

“Well, you must do that now, for papa has sent me for you.”

Ernest hung his skates up in the hall, and followed Connie into the drawing-room.

“Come here, my boy,” said Mr. Leslie. “This is my second son, Mr. Barnett.”

“Second son!—why, who’s the first?—oh, that poor lad up-stairs—yes, yes, to be sure—I forgot—I must go and see him. So this is the second; well, what’s your name.”

“Ernest, sir.”

“*Ernest*; a very good name too—I hope you *are* earnest?”

Ernest laughed.

“He’s something like Constance there: Leslie, I say, will you let your children call me uncle. There’s none to do it now, and it feels lonely enough.”

“I shall feel truly pleased to do it, do you hear, Ernest?”

“Uncle what?” said Ernest, hardly able to control his merriment.