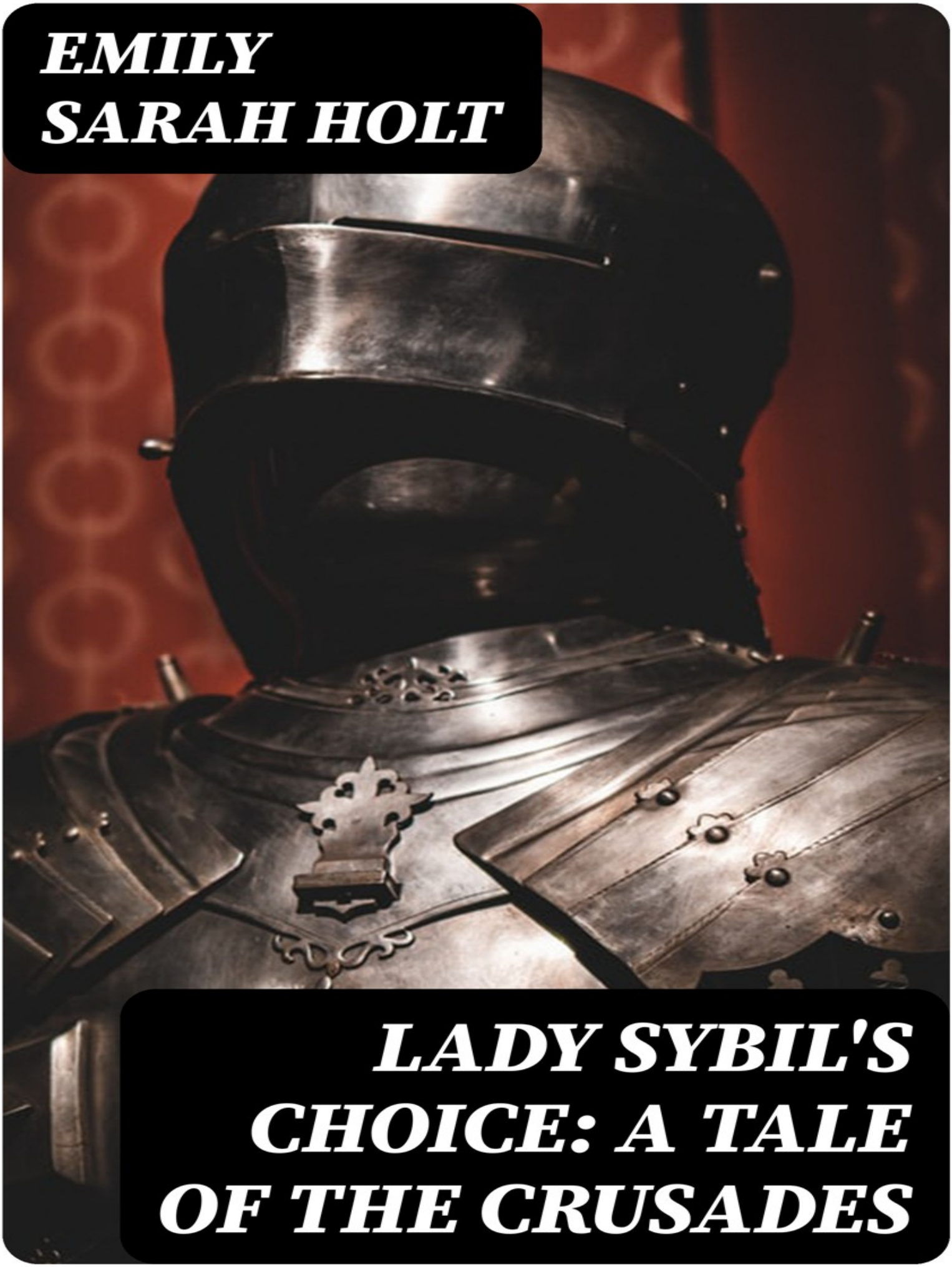
EMILY SARAH HOLT
LADY SYBIL'S CHOICE: A TALE OF THE CRUSADES

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# LADY SYBIL'S CHOICE: A TALE OF THE CRUSADES

**Emily Sarah Holt**

# Lady Sybil's Choice: A Tale of the Crusades

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Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info

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## CHAPTER I.

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## *GUY TAKES THE CROSS.*

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"But what are words, and what am I?
An infant crying in the night;
An infant crying for the light;
And with no language but a cry."
—TENNYSON.

Alix says I am a simpleton. I don't think it is particularly pleasant. Sometimes she says I am a perfect simpleton: and I cannot say that I like that any better. Nor do I think that it is very civil in one's sister to put her opinion on record in this certainly perspicuous, but not at all complimentary manner. Still, I have heard her say it so many times that I might almost have come to believe it, if she did not say so of anybody but me. But when—as she did this morning—she says Guy is a simpleton, that I cannot stand with any patience. Because there is nobody like Guy in all the world. He is the best, kindest, dearest brother that ever a girl had or could have. And it is a shame of Alix to say such things. I am sure of it.[#]

[#] The brothers in this family are historical persons; the sisters fictitious.

I do not know how it is, but Alix seems vexed that I should like Guy best of all my brothers. She says I ought to make companions of Amaury and Raoul, who are nearer me in age. But is that any reason for liking people? At that rate, I ought to love Alix least of all, because she is furthest off. And—though I should not like her to know that I said so—I am not at all sure that I don't.

Being like you in character, it seems to me, is a much better reason for choosing companions, than being near you in age. And I think Guy is much more like me than Amaury or Raoul either. They don't care for the same things that I do, and Guy does. Now, how can you like a man's company when you can never agree with him?

Alix says my tastes—and, of course, Guy's—are very silly. I believe she thinks there is no sense in anything but spinning and cooking and needlework. But I think Amaury and Raoul are quite as foolish as we are. Amaury admires everything that shines and glitters, and he is not at all particular whether it is gold or brass. I believe, this minute, he knows more about samite, and damask, and velvet, than I do. You would think the world was coming to an end by the wail he sets up if his cap has a feather less than he intended, or the border of his tunic is done in green instead of yellow. Is that like being a man? Guillot says Amaury should have been a woman, but I think he should have stayed a baby. Then Raoul cares for things that bang and clash. In his eyes, everybody ought to be a soldier, and no tale is worth hearing if it be not about a tournament or the taking of a city.

Now I do think Guy and I have more sense. What we love to hear is of deeds really noble,—of men that have saved their city or their country at the risk of their own lives; of a mother that has sacrificed herself for her child; of a lady who was ready to see her true knight die rather than stain his honour. When we were little children at old Marguerite's knee, and she used to tell us tales as a reward when we had been good,—and who ever knew half so many stories as dear old Marguerite?—while Raoul always wanted a bloody battle, and Amaury a royal pageant, and Alix what she called something practical—which, so far as I could see, meant something that was not interesting—and Guillot, he said, "Something all boys, with no girls in it"—the stories Guy and I liked were just those which our dear old nurse best loved to tell. There was the legend of Monseigneur Saint Gideon, who drove the heathen Saracens out of his country with a mere handful of foot-soldiers; and that of Monseigneur Saint David, who, when he was but a youth, fought with the Saracen giant, Count Goliath, who was forty feet high—Guillot and Raoul used to like that too; and of Monseigneur Saint Daniel, who on a false accusation was cast to the lions, and in the night the holy Apostle Saint Peter appeared to him, and commanded the lions not to hurt him; and the lions came and licked the feet of Monseigneur Saint Peter. The story that Amaury liked best of all was about Madame Esther, the Queen of Persia, and how she entreated her royal lord for the lives of certain knights that had been taken prisoners; but he always wanted to know exactly what Madame Esther had on, and even I thought that absurd, for of course Marguerite had to make it up, as

the legend did not tell, and he might have done that for himself. Raoul best loved the great legend of the wars of Troy, and how Monseigneur Achilles dragged Monseigneur Hector at the wheels of his chariot: which I never did like, for I could not help thinking of Madame the Queen, his mother, and Madame his wife, who sat in a latticed gallery watching, and remembering how their hearts would bleed when they saw it. The story Guy liked best was of two good knights of Greece, whose names were Sir Damon and Sir Pythias, and how they so loved that each was ready and anxious to lay down his life for the other: and I think what I best loved to hear was the dear legend of Madame Saint Magdalene, and how she followed the blessed steps of our Lord wherever He went, and was the first to whom He deigned to appear after His resurrection.

I wish, sometimes, that I had known my mother. I never had any mother but Marguerite. If she heard me, I know she would say, "Ha, my Damoiselle does not well to leave out the Damoiselle Alix." But I am sure Alix was never anything like a mother. If she were, mothers must be queer people.

Why don't I like Alix better? Surely the only reason is not because she is my half-sister. Our gracious Lord and father was twice married,—first to the Lady Eustacie de Chabot, who was mother of Alix, and Guillot, and Guy, and Amaury, and Raoul: and then she died, soon after Raoul was born; and the year afterwards Monseigneur married my mother, and I was her only child. But that does not hinder my loving Guy. Why should it hinder my loving Alix?

Most certainly something does hinder it,—and some tremendous thing hinders my loving Cousin Hugues de la

Marche. I hate him. Marguerite says "Hush!" when I say so. But Hugues is so intensely hateable, I am sure she need not. He is more like Guillot than any other of us, but rougher and more boisterous by far. I can't bear him. And he always says he hates girls, and he can't bear me. So why should I not hate him?

O Mother, Mother! I wish you had stayed with me!

Somehow, I don't think of her as I do of any one who is alive. I suppose, if she were alive, I should call her "Fair Madame," and be afraid to move in her presence. But being dead seems to bring her nearer. I call her "Mother," and many a time I say her pretty, gentle name, Clémence,—not aloud, but in my thoughts. Would she have loved me if she had stayed?

Does she love me, where she is with God? They say she was so gentle and pious, I am sure she must be in Heaven. She stayed only a very little while with us; I was not two years old when she died. Marguerite says she used to carry me up and down the long gallery, looking tenderly down at my baby face, and call me her darling, her dove, her precious Elaine. Oh, why could I not have heard her, to remember it, only once?

There is no need to ask why I feel lonely and desolate, and muse on my dead mother, as I always do when I am miserable. I can never be anything else, now that Guy is gone. Monseigneur, our gracious Lord and father, gave consent a month since that Guy should take the holy cross, and yesterday morning he set forth with a company on his perilous journey. Was there no one in all the world but my Guy to fight for our Lord's sepulchre? And does our Lord

think so very much about it, that He does not care though a maiden's heart be broken and her life desolate, if she give up her best beloved to defend it?

Well, I suppose it is wrong to say that. The good God is always good, of course. And I suppose it is right that Guy should put the sepulchre before me. He is the true knight, to sacrifice himself to duty; and I am not the noble-hearted damsel, if I wish he had done otherwise. And I suppose the great tears that fell on that red cross while I was broidering it, were displeasing to the good God. He ought to have the best. Oh yes! I see that, quite clearly. And yet I wonder why He wanted my best, when He has all the saints and angels round Him, to do Him homage. And I had only Guy. I cannot understand it.

Oh dear! I do get so puzzled, sometimes. I think this is a very perplexing world to live in. And it is of no use to say a word to Alix, because she only calls me a simpleton, and that does not explain anything: and Marguerite says, "Hush! My Damoiselle would not speak against the good God?"

And neither of them helps me a bit. They do not see that I never mean to speak against the good God. I only want to understand. They do not feel the same sort of want, I suppose, and so they think it wicked in me to feel it.

Does my mother understand it all? Must one die, to understand? And if so, why?

Guy would let me ask him such questions. I do not know that he saw the answer any better than I did, but at least we could agree in feeling them, and could try to puzzle the way out. But Alix appears not even to see what I mean. And it is disheartening, when one takes the trouble to brace up one's

courage to ask such questions from somebody above one, of whom one feels ever so little afraid, only to be told in reply what the same person had told one a hundred times before—that one is a simpleton.

I wish somebody would listen to me. If I could have seen a saint,—some one who lived in perpetual communion with our Lord, and knew all things! But do saints know all things? If so, why could not I be a saint myself, and then I should know too?

Well, I have no doubt of the answer to that question. For if I were a saint, I must first be a nun; and that would mean to go away from home, and never, never see Guy any more.

Oh no! that would not do. So it is plain I can never be a saint.

When I come to think about it, I doubt if there ever were a saint in our family. Of course we are one of the oldest families in Poitou, and indeed I might say, in France; for Count Hugues I. lived about nine hundred years after our Lord, and that is nearly as far back as Charlemagne. And Monseigneur has no one above him but our gracious Lord the Count of Poitou, who is in his turn a vassal of our suzerain, the King of England, and he pays homage to the King of France.

I never did like that, and I don't now. I cannot see why our King should pay homage to the King of France for his dominions on this side of the sea.[#] The French say there were Kings in France before there ever were in England. Well, that may be so: but I am sure it was not long before, and our King is every bit as good as the King of France. When Raoul wants to tease me, he says I am a

Frenchwoman. And I won't be called a Frenchwoman. I am not a subject of King Louis. I am a Poitevine, and a subject of the Lord Henry, King of England and Count of Poitou, to begin with: and under him, of his son the Lord Richard,[#] who is now our young Count; and beneath him again, of Monseigneur, my own father, who has as much power in his own territory as the King himself.

[#] This homage, exacted by the Kings of France, was always a sore subject with the Kings of England, who took every opportunity of evading that personal payment of it which it was the anxiety of the French monarchs to secure.

[#] Cœur-de-Lion.

It is true, Monseigneur's territory is not very large. But Father Eudes told us one day, when he was giving us our Latin lessons, that the great Emperor of Rome, Monseigneur Julius Cæsar, who was such a wonderful man and a great magician, used to say that he would rather be the first in a village than the second in imperial Rome itself. And that is just what I feel. I would rather be the Damoiselle Elaine, daughter of Monseigneur the Count of Lusignan, than I would be the niece or cousin of the Queen of France. I do like to be at the top of everything. And I would rather be at the top of a little thing than at the bottom of a big one.

Marguerite smiles and shakes her head when I say so to her. She says it is pleasanter down at the bottom. It makes me laugh to hear her. It is natural enough that she should think so, as she is only a villein, and of course she is at the bottom. And it is very well if she likes it. I could never bear

it. But then I am noble, and it could not be expected that I should do so.

Though we never had a saint in our House, yet, as every one knows, we sprang from a supernatural source. The root of the House of Lusignan was the Fairy Mélusine, who was the loveliest creature imaginable, but half woman and half serpent. I do not know when she lived, but it must have been ages ago; and she built the Castle of Lusignan by enchantment. Sometimes, on a still summer evening, any one who is out alone will catch a glimpse of her, bathing in the fountain which stands in the pleasance.[#] I would not cross the pleasance after dark on a summer evening—no, not to be made a queen. I should be frightened to death of seeing the Lady Mélusine. For when any one of our line is about to die, she is sure to appear, so I should think I was going to die if I saw her. She comes, too, when any great calamity is threatening France. Perhaps I should not be quite sure to die, but I would rather not risk it. I never did see her, the saints be thanked; and Marguerite says she never did. I think she cannot have appeared for a long time. About forty years ago, before the death of the Lady Poncette, Countess of Angoulême, who was a daughter of our House, Arlette, the mother of our varlet Robert, thought she saw the Lady Mélusine; but it was nearly dark, and there were trees between them, and Arlette is near-sighted, so it was not possible to be sure. But she says her mother-in-law's niece's grand-aunt really did see her, and no mistake at all about it. She was bathing in the fountain, and she splashed her long tail about till the maiden almost lost her wits from the fright. And the very next year, Count Hugues the Good was

murdered by the Duke of Guienne's people. Which shows plainly that there are such things as ghosts.

[#] Pleasure-grounds.

The night before Guy went away—can it be two evenings since,—only two?—we crept into the long gallery, as we two always do when we want a quiet talk, and sat down in that window from which you get the lovely view of the church spire through the trees, across the river. That is always our favourite window. Guy was trying to comfort me, and I am rather afraid I was crying. And he said, drawing me up to him, and kissing me,—

"Now, my little Elaine, there have been tears enough for once. I am not going to forget thee, any more than thou meanest to forget me. When I have fought the Saracens, and taken Saladin captive, and brought him in chains to Jerusalem, and the King has made me a Count, and given me a beautiful lady for my wife, and everybody is talking about me,"—of course I knew that was only Guy's fun; he did not really expect all that,—"then," he went on, "I will send home for Amaury and my little pet, and you shall come to me in the Holy Land. Monseigneur promised me that, thou knowest. He said it would be an excellent thing for thee; because thou wouldst not only have all thy sins forgiven at the Holy Sepulchre, but very likely I should have the chance of getting a good husband for thee. And I have talked well to Amaury about taking care of thee on the journey; and Marguerite must attend thee. So look forward to that, Lynette, and dry those red eyes."

"They will be red till thou comest back, Guy!" said I, with another burst of tears.

"I am sure I hope not!" he answered, laughing. "They will be very ugly if they are; and then how am I to get thee a husband?"

"I don't care about one, I thank thee," said I "So that does not signify."

"Ah, that is because thou art fourteen," said Guy; "wait till thou art four-and-twenty."

There, now! if I could have been vexed with my own dear Guy, and just when he was going away for ever—at least it looks very like for ever—but of course I could not. But why will men—even the very best of them—always fancy that a girl cares more for a husband than anything else in this world? However, I let it pass. How could I quarrel with Guy?

"Guy," I said, "dost thou care very much about having a beautiful lady for thy wife?"

Guy takes the Cross.

"Oh, certainly!" replied Guy, pursing up his lips, and pretending to be grave.

I did not like the idea one bit. I felt more inclined to cry till Guy came back than ever.

"What will she be like, Guy?" I asked, trying not to show it.

"She will be the loveliest creature in all the world," said Guy, "with eyes as black as sloes, and hair like a raven's plumage; and so rich that whenever she puts her hand in her pocket thou wilt hear the besants go chink, chink against each other."

"Wilt thou love her, Guy?" I said, gulping down my thoughts.

"To distraction!" replied Guy, casting up his eyes.

Well, I knew all the while it was nonsense, but I did feel so miserable I could not tell what to do. I know Raoul and Guillot have a notion that they are only fulfilling the ends of their being by teasing their sisters; but it was something so very new for Guy.

"But thou wilt not give over loving *me*, Guy?" I wailed, and I am sure there were tears in my voice as well as my eyes.

"My dear, foolish little Lynette!" said Guy, half laughing, and smoothing my hair; "dost thou not know me any better than that? Why, I shall be afraid of talking nonsense, or sense either, if thou must needs take it to heart in that style."

I felt rather comforted, but I did not go on with that. There was something else that I wanted to ask Guy, and it was my last opportunity.

"Guy," I said softly, after a moment's pause, "canst thou remember my mother?"

"Oh yes, darling," he said. "I was eleven years old when she died."

"Didst thou love her?" said I.

"Very dearly," he answered—quite grave now.

"Am I like her, Guy?"

Guy looked down on me, and smiled.

"Yes—and no," he said. "The Lady Clémence had lighter hair than thou; and her smile was very sweet. Thine eyes are darker, too, and brighter—there is something of the

falcon in them: she had the eyes of the dove. Yet there is a likeness, though it is not easy to tell thee what."

"Did Monseigneur love her very much, Guy?" I said.

"More than he ever loved any other, I think," answered Guy. "He was married to my mother when both were little children, as thou knowest is generally the case: but he married thine for love. And—I don't know, but I always fancy that is the reason why he has ever been unwilling to have us affianced in infancy. When people are married as babies, and when they grow up they find that they do not like each other, it must be very disagreeable, I should think."

"I should think it was just horrible, Guy," said I. "But Alix and Guillot were affianced as babies."

"So they were," said he. "But I doubt if Guillot ever cared about it."

"Why, is Umberge one to care about?" I replied. "There is nothing in her of any sort. Was Alix very sorry, Guy, when her betrothed died? How old was she?"

"About ten years old," he said. "Oh no—not she. I do not think she had seen him five times."

"Well," I said, "I am very glad that I was not treated in that way."

So we went on talking. I hardly know what we talked about, or rather what we did not; for it was first one thing and then another, as our thoughts led that way. I asked Guy if he thought that our mothers knew what befel us here on earth, and he said he supposed they must, for how else could the saints and angels hear us?

I saw old Marguerite at one end of the gallery, and I am sure she was come to bid me go to bed: but as soon as she

caught sight of Guy and me talking in the window, she made believe to be about something else, and slipped away again. She knew I wanted to have my talk out with Guy. The last talk I may ever have with him for years!

And now it is all over, and Guy is gone.

I wonder how he will get on! Will he do some grand, gallant deed, and be sent for to the Court of the Holy Land, and made a Count or a Duke?—and have all sorts of jewels and riches given him? Perhaps the Queen will put a chaplet of flowers on his head, and all the Princesses will dance with him, and he will be quite a hero. But about that beautiful lady,—I don't feel at all comfortable about her! I cannot tell whether I should love her or hate her. If she did not almost worship Guy, I am sure I should hate her.

And then there is another side to the picture, which I do not like to look at in the least. Instead of all this, Guy may get taken prisoner, and may languish out twenty years in some Saracen dungeon—perhaps, all his life!

Oh dear, dear! I don't know what to do! And the worst of it is, that nothing I can do will make any difference.

Why does the good God let there be any Saracens? Marguerite says—and so does Father Eudes, so it must be true—that God can do everything, and that He wants everybody to be a good Christian. Then why does He not make us all good Christians? That is what I want to know. Oh, I cannot, cannot make it out!

But then they all say, "Hush, hush!" and "Fie, Damoiselle!" as if I had said something very wicked and shocking. They say the good God will be very angry. Why is the good God angry when we want to know?

I wonder why men and women were ever made at all. I wonder why *I* was made. Did the good God want me for something, that He took the pains to make me? Oh, can nobody tell me why the good God wanted me?

He must be good, for He made all so beautiful. And He might have made things ugly. But then, sometimes, He lets such dreadful things happen. Are there not earthquakes and thunderstorms? And why does He let nice people die? Could not—well, I suppose that is wicked. No, it isn't! I may as well say it as think it.—Would it not have done as well if Alix had died, and my mother had lived? It would have been so much nicer! And what difference would it have made in Heaven—I hope Alix would have gone there—where they have all the angels, and all the saints? Surely they could have spared my mother—better than I can.

Well, I suppose—as Alix says when she wants one to be quiet—"it is no use talking." Things are so, and I cannot change them. And all my tears will not give me Guy back. I must try to think of the neuvaine[#] which he has promised to offer for me at the Holy Sepulchre, and hope that he won't be taken prisoner, and that he will be made a Count, and—well, and try to reconcile myself to that beautiful lady who is to have Guy instead of me. Oh dear me!

[#] Nine days' masses.

Now, there is another thing that puzzles me. (Every thing puzzles me in this world. I wish there had been another to which I could have gone, where things would not have puzzled me.) If God be everywhere—as Father Eudes says—

why should prayers offered at the Holy Sepulchre be of more value than prayers offered in my bedchamber? I cannot see any reason, unless it were that God[#] loves the Holy Land so very much, because He lived and died there, that He is oftener there than anywhere else, and so there is a better chance of getting Him to hear. But how then can He be everywhere?

[#] In using this one of the Divine Names, a mediæval Romanist almost always meant to indicate the Second Person of the Trinity only.

Why will people—wise people, I mean—not try to answer such questions? Marguerite only says, "Hush, then, my Damoiselle!" Alix says, "Oh, do be quiet! When will you give over being so silly?" And Monseigneur pats me on the head, and answers, "Why should my cabbage trouble her pretty little head? Those are matters for doctors of the schools, little one. Go thou and call the minstrels, or bind some smart ribbons in thine hair; that is more fit for such maidens as thou."

Do *they* never want to know? And why should the answers be only fit for learned men, if the questions keep coming and worrying me? If I could once know, I should give over wanting to know. But how can I give over till I do?

Either the world has got pulled into a knot, or else I have. And so far from being able to undo me, nobody seems to see that I am on a knot at all.

"If you please, Damoiselle, the Damoiselle Alix wishes to know where your Nobleness put the maccaroons."

"Oh dear, Héloïse! I forgot to make them. Can she not do without them?"

"If you please, Damoiselle, your noble sister says that the Lady Umberge will be here for the spice this afternoon, and your Excellence is aware that she likes maccaroons."

Yes, I am—better than I like her. I never did see anybody eat so many at once as she does. She will do for once with cheesecakes. I would not mind staying up all night to make maccaroons for Guy, but I am sure cheesecakes are good enough for Umberge. And Alix does make good cheese-cakes—I will give her that scrap of praise.

"Well, Héloïse—I don't know. I really think we should do. But I suppose—is there time to make them now?"

"If you please, Damoiselle, it is three o'clock by the sundial."

"Then it is too late."

And I thought, but of course I did not say to Héloïse,—How Alix will scold! I heard her step on the stairs, and I fairly ran. But I did not lose my lecture.

"Elaine!" cried Alix's shrill voice, "where are you?"

Alix might be a perfect stranger, for the way in which she always calls me *you*. I came out. I knew it was utterly useless to try to hide.

"Where have you put those new maccaroons?"

"They are not made, Alix," I said, trying to look as if I did not care.

"Not made? Saint Martin of Tours help us! What can you have been doing?"

I was silent.

"I say, what were you doing?" demanded Alix, with a stamp of her foot.

"Never mind. I forgot the maccaroons."

If I had been speaking to any one but Alix, I should have added that I was sorry. But she is always so angry that it seems to dry up any regret on my part.

"You naughty girl!" Alix blazed out. "You very, very naughty girl! There is no possibility of relying on you for one instant. You go dreaming away, and forget everything one tells you. You are silly, *silly*!"

The tone that Alix put into that last word! It was enough to provoke all the saints in the calendar.

"There will be plenty without them," said I.

"Hold your tongue, and don't give me any impudence!" retorted Alix.

I thought I might have said the same. If Alix would speak more kindly, I am sure I should not get so vexed. I can't imagine what she would say if I were to do something really wicked, for she exhausts her whole vocabulary on my gathering the wrong flowers, or forgetting to make cakes.

"Don't be cross, Alix," I said, trying to keep the peace. "I really did forget them."

"Oh dear, yes, I never doubted it!" answered Alix, in that way of hers which always tries my patience. "Life is sacred to the memory of Guy, but my trouble and Umberge's likings are of no consequence at all! And it does not matter that the Baron de Montbeillard and his lady will be here, and that we shall have a dish too little on the table. Not in the least!"

"Well, really, Alix, I don't think it does much matter," said I.

"Of course not. And the Lady de Montbeillard will not go home and tell everybody what a bad housekeeper I am, and how little I care to have things nice for my guests—Oh dear, no!"

"If you treat her kindly, I should think her very ungrateful if she did," said I.

Alix flounced away with—"I wish you were gone after Guy!"

And so did I.

But at night, just before I dropped asleep, a new idea came to me—an idea that never occurred to me before.

Do I try Alix as much as she tries me?

Oh dear! I hope not. It cannot be. I don't think it is possible. Is it?

I wish I had not forgotten those cakes. Alix did seem so put out. And I suppose it was rather annoying—perhaps.

I did not like her saying that I was not to be trusted. I don't think that was fair. And I cannot bear injustice. Still, I did forget the cakes. And if she had trusted me, it was only reasonable that she should feel disappointed. But she did not need to have been so angry, and have said such disagreeable things. Well, I suppose I was angry too; but I show my anger in a different way from Alix. I do not know which of us was more wrong. I think it was Alix. Yes, I am sure it was. She treats me abominably. It is enough to make anybody angry.

Those limes seem to come up and look reproachfully at me, when I say that. I was not at all well—it might be three

years ago: rather feverish, and very cross. And two travelling pedlars came to the Castle gate. One sold rare and costly fruits, and the other silken stuffs. Now I know that Alix had been saving up her money for a gold-coloured ribbon, for which she had a great fancy; and there was a lovely one in that pedlar's stock—in fact, I have never since seen one quite so pretty. Alix had just enough to buy it. She could not get any more, because the treasurer was away with Monseigneur at the hawking. But she saw my wistful glances at the limes in the other pedlar's panniers, and she bought some for me. They were delicious: but Alix went without her gold-coloured ribbon. She had no other chance of it, for the pedlar was on his way to the great Whitsuntide fair at Poictiers, and he would not stay even one night.[#]

[#] At the period of this story, shops were nearly unknown except in the largest towns. Country families—noble, gentle, or peasant—had to rely on laying in a stock of goods at the great fairs, held at Easter, Whitsuntide, Michaelmas, and Christmas; and for anything wanted between those periods, recourse was had to travelling pedlars, who also served as carriers and postmen when occasion demanded it.

I wonder if it be possible that Alix really loves me,—just one little bit! And I wonder if we could give over rasping one another as we do. It would be very difficult.

But if I ever do follow Guy, I will bring back, from Byzantium or Damascus, something beautiful for Alix, to make up for that gold ribbon. It was good of her. And I do wish I had remembered those maccaroons!