

## CHAPTER XXVIII PLANNING THE FUTURE

It was nearly a month later when Mary Louise, walking down to the river on an afternoon, discovered Ingua sitting on the opposite bank and listlessly throwing pebbles into the stream. She ran across the stepping-stones and joined her little friend.

"How is your grandfather this morning?" she asked.

"I guess he's better," said Ingua. "He don't mumble so much about the Lost Cause or the poor men who died for it in Ireland, but Ma says his broken heart will never mend. He's awful changed, Mary Louise. To-day, when I set beside him, he put out his hand an' stroked my hair an' said: 'poor child--poor child, you've been neglected. After all,' says he, 'one's duties begin at home.' He hasn't had any fits of the devils lately, either. Seems like he's all broke up, you know."

"Can he walk yet?" inquired Mary Louise.

"Yes, he's gett'n' stronger ev'ry day. This mornin' he walked to the bridge an' back, but he was ruther wobbly on his legs. Ma said she wouldn't have left him, just now, if she wasn't sure he'd pick up."

"Oh. Has your mother gone away, then?"

"Left last night," said Ingua, "for Washington."

"Is her vacation over?"

"It isn't that," replied the child. "Ma isn't going to work any more, just now. Says she's goin' to take care o' Gran'dad. She went to Washington because she got a telegram saying that Senator Ingua is dead."

"Senator Ingua?"

"Yes; he was my godfather, you see. I didn't know it myself till Ma told me last night. He was an uncle of Will Scammel, my father that died, but he wasn't very friendly to him an' didn't give him any money while he lived. Ma named me after the Senator, though, 'cause she knew which side her bread was buttered on, an' now he's left me ten thousand dollars in his will."

"Ten thousand!" exclaimed Mary Louise, delightedly, "why, you Craggs are going to be rich, Ingua. What with all the money your mother got back from Ned Joselyn and this legacy, you will never suffer poverty again."

"That's what Ma says," returned the child, simply. "But I dunno whether I'll like all the changes Ma's planned, or not. When she gets back from Washington she's goin' to take me an' Gran'dad away somewheres for the winter, an' I'm to go to a girls' school."

"Oh, that will be nice."

"Will it, Mary Louise? I ain't sure. And while we're gone they're goin' to tear down the old shack an' build a fine new house in its place, an' fix up the grounds so's they're just as good as the Kenton Place."

"Then your mother intends to live here always?"

"Yes. She says a Cragg's place is at Cragg's Crossing, and the fambly's goin' to hold up its head ag'in, an' we're to be some punkins around here. But--I sorter hate to see the old place go, Mary Louise," turning a regretful glance at the ancient cottage from over her shoulder.

"I can understand that, dear," said the other girl, thoughtfully; "but I am sure the change will be for the best. Do you know what has, become of Ned Joselyn?"

"Yes; he an' Annabel Kenton--that's his wife--have gone away somewheres together; somewheres out West, Ma says. He didn't squander Ann's money, it seems; not all of it, anyhow; didn't hev time, I s'pose, he was so busy robbin' Gran'dad. Ned run away from Ann, that time he disappeared, 'cause English spies was on his tracks an' he didn't want to be took pris'ner. That was why he kep' in hidin' an' didn't let Ann know where he was. He was afraid she'd git rattled an' blab."

"Oh; I think I understand. But he will have to keep in hiding always, won't he?"

"I s'pose so. Ma says that'll suit her, all right. Am I talkin' more decent than I used to, Mary Louise?"

"You're improving every day, Ingua."

"I'm tryin' to be like you, you know. Ma says I've been a little Arab, but she means to make a lady of me. I hope she will. And then--"

"Well, Inguá?"

"You'll come to visit me, some time, in our new house; won't you?"

"I sure will, dear," promised Mary Louise.