

note in one broad palm, and clapped the other on it smartly.

"Tiens," she left off in a hurry, "and Mamzelle said I must be careful—did you hear anything break, Mees?"

Spite of her vexation, Ursula could not help laughing at the sudden terror in Angélique's broad good-humoured face.

She opened the note; there were only these words: "To Ursula, whom I love—always yours, Sophie de Visme,"—and a half-blown China rose, crushed flat, but still sweet and fragrant.

If Ursula had been well, or if there had been any one present to give a ludicrous aspect to Sophie's effusion, she would probably have laughed at it. But illness had softened her. Angélique was looking out of the window, and hot tears came raining down from the great dark eyes over the fading rosebud.

"Am I never to be cured of my pride?" whispered the girl's humbled heart. "I thought it was cured years ago, when I saved Aimée from the bull. It was pride that made me do work which I could not understand, and Madame says I may be months before I can work hard again, even at French; and how proud I have been to Sophie."

Angélique turned round, and saw her crying. She stood a minute thinking, and then she went down stairs.

When she brought up Ursula's supper, she looked vexed and discontented.

"What's the matter, Angélique? I never saw you look cross before."

"Ah ça, Mees Ursule, if I tell, you will be sorry. I thought to give you a pleasure, and it is not possible,—that is all. There are folks in the world with no more feeling than insects."

"You had better tell me," said Ursula; "if you don't, I shall fancy something much worse than the reality."

Angélique heaved out a sound between a sigh and a grunt, and then she crossed her arms over her chest as if to keep in such utterances.

"Eh bien, Mees, I see you crying at Mamzelle's letter, and I think, 'Poor Mees Ursule—she does not like Mamzelle de Visme, but she wish for Mamzelle Léonie.' Well then, Mamzelle, when one is ill I know it is good to have all one desires, and I go quick

to look for Mamzelle Léonie. I say to myself, 'What do I know?—I am only an old bonne; it is possible Mees Ursule is right, and her friend may long to come to her.' Well, Mees, I go in the court, and I see Mamzelle Valérie and Mamzelle Léonie, who are kissing each other. I say, 'Mamzelle Léonie, there is your sick friend, the English mees, who desires extremely to see you, and you have heard Madame say this morning—is it not so, Mamzelle?—that whoever likes may visit Mees Ursule.'"

Ursula sat listening eagerly.

"Well, Mees, Mamzelle Léonie has only shaken her head—'Madame can say what she likes, but I am afraid of infection. I would not catch measles for all the world;' and Mamzelle Valérie kisses her, and says, 'Go along, Angélique; do you think such a face as this can run such a risk?'"

"But measles don't disfigure," said Ursula.

"I tell her so, Mees, and I say too Mamzelle Sophie has been to see you, and then Mamzelle Léonie answers quite cross, 'Sophie and I are different people; I shall see Ursule when she comes into school.'"

Ursule sat silent a few minutes, then she said gently:

"I think Léonie is right; she and Sophie are different people."

It is just a week since Sophie paid her first visit to the sick-room; a warm June afternoon, Ursula is seated in a garden chair between a huge myrtle bush and the clustering China roses that try to climb to Madame's drawing-room window. A book lies open in her lap, but she is not reading—her eyes stray after Sophie.

In a moment Sophie comes running across the garden with a bouquet of roses and mignonette, and, like a star in its midst, a pale passion-flower. Sophie throws herself on her knees, and points to the passion-flower.

"It is the first, the very first," she says breathlessly; "it came out on purpose for you, dearest."

Ursula bends down, and kisses her glowing face.

"Ah, Sophie, it is like your love, much too good for me."

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