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The Fruit at Singapore

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by

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Chapter I

There was no word for it. ~~Perhaps~~ It was most like a quick, clear smile, with no bothering face. It might be in anything. It might be in snowflakes suddenly seen. It was once in the line, the ~~clean line~~ of the school building, up and down against grey cloud, ~~a corner~~ seen through an ~~unobscured~~ window from a seat in the fourth row. It had been in the coldness of an evening when long light reddened the freezing pools and she was out alone. It had been in the faraway "miaow" of a cat-bird by the creek on a hot day when hard green gooseberries dropped ~~singing into a tin bucket~~; ~~in the pinkness of the wild roses on the way home~~. It might be in anything at any time: in the steamy smell of bubbling rice (a special reason for this); in a box of presents coming to ~~Minnesota from Grandmamma~~ several days after Christmas, of course ~~mostly~~ crocheted mittens with small crooked thumbs too tight even for the baby, but in all colors, so pretty. It was in the sudden inward seeing of dark blue ocean over brown roofs. Above all it was in a thinking about Little Cousin Marilyn. A sudden meaning it was in anything, a cutting that was pain and yet was not.

~~It went away.~~ It would never stay. It was, and then it was not.

It was unexpected. It would not come when she wanted it. She would not be wanting it, and there it would be.

When she was six - and had known simply nothing - there had been a matchbox ~~Mamma said she could have~~. It had two parts, one ~~a kind of~~ drawer slipping in and out. She had put two rags in the drawer part, one to wash her slate with, the other to wipe it. She went off to school, holding the box in her hand, skipping and thinking about the two rags in such a nice place, and everything suited her. ~~When she got to school there was the outer part of the matchbox in her hand; the drawer and the two rags were gone. She had only emptiness. And the emptiness was worse than not having the rags, though that was bad enough; because Miss Butterfield had made a punishing rule about cleaning your slate with your wet fingers. Emptiness - - -~~ She had turned her head away, sitting in her seat. Her eyes had come to the highest part of the window, and she saw snowflakes, white, thick, fast-coming, greyneess holding them while they whirled. And there it was, catching all of her, suddenly and hard, cutting her, for just one second. ~~the trouble of school:~~ Oscar the Big Boy grinning about words to whisper to girls he would catch and hold at recess; Miss Butterfield a little while ago hitting a little boy on his hands that were chapped and dirty and bony, making him hold them out and hold them out, and hitting them with a strong hard ruler, while he screamed and cried - ~~all this~~ was not at all. The one second of the snowflakes was.

This afternoon - she was thirteen now - she was sitting almost all the way behind the base-burner. She had to sit ~~almost all~~ the way behind the base-burner, because ~~she had Robert Elsemere, and Robert Elsemere~~ might be a novel. If Papa came over here she would put Robert Elsemere behind the coal-scuttle. If he

went out with his hat on she would lean into the light ^{and} ~~and read~~. She had found this paper book yesterday in the study behind thick books called Concordance. Papa might ~~not do anything~~ ^{anything} about her reading Robert Elsemere. ^{or anything} But he might. Sometimes he would choke you and snatch a Novel away and put hard into your hands Pilgrim's Progress or the true story of Mary Jones, a book about a Welsh girl who was very fond of her Bible and had a great deal of trouble. But sometimes he would smile if you had a novel, eyes shining behind gold glasses, and you would feel nice. But because you could not know what he would do, it was better to ~~stay here quite still~~ ^{have} the coal-scuttle handy.

Papa was walking up and down, though there was not much of a place to walk, the clothes-rack with ~~wet things~~ ^{things} on it and the baby-buggy taking nearly all the dining-room. Everybody was being still. Trixie was under the table with paper-dolls cut out from fashion-sheets ~~you get up town~~, the storekeeper ^{just} giving you one if you said your Mamma ^{wanted} it. Trixie whispered to the paper-dolls and smiled; ~~this was what she was nearly always doing~~. In summer-time she talked to sticks ^{to} leaning against the ~~fence or the house tired but polite~~. Tennyson must be out in the shed. He had been spanked ~~a while ago~~, when Papa first came ^{the} into dining-room. Mamma was holding the baby who had a cold.

Baby. Last Sunday when they were all kneeling beside the chairs in Sunday School and the Superintendent was praying ~~a long time~~, Clara Perkins had whispered that she bet Evelina's Mamma was going to have another one. Clara Perkins was a big girl. Mamma didn't want Clara Perkins around here. This baby, Marillo, was pretty big, nearly two - - -

Oh my. Her name, Evelina, among the Japanese words Papa

and Mamma were saying. Would Miss Fairbanks be next? ~~That~~
~~would be very~~ bad. Miss Fairbanks had said yesterday she was
 going to tell Papa and Mamma about her reading so much. Evelina
~~Osborne~~ reads ~~too much~~ ^{ly}entire too much: she doesn't get her
 Arithmetic. Miss Fairbanks had said yesterday she would have to
~~speak to Reverend Osborne~~. ~~There she had been~~, Aladdin ^{As he} inside
 her geography. Suddenly a thin white hand had come down and
 Aladdin was gone, ~~and~~ the map of Canada ~~was~~ before her eyes.
 "You get at your Geography lesson!" The hating voice of Miss Fair-
 banks. She had learned the Provinces of Canada. Other places
 in the Geography she knew without learning: India, Egypt, China,
 because she had been there. - - - - Had Miss Fairbanks told
 Papa? She listened ~~hard~~, sweating. She almost wished she knew
 Japanese yet.

But, no, her name was not among the Japanese words any more.
 Papa smiled, Mamma smiled, ~~they went on talking~~.

Papa and Mamma talked secrets in Japanese. Sometimes you
 heard the names of church people among the Japanese words. It
 would be rather interesting to know what Papa ~~was saying~~, or
 Mamma, about Mrs. Olds, Mrs. Skinner, ^{and} Mr. Carpenter with a long
 neck at the end of the choir.

But she was not sorry she had forgotten Japanese. Yesterday
 Mamma had said to a caller:

"Yes, Evelina spoke Japanese well. In Yokohama her little
 Cousin Marillyn and she would tell the servants stories they
 had been told in English."

The caller, a ^{gray} ~~tail~~, wrinkled woman in a ~~long~~ ^{rough} grey coat had
 looked at her and grunted, "Talk it once now,"

~~but she couldn't talk it~~. She couldn't think of a single

Japanese word, ~~nor~~ or anything to say in Japanese - or in English either. Her face got so hot her eyes felt as if they would pop out, and she didn't know what to do with her hands, so far out of her sleeves ~~because she grew so fast~~. She had a cold too - she nearly always had - and no handkerchief. Papa turned his face away and tapped his foot on the carpet. The caller after ~~a long still staring~~ and another grunt turned away too.

How bad it would be when the boys and girls in this town found out she had talked Japanese when she was little. Some day ~~of course~~ the teacher would point to her and say to a visitor, "This little girl over here was born in Japan!" and the whole roomful would stare ^{at her} ~~at her, and going home from school~~ the boys would yell and the girls would not walk with her. She tried, as hard as she could to be like the girls in any town she was in, ~~if the teacher didn't point at her for being born in Japan, and if she said haint darsn't in the right way, she might get to play Run Sheep Run and the girls might walk with her and even put their arms around her.~~ It was not good ever to say things, to know things, the others didn't. You ought to be like the girls in any town you were in. But it was very hard to - - -

Papa
The words were coming in English now.

"I am sure that ~~was the thing to do~~. I was right in sending the telegram. No use standing the suspense any longer. They'll ~~send the~~ reply, collect - - ought to come any time now. Somehow I have condifence I'm going to get it, that we'll be going to a better place very soon! They can't shelve me f'orever. The bishop's letter was most gracious, you will admit that."

How shining Papa's eyes behind gold and glass.

But there - her name again, Papa calling her.

Robert Elsemere slid from her apron. She had forgotten her arrangements with the coal-scuttle.

But Papa didn't seem to have noticed the thud Robert Elsemere made.

She got up from beside the base-burner and went and stood before Papa, knees shaking, neck hurting inside, face burning. She tried to cover her wrists.

~~Papa had his hands in his pockets. He was smiling, Mamma was smiling too.~~ Papa took one hand out of his pocket.

"Evelina, you go up to Dannenbaum's and buy a dozen bananas with this twenty cents." He put two dimes in her hand and looked at her sharply. "They're just twenty cents. I noticed them this morning. They're twenty cents ^{a dozen}. You come straight home."

"Do you remember, Dear, the fruit at Singapore?"

Mamma's eyes - ~~blue~~ ^{blue} - how they were shining over the baby's dark head in her neck.

Papa nodded ~~his head~~, several times, hard, smiling too. "Marvellous! Simply marvellous!" His voice was deep and he walked in the small place as if it were wide and splendid. And then he said, with just a small frown. "It's not an extravagance, when they're only twenty cents. A dozen for twenty cents is not extravagant. A change from prunes."

Mamma said to the baby, "Tell Evie by-by."

"Ba-ba," the baby said in a hoarse voice, his cold bothering him. Mamma wiped his nose and put his head against her and began to rock.

The two dimes tight in her hand Evelina got her coat and bonnet out of the stairway, put on her arctics out in the storm-entry, and stepped out into the snow. She crossed the street ~~to~~

to the other side where the sidewalk was - over in front of Buchanan's - and walked on the boards nearly bare now of snow. She felt like skipping, like skipping and yelling and laughing. Bananas! She skipped as much as she could in her arctics on the wooden sidewalk. It shook and some of the boards came up at one end, the nail-holes having got too big. Arctics were hard to skip in; these of hers leaked, but Lamma said they would do a few weeks longer. Just think, Lamma said, back in southern Ohio they would be planting gardens now. Maybe they would be in Ohio soon, maybe they would go away from Minnesota. The Presiding Elder had almost promised to do something; things would come right some day; there was such a thing as Justice. And then as she walked along words were in her ears - - not Japanese - - loud, strong words:

"I'll get out if they don't quite hounding me. I'll tell them a few things they'll remember, and I'll get out! I'll not stand their damned politics! I'll not lick their filthy boots. I'll not flatter them! I'll not drink their bath-water!"

Lamma had said, "Burton!"

There had been spans all around that day.

Oh there! There was the yard of the Shetland pony, the Shetland Pony. Why did Shetland Pony make her think of Little Cousin Marillyn? She laughed, putting the Shetland Pony and Marillyn together, - fat hairy pony and little pretty girl. But there they were, together, and it seemed right. She did not think of wanting the Shetland Pony. A Shetland Pony was far beyond wanting. One might wish for a whole merry-go-round with its beautiful music, but one did not wish for a Shetland Pony. It

was too much. There was the yard, though, the yard of the Shetland Pony. There were the trees with branches stretching out, brown edged with white, over streaked snow that you changed in your thinking to grass with yellow flowers in it. The yard of the Shetland Pony.

There were fine houses up here on Ash Street, with lace curtains, soft carpets, lamps hanging by shining chains from the middle of the ceiling, ladies in clean kitchens making doughnuts, getting ready maybe for the Chahtaqua Circle, and giving you holes to eat if you stopped with a book or a note from Mama about the Chahtaqua Study Course. In that big square house Ray Nicholson practised on the piano, not organ. He had to practise two hours. Nicholsons were rich, but Mama said Mrs. Nicholson was a most unfortunate woman. She came to church every time and prayer-meeting and talked to Papa, and she prayed about being unequally yoked together. Mr. Nicholson was a lawyer, he did not ever come to church, and he did not like church at all.

Oh, there HE was. Over across the street. In Papa's study she had seen HIM first. She was folding announcements about a lecture Papa was going to make about Japan. He had come to the study. "You had needt off a seerec-tary?" he had

said to Papa. Papa had got red, ~~when HE came in~~, his hands had shaken as he did this and that to the piles of announcements, and he had laughed strangely. ~~Then~~ he had sent her out, ~~told her to go home now~~ and help her mother. He was a sort of thick man in ^{baggy} clothes, with a yellow droopy moustache. HE was a FREE-THINKER. She was more afraid of a Free-Thinker than of anything else she had ever heard of. A Free-Thinker ~~was~~ was like a big dark cellar. A Free-Thinker was ~~like~~ - hell.

Not to see HE was over there across the brown-streaked snow of the street she looked down at the sidewalk. "Step on a crack, break your mother's back." That was what Angelina Leroy had said going home from school. Her mother's back - - ~~She saw Mamma~~, lifting her face, smiling with ~~soft blue eyes~~ over the baby's dark round head, up at Papa, and saying:

"Do you remember, Dear, the fruit at Singapore?"

She came to Dannenbaum's. She opened the door and went in. A man was standing among boxes of prunes and potatoes and cranberries and dried apples and mixed candy and - bananas. A dozen for twenty cents is not extravagant.

"How much are your bananas?" she said to the man.

She ought not to have said that.

~~The man looked at her.~~ He had eyes that stuck out, ~~that~~ had no light in them, and his moustache went down in two thin tails beside his purple mouth.

"Forty cents a dozen," he said and looked at her.

"Oh - " Her face got hot, ~~and~~ she felt as if she had

been trying to steal from the man. "I thought they were twenty cents."

"Forty cents," he said again. "Large bananas, see. Large bananas forty cents. Small bananas twenty. We aint got no more small. Same as buying a dozen small, half a dozen large."

The twenty cents - two dimes - in her sweaty hand.

"Well?" the man said, "I aint got all day."

She hurried and held out the two dimes. He dropped them in a drawer. They gave a little scream. He slammed the drawer shut.

He picked bananas from the counter, very fast stuck them into a paper bag, pushed the bag at her, cleared his throat with a very loud noise.

In a minute she was out of the store. You come straight home.

She did not see the yard of the Shetland Pony. She did not see the house of Ray Nicholson who practised ~~on the piano.~~ She did not see the house where she had had holes to eat. She saw in all her way home only the fence where all day two cats had lain looking at each other, never moving, once in a while yowling or deeply growling - bad to see.

When she was going down the hill from Ash Street she met a boy in a blue suit and cap, the telegram-boy. He was whistling. He didn't pay any attention to her. He had no troubles. Why did she feel sneaky and bad? A bad, bad, bad girl?

The baby was crying. She heard him when she was coming

up the steps of the storm-entry, and Mamma saying, "There, there, there."

Papa came. He looked at her a minute. His face was very white, his eyes black, without light and yet burning. He reached for the bag of bananas.

"They - they - were forty cents," she said, her tongue a thick flannel rag. "Big bananas forty cents. Half a dozen big the same as a dozen small for twenty cents."

"Big bananas! Call those big? Big bananas!"

The house was full of the sound of disappointment.

She stood, eyes down, while Papa looked in the bag. She saw, because her eyes must be somewhere, Trixie crawling over rows and ~~rows~~ of paper-dolls away back in under the table. She saw Tennyson's shoes in a crack of the door open a little into the kitchen turn, the door slowly, gently, close. Tennyson was going back to the shed. She saw a yellow paper, crumpled, torn, the "reply" that was to come collect.

"The man cheated you. What did you let the scoundrel cheat you for? Answer me! What did you let him cheat you for?"

"I - - - I - - - don't know - - - -"

"You don't know! You don't know! I'll teach you - -"

~~Papa's~~ hands, squeezing, choking. The stair-door bursting open. In a minute she was going up, being hit.

"Get to your room! You get to your room! I'll teach you - - - -"

She found the knob, opened the door of her room, and Trixie's. The door shut itself. She stood against it pulled and shaken and trembling. Then she moved and sat on the edge of the bed. The bed was not made, the dark red blankets mussed. The low

sides of the room where the ceiling came down to the floor were dark. she sat a long time, cold, even with her coat on. Her feet were wet.

The house was still. Out through the window and the storm-window there was the grey of partly melted snow and ~~the~~ black ~~the~~ trees.

In the cold stillness of the shut-up room under the roof came the sound of singing, Mamma singing, rocking the baby:

"I gave , I gave my life for thee,
What hast thou given for me-e-e-e - - "

The singing stopped, everything was very still, then it began again, "I gave, I gave - - - - -"

She slid off the bed. Her head went down on the window-sill.

Emptiness. Hurting, not of back and shoulders and legs, hurting no crying could help. She did not cry, her eyes were wide-open, without tears, no sobs came shaking her, helping, pushing the hurting emptiness out. Her head on the window-sill, her body on the dusty matting, she was as these, of the same kind of coldness and hardness and dustiness.

Her eyes were open.

Her eyes were on a long, smooth-edged cloud, purple-black and ruffled a little with white, blue all about it.

Cloud?

no, Long and beautiful ~~and~~ black, ^{beaming} it bent around the line where sky leaned down to green ocean, ~~it~~ was land.

~~rope~~ Much coiled rope, a smell of tar and of paint. Black and white funnels tipped back, Iron rails with moving, white-flecked, blue hills of water between. Sliding down a wave-side, running up another, a boat and the stripes of its awnings. Cars moved, brown hands on them, arms having pictures

of ladies and ~~anchors~~. There were blue caps, round dark-blue caps of sailors.

~~Warm~~ ^{spiny} A heavenly smell. Cool, sweet deliciousness. ~~Something~~ ^{spiny}, red-yellow, white sweetness within; something round and smooth, blood-red: cool lobes of sweet juice. Something long and yellow, black-marked, firmly soft, sweet.

Do you remember, Dear?

Marvellous!

It came.

It was gone.

But it had been, in its cutting, in its sweetness.

It had surely been.

"Evelina! Evelina! Come down and hold the baby while I get supper!"

She felt her way down the dark stairway, her fingers hurrying with coat and bonnet, she would put on the nail inside the stair door. .

She put her arms out to the baby, ^{+ took} The baby ~~put its~~ ^{pushed} arms out to her, and pushed a wet, red face against hers. She looked across ^{this head} the baby at Mamma. She wanted to say something. She wanted to say:

"I remember the fruit at Singapore!"

But ~~she did not say this.~~

Mamma's eyes had gone to a yellow shiny door that was shut on a room with no fire in it, where a man sat looking ^{mil. away} at nothing. "Well - - " Mamma said, "Well - - - -" and she went ^{to the} to the kitchen to make a fire and get supper.

A dish with a few small pieces of banana was at each

place on the supper-table. Papa pushed his ~~dish~~ away with the back of his hand till it was over by Tennyson's ~~head~~. Nobody talked. The baby snuffled and wheezed and rubbed bread all over his wet red face, sitting by the stove in his red high-chair. Mamma ^{did} put her fork ~~around on her plate~~ but did not put it ^{to} her mouth.

After supper Papa took his Bible and went to ^{Prayer} prayer-meeting.

Frixie and Tennyson played out in the middle of the floor. Mamma rubbed the baby's chest and the bottoms of his ~~feet~~ ^{feet} with turpentine and vaseline, and held his ~~legs~~ out to the stove. Evelina went close to the lamp and read Robert Elsemere, skipping some of it.

Chapter II

. . . .

There were noises in the houses of talking, walking, and slamming doors, almost like daytime, ~~no one trying to be still. Even Trixie came awake.~~

"Is it morning?" Trixie whispered.

"I 'spect so." ~~But Evelina didn't really.~~

"Do you feel any bedbugs? I do."

"No, ^{you know} Mamma says ~~there aren't any.~~ She's rid the house. You think they're crawling, but they're not."

Oh my. ~~Back~~ in Brown's Valley, the town just before this, in that other bed-bug house there had been a day when she had to go and go and go to the ~~drug~~ store to ~~get~~ turpentine, Mamma finding more and more bed-bugs, in the wooden slats of the beds, along the edges of the mattress, in the walls, in the cracks by the window. But you must not tell any one. The church people - - - The drug-store man had said, "Gosh, girl! Preacher's a hard drinker!" The half-breeds with bright, sticking-out eyes had laughed and waited for her to come again, and laughed again. Her face burned, now, in the dark, thinking of it.

"How many houses did we live in?" Trixie, scratching and squirming, half-talked, half-whispered.

"Oh, we've moved and moved. Let's count. Three houses in Brown's Valley. In that town Indians walked around and the Reservation got opened with guns and the people went galloping on the prairie that was South Dakota. Don - our horse - went galloping too; he ran away with Papa and Mamma and Tennyson!

We used to see drunk Indians behind piles of boards. We used to find gum stuck on things - and we chewd it - - -"

"Did I see Indians?"

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"I s'pose so. You were pretty little, but you weren't the baby. Tennyson was the baby. He was born in Brown's Valley.

"Where was I born?"

"In Steubenville."

"What's Steubenville?"

"Steubenville is by the Ohio River. Hudson was in Ohio, and Macedonia. We lived in those towns, in different houses, ~~we moved from~~. We visited in lots of towns, grandmamas and aunts and cousins. Aunts smell when they kiss you, ~~and~~ cousins stare and uncles laugh and hit your back. Old friends say who you look like. One town was New Portage. The grandmama that used to be Papa's mamma made cookies. Grandpapa preached in another town, but Grandmama could hear him when ~~we~~ stayed at home - seven miles away. There was a graveyard just behind the house, and there was a church with a ~~white~~ steeple by the canal and a ~~hill going down from it and~~ deep grass and violets under a big apple-tree. And once Little Cousin Marillyn took some scissors and cut all the fat things hanging down from Grandmama's table ^{-cover} in the front room because she didn't like worms."

"Did Papa know?"

"Yes."

"Did he spank her?"

"No."

"What did he do?"

"He said, By George! You're a corker!" Little Cousin Marillyn is about as old as me. She used to be in Japan too; her papa is Uncle Evan. He used to be Papa's brother when they were both little boys."

"Was Papa a little boy?"

"You're old enough to know that, Trixie."

Trixie sighed. She had stopped scratching. Pretty soon she yawned.

"Oh yes, we've moved and lived in as many houses as the years I am old, I guess. I remember a house I could see the ocean from, Trixie."

Trixie didn't say anything.

Oh the ocean. The ship. The funny things you smell on a ship, and you vomit and the little round window - "the port" - is shut and water comes and hits it. A Chinaman comes with tomato soup, his long thumb-nail down in it, and Papa says, "You eat that!" One ship - Mamma talked about this - had a salon just for the children. "They always had orange marmalade on the English ships - -"

She lay very still. Orange marmalade - - orange marmalade - - - - Oh, Marillyn - - - -

"Just eighteen months between the two little cousins." Mamma telling this. "Marillyn's mother was my best friend in Japan." Japan.

Japan.

The "nursery". Dolls and little dishes, and Noah's Arks and little bead purses and blocks and battle-dore and shuttlecock; yellow sand, digging, a blue pail, a red pail, little shovels, wind, ocean, brown temple - - temple - - - riding in a jinriksha under pink flowers that were cherry-blossoms, many other jinrikshas and orriages with horses, Mamma in the light blue basque and nice gloves, with a small parasol. Once a dark road, narrow, very high trees making a red-brown wall, green at the top, ~~bells~~, deep-calling bells - - - - Walking down from the Bluff, ladies holding up their skirts,

out on the way in front of the dark open shops everything to be seen: tea-pots and rice-bowls, sake-bowls and chopsticks, - - - rolls of silk, dolls in kimonos with big obis, small black bead eyes, round white heads with little black top-knots - - - the smell of daikon, sandalwood, tea, fish - - - a dog coming with a tall blind man blowing a whistle, scaring - - - - - music through paper-walls, nice, strange, not like the mission organ with Papa's strong hands playing - - -

Oh orange marmalade, oh ship and ocean, oh Marillyn -

- - - - -
She sat up in bed in the dark, she stretched out her arms and laughed aloud.

"Here!"

The door was open, a lamp shining, Papa, saying,

"Here!"

She hurried and lay down.

"Here! You get to sleep. Get to sleep!"

She squeezed her eyes tight shut.

Something was going bang. ~~What could it be?~~ Papa breathed hard, saying something inside his moustache the barber said was magnificent, simply magnificent. Bangety-bang.

~~The sound of Papa's feet going away. She opened an eye.~~

~~The sound of Papa's feet coming back. She closed the~~

~~eye. But~~ she knew what had made the noise. Tennyson's bed.

There came Tennyson in Papa's arms, the marks of crying on his face, but quiet. Papa put him quickly in the bed, Papa went away, came back. ~~and~~ he put the baby in Tennyson's bed! The baby was asleep. ~~When~~ Papa took the lamp, went away, and did not come back.

Why was all this?

~~She would stay awake and see.~~

What she saw next she saw by daylight: the face of the baby awake, lying still looking at her with his dark brown eyes. Trixie was awake too, and whispering about Tennyson's bed there. ~~Then~~ ^{Papa} footsteps, heavy and squeaky, coming up the bare stairs. ~~The door opened and~~ ^A big woman came in, with a red face and a blue apron. She bent over ~~Tennyson's bed~~ and picked the baby up, while she said, and laughed:

"Well, well, Buster, and did itsittswy-wittsy nosums det all bwoked?"

The baby was scared, but he was not the crying kind, or baby. The woman took ~~the baby~~ ^{him} away, looked back over her shoulder and said:

"You two girls better get up and put on your clothes. Bring your little brother downstairs to dress him. Something to show you."

Well.

They put on their red flannel drawers and their black knit woollen stockings. They had their red flannel shirts on already under their nighties. Trixie had a time with her stockings, ~~the~~ flannel drawers thick and wider than the stockings. Really, Evelina did with ~~hers~~ too. Red flannel did not scratch so much on a cold morning as it did beside a ~~warm~~ stove arter a bath on Saturday night. It was when it ~~wa~~ was clean it scratched. It was better not clean. In Ohio when they were going away to Minnesota, people said Minnesota was a caution for blizzards. Papa had gone to the store and bought yards and yards of red flannel. Mamma cut it into shirts and drawers and Papa pulled the sewing-machine out to the light and sewed, making the house shake. It took

a long time for red flannel to wear out.

Evelina put on her woollen dress and her long-sleeved blue apron over it and buttoned Trixie up the back, ~~of~~ her dress and skirt and drawers and apron. Their fingers were stiff. The window ^{had thick flowers and ferns on it} ~~had thick~~ flowers and ferns ~~on it~~ that sparkled in the light of the March morning. But there woman had said, "Something to show you."

Tennyson woke up and they took hold of his hands and went down stairs.

Papa came out of the bed-room into the dining-room. He said, "Evelina don't snuff, and help Tennyson get some clothes on."

When the door had been open from the bedroom there had come a noise like a cat. And where was Mamma?

The dining-room was warm because of the base-burner, but it did not seem warm. It ~~did not seem anything~~. Where was Mamma?

Tennyson wanted to have a tantrum when Evelina began taking his nightie off. She wiggled her fingers on the bottoms of his feet and said, "Tickly - - " and finally he laughed. Tennyson had light wavy hair, soft, with little curls when he was sweaty. His eyes were goldish-brown. ~~Evelina~~ ^{She} was used to Tennyson. She had taken care of him in Brown's Valley when he was the baby. In this town he was not the baby, but he ^{was still a baby} ~~went with~~ her when she took the baby riding. She was used to Tennyson and used to the baby. But of course Tennyson was like Papa in one thing: you never knew what Tennyson was going to do. You could not be ready for him. He had to try things and find out about them. ~~Once he had got into the sideboard and pulled~~

a bunch of raisins out at Christmas-time, and he said, "Thou ~~Do~~ ^{had} seeest me." Mamma told about this to callers. ~~she~~ said he had an interesting mind, a philosophical bent. Papa took him calling on ladies. Tennyson was the one ladies liked best. The baby was fatter and ~~laughed more~~; he took care of himself. He did not get spanked often. He did not get noticed much.

The door to the bedroom was open again. Papa was there smiling. The baby ran over to him. The baby's clothes had ^{not} been put on right, the big woman had not pinned the diaper to his sirt in the back, and it came down now ~~over his feet~~ and tripped him and he fell ~~down~~ by Papa's feet. Papa picked him up, turned him, and pulled ~~at~~ his didie up, but not spanking him.

Trixie came and looked up at Papa, a paper-doll in each hand. Papa told her to go and put those things away.

Evelina pulled her sleeves down, a little more.

Papa said, "Well, come on."

~~Papa~~ went, carrying the baby, Tennyson ~~running~~ beside him. Trixie walked behind Tennyson, sober and quiet, hands empty, and Evelina came last.

Mamma was in bed. She smiled, her blue eyes in her white face going from one of them to the other and so to them all. She nodded at Evelina, looked at her the longest, and said, "Come here!" ~~she~~ turned the cover down.

Evelina went up to the bed slowly, pulling at her sleeves. There in the bed beside Mamma was a sort of brown-red baby, very little, but fat, with black hair like a Japanese doll's.

"Your new little sister," Mamma said, and put out ~~her hands and touched Trixie who~~

her hand and touched ^{the cheek of} Fixie who was nearest. "Isn't it a pretty baby?" She raised her eyes to Evelina, and Evelina twisted her hands and swallowed.

Papa came closer. "Why ~~can't~~ you speak when you're spoken to?"

"Yes, Mamma," she said.

Now it was the big woman coming in and going over by the washstand, talking as she went.

"You got a fine family, Reverent Osborne. Quite a brood. Pity this un aint a boy. ~~But~~ plenty more time ~~for another boy~~. Maybe next un'll be a boy, ~~all right~~. I like a family more boys th'n girls, myself, but they don't often come that way. Still, plenty more time, like I says, you two bein' young yit - - - " She cleared her throat with a big noise, poked her finger through a hole in a small shirt she had taken from a drawer, and stirred things ~~around in the drawer~~. "Better get 'em all some breakfast, I wouldn't wonder. Want some breakfast, Buster?" She tickled Tennyson under the chin with a big red finger. She tickled the baby Papa was holding and said, "Issstt! Ittsy-wittsy nose all bwoke-bwoke!"

She didn't tickle Papa, but it seemed almost as if she ~~was~~ going to. She was not afraid ~~of~~ Papa.

Papa frowned down his nose. She laughed and said to Mamma, "Do ye lay good?" and went off on her squeaky shoes.

They had prayers in Mamma's room. They knelt around beside chair and bed.

Evelina didn't like anything, suddenly. She didn't like to be here in Mamma's room. She didn't like prayers

here/ She didn't like - - -

There would be another baby to take riding in the buggy that men leaning in front of stores on Main Street said needed a good greasing, sang out like a jackass. There would be another baby to take on Saturday if she went to Angelina Le Roy's for just an hour. There would be dummies to wash, for the new baby, for the old baby, even sometimes for Tennyson. There would be another baby getting spanked if it cried when Papa was saying a sermon, ~~walking up and down.~~

She went out of the bedroom. She was going to cry, and then what would happen? She came to the door into the front room. She opened ~~it a little way~~, went through, and softly closed ~~it~~ door. She swallowed and swallowed, standing in the cold front room. Curios were in here. The carpet was clean and curtains were at the windows. But the front room was the place where the curios were; that was what it was for, and for ladies coming to call. On a shelf were shells, some big you could hear the sea roaring in, some small, some with branches - "corals". There was a sword made of Chinese pennies, brown, with a ^{square} hole in each. There were "placques" ^{decorated with} ~~having~~ birds and dragons. There was a picture of the "Wailing-wall", just a grey wall, high, people in black dresses leaning their faces against it. A small picture of a Japanese "Buddhist" procession hung above another of the same size of a village of Japanese houses in a deep valley where ~~many~~ red and dark green trees were. Kakemonos hung on the walls. Inlaid boxes were on a table. On an easel was a big picture with a grand brass frame. The picture was all of threads on a background of dark blue shining silk. All the many,

Chapter III

At night there was ice, ~~and the snow was hard~~; in the day-time ~~there was~~ grainy slush, water, and mud. The time for sleds was almost over. A man came ~~and began to~~ shovel away the manure that had been banked around the house all winter, ~~and he~~ unscrewed the storm-windows ~~and took them off~~, and the storm-entry ~~by~~ the dining-room he took off board by board, Fennyson "helping", ~~by~~ asking a thousand questions. The slop-pile began to be lower and you could see the potato-peelings and prune-seeds. ~~Prune-seeds~~ ^{These} were good to crack and eat the inside of, like nuts, but you did not want to get ~~them~~ ^{when they are} unless you were just too hungry.

In the woods back of the house black water showed between patches of snow under the dark trees. Papa came home ~~one~~ supper-time and said the river was overflowing its banks; you could see it from the ^{front} upstairs windows probably, and from the other window you could see the "back-water". They were ~~practically~~ on an island! People were having to go in boats ~~from their houses!~~ Papa's eyes were shining, like Murillo's, and he went away again ~~right after~~ supper. Evelina looked out of one window and then the other upstairs in the twilight, and the water was like a big, darkly shining snake crawling, slowly, surely, under the trees, closer and closer. Papa had said ~~in praying this morning~~ ^{plus now}:

"Wilt Thou not stay the hand of the cruel waters - - -"

Evelina had prayed hard, tears running down her cheeks from her shut eyes as she knelt on the dining-room floor beside her chair. But standing at the window in the evening

she wanted the water to come on, come on, come on, out from the woods, across the garden up to the slop-pile, to the woodpile, into the shed, right up into the house, to come on, come on. On an island. Practically on an island.

But the water did not come any further than just beyond the edge of the woods. It was there the next morning, and then it began to go back into the woods, ~~never as if~~ ^{as if} a snake ~~had come~~ with dull/shining eyes ^{that} ~~and~~ looked and sneered and crawled away.

"We thank Thee, O Lord," Papa said, ~~the next morning,~~
~~"for answered prayer."~~

No tears came from Evelina's eyes. Her knees were sore from the dusty ingrain carpet with crumbs on it.

Papa did not miss prayers a single day now. Right after breakfast Mamma and all of them sat on chairs they pulled away from the table and they got down on the floor beside the chairs while he prayed. Sometimes he had used to miss prayers, but not these days. Probably he had not ever missed prayers in Japan. Prayers must have been something in Japan. Mamma told callers about them: all the servants came, cook-boy, coach-boy, nurse-san, and their helpers, all the dining-room after breakfast. Ohll, yes, they were all Christians, - - - -

Papa prayed these days a long time. He prayed about "utter consecration", "many accessions". Everybody had to have a verse to say too. "Jesus wept" would not do. An old verse would not do. It had to be new and long.

Papa began to have a meeting in the church every night. Mamma went sometimes, but not often because Rosa Barnett

~~Wanted to go.~~ Rosa got saved in this "series of meetings",
~~as Papa called it.~~ Clara Perkins told Evelina while Rosa
~~was crying down at the altar~~ that Rosa Barnett was always
 getting saved; every ~~time there was a~~ revival she'd begin to
 bawl and get up and run for the altar like a house afire. ^{to a point of being}
 Clara said her mother said it wouldn't hurt if Rosa got con-
 verted every week, and that wouldn't be enough. Rosa came ^{very, did her number in}
 to sleep in Evelina's and Trixie's bed that night, and ^{in 4}
 whispered and told them how she got saved. She saw Jesus on ^{about the things she really did}
 the cross, just like Papa said, and she couldn't stand it and
 was saved.

must be

Evelina wondered if Old Constable had felt that way
 on the day
 that time he was a convert, back when she was ten years old.
 She was out in the woods, quite deep in the woods back of the
 house, almost to the river, and she had stopped eating ~~acorns~~
~~and~~ thorny gooseberries and was hearing the saw-mill away off
 through the woods sing ^{very} high and higher, then low and lower,
~~and~~ be quite still and then begin all over again. There came
 another sound and there Old Constable was and there she was.
 Old Constable was drunk, he went from side to side of the
 small grassy road, lifting up his feet as if he saw stairs to
 go up. He stopped when he ~~saw~~ her. And then he began to come
~~onward~~ where she was, arms spread out, a great smile on his
 red face. She was always afraid of drunk men. When boys on the
 street threw stones at a drunk man and laughed and yelled, she
 was always afraid. Old Man Constable Pap, ^a said was a son of
 the Devil if there ever was one. But she was not afraid. This
 was no time to be afraid.

She began to sing and to walk slowly along the woods,
 singing and singing. She sang, "Ring Out the Temp'rance Bells,"

loud, over and over. [redacted] was singing for Old Constable. And she was [redacted] about Old Constable, drunk.

And there Old Constable was, standing still. He had stopped coming after her. He was still, with sunshine on him. He was crying. His black head began to shake, his black mustache and his shoulders in the red flannel shirt with suspenders coming up over it. He was crying. And then he was sick. He bent over and was very sick.

While he was sick she went away.

That night Old Constable went to church and got converted. He really did. She was in her bed and the register was open down into the dining-room and she heard Papa say Constable was converted.

"Emma! I am greatly encouraged. I had a convert tonight. Old Man Constable! I seem to have made a deep impression on him. I'm not a failure!"

When she was ten she had prayed about saloons, and when she was eleven. She prayed in her bed at night, and cried, and she remembered the text about not let the sun go down on your wrath, and she tried to be angry all night about saloons and to pray without ceasing. How hard she had prayed about saloons? Why didn't she now? She did not want to pray about anything.

Would being saved make Rosa Barnet not taste things with a spoon and put the spoon back in the kettle? Would being saved make Rosa Barnet want to wash the baby's didies? No.

Sometimes Mamma talked out loud. Evelina heard her

*make
sawyer*

*Emma's long letter
all along
new idea
to see the
to feel
anxious*

*Did it make Papa
any better?*

~~Quarterly Conference.~~ Presiding Elder. Cousin Marillyn had said, that time at Grandmamma's house in Ohio, that a 'Sliding Elder ate elderberries. Grandmamma had laughed about that, and Grandmamma was not one to laugh very much. She hadn't laughed, certainly, when the Presiding-Elder was there and ate with his knife and Marillyn had whispered so loud everybody heard, "Oooh! He'll cut his froat!" Grandmamma had cried after dinner and said she was disgraced.

The Presiding-Elder was coming for Easter. Mamma told Evelina and Trixie about Easter in Southern Ohio: ^{there} would be flowers, growing outdoors. On Easter Sunday ^{in this} northern Minnesota there would probably be a big snow-storm.

There was. Papa brought the Presiding Elder home and he slept in the folding-bed let down into the front room. Papa had to carry hot water in there and make a big fire in the base-burner/ and have the door open from the dining-room. Evelina had to stay out in the kitchen and keep the baby quiet. Rosa Barnett said she never seen such style, she had a good notion to quit, too much work. Mamma said it was very important that everything be right.

At church one whole front pew was full of people joining the church. The Presiding-Elder talked about the goodly number of accessions. It seemed as if the Presiding-Elder had made all those people in the front pew ^{up to his own house} himself. He was the main one. He said, "Dee-ee-arly beloved!" Papa just told what hymns to sing and about prayer-meeting at the usual hour and the collection will now be taken. The rest of the time he sat in the chair at the side of the pulpit and swung his foot and his moustache began to go down not up. On Monday morning there was the quarterly Conference, all

*Nothing
said at
the
conference*

the stewards and officers there, and then the Presiding-Elder got on a train and was gone.

There were no prayers Tuesday.

Chapter IV

On Wednesday the snow of the Easter storm was about gone, and there was the sound of water again. Evelina noticed the ^{from Ash Street} sound after she had got almost down the hill ~~home~~ and did not hear any more the other girls and boys going home from school, yelling and ~~calling~~, playing tag, dilly-dallying. The sun was warm on her shoulders and there was the smell of mud, a smell not of winter.

Between Ellington's and Leroy's she looked, ~~as she~~ usually did, and there was the river, logs going fast along on its great blackness. ^{Probably Papa would pray and there} wouldn't be any flood. She yawned, and went slowly along, and her moving seemed like the water's. Could she stop? ~~and water could not?~~ She tried it in front of Ducharme's on the high board sidewalk where she ^{went} to push the baby to sleep in the buggy. Up and down, up and down, up and down, turn, go on pushing, while the buggy squeaks. Oh Ducharmes! No matter how much you looked at Ducharmes' house you wanted to ~~some~~ more. Ducharmes were not desirable. They were heathens. They played the accordion nearly all a summer night, and they danced. ~~for that they were so loud~~ The small, thin, tall house, shook with the noise. ^{of their dancing} One day they killed a pig. Peter Billadou said they stuck a knife ~~right~~ in its ~~throat~~ while it was alive. This was not bad, of ~~course~~ course, like dancing, but the pig squealing so loud, making you hear when you had your dress up over your head and your arms over your ears was something you could not stand but had to. Once Marie Ducharme had a first communion. She wore a beautiful white veil and flowers on her forehead and rode in a carriage with other girls with white veils. Mamma said she pitied them, poor things. Ducharmes did not go to the

Methodist Episcopal Church.

Well, she - must get home. She had to go. "Don't dilly-dally!" There. That was it: she couldn't stop. She had to go. Like the water.

*But now he
Papa now with
P. H. H. H. H.*

~~It would have been better if she had stopped, It was not a good time to be getting home. In just a minute she knew this. Papa was not out calling as he had been all the afternoons of the "three weeks' series of meetings". He had been out today, somewhere, but now he was in. He was on the edge of a chair, his back like a board, his overcoat on, his hands in tight fists, his chin down on his stiff white collar, his eyes black, staring at his door straight out in front of him. No, this was not a good time to be getting home.~~

She kept holding the knob of the dining-room door, not knowing what to do. Even softly closing it might be just what not to do. Mamma was talking.

" - - - in the Spring. Spring is always a disturbing time. And you are suffering from the reaction to those weeks of over-work when you were having the meetings. Those weeks of constant, intense effort! And you know you were very successful. You made a large number of conversions. The Presiding Elder can't take credit for them, not honestly! A small thing to be distressed about, a silly, gossiping woman who pretended to be devoted to you, reporting to the elder your friendliness - I mean, the friendliness of Mr. Schiller to you. The elder and the bishop are big men, they will pay no attention to a thing so trivial; they will not let it militate against you when they come to make out the appointments. You are right and have the inner consciousness of being right. I can't approve of a free-thinker like Mr. Schiller, but strong in the faith as you are -

Papa's shoes shook as if he felt flies on them. The baby began to fuss and Mamma bent and began to pat her.

Evelina decided to shut the door. She would go away for a while, maybe go around to the kitchen where Rosa Barnet would be. But the hinge squeaked.

"Come in, Evie. Dpn't stand and hold the door open. You'll have to do the dinner dishes. Rosa Barnet has left us. The baby has been troublesome. Hurry, please, and get at your work."

The kitchen was cold ~~and dark~~. Dishes and pans with potatoes and gravy dried on them were all over the table and the stove. Baby's clothes were around on the chairs and the lines and the two water-barrels, one with water for cooking and drinking, the other, mixed with ashes, for washing. The lamps were sitting on the back of the table, no coal-oil in them, their glass chimneys dirty.

Rosa Barnet had tasted things and put the spoon back in, s she had wiped her hands on the dish-towel, and combed her hair over everything, she had said she wouldn't wash diapers not for nothing and stood with red arms on hips and watched Evelina in a bucket on a chair wash them, she had eaten the best things up herself - - - but Rosa had washed dishes, she had kept the kitchen warm with pushing many pine slabs in the stove, she had laughed and romped with Trixie and Tennyson and Murillo - - - - Oh, big Rosa Barnet - - - -

Out in the shed she found the hatchet. Papa had showed her how to make a fire; you didn't forget what Papa showed you. He could make a fire

that would burn. Mamma couldn't. But Mamma had been highest in Geometry and Latin; she made talks at Chautauqua, dressed up, bangs curled, and a small bonnet with ~~purple~~ ^{purple} flowers, ~~and~~ with long black velvet ribbons that tied up stylishly under her left ear, and once she had to go on a train to another town and preach about the "Women of Japan", and she had to suck a lemon to make her voice clear. In Japan it had been nice for Mamma - - -

When she came in with the ~~fire~~ with kindling Mamma was in the kitchen, the baby against her shoulder screaming and drawing up its feet. Mamma went to the stove and felt the teakettle. "Hurry," she said to Evelina above the baby's noise. When there was warm water in the teakettle she poured some in a cup. She held the baby in her left arm and began to put warm water in its mouth. The baby spit the water out, wetting its chin and ^{the} neck of its flannel nightie. Mamma sighed, got a didie from the line and put it under the baby's red chin, and put some ~~more~~ water in its mouth, which ~~did not~~ come out. She laid the baby over her shoulder and patted it and said, "There, there."

"Clean a lamp," she said, Evelina knowing by the way her lips moved, what she said. ~~The baby was still crying but perhaps~~ not quite so loud. Mamma handed her a cloth and Evelina took a chimney in her hands and put the cloth inside and got some of the black off, most of it on the back of her hand. Mamma shook the lower part of the lamp. "Get the kerosene can. Keep away from the stove with it, and fill this lamp."

Evelina spilled kerosene on a chair and on the floor, but she got some in the lamp. (Mrs. Ellington always cleaned the lamps right after she did the breakfast dishes, she had

told Evelina once, then they were ready!) Mamma lighted the lamp with one hand. She carried it to the table, pushed dishes away, set it down, holding the baby all the while with one arm. The baby was still crying. She signed to Evelina to scrape the dishes. Evelina began. Mamma carried the baby close against her and patted it. Finally it stopped crying.

There came a noise from the dining-room. Papa was spanking Tennyson.

Everybody would be spanked. Everybody. This was that kind of a day.

Evelina could feel her heart beating very hard, in her neck, clear up against her ears. Her hands shook and she could hardly scrape the dishes. The lamp gave only a little light, the wick needing trimming, ~~the chimney smoked~~. She began to wash the dishes in water that had not got hot. From the corner of her eye she saw Mamma standing by the stove, the baby against her left side, a spoon in her right hand. Her head was a little down, her eyes on the darkest part of the kitchen, over beyond the water-barrels. Her eyes were dark, more black than blue. They saw darkness. Slowly she shook her head and her lips moved. Then she lifted her head, and her white tooth showed biting into her lower lip.

"We'll all be better," she said in a loud, very clear voice, "when we've had some supper."

Supper. Supper. - - Papa would keep sitting ~~where he was~~, in his overcoat looking down at his shoes, or he would ^{be at the table} come and serve them all and not save any potatoes for his own plate, and watch them eat, his lip curled. He would

sprwad bread and butter for Tennyson and Murillo. He would tell her, Evelina, not to chew with her mouth open - and at this meal he would say anything at all - and he would tell Trixie not to hit her teeth with her spoon or he would attend to her. Sometimes he did not notice noises at the table, but talked, saying that some day they would not be living in a jumping-off-place, they'd move to a better place, maybe back to Ohio where ~~maybe they'd better have staid, or maybe to~~ ^{ou he to have} some great city, or he was pretty sure of a consulship in Japan - he had written to the President. Or he might tell stories about Grandpapa: ~~how once he was making a sermon and~~ ^{stairs} came down and called Uncle Evan, "Esau"; or that story about the tarry and the dog and the hired girl laughing so that she had a fit. Sometimes Papa would be smiling and joking about everything, and then they all romped and squealed and nothing anybody did was bad ~~at all~~. You could never tell any day, any meal, what he was going to be like. You might be arraid and there would be nothing to be arraid of. You might be not arraid, and there, suddenly, everything anybody did was all bad and to be punished for. Today, though, there was no uncertainty: today you knew you would be spanked and spanked hard - - -

Mamma was taking up the potatoes out of the skillet, Evelina holding the dish. There came Papa walking fast out into the kitchen. The dish slipped out of her hands, fell, broke. Her arms went to her face, her head - - -

"Too bad. Accidents will happen."

Papa saying that, pushing the biggest piece of dish with his foot under the stove. Evelina looked out from her arms ~~over her head~~. Papa had a yellow paper. Oh my, another telegram!

"Oh - - - " Mamma stared at Papa holding the telegram with the thumb and finger of each hand.

"My - poor brother," Papa said.

"Oh - - is - - - is - - Evan - - - "

"Read it - read it."

Mamma went around and looked over Papa's arm and read the telegram. "Poor Margaret! Oh, poor Margaret. My friend, Margaret. Oh, so young, leaving her little child alone in the world. Poor little Marillyn!"

"Yes, poor little Marillyn, Poor, little motherless child." Papa's voice was as if it was in a sermon sometimes, deep and trembling, telling about a drunkard or an orphan, or a cannibal that got saved. "Poor little motherless child. Poor little orphan."

"Yes." Mamma nodded, her eyes still on the telegram. "She is really an orphan. Of course, your brother is fond of her, though she is but his step-child, but how can he make a home for her? No mother. Poor little Marillyn. No home. Poor child. Let's see. She died in Chicago - early this morning - - - "

But Papa was not paying any attention. He was folding and unfolding the paper in his strong fingers.

"Yes," he said "I can do no less than offer my home to the child. Mamma, can you mother this child? If - if - it were one of ours, if you were leaving our children, how would it be? Just imagine that..."

"Yes, yes," Mamma hurried and said. "I know. I know. Ah - - shall you be going?"

"Oh yes! Decidedly. It is my duty. My duty. I'll go and see about trains, arrange for a loan with Wheeler. If necessary -

and I am convinced that it is - Wheeler can get into the bank tonight and procure funds. I'll go immediately."

"Won't ypu take time for supper?" Mamma did not seem at all tired now.

Papa frowned at his watch, holding it on its gold chain in his hand. "Well, if it's nearly ready. I'll go now and look over my shirts in the bedroom."

"I can wash and iron anything you need," Mamma said. "Come Evie, hurry, cut the bread, and get the chairs up."

They were all sitting in just a few minutes around the table with the ^{best} ~~best~~ cloth Mamma had got out and ironed so carefully for the Presiding Elder. ^{spotted now and mused.} The lamp with its partly cleaned chimney was in the middle and in the light all the faces were shining, the tears on Tennyson's cheek drying. Papa said a short quick grace in a loud voice. Papa served the potatoes, putting some on his own plate too. He stopped putting food in his mouth after just a few bites and held his fork up and stared at it and said:

"Almost a black tragedy. Rather a remarkable incident." He kept on staring, smiling. "A beautiful child. Attractive. They might never have recovered her. She might easily have been sold in the slave marts of the Near East, and lost irrevocably."

"Oh, do you think so?" Mamma's blue eyes regarded Papa.

"Certainly! Certainly! It was a strange fate which restored her to the fond arms of her parents."

Evelina leaned forward, her eyes on Papa still staring at his fork.

Papa sighed, said nothing. Would he ever go on? Of course this was not the first time he had mentioned this

remarkable incident. But it was an interesting story; he put in new things every time he told it; he kept you waiting. Now he seemed practicing it for an important audience.

"It was in the Uffizi Gallery - you remember it, Emma - or the Pitti - it is really immaterial as regards that point - - - Under the great picture, The Madonna of the Chair, on a settee Margaret had placed the child. By and by she missed her, but thought nothing of it, believing the child was with her step-father, my brother, in another part of the Museum. I really cannot blame my brother. When it was discovered that the child was gone they immediately put the case in the hands of the police. The gendarme - " Papa seemed to roll that word around in his mouth for the pleasure of it - " - the gendarme at the entrance told them he had seen an old Italian woman leading a little girl down the great marble steps. Yes. An old Italian woman. Hours later - six hours, to be exact - (hadn't it been two in ^{other} tellings?) - six hours later, she was discovered in an old garden behind a palace, an old garden with its clipped yews and gnarled old pines and strangely perfumed flowers, playing with a basket of kittens. She was restored to her parents at the hotel, who burst into tears. A fearful ordeal for them, I can assure you. A beautiful child. Beautiful. She escaped a fate worse - far worse - than death. Worse than death!"

Papa's eyes were shining, his mouth a little open. Everybody sat quite still, until suddenly Mamma got up from her chair, saying in a quite loud voice:

"Excuse me, please. I must get some water heated to wash those shirts and underwear."

Papa put on his best hat. His lips were pressed together and he frowned. He had to go on a journey.

When the door had shut after Papa, Tennyson and Murillo began to roll around on the floor. Trixie helped carry the dishes out, Evelina scraped them, and didn't she work fast? She felt a singing inside of her.

Mamma ⁱⁿ put big pieces of wood ~~in the~~ stove and got the fire to burning hot in the kitchen stove. She washed and rinsed two shirts, she made starch for them, and hung them to dry over the stove. She ironed them, making the bosoms stiff and shining. She could not stop to nurse the baby. Evelina walked with the baby to keep her from crying. She would never be tired. There was her heart beating and beating. There was part of her crying about a poor orphan; there was part of her laughing and singing.

Papa came stamping back, hurrying. Wheeler had got the money out of the bank. The Official Board had advanced it to him. See? A big roll of green money. Everybody was surprisingly kind, affectingly so, all sympathy. They said it was mighty fine of him to think of taking an orphan child into his home, when he had children of his own flesh and blood. Well, there should be no difference between Marillyn and his own girls. He turned from ~~his~~ unpacking his grip so that he could pack it again differently, and looked hard at Evelina.

"I want you to bear in mind," he said, "that Marillyn is your sister. I want you to be good to her, share with her, never let her feel she is not by actual birth a member of this family."

Mamma looked up from the underwear she was drying by the stove and darning at the same time. "You aren't perfect!"

sure, Burton - - - - - "

"Oh, practically, Emma, practically! Evan will be only too glad to be relieved. He has been good to the child, but Evan is no family man. He has always been unsettled, a rover. That he stayed those three years in Yokohama is surprising. Of course our being there, and Margaret's presence, ~~that~~ influenced him. He will be immensely relieved, as will Margaret's ^{few} relatives, I am certain, to have Marillyn in a good home, the home of a minister of the gospel."

"Well," Mamma said, "I just don't want you to be too much disappointed."

Papa frowned, took a shirt Mamma had folded, unfolded it, folded it again. He looked at his watch. "H'm. Train leaves at ten forty-five. I'll take a bath, if it is only Wednesday night. Evelina, you go on up to bed."

All night Evelina was not really asleep. She was not awake, either. Her dreams were thoughts, her thoughts dreams. All of "Ohio".

at the top of the hill Grandmamma's tall house inside its sharp-pointed fence,) At the bottom of the hill long, glassy water, the "Canal". / Halfway down the hill is an apple-tree, holding out an arm good to gallop on up and down and up and down. Grass everywhere on the hill, cold, soft, long grass, black-green under the tree, pointing down to the water, and violets under the tree, with long white stems and dark purple faces. A little girl running up the hill with short fat legs, scrambling to the galloping branch, riding, falling, laughing, lying under the tree. - - - - -

Oh, Marillyn, get up, oh, get up from there. It's so dark there, I can't see you. - - You are in a dark, cold place,

oh, get up, get up - - -

"Chil - dren! Chil - dren!" Grandmamma at the top of the hill, slim, black stick against the sky. "Hurry!"

They came up to Grandmamma. "My sakes!! Marillyn, why don't you keep on your sun-bonnet. Your mother's so particular, and you'll get all freckled like your Cousin Evie." Grandmamma's hand reached down and took Marillyn; her other hand had to hold up her long black dress. "You'll have to change your dress, Marillyn, and have your hair curled."

Grandmamma had a rule: when you changed your dress you must be behind a door or inside a closet, if you took your dress off even all by yourself with no one near; you must be behind something; never forget that.

A sudden screaming from Grandmamma. Marillyn running around in the bedroom all bare, laughing, and all bare. Grandmamma running too. Marillyn skipping in behind the door, putting her face out, and half of her stomach. Grandmamma spankin right on the bare. "Have you no - modesty?" Petticoats snatched from the bed, put on Marillyn behind the door, Grandmamma white-faced, eyes black fire like Papa's. "Now!"

~~All the sitting-teen waiting for dinner to be ready,~~
Papa, Uncle Evan, and Grandpapa^{were} on the porch[^] the talking of the foreign field and conference and appointments and Grandpapa's horse; Grandmamma^{was} making a noise with kettles in the kitchen. How Marillyn's petticoats stuck out, and her pretty dress with starchy ruffles. Her curls, black with[^] with wetness and smooth because of Grandmamma's finger that had made them, went down nicely beside her face. Her hands ~~were~~ behind her, in the front room she stood[^] not touching the table with its red and green and

yellow cover that had fuzzy things like caterpillars hanging down from it. Her mouth was quiet and her eyes, with thinking. Some scissors ^{were} in Grandmamma's sewing-basket. She went and got them. There in a minute was her hand working the scissors open and shut, and she was grunting a little, and the caterpillars were falling softly down on the flowers of the carpet. Around the table, slowly, a little girl walked; and cut and.

Something made it all dark, blackness around Marillyn. And it was Papa standing in the door.

Papa came and took the scissors, stood, tall and black, ~~bet~~ between the sun and the little girl. Marillyn's hands went behind her again, she tipped back her head and looked up at Papa with her wide grey eyes. Papa's eyes were warm, shining, and he laughed. "By George. By Geooorge! Aren't ypu a corker! You'd better come along with Uncle Burt, see if you can keep out of mischief five minutes."

and so there ~~was~~ Marillyn, going with Papa, blackness over her, all blackness where they were going - - - - -

"I don't want - - - I don't want - - - " she heard her self ^{in the night} crying and it made her awake, "I don't want Marillyn to come - - - - -"

She slid her feet out of the bed. The window was a whitish square. She put her hands out to it, her hot hands, her forehead came against its hard coolness. Out in the pale bluish-green glow squares of black and white: snow patches and ground. Could she hear through wood and glass that voice of water, sucking, roaring, laughing, roaring, flowing? Flowing - - flowing - - - nothing staid still, nothing wanted to. One thing streamed into another, moving, shining, flowing; black and white did, shadows and moonlight, snow and ground, sound and

and silence; and people did, one moving and going with another, moving and flowing - - - - and nothing could stay out of the flowing.

The mussed red blanket was comfortable about her coldness in bed again. "I want you to bear in mind that Marillyn is your sister - - - " The church had sisters. The ladies said "Sister - - - ." Church sisters had skin of their necks hanging loose, not enough teeth, fingers going crookedly out of mitts; or they had high stomachs and double chins. She laughed. "Sister Marillyn!"

Chapter VI

Frixie and her son and Marillo dilly-dallied dressing. They played around in their drawers and waists with supporters dangling, shoes and stockings and petticoats all over the floor. Evelina sang and she wanted to talk. Mamma seemed tired.

"Don't count on it so," she said over the baby's head against her being nursed, "You must learn not to count on things. You are like your father: you get lost in dreams so. Just stop thinking about it, go on to school, help me all you can, and be a good girl. We can't force things, you'll have to learn that." Mamma leaned over and looked hard at the floor. She said in a low voice, "What is the significance of this? This child of another woman - - - -"

It was good to get out into the shiningness of the morning. Why, you didn't need a coat! A chicken crowed with a high clear sound, and a dog barked. And Marillyn - Marillyn was coming!

She told it to Ray Nicholson. Ray put her arm around her and walked with her. Usually Ray made a face and went and walked with Selma Steenerson.

She said to Miss Fairbanks, whispered it:

"Marillyn is coming!"

Miss Fairbanks put her thin white hand on her shoulder and looked kindly at her, as she did at Ray and Selma when they brought her a pop-worn ball. "Yes," Miss Fairbanks said, "I heard so from Mr. Wheeler. Your father is a fine, generous man."

Two days later a thick letter from Papa was in the post-office. Evelina was to come home by way of up-town and be sure to go to the post-office.

Mamma lifted her floury hands from the pile of dough on

the bread-board and Evelina watched her holding the sheets and reading Papa's smooth round "Spencerian" writing. Trixie watched and so did Lennyson.

Mamma laid the letter down, folded, beside the bread-board, and began to pull off a piece of the big flabby pile of dough.

"So," she said, "so - - - -" and then after a long stillness she said, in the same low voice, "So, she's coming."

Out with the bucket Evelina went to pick up chips beside the wood-pile. ^{Evelina} She put the bucket down and pressed her hands over her ears so she would hear nothing but,

"So, she's coming."

There were many days to wait, ~~one, even,~~ ^{even,} a Sunday, when an old man, a Superannuated Brother, had church, and preached and said, "The air of my grandsires is good enough for me; so is their religion."

On Saturday afternoon, there Papa was, walking down the sidewalk, carrying two grips.

And there was - Little Cousin Marillyn. No: Sister Marillyn. No. Marillyn. Just Marillyn.

Mamma bent over and kissed Marillyn. Papa took hold of Marillyn's hand and kept hold of it. He was very straight and his eyes were shining, and his gold glasses.

Marillyn did not smile. She stood quietly beside Papa, her hand in his, and she looked up at Mamma with eyes that were a prettier color than grey, and ^{nicer than} ~~yes~~ blue. She had a pretty mouth, and pretty pink cheeks, and her curls went down nicely and she had a hat, not a hood. Yes, she had a ring on one pretty hand. She was not the fat Little Cousin Marillyn. She was a girl about as big as Evelina. She was not the same as the Marillyn

that was Little Cousin Marillyn. She was Marillyn.

"Well, aren't you glad to see your sister?" Papa looked at Evelina and said in a loud voice.

Evelina nodded, standing on the outside of the half-circle there in the front room, open today. She felt her face getting hot ~~with the red coming into it~~ and she tried to pull her sleeves down - the way she always did when Papa was saying anything to her. Her eyes, though, and Marillyn's were meeting. Marillyn did not smile and she did not; they looked at each other.

"Well, come and kiss your sister," Papa said, "all of you."

Tennyson went nearer, his soft yellow, wavy hair going away from his face, and he stood beside Marillyn with his head back. Trixie came nearer, with her blue eyes like Mamma's. Marillo holding Evelina's dress watched with his dark eyes, and the baby in Mamma's arms turned its face around. There was no talking by the children, no smiling, ^{no kissing} only looking.

"Well!" Papa said in a cross voice. But Mamma said, "What kind of a trip did you have? When did you leave Chicago?" and Papa began to tell about trains and the names of railroads. Then Mamma told him about some people coming to get married and about Mrs. Skinner what had had a new baby coming to the "crisis".

Papa said he would take Marillyn up town. Mamma said if Marillyn would come here she would fix her curls a little. Then she drew her brown kid gloves up over her little hands, and all the children stood and watched. Papa and Marillyn went off up the sidewalk together.

*I have
seen
Papa
and
Mamma
and
Trixie
and
Marillo
and
the
baby
and
the
crisis*