

Millheim on the I. C. & S. C. E. R. has a population of 600-700...

LULU.

By G. P.

"I hate her! The tattling little upstart, the bigger's brat!" exclaimed Hortense Lee...

Just then the door opened and a fragile, delicate girl of some 14 summers stepped in.

"Good morning," she said pleasantly to the group of girls.

There was no reply. All looked timidly at Hortense, for she was all-powerful there...

"Good morning, girls," repeated Lulu.

Hortense drew herself up haughtily. "Attend to your dusting," said she.

"You do not say your tuition is paid by entertaining us, and we do not care to hear any of your hypocritical remarks..."

"Tattlers are always liars," scornfully replied Hortense as she turned away...

"I don't believe she did it, Tense," whispered Martha Ve non.

"You are at perfect liberty to think what you please," replied Hortense.

"Go if you choose, take the part of a mean informer and spy. But I thought you had more spirit than to be turned round by a few crooked tears..."

Martha shrunk back abashed, and the rest of the girls were easily persuaded that Hortense was right.

Hortense Lee was at this time about 15 years of age, and certainly very handsome.

When little Maud, too, stayed at home, she begged her mother to let her go to see her favorite, and Mrs. Lee consented.

When the servant took her to the washerwoman's house where Lulu lay sick...

Lulu heard all these whispers but she knew better than all these what was true, and she was as true as steel.

Hortense started as if an alder had stung her; she flung off Lulu's encircling arms and exclaimed bitterly, "She did love you and how did you repay her? You kissed her with poison on your lips—you killed her!"

Lulu was shocked. She tottered feebly to her seat, hid her head on her desk and wept silently.

The next day she did not come to school. She was worse again, the scholars said. She had come out too soon, the doctor said, and a relapse was the consequence.

Hortense cared not. She felt in her heart that Lulu had murdered her sister and hated her worse than ever.

It was twilight, and Hortense had been out gathering wild flowers and digging up violets to plant on her sister's grave.

She was growing late and the graveyard was a lonely place; but what cared she for that? She was no coward and she walked in among the white tombstones gleaming in the moonlight without a shudder.

But as she drew nearer Maud's grave she started. Surely she saw something move. She hesitated, then resolved to go forward, and there, lying on the ground was Lulu Allen.

She was dressed only in her night dress and her pale face looked puer, shrouded as she was in her fair hair.

She was moaning sadly, "You are gone. You were the only one that loved me and I killed you!" Then sobs and groans would interrupt her words.

She did not see Hortense till suddenly she looked up.

"Oh, do not send me away!" she said, wildly. "I did not mean to kill her! How could I want to kill the only one that loved me? Let me stay! Do let me stay!" and she clung to Hortense's dress convulsively.

"Lulu Allen, how came you here?" was all that Hortense could say.

When Miss Chandler had offered to take her into school and teach her for some slight services, Lulu's heart leaped for joy.

Her teacher told her that in time she, too, might obtain her livelihood by teaching and this had stimulated the child to almost superhuman exertions.

Which had soon, by making a rival, gained her an enemy in Hortense.

The kindness and affection of her schoolmates had made her young life full of sunshine and now the sudden change plunged her into tenfold deeper gloom than before.

The light of happiness faded from her blue eyes; she drooped visibly, and one could hardly have recognized the gentle, smiling Lulu Allen in the now pale and thoughtful child.

She brooded over her troubles in secret, but her teacher noted nothing of the change. It is needless to say that she was guiltless, of the charge and had Miss Chandler been aware of it she would have cleared her at once.

But she was not an observant woman and saw none of the mental troubles of her pupil; and Lulu, who longed some times to speak to her teacher on the subject, shrank nervously from doing so from a dread of deserving in reality that dreadful appellation, "tattler."

That seemed ever sounding in her ears, a character so abhorred by school children. She would have been utterly wretched had it not been for the little Maud, a fiery like child a sister of Hortense, who now came to school and who had at once taken a great fancy to Lulu, and on whom in return Lulu lavished all the repressed affection of her loving heart.

Hortense looked upon this with the deepest annoyance. Maud was her daught and she could not bear to have any rival in the child's heart—least of all was it to be borne when that rival was a washerwoman's daughter.

Hortense had gained her point in making Lulu shunned by her school mates, but all this was nothing so long as her darling sister loved her and too proud to appear to notice that she had a rival she could not deprive Lulu of this. It was agony to her to have the child spring from her side as she did in the morning to meet Lulu, to see her white arms twined round the girl's neck and her sweet lips pressed to hers, but there was no remedy for it.

Thank God there are no aristocrats among children.

So time passed on and finally Lulu was missing from school. She had been absent for a day or two.

When little Maud, too, stayed at home, she begged her mother to let her go to see her favorite, and Mrs. Lee consented.

The servant took her to the washerwoman's house where Lulu lay sick. The child clung to her and, bore home with her the seeds of the contagious disease, the scarlet fever, which Lulu was herself unconscious of having as she had not been attended by a physician.

Poor Maud was stricken down and after a short and severe illness, died, while Lulu recovered to mourn over the sad loss of her child friend and to look hopefully forward to her own uncertain future.

It was the morning after the funeral of Maud that Lulu, a mere shadow, entered the school room. Hortense was there, pale and haughty in her mourning dress. None of the girls dared address her as she sat there fearless and still, though some whispered that they "thought she showed very little grief since she seemed to love Maud so; and one girl said, "she never cried a bit at the funeral, when her mother sobbed as if her heart would break."

Lulu heard all these whispers but she knew better than all these what was true, and she was as true as steel.

Hortense started as if an alder had stung her; she flung off Lulu's encircling arms and exclaimed bitterly, "She did love you and how did you repay her? You kissed her with poison on your lips—you killed her!"

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