LOVE OR DEATH.

Hark! who is he that calls? Dost thou not hear him, too?
And yet again, the silence through,
The summons clearly falls.
Can it be Love, with honeyed breath,
Or—oh, my God!—can it be Death?

I dreamt, but yesternight,
My eyelids were kissed down,
And whilst I made as if to frown
I smiled from sheer delight.
For, ahl those lips, my eyes above,
Were the impassioned lips of Love.

I coold fond speech to him,
I murmured like the bee,
The while bright spirits, smilingly,
Leant down from glory's rim.
Alas for mel for I awoke,

Hark! now again the call, And oh, I fear! I fear! What if sweet Love be not anear And Death my steps enthrall? I am so young, and he is old, Warm runs my blood, and his is cold.

changed immersely, though, Salle said, ruthlessly, looking over her shoulder. "He could not possibly look like that now, you know. He is sure to be ruther bald and fat."

"How unfair life is" said Miss Nangy, suddenly, "How unfair and hard".

Bertha looked up in largy surprise. "Why, Auntie Nani, Why, Auntie Nani, Why, Auntie Nani, What is it?"

"Oh, nothing! Nothing new, Nothing is new under the sun, you know-not even our longings and our wantings and the merry over it beined her how. There was no denying, a however, of this and she held her memory, in which it had been embalined for so long.

"But it is only natural that I should like the work their will with her soft, dult hat, in the end adopting the style that they agreed and opposite and our wantings and the wantings and the merry over it beined when were the wanting a little wanting a lit

it to Elsie Brown."

Then a look of an old haunting pair

not then nor any time." And they all grew uncomfortable together, and wished that the question had not been

could have brought Miss Nancy a reply to her letter, she came back from the postoffice, having lately assumed the on the porch, laid a letter in the girl's

her cheeks.
"I have been writing-that is all,"

she explained, simply, when her nicces reguishly commented on her looks. "You don't know what it is to me to From that day she wrote at regular

desert. By degrees she became alto gether a different woman. The reserve

Miss Nancy came prominently forward as never before, taking a more authoritative and, if possible, a more interested part in the preparations than even the bride elect, no detail proving too petty to claim her closest care.

"How good you are to me!" Salile said, gratefully. "How can I ever repay you?"

me time to think."
"Time!" echoed Sallie. "You have

"He is dead, children, she said, slow-y. "Arthur Keene is dead. That is what I have to tell you."

what I have to tell you."

"Auntie! Auntie." the girls cried out together. But she went on steadily in curiously even measured tones:

"He was drowned. It was on the twenty-fifth, The captain of the steamer wrote me about it. There was a storm A horrible storm. He was on deck. A wave struck him and swept him into the sea. They stopped the ship, but it was no use. He was lost."

"Oh, auntie! Oh, auntie, darling!" the two girls cried again, and could say no more, struck dumb in the face of such a tragedy. They clung to her

readiness, dailying with the idea and changing from white to pink like a bashful girl. Presently some thought struck her. She looked up diffidently. "Do you think it would do-that it "Of course it must be white!" May responded with decision. "What else should it be? We will send to New y, as if the mere saying of it gave her self that he had loved her, instead

"What should I do without you. Auntie Nan!" May said time and again. "You are become so much to me, and I need you so!" What should I have done if Mr. Keene had taken you know," sighed May "We cannot ask her."

"I would not have left you," Miss
"Nancy always declared soberly. "You need not have been afraid." And she never said any more.

her."
"Decidedly not!" agreed Bertha, emphatically. Just there the dor opened, and Miss Nancy came in, sweet and smiling, with tender, bright eyes and a

lation. And just imagine my aston-ishment when she said she meant Ar-thur Keene!"

"She saw the likeness, too, then. "Why, when she found I was auntie's was, and she became at once so utterly

"What came out?"

"Was that it? Poor little auntie!"

ty years ago!"
"Beitha!"
"Yes! Ves! Yes! I know perfectly
what I am saying. Jack has made private inquiries since, and all that Elsle
Vannini told us is absolutely true. Ab-

pleasure, she never again could be in-pleasure, she never again could be in-duced to speak of him at any length, seeming to have folded away his mem-ory for good and all among the per-fumed relics of her past.

Self that he had loved her, instead of her now, and her trying to make us think so may have been only a way of making it seem more real to herself. The letters she wrote were real enough,

alone in the old home.
"What should I do withou" you, fancies she has ended by actually be-

cagerly.

"Oh, May, I have the strangest thing to tell you—the most impossible thing! Whom do you think I met at Genoa a few nights before we sailed? Elsie Brown! At least, she is not Elsie Brown now. She is Elste Vannini. It seems she married an Italian, and has lived in Rome ever since—in Rome, May!" eyes were with with interest. "That hateful Elsie Brown who spoiled Auntie Nan's life? You met her?"

"She is not hateful, May. She is exactly what auntie said. She is a sweet little woman, rather shallow and affected, perhaps, but she must have -no one knows how happy. It is not a sign of grief. It is only a sign that I remember when every one else has forgotten. I am happler in the right to mourn for him than I have been all my life in loving him. I could not leave it off, for I shall remember always, you

know. And I thought that you under-stood. Still—" She paused and looked up with a sudden childlike humility and wistful-

"I will do just as you say, children. Do you want me to take this off?"

There were tears in the eyes of both the girls. Bertha leaned over her and kissed her impulsively.

"No! no, indeed! Wear it always, Auntie Nan, always. How could we think differently from Jack? We could not want you to leave it off, even if we did not quite understand."

Chicago Chronicle: The circumstance that an army chaplain, ordered to the Philippines, has got drunk and landed in the guardhouse at the Presidio of San Francisco is cause for deep sorrow, yet the circumstance is not without its compensations. As the military career of the bibulous chaplain will undoubtedly be cut short by a court martial, a place will be left in the army for some one of the warilke Chicago brethren who have been howling death and destruction to the traitorous Aguinaldo ever since the Philippine row began. Let the militant parsons get their applications in early and avoid the rush.

her face.

Bertha's eyes sparkled with amused pity. How could anything matter much after one was middle-aged? Was anything of real moment then?

"How strange you seem today, Auntie Nan," she said. "But for all your demureness I cannot believe you never had a lover. Was there really never any one, auntie—not when you was a girl?"

Miss Nancy shok her head. "Not any one for me, my dear. Life's best is not for all."

"Poor littl auntie!" returned Bertha, with the condescending, easy pity of the young and secure. "If there had "No."

"Hush, Bertha!" Miss Nancy's soft voice grew suddenly quite stern. "You do not understand. Elsie never did anything wrong. She forgot him—that is all—and—and—he and I were separated."

"You poor little young auntie! How hard! And you knew all the time that it was you he really loved?"

Miss Nancy turned aside her head, crimsoning to the ears. "My dear," she answered, very gently and with great effort, "I only knew all the time that I loved him."

"You sweet old darling! Has he married?"

"You sweet old darling! Has he married?"

"No."

"Poor littl auntie!" returned Bertha, with the condescending, easy pity of the young and secure. "If there had but been a Jack for you as well as for

"If," Miss Nancy murmured, "If." She remained silent a time, then went away to her own room and sat motion less in her window, dreamily watching while the twilight slowly blurred the landscape into a homogeneous thing like her life.

That outbreak to Bertha had not time's gathering—the final outcry of a lifetime's starvation and repression. When there was so much love in the world, why had she alone been denied it? Why should she, too, not have had it? Why should she, too, not have had her story, at least, if nothing more? It is her story, at least, if nothing more? her story, at least, if nothing more? For there had been some one once. What woman exists in whose life there has not at some time been some one. and in whose heart there does not lurk
the desire, however subjugated or igmored, for that without which her life
must remain forever incomplete, although she life it never so cheerfully
and crowd its every hour to the full
with compensating duties? Yet how
many women confess the feeling? Miss
Nancy did, indeed, acknowledge the
truth to herself as she sat alone in
the kindly screening dusk, but she recoiled, even then, before the temerity
of the admission. Besides, what good
accrues from the recognition of a want
that can never be satisfied? It is but
converting an Ignorance into a regret.
Bertha was at her desk the next aftand in whose heart there does not lurk

Bertha was at her desk the next afternoon when a timid hand was laid upon her shoulder. She glanced around impatiently—who likes to be disturbed in the middle of a love letter?—but at the night of her aunt's face she bright-ened into immediate interest.

nere eyes downcast, and there was an add flutter about all her delicate per-

"Something has happened—just a lit-tile something." she faltered. "Not much. Only this."

She held an envelope before her niece's eyes and Bertha read the ad-iress aloud: "Miss Nancy Rathbone. Edgewood, New York, United States of America." A foreign letter! I did not mow you had are foreign letter! I did not

Edgewood, New York, United States of America.' A foreign letter! I did not know you had any foreign correspondents, Auntle. What an extremely peculiar hand! Whom is it from?"

"It is from—Rome, Italy."

"Yes, I see the postmark plainly enough. But who wrote it? What is it about?"

Miss Nancy walked off a few steps.
"It is not much of anything. It is just a letter. You must not expect too much all at once."
"Auntie!" declared Bertha impressively, "It is from a man!"
Miss Nancy gave a pleased isugh, and thrust the envelope into her pock-

"Oh, come!" objected the young girl, ringing toward her. "That is not it. You can't tell me just that and thing more. You must make a clean ufaction. Who is he, auntie? Quick,

"Oh, no, no!" cried Miss Nancy, warding her treasure with both hands. It is not meant for any one else. No me may see the letter." "Auntie Nan! Auntie Nan! Then it

the caught her by both arms, pushing the frail figure into an chair, stood over her playfully.

Town, you dear frightened soul, edity. "I had not thought about the state of the frail figure into an chair, stood over her playfully.

"Oh!" returned Miss.

"Dear me, you will have to wait a whole month for your answer!" said Bertha, commiseratingly. "How will you do it? I could never wait so long as that?"

"Town the first of the force Battle of the push and the push and the push and the first of the firs

And dawn that dream of rapture

Goodbye, dear heart, goodbye! To him who calls I speed: Unfearing wheresoe'er he lead-And it is Death-go I.

For lo! the myrtle crown aneath
The eyes of Love shine forth from
Death.

"Y-yes."

"Horrid thing! How I hate her!"

Miss Nancy hastily lifted her faded, gentle, gray eyes. There was an earnest, almost a reproving look in them. "You must not say that, dear. Elsie Brown was a sweet girl. She was unstable—light—but she was a sweet girl and pretty as a pink. She was my dearest friend."
"And she stole your lover from you?"

"Hurrah!" Bertha executed a gay pi "Hurrah!" Bertha executed a gay pirouette. "And at last he has come back to his first love—and he has written to tell you so? You might as well confess, auntie, as blush so outrageously. I never saw such blushing! How does he say it? Do tell me, there's a dear! And what reason does he give for not writing sooner?"

"There was nothing to explain, Berthat I always understood it perfectly.

een the expression of a passing dis-ontent. It was the rebellion of a life-He was never to biame for anything He was never to blame for anything. "Bless your loyal heart! But you ar

> -it is only a letter, I told you. But

"Oh, you read between the lines, of course!" supplemented Bertha, blithely. "That is what Jack and I do. We write wide apart on purpose. At least now, though, you will write to Mr. Keene, will you not, auntie?"

Miss Nancy's head drooped. "Yes." she answered at last in a voice trembling with a subdued pathetic happiness. "That much I may do. I shall write to him."

"A nice letter, auntie? As nice as mine to Jack?"

Miss Nancy looked up. The light of a new spring time seemed to have passed

"A nice letter, auntie? As nice as mine to Jack?"

Miss Nancy looked up. The light of a new spring time seemed to have passed transformingly over her. Her eyes were deep and dark and young again. "You could not write your Jack such a letter if you tried," she said. "I have waited for years to write him. It is as if I had been dumb till now."

Bertha laid her hand sympathetically over Miss Nancy's thin fingers. They were hot and quivering, as if with eagerness to begin, and the girl impulsively drew her to the desk sweeping her own half-finished not unceremoniously out of the way. "Sit here and begin at once—now, while you are in the mood for it," she ordered, with the unconscious patronage of the competent adviser. "I will go away and leave you alone. And, Auntie, may I tell the girls?"

Little waves of color ran over Miss Nancy's transparent cheeks in alternative negative and assent. "Do what you like," she murmured faintly. "There is not really anything to tell, you know." And she bent her head low over the desk, while Bertha flew jubilantly from the room.

It was an unusually long letter that Miss Nancy wrote, and from beginning to end the writing of it was one exquisite, intoxicating joy. When at last she appeared, closked and bonneted among her nieces, some new and vital atmosphere, vibrant with intense emotion, seemed to enetr with her.

The three young girls looked at her awkwardly, deeply interested, yet not knowing how to express themselves, for even keener than their curiosity in the hinted love story was their sense of the incongruity of connecting it with Auntie Nan. How could love begin all over again for any one at a time when it ought to be coming to an end? Why, Auntie Nan was nearly fifty years old. To think of her at that age with a lover was like watching for the sunrise in the middle of the day.

"I am going to the village to post a letter," Miss Nancy, said, irresolutely, interpreting the expression on their frank, mobile faces.

"There is no hurry, you know," Sallie observed. "There is no

They talked much of Mr. Keene la the following days after the first re-serve had worn away, and Miss Nancy was persuaded into showing them a photograph which she had had hidden away for twenty years. It was a charming face, manly and full of sweetness, and Miss Nancy's eyes grew dim as she gazed at it. "He looks ever so much like Jack. "Tes, indeed:" ejaculated both girls imultaneously, "Well?"

Miss Nancy extended a small tremusus hand. An envelope lay tightly rushed within it.

"I have had—a letter."

"I have had—a letter." simultaneously, "Well?"
Miss Nancy extended a small tremulous hand. An envelope lay tightly crushed within it. "I have had—a letter." "He is coming back? Oh, Auntie

grew dim as she gazed at it.

"He looks ever so much like Jack, doesn't he?" Hertha commented in delight, and Miss Nancy confessed that he did, and that the chance resemblance had always been a secret element in her partiality for the young fellow.

would not be foolish-to get a white

the direct question was put to her

wedding day."

a soft, rich, white silk ove

"Of course, Mr. Keene must have

want one's own some alone to meet the might have been one's own. I did not feel it so much when I lived alone. There was nothing to bring it home to me. But coming among all you happy young creatures showed up my life by contrast. I cannot help feeling as if I had not had all my rights."

She broke off, astonished at herself, a faint deprecating color overspreading the fragile white-crocus prettiness of ler face.

Bertha's eyes sparkled with amused ity. How could anything matter uch after one was middle-aged? Was yithing of real moment then?

'No. She married some one else."

'No. Gear," the gentle voice returned in its precise accents. 'I did not ling withing of real moment then?

'Husb, Bertha'' Miss Nancy's soft within the cook it."

'No. She face.'

'But of course you gave it to him the you not?'

'No. dear," the gentle voice returned in its precise accents. 'I did not ling withing of real moment then?

'Husb, Bertha'' Miss Nancy's soft within the took it."

'And what did hook it."

Miss Nancy looked straight at her in-quisitor. Her voice grew oddly hard. "No. Elsle stood there, too. He gave

crossed her features, and Bertha and May recognized instinctively that here was some holy ground no touch should desecrate. But natures are not gifted alike with spiritual insight, and heed

alike with spiritual insight, and heed-less Sallie rattled on.

"But didn't he give you a kiss for the rose, Auntie Nan, later, when Elisle was not there? Don't be shy of us girls. We know all about roses and kisses. Say, didn't he kiss you?"

Miss Nancy suddenly stiffened and drew back, dropping her lids over a curious look of ashamed longing that leaped into her eyes. "No," she an-swered coldly. "He never kissed me-not then nor any time." And they all

pocket with a nervous hand. "A letter for me, too," she added, in a whisper and hurried away. When she reap-peared, long after, her eyes were shin-ing, and there was a bright flush on

intervals, and always for hours after-wards she looked as one who, fainting of thirst, had come to an oasis in a self-restraint and aloofness which had hitherto kept her a stranger in her home, melted gradually away, and her nieces, to their astonishment, sounded depths of feeling in her in comparison depths of feeling in her in comparison with which their own seemed drolly shallow. Insensibly, too, her attitude toward them changed. She was no ionger "just Auntie Nan," the chaperon and housekeeper, doer of all the slight drudgeries so irksome in the doing and so indispensable to peaceful living, but the virtual head of the house, as she

the criticised, some one to consult and defer to and obey.

When Salile's wedding day drew nea

said, gratefully. "How can I ever repay you?"
"By coming back and helping whenit is her turn and all this is to do for
her." suggested Bertha.
"For me?" exclaimed Miss Nancy,
startled and confused. "For me?"
"Certainly, you dear goosey. What
do you suppose all these letters are
leading up to? How soon is it to be.
"I have not thought." Miss Nancy
was all in a tremor, looking at the
girls in a dazed way. "You must give
me time to think."

me time to think:

"Time" echoed Sallie. "You have had months and months already. What does Mr. Keene say about it, Auntie Nan? When is he coming back?"

"Not—not now," failered Miss Nancy.

"When he comes the wedding will be at once, of course," Sailie declared.

"And what on earth is to be done with May and Bertha then? They will have to come to Belle or me."

Miss Nancy's thin lips straightened.

"Child," she said, seriously, "set your mind at rest. I will never leave them."

"So you think now, but wait till he comes!" objected Bertha.

Miss Nancy only set her lips the more determinedly and went away to her room and sat and thought and thought. How could the girls imagine she would leave them?

A couple of days after Sallie's wed-

he would leave them?

A couple of days after Saille's wedling, as the two remaining sisters satingsther, Miss Nancy came in from her wonted walk to the postomice. She went directly to Bertha and began at most in a husky, strained voice.

"Do you remember what Saille said about Mr. Keene's coming home to—to

lous hand. An exvelope lay tignit tremule which is country back?

"He is country back? Oh, Auntie when?"

"He is country back? Oh, Auntie when?"

Mass Nancy crimsoned violently and made no arswer. Rertha sprang upscriedly. "When is he coming, auntie that when?"

Miss Nancy's head hung guility. She booked singularly disressed, and the world, better than all the world, be

It was the first time she had spoken of him by his Christian name alone, it is brought him very near. May neatled up to her couxingly.

Trell us what you said to him, auntited darling. That will dequite as well."

"Will it?" Miss Nancy asked. "Well: "Come, let us sit down and talk." They came shyly and sat by her on slowly. T said it never wrote him so short a letter hefore. I said." she hesitated so, long that her audlence began to thate. A hast she went on slowly. T said it never bornely is for you all my life. If you do not come back to me, I shall be lonely for you till it die.

"One said Bertha, much disappointing but that?"

"Not another word."

"Not another word."

"You never said as much as that to Jack. You could not. You do not know what lonelines is."

"Perhaps, Bertha admitted, unwillingly." However, I Mr. Keene sails soon, he will not get that letter."

Miss Nancy looked at her strangely. "You never said as much as that to Jack. You could not. You do not know what lonelines is."

"Perhaps, Bertha admitted, unwillingly." However, I Mr. Keene sails soon, he will not get that letter."

Miss Nancy drew units set at once about getting your wedding gown, said Bertha, practically. "Well, I suppose we must set at once about getting your wedding gown, said Bertha, practically." "She will probably breakh, that sounded like a sigh. "No he cannot get it. All the same, I had to write it. The words were burning." "Well, I suppose we must set at once about getting your wedding gown, said Bertha, practically." "She will probably breakh that a forther she was not wholly connorties and that is that Arthur Keene died her heart for the said that she gave it to him beyond a doubt I never meant on the will not get the fire hit a sit dwn her on the will not get the fire hit as sit dwn her on the will not get the fire hit as sit dwn and talk." "The went to said that it is not talk firely of the fire hit as the sum of the will not get the fire hit as sit dwn her took and cannot be seen to help and the will not get the fire

beyond expression is bound to be dumb."

"Nonsense!" Bertha rejoined, unbelievingly. "She will probably break down by tomorrow. It is not human for her to take it as she does."

But Miss Nancy did not break down the next day or any time thereafter, and, apart from her mourning, which she never lightened, her life went on unchanged. Her nieces surprised her now and then sitting dreamily in the dusk, her slim hands folded, and she would glance up with a faint smile and say: "You cannot think how I miss my letters." But they never found her in tears. And, though she sometimes mentioned her lover's name, lingering. said Bertha, practically.
"Oh" Miss Nancy exclaimed, almost
in a fright. "My wedding gown?"
She stood irresolute under their reiterated assurances that she must be in

ative hand again and again. "It will be time enough to have it made when the day is fixed," she said, and bore ory for good and all among the perfumed relics of her past.

So Bertha's wedding day came and went, and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and May were "I do not know what to think," Berthalia and Miss Nancy and Miss it away to her room with a look of mingled shame and triumph. Bertha smiled as the door closed.
"That silk would suit me perfectly, you know, May. It is just what I have always said I wanted. But really—for Auntie Nan—!"

"And why not for Auntie Nan?" re-torted May. "Are only young girls to have pretty things? Dear Auntie Nan! shall look her very sweetest on her

That day seemed nearing fast. Still Miss Nancy would give her nieces no clue as to when she expected Mr. Keene, declining to answer wherever need not have been afraid." And she never said any more.

Bertha had gone abroad for her wedding journey, and soon after her return she and Jack came to make a visit to Edgewood. She was in radiant spirits, as befited a bride; nevertheless, May soon perceived that there was something on her sister's unind which she was waiting the opportunity to communicate, and the first moment that they were alone Bertha burst out eagerly.

and Miss Nancy came in, sweet and a milling, with tender, bright eyes and a pale pink spot on each delicate cheek. "I hated to be so long away from you, Bertha, dear," she said brightly. But Jack kept me. I never can resist Jack. He has such a way with him, aimost be Arthur. He might almost be Arthur. She sighed—a soft, not unhappy sigh, and the sisters exchanged a quick glance. Bertha went to her and passed a loving arm about her. "Don't tease her!" May begged of Bertha at last. "Evidently she prefers us not to know. She does not want us watching her."
"Oh, as to that!" Bertha replied, with a shrug of the shoulders. "I shall know just by watching. I am absolute-

ly sure he is on the water now, she looks so restless and disturbed and keeps such track of the weather reports and the shipping news. She told me last evening that there had been me last evening that there had been dreadful storms at sea lately. It is to be haped nothing will happen to the poor old gentleman."

"Take care." May warned. "I hear her at the front door. She has been to

May's eyes were with with interest.
"That hateful Elsle Brown who spoiled Auntie Nan's life? You met her?"
"She is not hateful. May. She is exactly what auntie said. She is a sweet little woman, rather shallow and affected, perhaps, but she must have been tremendously pretty once. She sat opposite us at the table d'hote, and kept staring at Jack all the time. After dinner she came up to us in the salon, and said he lokoed like some one she had once known and that we must excuse her for asking if he were any relation. And just imagine my aston-But Miss Nancy did not come where they were. Contrary to her wont, she passed on at once to ner room. Hours went by and still she remained upstairs until her nieces grew anxious and began to question what could keep her there so long. By dinner time she had still not appeared, and, when the mald brought word that Miss Rathbone wished nothing, and the young ladles were to dine without her. Bertha and May glanced at each other in alarm, and, with a common impulse, turned and flew up to her door. It was locked, but in response to their appeals it was at last thrown open.

ed, but in response to their appeals it was at last thrown open.
"Come in," Miss Nancy said. "I have something to tell you." She stood just within the threshold as they entered. The shades had all been lowered. They could not see her features distinctly, but the excess of quiet in her voice indicated a repressed agitation. May threw her arms about her.
"Auntie, darling, not bad news! Don't say it is bad news!" frank and unreserved that it all came Miss Nancy stood so still within the encircling arms that May was more frightened that if she had felt her

"What came out?"

"One extraordinary thing after another, and all without her suspecting a thing. Of course we were not going to give Auntie Nan away, even to her dearest friend, but Jack asked such splendid questions. May, Mr. Keene never cared for Auntie Nan at all!"

"Oh, Bertha!"

"My dear, he was engaged to Eisie Brown before Auntie Nan ever saw him. That night she went to the gate to get the rose and found him and Eisie there, was when she first learned of their engagement."

"Was that it? Poor little auntie!"

"Yes, I feel awfuly sorry for her. It was natural enough she should have cared for him. There was no one, you know, in Carlisie, and, being so like Jack, of course, he was charming. But, May, wait till you hear! You will never, never believe it. It is incredible. Arthur Keene—the man Auntle Nas put