

HARRY'S HELP

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Harry's help by S. C. Rochat

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BY

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CHAPTER I.

AT HOME.

"WHERE'S Harry?" shouted Master James Dean to his baby-sister's nurse, who was tossing the wee girl high in the air at some distance off. He lived in a grand house, with beautiful gardens round it, large old trees, a broad deep lake, and everything calculated to make him happy in his home-life, yet James Dean was not so, therefore he made those around him uncomfortable for him and themselves.

Nurse either did not or would not hear.

"Where's Harry, I say?"

Nurse turned round sharply. "I wonder you're not ashamed, sir, to be shouting that way so close to your mamma's window, and she so poorly. Master Harry's in her room like a kind amiable boy as he is."

Jemie's voice sank a tone lower as he turned away with, "Oh, he's a regular soft 'un. Ma's own boy, if he had one!"

"That's just why you should be kinder, and less rough to him; not as you are, the rudest, *unfeelingest* boy I ever knew, sir, that you are!"

A whistle was the answer, and Jemie bounded into the house to get Harry Esbute to play with him. Harry's parents were dead. His mother, Mr. Dean's sister, on her deathbed gave her boy solemnly into his keeping, thenceforth Hatfield Hall had been his home.

Mrs. Dean was kind in her way to him, that is, she thought and intended to make no difference between him and her own son. But the eyes, even of those who being in the world are *of* the world, are great tell-tales, and the light and smiles that fell to Harry's share were paler and less frequent than those resting on imperious Jemie. After all, it was but natural. One was her own, the other but the child of a sister-in-law. One was the natural branch, the other but grafted.

Mr. Dean had always loved his sister dearly, and in *his* eyes her child had a sacredness that made him as tender over him as a man could be. Harry returned his kindness with an affection and open confidence that astonished his aunt, who found him reserved and shy.

Poor little Harry! yet he was happier than his cousin,

who looked upon him as brought up merely to play with, and bear with him in all things: not on the frank equal footing of brother with brother. Harry got on very well notwithstanding; with his uncle's love, and the affection of all beneath him secretly, if not openly, expressed, he managed to go on in his quiet gentle way, subduing the angry frown by a loving smile, while indifferent looks passed over him unheeded.

Hatfield Hall was in Dorsetshire, a few miles from Weymouth. Many's the ride Harry and Jemie took over the Downs on their rough Shetland ponies, Gipsy and Fay,—one a bright bay, and the other a lovely iron-grey: their big dog, Hector, cantering after his masters, starting and chasing the timid rabbits over the Downs, and across the jagged cliffs to the sea-edge. Such rambles they had! with the fresh breeze blowing not pink, but bright-red roses on their cheeks. The cottage-mothers who saw them returning from their ride, looked after them saying, "Bless their bright faces!" and a fine pair they were. Jemie, a well formed Herculean sort of boy, with deep olive complexion, large round black eyes, red lips, and a proud bearing, rather too imperious, but manly and brave looking at first sight. Harry, more feminine in beauty, with regular but delicate features, golden-brown hair, and large, earnest, deep-set eyes; his form slight and more graceful than his cousin's. He was so like his

gracious tender mother that Mr. Dean would start at a sudden word or movement of his, and turn away, saying, "Poor Alice! poor Alice!" Was she not happy Alice? No sorrow, no strivings, but perfect rest and happiness in the *knowledge* (not *faith* now) that the way in which her boy would be guided was the way best suited to his character and wants, for that GOD cares for little children.

Harry's father, an officer in the navy, had met his death bravely rescuing a man from drowning; the man lived, but his preserver died, and this happened a few months before poor Harry's birth, making that event one rather of sorrow than of joy. So his mother when she looked around on her bed of pain and weakness, and beheld a little fragile baby with no father's kiss upon his brow, felt a sinking at the heart and a dread of the life before her, but the love and mercy of her Heavenly FATHER had prepared for her a speedy rest from all her cares in His own blessed Home.

Harry was left to his uncle and aunt; and his cousin, then but three years old, gave the new visitor a very uncertain welcome. Jemie was not quite sure whether to be glad or sorry, glad of a playmate or sorry for there being now a number two in the house, and therefore the number one having to share favours: but as much as possible Mr. and Mrs. Dean strove to unite them and bring them up with *two bears* for their constant companions, and the names of these two bears were "bear," and "forbear." I wish in-

stead of—at any rate, as well as—the little dogs, and canaries, and white mice, and pigeons, that young people fondle, and feed and care for, they would at once find two pets with these names : and the more you love and cherish them so much the more will your friends and all you seek to please, love and cherish you, so it is worth while trying.

Talking of pets, what numbers Jemmie and Harry had ! There were Gip and Fay, their ponies ; a pet donkey, that had attained the age of three years, and no one had dared put a saddle on, so much had good feeding and kind treatment altered the ordinary character its species bear ; there were rabbits, Angola, lop-eared, every variety almost, stamping their feet and munching parsley. In the rabbit-hutch also resided some fine guinea-pigs, black and red, white and red, lissom rat-looking ones, and others of a decidedly corpulent tendency. Two black squirrels, sent to Jemmie from America, beautiful creatures, but quite untameable, they had given their keeper more bites in a month than his favourite ferret had in ten, they were certainly only borne with for their glossy black coats and tails, beady bright eyes, and extreme rarity in England. One morning, however, the door was found open and the squirrels fled. Days and days passed, but they were not found, and it was not until months after when a paragraph in a local paper of the next county announced that a wonderfully beautiful squirrel unknown as a native of English woods had been