eggs a day early."

The girl, whose plain, colorless face was dully expressionless, climbed up on the seat at Jenny's side. "You look awfully fagged and dusty. Have you been walking far?" the young driver ventured.

The strange girl's tone was complaining – "Far? Well, I should say I have. All the way to Santa Barbara railway station and back. Folks enough passed me goin' and comin', but you're the first that offered me a lift."

"Eight miles is a long walk," the young driver put in, "on a day as warm as this" Etta's china blue eyes stared dully ahead. She made no response and so Jenny again started Dobbin on the upward way.

From time to time she glanced furtively at her companion, wondering why she was so evidently miserable.

At last she said, "I suppose everyone was in a hurry. I mean the folks who passed you."

But her companion, with a bitter hatred in her voice, replied, "Don't you believe it. Most of 'em don't have nothin' to do that has to be done. Rich folks ridin' around in their swell cars, but do you s'pose they'd give me a lift. Not them! They'd think as how I'd poison the air they breathed if I sat too close. I hate 'em! I hate 'em all!"

Hate was a new word to Jenny and she did not like it. "I suppose some rich folks are that way, but I don't believe they all are." Then she laughed, her happy rippling laugh which always expressed real mirth. "Hear me talking as though I knew them,

when I don't. I never spoke to but one rich person in all my life, and just a minute ago I was wishing that I never would have to speak to her again." Jenny wondered why Etta had walked to the railway station. As they turned the last bend before their destination was to be reached, she impulsively put her free hand on the arm of her companion and said, "Etta, would it help any if you told me why you are so dreadfully unhappy? I don't suppose I could do anything, but sometimes just talking things over with someone who wishes she could help, makes it easier."

The china blue eyes of the rebellious girl at her side were slowly turned toward the speaker and in them was mingled amazement and doubt. Then she remarked cynically, "There ain't nobody cares what's making me miserable." But when Jenny succeeded in convincing the forlorn girl that she, at least, really did care, the story of her unhappiness was revealed.

CHAPTER IV.
A PITIFUL PLIGHT

"There ain't much to tell," Etta said bitterly, "but I haven't always been miserable. I was happy up to the time I was ten. I lived with my grandfolks over in Belgium. My mother left me there while she came to America. She'd heard how money was easy to get, and, after my father died in the war and the soldiers had robbed my grandfolks of all they had on the farm, we had to get money somewheres. That's why she came, takin' all that she'd saved for her passage. How my mother got away out here to Californy, I don't know, but anyway she did. She was a cook up in Frisco. Every month she sent money to my grandfolks. My mother kept writing how lonesome she was for me and how she was savin' to send for me. The next year I came over with a priest takin' charge of me, but when I got here they told me my mother had died and they put me in an orphanage. My grandfolks tried to save money to send for me to go back to Belgium, but what with sickness and they bein' too old to work the farm, it's seven years now, an' the money ain't saved. Last year, me bein' sixteen, I got turned out o' the orphanage and sent here to work parin' vegetables. I don't get but three dollars a week and board, and I've been savin' all I can of it. But 'tain't no use. That's why I walked to the railway station over to Santa Barbara to ask how

much money I'd have to save to take me home to my grandfolks." The girl paused as though too discouraged to go on.

Jenny had been so interested that she had not even noticed that Dobbin had stopped to rest at one side of the steep road.

"Oh, you poor girl, I'm so sorry for you!" she said with a break in her voice. "I suppose it takes a lot of money for the ticket to New York and then the passage across the Atlantic in one of those big steamers."

The tone in which her companion answered was dull and hopeless. "'Tain't no use tryin'. I never can make it. Never! It'd take two hundred dollars. An' I've only got a hundred with what my grandfolks have sent dribble by dribble." The dull, despairing expression had again settled in the putty-pale face. "'Tain't no use," she went on apathetically. "I can't save the whole three dollars a week. I've got to get shoes an' things. Cook said yesterday how she'd have to turn me out if I didn't get some decent work dresses; a fashionable seminary like that couldn't have no slatterns in the kitchen." Then, after a hard, dry sob that cut deep into the heart of the listener. Etta ended with "I don't know what I'm goin' to do, but it's got to be done soon, whatever 'tis."

Jenny felt alarmed, she hardly knew why. "Oh, Etta, you don't mean you might take – " She could not finish her sentence. Her active imagination pictured the unhappy girl going alone to the coast at night and ending her life in the surf, but to her surprise Etta looked around as though she feared she might be overheard;

then she said, “Yes, I am. I’m going to take one hundred dollars out of the school safe, and after I’ve got over to Belgium I’m going to work my fingers to the bone and send it back. That’s what I’m goin’ to do. I’ve told ’em at the station to keep me a ticket for the train that goes out tomorrow morning.” Then, when she felt, rather than saw, that her companion was shocked, she said bitterly, “I was a fool to tell you. Of course you’ll go and blab on me.” To the unhappy girl’s surprise she heard her companion protesting, “Oh, no, no! I won’t tell, Etta. Never, never! But you *mustn’t* steal. They’d put you in prison. But, most of all, it would be very, very wrong. You can’t gain happiness by doing something wicked. I just *know* that you can’t.”

Then, after a thoughtful moment, Jenny amazed her companion by saying, “I have some money that is all my very own. If Granny and Granddad will let me, I’ll loan you a hundred dollars, because I *know* you’ll pay it back.”

Radiant joy made Etta’s plain face beautiful, but it lasted only a moment and was replaced by the usual dull apathy. “They won’t let you, an’ they shouldn’t. I just told you as how I was plannin’ to steal, and if I’d do that, how do you know I’d ever send back your hundred dollars?”

“I know that you would,” was the confident reply. Jenny then urged Dobbin to his topmost speed, and since he had rested quite a while, he did spurt ahead and around a bend to the very crest of the low foothill where stood the beautiful buildings of the seminary in a grove of tall pine trees. The majestic view of the

encircling mountain range usually caused Jenny to pause and catch her breath, amazed anew each time at the grandeur of the scene, but her thoughts were so busy planning what she could do to help this poor girl that she was unconscious of aught else.

They turned into the drive, which, after circling among well-kept gardens and lawns, led back of the main building to the kitchen door.

"I'm awful late and I'll get a good tongue lashin' from the cook but what do I care. This'll be the last night she'll ever see me." Jenny glancing at her companion, saw again the hard expression in the face that had been so radiant with joy a few moments before.

"She doesn't believe that I'm going to loan her my money," Jenny thought. "And maybe she's right. Maybe Granny and Granddad will think I ought not." But what she said aloud was: "Etta, let me go in ahead and I'll fix things up if you're late and going to be scolded." And so, when they climbed from the wagon, it was the girl from Rocky Point Farm who first entered the kitchen. "Good afternoon, Miss O'Hara," she called cheerily to the middle-aged Irish woman who was taking a roast from the huge oven of the built-in range.

"Huh," was the ungracious reply, "so *you* had that lazy good-for-nothing out ridin', did you?" The roast having been replaced, the cook turned and glared at Etta, her arms akimbo. "Here 'tis, five o'clock to the minute and not a potato pared. How do you suppose I'm going to serve a dinner for the young ladies at six-

thirty and all that pan of peas to shell besides."

Etta was about to reply sullenly when Jenny, who had placed her basket of eggs on one end of a long white table, turned to say: "Miss O'Hara, I want to ask you a favor. If I stay and help Etta get the vegetables ready, will you let her come over to my house to supper? Won't you please, Miss O'Hara?"

Jenny smiled wheedlingly at the middle-aged Irish woman who had always had a soft spot in her heart for "the honey girl," and so she said reluctantly, "Wall, if it's what you're wishin', though the Saints alone know what *you* see in Etta Heldt to be wantin' of her company."

Ignoring the uncomplimentary part of the speech, Jenny cried joyfully: "Oh, thank you, thank you, Miss O'Hara! Now give me a big allover apron, please, for I mustn't soil my fresh yellow muslin."

Miss O'Hara's anger had died away, confident that the peas would be shelled and the potatoes pared on time. She went about her work humming one of the Irish tunes that always fascinated Jenny.

Etta, without having spoken a word, took her customary place and began to pare potatoes, jabbing out the spots as though she were venting upon them the wrath which she felt toward the world in general, but even in her heart there was dawning a faint hope that somehow, some way, she had come to a gate on the other side of which, if only she could pass through, a new life awaited her.

She looked up and out of the window by which they were seated, when Jenny, pausing a moment in the pea-shelling, exclaimed: "Oh, Etta, do see those pretty girls. Aren't they the loveliest? Just like a flock of butterflies dancing out there on the lawn. There are eight, ten, twelve! Oh, my, more than I can count! How many girls are there now at the seminary, Miss O'Hara?"

"With the three that came in today, there's thirty-one," the cook answered as she broke a dozen eggs into a pudding which she was stirring.

"Did three new pupils come today? Isn't it late in the year to start in school? Only two months more and the long vacation will begin," Jenny turned to inquire.

"It is late," Miss O'Hara replied, then suddenly she stopped stirring the batter and stared at Jenny with a puzzled expression in her Irish blue eyes. "When I saw one of 'em, a haughty, silly minx, I thought to myself as I'd seen her before somewhere's though I knew I hadn't. Now I know why I thought that. There's something about you, Jenny Warner, as looks like her. Folks do look sort of like other folks once in a while, and be no way related."

Jenny agreed brightly. "Yes, Miss O'Hara, that's absolutely true. My teacher has often said that the reason she has kept on tutoring me is because I look like a sister she once had. That makes two folks I resemble, and I suppose likely there are lots more. What is the new pupil's name. Miss O'Hara?"

Then it was that the cook recalled something. "Begorrah, and maybe you know her being as her ma owns the farm you're living

on."

Jenny looked up with eager interest. "Oh, no, I didn't even know Mrs. Poindexter-Jones had a daughter. But I do know the son Harold. That is, I met him for a few moments once two years ago, and now I do recall that he mentioned having a sister." Then, returning to the shelling of the peas, she concluded with: "You know they have not lived in Santa Barbara lately. I never saw the mother, that is, only once."

"Well, you're not likely to do more than see the daughter. She wouldn't speak civil to a farmer's granddaughter." Jenny's bright smile seemed to reply that it troubled her not at all.

For another ten minutes the girls worked silently, swiftly; then Jenny sprang up, removed her apron and, as she donned her hat, she exclaimed: "Miss O'Hara, you just don't know how grateful I am to you for having said that Etta might go home to supper with me."

Although the cook regretted having given the permission, she merely mumbled a rather ungracious reply.

Etta went up to her room to put on her "'tother dress," as she told Jenny, but on reaching there she bundled all her belongings into an ancient carpet bag, stole out of a side door and was waiting in the buggy when Jenny reached it.

"Well, I sure certain don't see how 'twas the ol' dragon let me go along with you," Etta Heldt declared, seeming to breathe for the first time when, high on the buckboard seat at Jenny's side, old Dobbin was actually turning out of the seminary gates that

had for many months been as the iron-barred doors of a prison to the poor motherless, fatherless and homeless girl. And yet not really homeless, for, far across the sea on a small farm in Belgium there was a home awaiting her, and a dear old couple (Jenny was sure that they were as dear and loving and lovable as were her own grandparents) yearning for the return of their only grandchild.

Jenny, who always pictured in detail anything and everything of which she had but the meagerest real knowledge, was seeing the old couple going about, day by day, planning and striving to save enough to send for their girl, but failing because of the privation that had been left blightingly in the trail of the cruel world war. Then her fancy leaped ahead to the day when Etta would arrive at that far-away farm.

Jenny's musings were interrupted by a querulous voice at her side.

"Don't you hear nothing I am saying? What do you see out there between your horse's ears that you're starin' at so steady?"

Jenny turned a pretty face bright with laughter. "I didn't see the ears," she confessed, "and do forgive me for not listening to what you were saying. Oh, yes, I recall now. You wondered what the old dragon would say when she found you were really gone."

Then, more seriously: "Truly, Etta, Miss O'Hara isn't dragony; not the least mite. I have sold eggs and honey to her for two years, long before you came to be her helper, and she always seemed as glad to see me as the dry old earth is to see the first rains."

Then, hesitating and slowly thinking ahead that her words

might not hurt her companion, she continued: "Maybe you didn't always try to please Miss O'Hara. Weren't you sometimes so unhappy that you let it show in your manner? Don't you think perhaps that may have been it, Etta?"

"Oh, I s'posen like's not. How could I help showin' it when I was so miserable?"

Then, before Jenny could reply, Etta continued cynically:

"Well, I'm not goin' to let myself to be any too cheerful even now. 'Tisn't likely your grandfolks'll let you loan me a hundred dollars. How'll they know but maybe I'd never return it. How do you know?"

Jenny turned and looked full into the china blue eyes of her companion. The gaze was unflinchingly returned. Impulsively Jenny reached out a slender white hand and placed it on the rough red one near her.

"Etta Heldt," she said solemnly, "I know you will return my money if it lies within your power to do it. I also know that when it came to it, you would not have stolen money from the Granger place safe. There's something in your eyes makes me know it, though I can't put it into words."

As the other girl did not reply, Jenny continued: "I'm *not* sure certain that I *can* loan you my money, of course. I have been saving and saving it for two years so that I could add it to the money grandpa had if we needed it to buy Rocky Point Farm, but the farm hasn't been put on the market, granddad says, and so I guess we can spare it for awhile."

Suddenly and most unexpectedly the girl at her side burst into tears. "Oh, oh, how sweet and good you are to me. Nobody, nowhere has ever been so kind, not since I came to this country looking for mother. When they told me she was dead and had been buried two days before I got here, and all her belongings sold to pay for the funeral, nobody was kind. They just tagged me with a number and sent me with a crowd of other children out to an orphan asylum. And there it was just the same: no one knew me from any of the rest of the crowd."

There were also tears in her listener's eyes.

"Poor, poor Etta, and here I've been brought up on love. It doesn't seem fair, someway." Then slipping an arm comfortingly about her companion, Jenny said brightly: "Let's keep hoping that you can borrow my money. Look, Etta, we're coming to the highway now, and that long, long lane beyond the barred gate leads right up to my home. Don't cry any more, dearie. I just *know* that my grandfolks will help you, somehow. You'll see that they will."

Thus encouraged, the forlorn Etta took heart and, after wiping away the tears which had brought infinite relief to her long pent-up emotions, she turned a wavering smile toward Jenny.

"I'll never forget what all you're trying to do for me. Never. Never," she ended vehemently. "And I'm hoping I'll have the chance some day to make up for it."

"All the reward that I want is to have you get home to your grandfolks and be as happy with them as I am with mine," Jenny

called brightly as she leaped out of the wagon to open up the barred gate.

CHAPTER V.
FRIENDS IN NEED

Grandma Sue had been often to the side porch nearest the lane and had gazed toward the highway wondering why her girl did not return. The supper had been ready for some time and the specially ordered chocolate pudding was done to perfection. At last the old woman hurried back into the kitchen to exclaim: "Wall, I declare to it, if Jenny ain't fetchin' someone home to supper. I reckon its Mis' Dearborn, her teacher, as she sets sech a store by."

But, as Dobbin approached at his best speed (for, was he not nearing his own supper?) the old woman, peering from behind the white muslin curtains at a kitchen window, uttered an ejaculation of surprise. "Silas Warner," she turned wide-eyed toward the old man, who, in carpet slippers, had made himself comfortable in his tipped back arm chair to read the *Rural News*.

"Yeap, Susan?" his tone was one of indifferent inquiry. He presumed that his spouse was merely going to affirm what she had already suspected. Well, even if that were true, all he would have to put on was the house coat Jenny had made for him. It never would do to go to the table in shirt sleeves if teacher – he rose to carry out this indolently formed decision when he saw his wife tip-toeing across the room toward him, her finger on her

lips. “Shh! Don’t say nothin’, Si!” she whispered. “Jenny’s left the horse hitched and she’s comin’ right in and trailin’ arter her is a gal totin’ a hand satchel. Who do you cal’late it can be?”

The old man hastily slipped on the plaid house coat and stood waiting, trying not to look too curious when their girl burst in with, “Oh, Granny, Granddad, this is my friend Etta Heldt. You know I told you about the girl who pares vegetables up at the seminary and who always looked so – so unhappy.” Jenny did not want to say discontented as she had that other time. “Well, I’ve found out what makes her unhappy and I’ve fetched her over to supper. Etta, this is my Grandmother Sue and my Granddaddy Si.”

The strange girl sent a half appealing, half frightened glance at each of the old people and then burst into tears.

Jenny slipped a protecting arm about her new friend, as she said by way of explanation: “Etta’s all upset about something. I’ll take her into my room to rest a bit, and then I’ll come back and tell you about it.”

Left alone, the elderly couple looked at each other in amazement.

“I reckon that poor girl is like the stray kittens and forlorn dogs our Jenny fetches home so often,” the old woman said softly. “I never saw such a hungerin’ sort of look in human eyes afore.”

The old man dropped back into his armed chair and shook his head as much as to say that their “gal’s” ways were beyond his comprehension. A moment later that same “gal” reappeared and,

going at once to her grandfather, she knelt at his side and held his knotted work-hardened hand in a clinging clasp.

"Tut! Tut! Jenny, you're all a-tremble." The old man always felt deeply moved when the girl he loved seemed to be troubled. He placed his free hand on her curls.

"I reckon you'd better start at the beginnin'. Me'n your grandma here is powerful curious."

The girl sprang up. "Granny dear," she pleaded, "you sit here in your rocker and I'll be close between you on this stool. Now I'll tell you all and please, please, please say yes."

The two old people looked lovingly into the eager, uplifted face of their darling and wondered what the request was to be. They never had denied their "gal" anything she had asked for in the past, but they had always been such simple desires and so easily fulfilled. However, there was an expression in the girl's lovely face that made them both believe that this was to be no ordinary request.

Jenny glanced from one to another of her grandparents anxiously, eagerly. Then, taking a hand of each, she fairly clung to them as her words rushed and tumbled out, sometimes incoherently, but the picture was clearly depicted for all that. The two old people could see the forlorn little Belgian girl coming alone to America to join the mother who had died and been buried only two days before the child reached San Francisco. Then the long dreary years in a crowded city orphanage where no one really cared.

Grandma Sue began to wipe her eyes with one corner of her apron at that part of the story. She was thinking that their own darling might have been brought up in just such a place had not Grandpa Si happened to see the canopied wagon on that long ago day. The girl felt the soft wrinkled hand quivering in her clasp, and she looked up almost joyfully, for she believed she had an ally. Then she told of the time when Etta had reached an age where she could no longer be kept in the institution and how work had been procured for her paring vegetables at Granger Place Seminary. Food and a place to sleep were about all that orphan girls were given, and so, although she had tried and tried to save the little money she earned, she could not, for she had to buy shoes and clothes.

The old woman nodded understandingly. "What was she savin' for, dearie? Anything special?"

"Oh, yes, Grandma Sue, something very special." Then Jenny told about the feeble old grandparents far across the sea whose little farm had been laid waste by the war and how they longed for their granddaughter to be a comfort in their last days. At this point Grandpa Si took out his big red bandana handkerchief and blew his nose hard. He was thinking what it would mean to them if their Jenny was far away and couldn't get back. Then, looking at their "gal" shrewdly, he asked, "Jenny, darlin', what be yo' aimin' at? Yo' ain't jest tellin' this story sort of random-like, be yo'?"

The girl shook her head. "No! No!" Her tear-brimmed eyes

implored first one and then the other. Then she explained that it would take one hundred dollars to pay for Etta's transportation in the steerage.

How the girl pleaded, her sensitive lips quivering. "Think of it, Grandma Sue, Granddad, only one hundred dollars to take that poor girl to her old grandparents who love her so. Won't you let me loan her that much from the money I've made selling eggs and honey? Please, please say that you will. You've always told me that it is mine and oh, I do so want to help Etta." Then, as her surprised listeners hesitated, she hurried on: "She'll pay it back, every cent, and only the other day, Granddad, you said you didn't think the farm was going to be sold, because nothing more had been heard about it."

The old man's eyes questioned his spouse. Still tearful, Grandma Sue nodded. Then drawing the girl to her, she held her close as she said, "Silas, I reckon we owe it to the good Lord to help one of His poor little children."

"O, Granny! O, Grandpa! However can I thank you?" The flushed, happy girl sprang up, kissed each of them and ran toward the bedroom to tell the wonderful news to the waiting Etta.

CHAPTER VI.
WANTED, A WAITRESS

Such a supper as that had been. Etta's expression had so completely changed that Grandma Sue decided that she was almost pretty with her corn-colored hair and china blue eyes. It was the first time that Jenny had seen her smile and she found herself wishing that Miss O'Hara could see it also. They made their plans. Etta was to remain with them all night. Then early in the morning Granddad would drive both of the girls to Santa Barbara and take the money from the bank, then they would go to the railway station and buy a ticket, both for the train and the steamer. Jenny was sure that there were such tickets because she had heard her teacher, Miss Dearborn, tell about one that she purchased all the way through to Liverpool. Then there would be no fear that Etta would lose the money. When she reached Belgium, Etta promised, oh, so faithfully, that each month she would send back part of the hundred. She was so strong. She would work the farm again. The women over there all worked in the fields. She knew she would have money to send. Every time she thought of the great joy in store for the old couple, she began to cry and laugh at the same time. But once she had a thought which brought only frightened tears. What if this voyage should be like the other? What if her loved ones would be dead?

But Jenny had said that she must not think of that, though they all knew that she would, poor girl, till the very moment that she reached the farm and saw her grandparents.

"You'll write us all about it, won't you, dearie?" Grandma Sue said.

The chocolate pudding was eaten, but no one seemed conscious of it. They were all thinking the same thing and yet with wide variations. Grandma and Grandpa were being so thankful because they had Jenny, and that little maid was deciding how she would tell Miss O'Hara when Etta was gone.

Everything happened just as they had planned. The next day dawned in the silvery mist that so often veils the seaside mornings in California, but later it burst into a glory of sunshine, as golden as the oranges, and sweetly, spicily fragrant with the breath of the lemon groves they passed as they drove to Santa Barbara. The money was drawn from the bank, the ticket, a very long ticket, was procured. Etta, hardly able to believe that she was really awake, had expressed her thanks in all the ways that she knew, and the train at last bore her away.

It was not until Jenny was back in her own farm home that she told what she planned doing next. "I must drive right over to the seminary and tell Miss O'Hara what has become of Etta. Of course she hasn't worried yet, because she knew that Etta was with us over here, but she'll be getting impatient if there's no one to pare the vegetables and help her get lunch."

Grandmother Sue's eyes were opened wide. "But, dearie, this

is your very own Saturday. The one that's for you to do with as you please. I thought you and Miss Dearborn were goin' to drive way up into the foothills. Wasn't that what you'd planned?"

The girl nodded brightly. "Yes, it was," she said, "and maybe there'll be time for that later, but first, I must tell Miss O'Hara about Etta's having gone back to Belgium. I suppose she'll send up to the orphanage for another helper, but that will take a day or two, maybe more."

Granny Sue said no more and as Dobbin was not needed on the farm, Jenny again drove up the winding tree-shaded lane to the crest of the low hill on the broad top of which stood the picturesque buildings and grounds of the fashionable school for girls. This time Jenny drew rein before she entered the gate and gazed far across the valley to the range of circling mountains, gray and rugged near the peaks, but green and tree-clad lower down. Jenny always felt, when she gazed at those majestic mountains, the same awe that others do in a great cathedral, as though she were in the real presence of the Creator. "Father, God," she whispered, "I thank Thee that at last Etta is really going home." Then she turned in at the gate.

As Jenny had feared, Miss O'Hara was becoming very wrathful because of the delayed return of her helper, and when the kitchen door opened, she whirled about, a carving knife in her hand and a most threatening expression on her plain Irish face. When she saw who had entered, the expression changed, but her sharp blue eyes were gazing back of the girl as though to find

one whom she believed was purposely lingering outside until a just wrath were somewhat appeased. But when Jenny turned and closed the door, Miss O'Hara demanded: "Where's that wench? Are you tryin' to shield her? You can't do it! She'd ought to've been here two hours back. Me with all the silver to clean and the vegetables to pare." Then, noting a happiness like a morning glow in the face of the girl, the woman concluded: "Well, say it out, whatever 'tis! But first let me tell you, I'm *through* with that ne'er-do-well. I set myself down right in the middle of the mornin' and wrote to that orphanage place tellin' 'em they'd have to find work elsewhere for Etta Heldt, and I'd be obliged to 'em if they'd send me another girl as soon as they could. An' what's more, I made it plain that I didn't want any sour face this time. I want someone who's willin' and agreeable, that's what! So, if that minx is waitin' to hear what I'm sayin', you might as well fetch her in and let's have it out."

To the amazement of the irate woman, Jenny clapped her hands girlishly and then, skipping forward, gave Miss O'Hara an impulsive hug as she cried: "Oh, oh, I'm so glad you feel that way about it! Then you won't mind so terribly because Etta Heldt is gone – gone for good, I mean?"

Miss O'Hara stared blankly. "Gone?" she repeated. "Where's she gone to?"

Jenny glanced at the clock. It was nearing noon and she knew that the cook had little time for idle visiting, and so she said briskly: "I've come over to help. I'll put on Etta's apron and do

anything you want done, and while we're working, I'll tell you the whole sad story, because, Miss O'Hara, it is awfully sad, and I do believe if you had known it, you would have been sorrier for Etta, and maybe, a little more patient." Then, fearing that this might offend her listener, the tactful girl hurried on with: "I know how kind you can be. No one knows better."

The cook, who had turned back to the slicing of cold meat, which had been the reason for the carving knife, merely grunted at this. She was not sure but that a little of her own native blarney was being applied to her. But she answered in a pleasanter voice to the girl's repeated inquiry: "What shall I do to help?"

"Well, you might be fixin' the salad. You'll find the mixin's for it all in the icebox up top."

"Oh, goodie!" Jenny skipped to the box as she spoke: "I adore making things pretty, and salads give one a chance more than most anything else, don't you think so, Miss O'Hara?" She had lifted the cover and was peering in where, close to the ice, lay the cheesecloth bag of crisped lettuce and a bowl of tiny cooked beets. These she carried to the long white table as she asked: "May I prepare it just as I want to, Miss O'Hara, or have you some special way of doing it?"

"Fix it to suit yourself," was the ungrudgingly given response. "You'll find all sort of bowls for it in the pantry, you'll need four, there being four tables."

Jenny chose pretty glass bowls and set about making as artistic a salad as she could, and, while she worked, she told the whole

story to a listener who at first was merely curious, but who gradually became interested and finally sympathetic. "Well, I sure certain wish I'd known about her comin' to this country and findin' her mother dead. Like as not I'd have tried some to cheer her up. As I look back on it now, I wasn't any too patient with her. It'll be a lesson to me, that's what it will. When the next orphan comes to this kitchen, I'll try to make it as home-like for her as I can." Then the cook recalled her own troubles. "How-someever, I wish Etta Heldt had given me notice. Here I'll be without a helper for no one knows how long, a week maybe."

Jenny, having heaped a glass bowl with a most appetizing salad, stepped back to admire it. Then she revealed her plan. "Miss O'Hara, if you'll let me, I'll come right over after school every day and do Etta's work until you can get another helper."

Miss O'Hara again turned, another knife in her hand, as she had been cutting bread. "Jenny Warner, are you meaning that? Will you help out for a few days? Well, the Saints bless the purty face of you as they've done already. I only wish I could have a helper all the time as cheery as you are. I could get on with afterschool help. I'm thinkin', on a scratch."

Then, glancing at the clock, she continued: "Well, if 'tisn't eleven-thirty all ready. Here, cut the bread, will you, Jenny, while I go upstairs and see if one of the maids won't help with the servin' today? I can't be in the kitchen dishin' up, an' in the dinin' room at the same time."

Jenny, glad to assist in any way, finished the task, and then

wandered to a window near to await further orders. She heard a gong ringing somewhere in the big school. Then a side door opened and a bevy of girls, about her own age, trooped out on the lawn for a half hour of recreation before lunch. How pretty they were, nearly all of them, the watcher thought. By their care-free, laughing faces she concluded that they had none of them known a sorrow or felt a feather weight of responsibility. They had come from homes of wealth, Jenny knew, where they had had every pleasure and luxury their hearts could desire. But she did not envy them. Where in all the wide world was there a home more picturesque than her very own old adobe farmhouse, overgrown with blossoming vines, with the ever-changing ocean and the rocky point in front, and at the back the orchard, which, all the year round, was such a delight. And who could they have in their rich homes more lovable than Granny Sue and Grandpa Si? There couldn't be any one more lovable in all the land. Then the watcher wondered which one of the girls was Harold P-J's sister. "Proud and domineering," Miss O'Hara had said that she was. Maybe she was that tall girl who had drawn apart from the rest with two companions. She carried herself haughtily and there was a smile on her face that Jenny did not like. It was as though she were accompanying it with sarcastic comment about the other girls. The two who were with her glanced in the direction which their leader had indicated. Jenny did also and saw a shy-looking girl dressed far simpler than the others, whose light brown hair hung straight down, fastened at her neck by a plain

brown ribbon. “She must be a new pupil, too,” Jenny decided, “for she doesn’t seem to be acquainted with any of the girls.”

At that moment Miss O’Hara returned, more flustered than she had been an hour earlier, if that were possible. “The de’il himself is tryin’ to fret me, I’m thinkin’,” she announced. “That silly Peg Hanson’s had a letter and there’s somethin’ in it that upset her so, she took a fit of cryin’ and now she’s got one of her blind headaches and can’t stand. The other maid’s in the middle of the upstairs cleanin’, being as she had to do Peg’s work and her own. Now, I’d like to know *who* is to wait on that parcel of gigglin’ girls this noon? That’s what!”

“O, Miss O’Hara, won’t you let me? I’m just wild to have a chance to be near enough to them to hear what they say. It would be awfully interesting to me. Please say that I may?”

The cook stared her amazement. “Well, now, what do *you* know about waitin’?” she inquired.

“Nothing at all,” was the merry reply, “but my teacher has often said that I have a good intelligence, and I do believe, if you’d tell me what ought to be done, I could remember enough to get through.”

The cook’s troubled face broke into a pleased smile. “Jenny Warner,” she commented, “you’re as good as a pinch of soda in sour milk. Somehow mountain-sized troubles dwindle down to less’n nothin’ when you take a hand in them.” She glanced at the clock.

“Lunch is served at twelve-thirty,” she continued. “We’ll have

to both pitch in and get things on the table, and, while we're doin' it, I'll tell you what you'll have to know about servin'."

* * * * * * * *

Jenny was in a flutter of excitement half an hour later as she donned the white cap and apron of the waitress uniform. They were really very becoming, and soft brown ringlets peeped out from under the dainty band-like cap which was tied about her head.

"There's very little waitin'-on to be done at noon, thanks for that," Miss O'Hara said. "Most things are on the table, but you'll have to go around and pour the chocolate and do the things as I told you. There now! The bell's ringing and I hear those silly girls laughing, so they're all in the dining room. Here's the chocolate pot. I haven't filled it full, fearin' it might be too heavy. You'll have to come back and get more when that's gone."

With cheeks flushed and eyes shining, as though she were about to do something which pleased her extremely, Jenny entered the dining room, where four tables, surrounded by girls, stood along the walls. Few there were who even noticed her as she went from place to place filling the dainty cups with steaming liquid.

At the first table the girls were chattering about a theatre party to which they were going with Miss Granger, and not one of them gave the waitress more than a fleeting glance. But at the second

table Jenny found the girl she sought. The sister of Harold P-J, and the daughter of the proud owner of Rocky Point Farm.

The little waitress knew at once which she was, for a companion spoke her name. Jenny was disappointed when she heard her speak. There was a fretful, discontented note in her voice. And why should there be, she wondered, as she slowly approached the end of the table where Gwynette Poindexter-Jones sat with an intimate friend from San Francisco at each side.

Surely she had everything her heart could desire. But evidently this was not true, for, as Jenny drew nearer, she could hear what was being said.

"Patricia Sullivan, you make me weary! You certainly do!" she addressed the girl on her right. "How can you say that this is a pleasant place? When I think of my mother in France luxuriating in the sort of life I most enjoy, it makes me rebellious. Sometimes I feel that I just can't forgive her. What right has a mother to send her daughter to an out-of-the-way country boarding school if the girl prefers to be educated abroad?"

The friend who had been called "Patricia" now put in, almost apologetically: "But I merely said that it is a beautiful country, and I repeat that it is. I think that it is wonderful to be so high up on a foothill and have a sweeping view of the ocean from one side of the school and a view of the mountains from the other side."

A shrug, accompanied by an utterance of bored impatience, then Gwynette's reply: "Scenery isn't what I want, and if I did, I prefer it in France."

After glancing critically from one table to another, she continued:

"There isn't a single girl in this room who belongs to our class, really. They are all our social inferiors."

But Beulah Hollingsworth, the friend on Gwynette's left, leaned forward to say in a low voice, which was audible to Jenny merely because she had reached the trio and was filling Patricia's cup:

"I've heard that there is a girl in this school whose father is a younger son of some titled English family. She ought to be in our class, don't you think?"

Patricia, whose back was toward the room, could not turn to look at the other pupils, but suddenly she recalled one of them, and so, leaning forward, she also said in a low voice:

"Look at Clare Tasselwood. She's stiff enough at least to be a somebody." Gwynette and Beulah agreed.

They both glanced at a tall blonde girl at the table across the room, whose manner was neither disagreeable nor pleasant, expressing merely bored endurance of her present existence. Gwynette's face brightened. "I believe you are right. Let's cultivate her!"

Jenny could hear no more of their conversation as she had to go back to the kitchen to refill the silver pot, and when she returned she began to fill cups at a third table, the one at which sat the supposed daughter of a "younger son." Clare Tasselwood was so deeply engrossed in her own thoughts that she seemed scarce

aware that the timid girl at her left was offering her a platter of cold meat. She took it finally with a brief nod; absently helped herself to a slice and passed it to the neighbor on her right.

Jenny found herself feeling sorry for the little girl whom she had noticed at the recreation hour; the one so simply dressed in brown with whom no one had been talking, and about whom Gwynette and her friends had evidently been making uncomplimentary comment. When the new waitress poured that girl's cup full of chocolate, the little maid smiled up at her and said, "Thank you."

More than ever Jenny's heart warmed toward her. "Poor thing! I'd like to be friends with her if she were not a pupil of this fashionable school. She looks more like real folks than some of them do."

Then, having completed the round with the chocolate pot, the waitress went out to the kitchen to get the tray on which were to be heaped the plates after the first course had been finished. Jenny really dreaded this task, fearing that she would break something, and was relieved to find that the upstairs maid who had been cleaning had come down and was ready to assist.

"Here, Jenny," Miss O'Hara said, "you follow and give each girl her dessert. Then you come out and eat your own lunch. After that you can go. Tomorrow, being Sunday, I can get along alone, and probably by Monday the new helper'll be here."

An hour later Jenny drove away, laughing to herself over her amusing adventure and eager to tell Grandma Sue and Granddad

Si all about it.

CHAPTER VII.
JENNY'S TEACHER

It was two o'clock when Jenny skipped to the side porch of the Rocky Point farmhouse. Her grandmother, who was sitting there with her mending basket at her side, looked up with the welcoming smile that she always had for the girl. Dropping down on the wooden bench, back of which hung a blossom-laden garland of Cecil Brunner rose vine, Jenny took off her wide, flower-wreathed straw hat and began fanning her flushed face. The sparkle in her soft brown eyes told the watcher at once that something of an unusual nature had occurred. The old woman dropped her sewing on her lap, pushed her spectacles up under her lavender-ribboned cap and then said with a rising inflection: "Well, Jenny dearie, what have you been up to?"

A peal of amused laughter was the girl's first answer, followed by a series of little chuckles that tried to form themselves into words but couldn't. Mirth is contagious and the old woman laughingly said: "Tut! Tut! Jenny, don't keep all the fun of it to yourself. What happened over to the seminary that was so amusing? I reckoned you'd have sort of a hard tune making things straight with Miss O'Hara, if she's as snappy as poor Etta Heldt said she was."

Jenny became serious at once, and, leaning forward, she began

earnestly: “Miss O’Hara is kindhearted, Granny Sue, but she does seem to have a powerful lot to worry her. Etta didn’t try to be real helpful, I know that, although I was so sorry for her, and when I told Miss O’Hara all about the poor orphan, there were tears in her eyes, honestly there were, Granny, and she said that when the next orphan came, she’d try to make that kitchen more homelike.”

Her listener was pleased and nodded many times, as she commented: “Well, well, that’s somethin’ now that my Jenny gal has brought to pass, but it wasn’t about that you were having such a spell of laughin’, I reckon.”

Again there were twinkles in the brown eyes as the girl confessed: “No, Granny Sue, it wasn’t, and in as many years as Rip Van Winkle slept, you couldn’t guess what it was.”

The old woman looked puzzled, as she always did when Jenny quoted from some of her “readin’ books.” “Wall, I reckon I couldn’t, bein’ as I don’t know how long the lazy fellow slept, so I reckon you’d better tell me what you’ve been up to over to the seminary.”

She had replaced her glasses and was again sewing a patch on an old shirt of Grandpa Si’s, but she looked up when the girl said: “You’ll be astonished as can be, because you never even guessed that your granddaughter knew how to wait on table, stylish-like, with all the flourishes.”

Down went the sewing, up went the glasses, and an expression of shocked displeasure was in the sweet blue eyes of the old

woman.

"Jenny Warner, am I hearin' right? Are yo' tellin' me that my gal waited on table over to the seminary?"

The girl looked puzzled. Grandma Sue was taking almost tragically what Jenny had considered in the light of a merry adventure.

"Why, yes, Granny, I did. You don't mind, do you? You have always wanted me to help where help was needed, and surely poor Miss O'Hara needed a waitress. If we hadn't spirited Etta away, she would have been there. You see, don't you, Grandma, that I just had to help?"

"Yes, yes, I reckon like as not you did, but don't do it again, Jenny, don't! Promise, just to please your old Grandma Sue."

The girl placed her hat on the bench and went to her grandmother's side and knelt, her head nestled lovingly against the old woman's shoulder. "Why, Granny, dearie," she said contritely, "I didn't suppose you'd mind. Why is it that you do?" She was plainly perplexed.

But the old woman had no intention of telling the girl she so loved that she could not bear the thought of having her act as a servant to her own sister, Gwynette. And so she replied with an assumed cheeriness: "Just a notion, dearie, like as not. I feel that our gal is as good, and heaps better'n a lot of them seminary pupils, and I guess I sort of don't like the idea of you waitin' on 'em." Then anxiously: "It won't happen again, will it, Jenny?"

The girl kissed her grandmother lovingly. Then rising, she

put her hat on her sun-glinted head as she replied: "It won't be necessary, because Peg, the real waitress, will be well again tomorrow. She had one of her blind headaches today, but I did promise to go over Monday after school and do Etta's work, preparing vegetables. You don't mind that, do you, Granny dear. The new orphan will be there by Tuesday surely."

"Well, well, you do whatever you think right. That heart o' yourn won't take you far wrong. You're goin' over to your school-teacher's now, aren't you, dearie? She'll be expectin' you."

The girl nodded, skipped into the house to get a book, returned, saying as she went down the path: "This is our mythology lesson day. Good-bye, Granny dear. I'll be home in time to get supper."

As Jenny drove Dobbin along the coast highway, she wondered why her grandmother had objected so seriously to the act of kindness that she had done. Her teacher, Miss Dearborn, had so often said: "Jeanette, it isn't what we do that counts, it is what we are." Surely Jenny had been no different from what she really was when she had been filling cups with steaming golden brown chocolate. Moreover, Granny Sue hadn't minded in the least that time, last year, when Jenny had gone over to the cabin home of the poor forlorn squatter family in the sycamore woods and had cleaned it out thoroughly.

She had found the mother sick in bed and the three children almost spoiling for a bath. Jenny smiled as she recalled how she had taken them, one after another, down to the creek in the

canon below the cabin, and had washed them, showing the oldest, Rosa, who was eight, how to give future baths to Sara, aged five, and Elmer, aged two. And after that she had driven, at Miss Dearborn's suggestion, into Santa Barbara to tell the Visiting Nurse's Association about the poor squatter family. Grandma Sue had been pleased, then, to have Jenny serve others. Why did she object to a similar service for Miss O'Hara? This being unanswerable, the girl decided to drive through the Sycamore Canon Road, as it was really but a little out of her way, and see how the squatter's family was progressing.

It became very cool as she turned out of the sunshine of the broad highway, and the deeper she drove into the canon, the damper and more earth fragrant the air. Great old sycamore trees that had grown in most picturesque angles were on either side of the narrow dirt road, and crossing and recrossing, under little rustic bridges, rambled the brook which in the spring time danced along as though it also were brimming over with the joy of living. The cabin in which the Pascoli family lived had been long abandoned when they had taken possession. It stood in a more open spot, where, for a few hours each day, the sunlight came. It was partly adobe (from which its former white-washed crust had broken away in slabs) and partly logs. A rose vine, which Jenny had given to the older girl, was bravely trying to climb up about the door, and along the front of the cabin were ferns transplanted from the brookside.

When Jenny hallooed, there was a joyful answering cry from

within, and three children, far cleaner than when they had first been found, raced out, their truly beautiful Italian faces beaming their pleasure. They climbed up on the sides of the wagon shouting, in child-like fashion, "O, Miss Jenny, did you fetch us any honey?"

"No, dearies. I didn't! And I don't believe you've eaten all that I brought you last week, have they, Mrs. Pascoli?" the girl looked over Sara's head to the dark-eyed woman who appeared in the open door carrying a wee baby wrapped in a shawl. She replied: "No, ma'am! The beggars they are!" Then came a rebuking flow of Italian which had the effect desired, for the three youngsters climbed down and said in a subdued chorus, "No'm, we ain't et it, and thanks for it till it's gone." the latter part of the sentence being added by Sara alone. Jenny smiled at them, then said to the woman:

"You're quite well again, Mrs. Pascoli. I'm so glad! Grandpa tells me that your husband is working steadily now. Next week I'll bring some more honey and eggs. Good-bye."

The girl soon turned out of the canon on to a foothill road and after a short climb came suddenly upon a low built white house that had a wonderful view of the ocean and islands.

She turned in at the drive, the gate posts of which were pepper trees, and at once she saw her beloved teacher, Miss Dearborn, working in her garden.

The woman, who was about thirty-five, looked up with a welcoming smile which she reserved for this her only pupil.

"Jenny Warner, you're an hour late," she merrily rebuked. "Hitch Dobbin and come in. I have some news to tell you."

"O, Miss Dearborn, is it good news? I'm always so dreading the bad news that, some day, I just know you are going to tell me. It isn't that, yet?"

The woman, whose strong, kind, intelligent face was shaded with a wide-brimmed garden hat, smiled at the girl, then more seriously she said: "Shall you mind so very much when the call comes for me to go back East?"

Jenny nodded, unexpected tears in her eyes. "East is so far, so very far away, and you've been here for – well – for as many years as I have been going to school."

"Ten, to be exact," was the reply. "But that isn't my news today. It is something about you, and you'll be ever so excited when you hear it."

Miss Dearborn led the way into a long, cool living room which extended entirely across the front of the house. In one end of it was a large stone fireplace, on either side of which were glassed-in book shelves. There were Navajo rugs on the hardwood floor, a piano at the opposite end, deep, cozily cushioned seats under the wide plate-glass windows that framed such wonderful views of sea, rocky promontory and islands, mist-hung.

In the middle was a long library table and everywhere were chairs inviting ease. Great bowls of glowing yellow poppies stood in many places about the long room. This had been Jenny Warner's second home, and Miss Dearborn a most beneficial

influence in her development.

Having removed her garden hat, a mass of soft, light brown hair was revealed. Seating herself at one end of the table, the older woman motioned the girl to a chair at her side.

For a long moment she looked at her earnestly. "Jenny," she said at last, "I believe you are old enough to be told something about me, but since it is not nearly as important as the something about you, I will begin with that."

Jenny, not in the least understanding why, felt strangely excited. "Oh, Miss Dearborn, if only it hasn't anything to do with your going back East."

A strong white hand was placed over the smaller one that was lying on the table, and for a searching moment the gray eyes met the brown. "I believe, after all, I will have to tell you the part about myself first in order that you may more clearly understand the part about you," Miss Dearborn said. "I never told you why I came West ten years ago. It was this way. When I was fifteen, I went to a boarding school in Boston and met there a girl, Beatrice Malcolm, who became, through the four years that followed, as dear to me as an own sister would have been. She was not strong and she never had been able to bear disappointment. I always gave in to her and tried to shield her whenever I could. She clung to me, depended on me and loved me, if not quite as devotedly as I loved her, at least very dearly. When we left boarding school we visited each other for weeks at a time. She came to my Cape Cod home in the summer, and I went to her New York home in the

winter, and so we shared the same friends and were glad to do so, until Eric Austin came into our lives. Eric and I were unusually companionable. He loved books and nature and especially the sea. He had come to Cape Cod to write a group of poems and I met him at our Literary Club. He came often to my home and we read together day after day. Then Beatrice came for her annual summer visit, and, after that there were three of us at the readings. Eric's voice was deep, musical and stirringly expressive. I began to notice that Beatrice hung on every word that he uttered as though he were a young god. There was something poetically beautiful about his fine face. Then, one day, she confessed to me that if she could not win Eric Austin's love, she would not care to live. This was cruelly hard for me, because I also loved Eric and he had told me that my love was returned. Indeed, I had not allowed myself to really care, until I knew that he cared, but I had told him that I wanted to wait until we had known each other at least through one summer."

Miss Dearborn paused and gazed out of the window at the blue sea shimmering in the distance, then turned and smiled into the sensitive, responsive face of the girl at her side. Almost tearfully, Jenny said: "Oh, Miss Dearborn, I know what you did. You gave up the man you loved for that selfish girl."

The woman shook her head. "Not selfish! Just spoiled, and I had helped, for I had always given up to her, and that is what I did. I pretended not to care. I left them much alone, and then, when the summer was over, I closed my Cape Cod home and

came West. Eric was deeply hurt, and wrote me that, although he never could care for anyone as he did for me, he was going to marry Beatrice and would try to make her as happy as he had hoped to make me. That was all. They were married while I was settling in this new home. Year after year Beatrice has written that some day she wants me to come and visit them, and she has named her oldest girl after me. Little Catherine is now eight. That is all about me. Now I will tell the something about you."

Jenny, deeply affected by what she had heard, said with a little half sob: "Oh, Miss Dearborn, it makes my heart ache to think that you have lived all these years so alone when you might have had the companionship of that man who really loved you. I just know he never could have loved your friend Beatrice. She must have known you cared and she let you make that cruel sacrifice."

Before answering the older woman took the girl's hand and held it in a close clasp as she said earnestly: "Jenny, dear, I gave up much, very much, but think what I won. You, for instance. I had thought that I might have a daughter, as I suppose all girls, growing into young womanhood, dream that, some day, they will marry and have children, and that daughter, I now believe, would have been like you. So you see I gained something very precious." There were tears in Jenny's tender brown eyes as she replied: "Oh. Miss Dearborn, I am the one who has gained. I just can't picture life without you. I remember so well when you first came. You heard that our little schoolhouse down on the coast highway was to be closed because the board of education was not

allowed to pay a teacher's salary unless there were eight pupils to attend the school. There were only five of us, the four from the Anderson Bean Ranch and me. You offered to teach us for nothing, saying that you wanted to do something for children. I didn't know that until long afterwards, then Grandma told me how it had all come about. We were too little to go on the bus to the big schools in Santa Barbara."

"I'm glad indeed that I did it," Miss Dearborn put in, "but, of course, when the Andersons moved back to their Iowa farm and you were the only pupil we closed that coast highway school and had our lessons here, and such an inspiration as they have been to me, Jenny Warner! I just know that you are leading up to an expression of gratitude. I've heard it time and again and I do appreciate it, dear girl, but now that you know the great loneliness that was in my heart when I came West, you will readily understand that having you to teach filled a void, filled it beautifully, and so, I also have a deep sense of gratitude toward you."

"And two years ago," Jenny continued retrospectively, "when we completed the work of the sixth grade, you can't think how unhappy I was, for I supposed that at last I would have to leave you and go by bus each day to the Santa Barbara Junior High, and I never shall forget that wonderful day when you told me you had received permission to teach me through the eighth grade."

Miss Dearborn laughed happily. "What I never told you, Jenny, was that the board of education insisted that I take an

examination at their State Normal to prove to them that I knew enough to teach one lone pupil the higher grade work. I brushed up evenings and passed creditably."

Impulsively the girl pressed the woman's hand to her cheek. "Oh, Miss Dearborn," she exclaimed tremulously, "to *think* that you did *all* that *just* for me."

"Wrong you are, Jenny girl!" the woman sang out. "I did it first of all for Catherine Dearborn. I felt a panic in my heart I had not dreamed possible when I thought that I was to be left all alone, day in and day out, with only memory for company. I wanted to keep you, to teach you, to love you, and I did keep you, but now along comes a letter from the same board of education. If we thought they had forgotten us, we are mistaken. That's my news about you."

Opening a small drawer in the end of the table, Miss Dearborn took out a letter and read:

"Miss Jenny Warner will be required to take the entrance examination in all the subjects at the High School of Santa Barbara during the week of June 10th. The results of these tests will determine where she is to continue her studies."

The girl's lovely face was the picture of dismay. "Oh, Miss Dearborn, I can't! I can't! I'd be simply frightened to death to even enter the door of that imposing building, and if any of the pupils as much as spoke to me, I'd simply expire." Her teacher laughed. "Nonsense!" she declared. "Not only must my pupil enter the door but she must pass the tests with high grades if I

am to be permitted to teach her another year."

Then to change the girl's thought, Miss Dearborn continued brightly: "Saturday is our mythology day, isn't it? But since you came late and we have spent so much time visiting, we will not go up into the hills as we usually do for this lesson. Let me see. Weren't you to write something about Apollo, Diana and Echo that I might know if you fully understand just what each stands for in poetry and art?"

"Oh, Miss Dearborn," Jenny laughed as she drew a paper from her book, "I don't know what you will say about the composition I tried to write. It isn't good, I know, but I ever so much wanted to write it in verse. Shall you mind my trying?" The girl's manner was inquiring and apologetic at the same time.

"Of course not," was the encouraging reply. "We all reach an age when we want to write our thoughts in rhyme. Read it to me."

And so timidly Jenny began:

At Sunrise

Gray mists veil the dawn of day,
Silver winged they speed away,

When across a road of gold
In his shining chariot rolled

Young Apollo. Day's fair King

Bids the birds awake and sing!

Robin, skylark, linnet, thrush
From each glen and flower-glad bush

Burst their throats with warbles gay
To welcome back the King of Day.

Diana, huntress, Apollo's twin,
Standing in a forest dim,

A quiver on one shoulder fair
Filled with arrows. (In her hair

A moonlike crescent.) Calls her hounds
To new adventures with them bounds,

While lovely Echo in the hill,
Though grieving for Narcissus still,

Must need call back their song or bay,
And so is dawned a glad new day.

Miss Dearborn smiled as she commented: "Dear girl, there is no need to blush about this, your first effort at verse. I am going to suggest that you write all of your compositions on this poetical subject in rhyme. Keep them and let us see how much better the last will be than the first." Then after a thoughtful moment:

“Dawn is a subject much loved by the poets.”

Then she quoted from Byron:

> “The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
> With breath all incense and with cheek all bloom;
> Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn
> (Living as if earth contained no tomb)
> And glowing into day.”

“Oh, Miss Dearborn,” was Jenny’s enthusiastic comment, “how happy I will be when my memory holds as many poems as you know. It will add to the loveliness of every scene to know what some poet has thought about one that was similar.”

“You are right, dear, it does.” Then rising, Miss Dearborn said: “Come with me to the porch dining room. I hear the kettle calling us to afternoon tea.”

CHAPTER VIII.
AN ADVENTURE FILLED DAY

It was late afternoon when Jenny returned from Miss Dearborn's home high in the foothills. As she drove up the long lane leading to the farmhouse, she saw three young ladies from Granger Place Seminary on horseback cantering along the highway toward the mansion-like home of Mrs. Poindexter-Jones. She was too far away, however, to be sure that among them was the girl whom she believed to be the daughter of the rich woman who owned the farm.

Going to the barn, Jenny unhitched Dobbin, patting him lovingly and chatting in a most intimate friendly manner as though she were sure that he understood.

"We've had a red letter day, haven't we, Dob? First, early this morning we drove that poor Etta Heldt to the station and loaned her money to help her buy a ticket to Belgium." Then, in silent meditation, the girl thought: "How I wish I had a magic carpet like that of The Little Lame Prince. I would love to be over on that quaint Belgian farm when the old people first see their granddaughter arriving."

Then as she led the faithful horse out to the watering trough under a blossoming peach tree, another thought presented itself. "Dobbin." she again addressed her companion, "now that we

have loaned part of the honey and egg money, wouldn't it be dreadful if Mrs. Poindexter-Jones should decide to sell this farm?" She sighed. "Though I suppose that hundred dollars wouldn't go very far toward buying it." For a contemplative moment the girl gazed across the meadow where a pale green of early grain was beginning to show, and then at the picturesque old adobe partly hidden by the blossoming orchard. It was all the home she had ever known and it was hard to even think of moving to another. "Don't climb over a stile till you get to it," Grandpa Si had often told her. Remembering this, she turned her attention to her companion, who had lifted his dripping head. "My, but you were thirsty, weren't you, Dob? Come on now into your nice cool stall. I'm eager to tell Grandma about that dreadful examination I am to take."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.