

which had weighed on her and her mother was laid down for ever. Never again would she listen to his step, in the fear that it might be uncertain, or walk with tired feet, seeking him through the slums of a city.

They softly opened the door, and found the mother still sleeping. Mary opened the dampers of the 'Star of the East,' and soon a good breakfast was in preparation.

John Cronin told his wife of his resolution as he sat by her bedside, after Mary had gone to bed, but he did not tell her then at what a fearful cost of suffering to their child it had been bought.

His intelligence and perseverance won him the position of foreman, and to-day Mary and her mother, who has recovered her health and gaiety in Katahdin Woods, rejoice in their new house, which exceeds Mary's day-dreams.

'That's a fine man, that Cronin,' said someone in authority the other day.

'He and his daughter are studying chemistry together, and he has some first-rate notions about roasting the sulphur out of the ore. I shouldn't be surprised if we had a rare find in him.'

'The girl is a pretty and lady-like one, too,' said another. 'The whole settlement seems to be fond of her.'

John Cronin, passing on the other side of the Red Bridge, himself unseen, heard the words, and smiled and thought, 'Where would Cronin be to-day if it were not for "Cronin's Daughter"?'—*Catholic Weekly*.

DAVID SUMMER'S SECRET

Aunt Katie stood in the kitchen doorway and looked toward the barn. The morning sun, sifting through the leaves of a chestnut tree, threw little patches of glory on her brown calico dress. It touched her thin hair, and made a path of gold across the gray.

'Beats all, how David manages to git out o' my sight so quick,' she said, turning again to the kitchen. 'There ain't no saleratus in the house, and I wanted to git my cake stirred up while the bread was bakin'. He can't be so far away that he can't hear all the screechin' I've been doin'.'

She went back to her moulding-board, and pinched and folded the creamy dough into smooth, generous loaves, finishing each with a pat as she laid it in the pan. As she worked she kept looking toward the window. Presently she saw David saunter out of the barn.

He came in with an air of forced unconcern, glancing slyly out of the corners of his eyes at his wife, as he walked over to the stove.

'Got wood enough?' he asked, fumbling with a peach basket which stood at the side of the stove and was half full of kindlings.

Aunt Katie dropped her hands to her sides and stared. 'Well, David Summers! Didn't you fill up the wood-box this morning?'

'Yes, that's so, I did,' he answered, confusedly; 'but I was thinkin' maybe you wanted some chips or kindlin's.'

She came up to him then and turned him around to the light.

'Ain't you feelin' well this morning?' she asked, anxiously.

He worked his shoulders as if to free himself from her grasp.

'There ain't nothin' the matter with me, as I know. I thought I heard you call, and that maybe you was wantin' something.'

'I did. I wanted some saleratus for my molasses cake. I forgot to tell you yisterday. But I don't want you to go for it if you're sick. We kin do without the cake—'twon't be the first time.'

A look of annoyance crossed David's face at the mention of the saleratus. Usually he was glad of a pretext for going to the store.

'I suppose I kin go git it, if you want it,' he said. 'You're all fixed for bakin'.'

His old soft 'felt' hung on a nail near the back window. As he reached for the hat, his eyes turned longingly toward the barn. Aunt Katie was watching him sharply; he knew it, and he smothered a sigh that rose to his lips.

'I won't be any longer'n I kin help, Kate,' he said, as he made for the door.

'You needn't hurry on my account, nor the cake's, either,' she answered. 'You'd better set in the store a while and rest, afore you start back.'

She stood back in the doorway and watched him out of sight.

'There's somethin' the matter,' she said, when his tall, stooping figure had turned the corner. 'He ain't used to actin' like this. I'm goin' up to the barn and see if I kin find out what's takin' him up there so much.'

She searched the lower floor carefully, but there was no sign of anything that might have disturbed her husband's peace. A ladder led to the loft. Aunt Katie looked at it and shook her head.

'I ain't done it in thirty years,' she said, 'and then I puffed like a steam engine. I'd break it now, with all my heft.'

Nevertheless, she stepped to the ladder, and shook it to see if it was firmly placed. Then she raised one foot and placed it on the first round. She brought up the other, and stood a moment, gazing up through the square opening into the dim uncertainty of the loft.

'Tain't likely, there's anything up there, anyhow,' she decided, and backed down laboriously.

Throughout the day David was kept busy on one pretext or another. Night came and he had not been able to keep away from Aunt Katie's watchful eyes even for a moment.

At nine o'clock she took down the little lamp from the kitchen shelf.

'Come, David,' she said, gently, walking toward the stairway.

David was sitting on the wash-bench, just outside the door.

'I don't feel like goin' to bed yet, Kate,' he answered. 'It's so nice out here, I think I'll set up awhile. Don't you stay up, though, on my account. I'll come along after a spell.'

Aunt Katie stood a moment as if undecided. Then she walked to the door and held the lamp so that its rays fell on David's snow-white hair and round, rosy face.

'You'll git the rheumatiz settin' out there in the damp,' she said. 'You'd better come in and go 'long to bed.'

David sighed, but rose meekly and followed his wife.

Aunt Katie awoke in the night with a vague sense that something had gone wrong. The moonlight was shining, full and strong. It filled the room with its glory, and fell on the snowy bed, lighting it with a strange whiteness. She sat up and looked about. David was not there.

She rose and looked toward the barn, half expecting to see a light in the hayloft, but there was none.

Then she listened at the head of the stair, knowing if David was in the house, his clumsy stepping would betray him. The big kitchen clock ticked noisily, but there was no other sound.

'He's out there in the barn, and up to smethin' or other,' she said to herself, 'and I'm goin' to find out what it is.'

She went back to her room and slipped into the brown calico dress. Then she stole noiselessly down the stairs, out the front door and around the side of the house.

Under the shadow of the trees she crept toward the barn. Her heart beat loud and fast as she stepped inside the door. There was a light in the hay-loft. David must have hung something at the window to blind the glow. There was something he was hiding from her—she knew it now.

A dozen fancies flashed through her brain, but she put them from her. Whatever it was it could not be wrong—if David was himself. But people often did strange things as they grew old. Was David getting 'queer'? she wondered.

She looked at the ladder, and measured the distance she would have to climb. Then she raised herself slowly up.

David was bending over a table, with his back toward her. As she attempted to step from the ladder she fell clumsily, and he started and turned around quickly.

'Kate!' he exclaimed. Then, seeing her plight, he stepped forward and helped her to her feet.

The two old people stood for a moment gazing silently at each other. David's tall form seemed to have shrunk, and he looked the picture of disappointment. Aunt Katie's eyes wandered from her husband to the table he had left.

In his youth David had been a carpenter, but time and rheumatism had so stiffened his fingers that he was able to do only the roughest kind of work. The object which Aunt Katie saw on the table must have cost him hours of painful toil.

It was a spice cabinet, like one they had seen the last time they went to the city. He had fashioned it of pine, and painted it a pale grey, and the tiny compartments were lettered with black. He was just finishing the last drawer. A shaky 'C,' and part of an 'L' glistened dully in the lantern's feeble rays.

'I didn't—want—you—to-know, Kate,' he stammered, huskily. 'It's your birthday—to-morrow—and—the—younguns—was comin' home—'

Aunt Katie's face was working. Her chin quivered and her lips moved tremulously. She put a hand on her husband's shoulder and looked up into his face.

'I've been—meaner'n—skunks, David,' she said. 'I was feared—maybe—you—was—goin'—queer—and I guess—it's me!'

Three beautiful works of art—the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Immaculate Conception, and St. Joseph—have been placed on the walls of the sanctuary of St. Joseph's Church (Vincentian Fathers), Malvern. They were painted by a member of the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Burko road, Malvern.

Nothing grieves the careful housewife more than to see her good furniture mishandled by careless carriers. If you have to shift, be wise and get a reliable firm like the NEW ZEALAND EXPRESS COMPANY to remove your things. They are very careful, and charge reasonably too. Their address is Bond street....