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THE THANK-YOU PRAYER.

Once upon a time I listened,
Listened while the quick tears glistened
On his drooping lids that hid them, as a
Little prattler said—
While a father's arm caressing,
Round the precious form was pressing,
And against his pillow boom lay a dainty,
Curling head.
"Papa," spoke the little trembler,
"Papa, dear, do you remember
When that gentleman was here to tea, his
soler, solemn air?
How he bent his head down lowly,
And his words came soft and slowly,
As he prayed to God in Heaven such a pretty
thank you prayer?
"And I wonder all about it,
For of course I could not doubt it
Was a funny way that made us be so kind to
one another,
To say thank you for each present,
In a way so very pleasant,
And forget that God might like it; so I asked
my darling mother.
"But she looked at me so queerly,
And her eyes were very nearly
Full of crying, and I left her; but I want to
know her bad."
Here the shy eyes lifted brightly,
"Is it treating God politely,
When He gives us things, to never mind nor
tell Him we are glad?
"And since then I have been thinking—
Papa, dear, why are you wringing?"
For a slow sob shook the strong man as each
keen, unconscious word
Pierced him, all the past unweaving
And the cold neglect and failing,
All the thoughtless, dumb revival—how the
heedless heart was stirred.
"God is good, and Jesus blessed them,
And His sacred arm caressed them,
Murmuring thus, he touched the child-brow
with a passionate, swift kiss
Of the little one beside him;
Of the angel sent to chide him;
And a thank-you prayer, ah, never more his
living lips shall miss.

An Awkward Interview.

YOU will—er—stay
—and meet Mr.
Rochdale, my dear,
will you not?"
"Well, no, papa,"
replied Edith, Las-
celles, in a medita-
tive fashion, "I don't
think I will. You see, my position is a
peculiar one. I have no hesitation in
saying I find it a disagreeable one also.
I suppose if I were like a heroine of
romance I should feel a wild excitement
and a longing to choose the man who
is to be my husband, but who is utterly
unknown to me; but not being a heroine
at all, these feelings are wanting."
"Of course, my dear," Mr. Lascelles
observed, a trifle nervously. "You know
you can refuse him if you like, but you
are so sensible, and—"
"Yes," cut in the girl decisively, "and
I shall lose five thousand a year, shall I?
Well, I tell you flatly, papa, I shall
lose the five thousand most certainly if I
don't like the man."
"Then you intend to let the money
slip from your fingers. In plain
words you refuse."
Edith shook her head.
"I never do anything in a hurry," she
determined, and a glance at her pretty,
firm mouth bore testimony to her words;
"but you did not tell me, papa, and
induced Aunt Maria, who has been
Rochdale more than any other person."
"She was in love with his father years
ago. At least, I believe so, my dear,
and so—"
"I understand," Edith's lip curled
in a sneer; "delightfully sentimental
and deplorably vulgar."
Two days later Edith found herself
ensconced in the snugest corner of
Mrs. Dalton's drawing-room.
She was very fond of Lucy; they had
been firm friends in their childish days,
and Mrs. Dalton had the greatest re-
spect for the tall, handsome girl who
was so far her superior in brains. The
last time they had met had been in
Paris, when Edith was introduced to
Lucy's husband, one of the kindest-
hearted men in the world—a dyslexic,
or a scapbooker, or some such mysteri-
ous and consequently wealthy person—
and to the golden-haired child, the very
image of her mother and the idol of the
household.
"You are looking pale, Lucy," Edith
remarked, as she stretched vigorously at
her work—she was never idle a moment.
Lucy suddenly belied the suggestion
by coloring vividly, almost painfully.
"I am very well, dear," she answered;
and Edith's quick ear caught the faint-
est trace of annoyance in the pretty
voice.
She pondered a little over this, and
by and by Mrs. Dalton rose hurriedly.
"You won't mind, Edith, if I leave
you for half an hour, will you? I must
go to Dent's; they have not sent home
the things I ordered."
"Let me go," Edith put down her
work. "You know you have been out
this morning, and Herbert does not like
to see you absent when he comes home."
"Oh, the drive won't hurt me, and I
would rather go myself, the people are
so stupid. I know you won't be dull;
there is a pile of new books, and baby
will come down if you would care to
have her."
"If it was not too absurd," she said to
herself, as she recalled the nervousness
in haste with which her friend had
spoken, "I should imagine that Lucy
did not care about my being with her
just now. She made me very welcome,
certainly; but she seems changed, and I
don't know exactly where or how! Per-
haps she is ill. She may say what she
likes, but she looks wretched. If so, I
am a very glad I have come. She is an
emotional creature, and would probably
have become wretched and depressed
while Herbert is away."
Just about 6 o'clock Mrs. Dalton re-
turned.
"Is Herbert in?" she asked as she
threw off her mantle and untied her bon-
net-strings. There was the faintest
flush on either cheek that might have
been caused by the autumnal wind, but
seemed to rise from suppressed excite-
ment.
"Decidedly, Lucy is ill," Edith de-

termined, as she replied in the negative;
but she said nothing, only resolved that
during Mr. Dalton's absence she would
sense she would take her friend in hand
and doctor her.

At dinner-time Edith, watching her,
saw the evident effort made by the
young wife to appear cheerful and easy,
and was surprised that Mr. Dalton did
not seem to be aware that anything was
wrong.
"I certainly shall not enlighten him,"
she declared to herself, "but I will see
what I can do with Lucy when he is
gone. Ignorance is bliss in such a case
as this. Why, he would fret himself to
fiddle-strings if he thought she were
ill."
When the morning arrived which
witnessed Mr. Dalton's departure to the
north, Edith noticed more than ever
that her friend was laboring under some
emotion which was not unconnected, so
it seemed to her, with excitement.
Edith withdrew to let the couple say
farewell. As she went into the drawing-
room, her thoughts flew for the first
time to her father and his marriage
scheme.

"I suppose I had better write and tell
the poor old man that I consent to meet
Mr. Rochdale. I can do no harm at
all, and I can't possibly marry him
without seeing him first. I will go
home at the end of this week."
The first day of Mr. Dalton's absence
passed much as usual. On the second,
Mrs. Dalton drove out with her friend
and child, and did some shopping.
As they returned to the comfortable villa
near Dent's Park, they met a woman
carrying a parcel in her hand, evidently
bound for a journey.
"Why, that is Parker, is it not?"
Edith said suddenly; "is she going away,
Lucy?"
Parker was the housemaid at the villa.
"Yes," Mrs. Dalton murmured, stop-
ping with a hurried gesture to push
some parcels on to the seat opposite.
"She has been waiting to go home for
some time, and I thought now Herbert
was away it was a good chance to give
her a holiday."
Edith inquired in this, and did not
observe Lucy's face flush crimson and
then fade to deathly pallor as she spoke;
indeed, at that moment they turned in
at the gates, and Parker was forgotten.
The two women dined rather drearily,
for Lucy was strangely dull, and Edith
was suddenly struck by an unusual
and disagreeable toothache.

"Why not go to bed, Edith?" Mrs.
Dalton suggested as the clock struck 9
and they were back in the drawing-room.
Edith felt desperately cross with her-
self. "A nice person am I to cheer up
myself and to be so cross," she thought.
She was more than annoyed that so trivial
but painful an ailment should visit her
when she was the possessor of so rarely
white and even a set of teeth. She was
not easily beaten, but after half an hour
had passed, during which she had been
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the landing. Like a flash Edith was
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