

mouse? I dug out the inside of the hollow place hunting for it, but it was gone, and then he praised me some more for helping to clear out the place where he meant to keep his tools; and I heard him say to my Helen that evening, "I do think, Helen, that Jock is the very cleverest dog I ever saw: he seems to understand every word I say to him, and he's better help than most boys are."

"Yes, he *is* very clever," she answered, "but I believe I care more for his lovingness than I do for his cleverness. How many dogs as active and full of fun as he is would spend hours, as he does, here in this quiet room, contented if I just touch him or speak to him now and then?—Dear little Jock!" and she drew me closer to her and laid her hand on my head. "But what did he do to-day that was so clever?" she asked presently.

"Well, it's a secret just now," he said, "and it will be till Aunt Louise's birthday comes; then I'll tell you all about it."

Helen did not tease him to know what it was, but she said, very sorrowfully, "I am the only one of you all who cannot make mamma something for a birthday present; and yet I am the one who ought to give her a birthday present every day, for all that she does for me."

"It wouldn't be a birthday present if you gave her one every day," said Roland. "Now, I know you'd like to say, 'Don't be literal, dear,' and you may say it; I sha'n't mind. But, Helen," and he took her two little hands in his and rubbed them gently together, "if you'd like me to I can fix you up a sort of a birth-