

I'm always getting into wrong places and doing out what I ought not to. I wish I didn't live with my folks. Star. When May Halsey left me up stairs alone, and I got out of the window to have a good slide down the roof, I didn't know I was going to hear them talk my brothers over, did I Star? I didn't know I was going to hear Jenny Halsey say Tracy was an agreeable, gentlemanly fellow—that's what everybody says, you know—but that my good Seth was worth a dozen just like him. That's what she was more of than about Seth when he was seventeen than there had been about Tracy all his life.

The little girl did not finish her communication to Star.

"Take care there, Kate," said a voice in such close proximity, that, with a violent start that nearly threw her from her balance, the little girl gazed around, vainly seeking to discover from whence it came. But a moment intervened before Seth sprang from the cloverbloom, where he had been lying close by the fence, and stood before her.

Kate, whose every instinct was excitement when feeling was concerned, sat confounded, staring nearly at her great, dark eyes. Seth sat, the dark curls back on either side, and stood gazing down into the non-committal face.

"Kate, you gyp, did she say that?" "Who say what?"

Not a quiver of an eyelid betrayed the Kate of two minutes before and the present Kate to be identical.

"Did I dream what you said to Star, little sister?"

"Maybe you did. Very likely. Let go my head, Seth. I never said anything to any person any young lady wouldn't want to see. I wouldn't say the child staidly, if I burned my head off. But I'm always finding out what I ought not to. And now you are just as bad. Why don't you take your naps on the sofa the way Tracy does, and leave outdoors to me. There's one thing Seth Howe, and the dark eyes brightened, you are not to remember one minute if you've heard anything. Miss Halsey would not want you to know. I am only twelve years old, but I know how young ladies feel about such things, and you have treated her shamefully, Seth Howe. You are a great, big coward to stand back so. You put me out of patience, you do. There, I haven't got another word to say. Let me go. Aunt Dobby wants the curtains for tea."

And Seth, letting her go, began a sort of apology. "I have been cross to you lately, Katy. I have—but he did not get further. Picking up her dish of bright fruit, Katy threw back her head for one of the old laughs that had been less frequent lately.

"Don't practise apologies on me now, Seth, don't. You'd better make 'em to somebody else. Don't be a goose!"

And Seth, watching the little figure flying down the garden-walk, exclaimed—"What a child it is, to be sure?"

The swallows had sought their nests, and the whip-poor-wills were uttering their plaint, when—Tracy having one of his several calls—Seth walked alone over to Squire Tracy's, and found Jenny, apparently quite by herself.

The young lady met him with gentle dignity, quite unlike the old-time pleasant freedom before Tracy came. But out there in the vine-wreathed porch, with sweet odors coming to them borne on the soft night air from Jenny's flower garden, with moonlight radiance around them, and only the stars and guardian angels looking down upon them, how was it possible that they should do otherwise than come to an understanding?

When Seth found how Jenny had, he had grieved over his changed manner, how she had questioned her own conduct to find a reason for it, and how bravely she had striven to win him back by cheerful kindness, and bright good nature, yet without increasing the old understanding upon him; when he knew how she had feared some dark shadow of trouble had come upon him which she might not share, and had conjectured in vain its character, and finally in maiden delicacy had confided herself to his own cold manner—when he knew all this, together with the explanations of various little scenes between her and Tracy, his conflicting emotions of joy, sorrow, and self-disgust found limited expression in the one ejaculation.

"I had been a great fool, Jenny? Had Katy been there, which she was not, her straightforwardness would have expressed itself in the words—"

"Prose what I thought all the time, but how was I to help it?"

"Had Tracy confided to me the fact of his engagement to Miss Williams, it would have been different. However, in that case, I should not have known what an easy Saps I am capable of becoming to my own weakness," said Seth.

"I was at fault," yielded Jenny. "I was glad to entertain Tracy as your brother, of course, but I should have

That night when Jenny made an entry in the diary she kept locked, day by day, in her rosewood writing desk, the last lines ran—

"So no more sleepless nights, and perplexed mornings now. I never would have supposed my noble Seth had an atom of jealousy in his disposition—must I do it by that ugly name? But it is well to know it thus early, that I may guard against the brightening of the little spark. Perhaps it will die utterly for want of fanning. It has been hard for us both all these weeks, but I will not dwell on what is past."

Jenny and Seth were married in the autumn, and Tracy was groomsmen. Katy, now in young womanhood, retains all her childhood's straight-forwardness and delicate sensitiveness to honor, together with her propensity to mortification and latent love of teasing, but she is greatly toned down and softened. Katy has personal matters of her own to be interested in, and to keep silent about. She is spending some time at brother Seth's now. He gives her occasional pay in her own coin on old scores, when he enquires the contents of certain letters that come up regularly when he alludes to the subject of a private interview as relative to one of Tracy's friends, from which Miss Katy came with a troubled look and crimsoned cheeks—

"Finding the young lady fit to trust on this topic, he demurely inquires whether she would not be induced to confide in it Star"—*Tracy's Home Magazine*.

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