

**THE GOLDEN
CITY; PP.8-111**

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The Golden City; pp.8-111 by Eliza Kerr

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BY
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"Never heed her anger, my Lysken, but come in and help me get father's supper. Mother would not let anything hurt her baby Idaline, would she my beloved?"

"No," replied the child, raising her grave eyes to Gretchen's face, "but I don't like the big woman, she is always cross to her child, big like herself, is he not mother? If I was a big baby, and not a little one, would you be cross to me? Is it because I am a little baby that you are not cross to me, mother?" The question was put with serious persistency, while the child gazed intently at her mother.

"No, my darling, big or little I would never be angry with you," fondling the wee face so close to hers, but in nowise astonished at the odd, unchildish way in which the little one spoke.

"Mother," put in Lysken, who was moving about the room, getting the supper-table ready with deft womanly hands, "does the stream

never stop on its way to the mill, and have a play, just for a minute you know? I like helping you, mother, but I like to play too."

"No, my Lysken, the stream never stops to play, it has not time. When you grow to be a big girl you won't want to play so much either, you will have other things to do."

"But mother I don't think the woman at the mill ever did play, even when she was small."

"Well no, perhaps not. There are some people who never care to play, from the time when they lie in their cradles until the good All-Father calls them home."

"Oh, mother, what busy people!" said Lysken with breathless astonishment.

"Yes, such is the hurry they are always in, but now *we* must hurry, for the father will want some supper before he goes up to the great feast at Wilhelm's house; and look, here he is coming home along the path."

As she ceased speaking, Hans entered the cottage, and Idaline, with a little run across the floor, met him and was caught up in his arms.

“ Well, my little love, my pet, what have you been doing all this summer day ? ”

“ We were looking at the stream father, and the woman at the mill was so angry looking, oh so angry ! ”

“ Ah yes and well she may be, since all her forebodings have turned out wrong, for Wilhelm has come home with riches. Little mother are you not sorry now that I did not go to America ? You and the children would have been living in a castle now, such as Wilhelm is about to build for his wife, and he poor man has not such a baby as this wee elf that I hold in my arms. ”

“ And yet you are not content, my husband. You know that you are richer than he is, through the goodness of our Father who has given us these little ones. Poor Wilhelm has no children

to gladden his home, and yet you envy him his money!"

"But Gretchen, it is because of my little ones that I want to be rich. Look at Idaline! Would she not be fit to dwell in a castle? I wish I could get money enough to build one. But I will, I am not too old yet. I will go to the land where Wilhelm has made his money, and I too will come home a great man."

"I don't want a castle for my babies, and fine clothes to deck them in. A little home over which our Father watches constantly with tender love and care, such as ours is; that is what we have, why should we want more? I cannot but think that we are far happier than Wilhelm with all his wealth."

"But we can be better off still. Think how different it would be if we had even some of the grand things Wilhelm has."

Gretchen turned away without answering, and with a weary little sigh she gave up the

subject, hoping that something would happen to turn her husband's mind away from this desire that had obtained such a strong hold over it.

It was morning before Hans came home from the feast at the house of Wilhelm, and then he said quietly to his wife, but with an evident determination to act, which she knew there was no use in trying to resist, "Gretchen, get ready everything, for we shall start for America in a week."

With a feeling of despairing sorrow, and a foreboding of evil that she could not overcome, she prepared to obey her husband.

