



JANE OF
LANTERN HILL

LUCY MAUD MONTGOMERY

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Lucy Maud Montgomery

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Autobiographical sketch of Lisa Maud Montgomery

I WAS born on November 30, 1874, in Prince Edward Island, a colorful little land of ruby and emerald and sapphire. I came of Scotch ancestry with a dash of English, Irish, and French from various grands" and "greats."

My mother died when I was a baby and I was brought up by my grandparents in the old Macneill homestead at Cavendish. . . eleven miles from a railroad and twenty-four from a town, but only half a mile from one of the finest sea-beaches in the world. I went to the "district school" from six to seventeen. I devoured every book I could lay my hands on. Ever since I can remember I was writing stories and verses. My early stories were very tragic creations. Almost everybody in them died. In those tales battle, murder, and sudden death were the order of the day.

When I was fifteen I had a "poem" published in a local paper. That gave me the greatest moment of my life. Then I qualified for a teacher's license at Prince of Wales College, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, and taught three years. During those and the following years I wrote all kinds of stuff. Most of it was rejected but enough was accepted to encourage me. Eventually I won a place as a writer of stories for young people.

I had always hoped to write a book . . . but I never seemed able to make a beginning. I have always hated beginning a story. When I get the first paragraph written I feel as if it were half done. To begin a book seemed quite a stupendous

task. Besides, I did not see how I could get time for it. I could not afford to take time from my regular writing hours. In the end I never set out deliberately to write a book. It just "happened." One spring I was looking over my notebook of plots for a short serial I had been asked to write for a certain Sunday School paper. I found a faded entry, written many years before. "Elderly couple apply to orphan asylum for a boy. By mistake a girl is sent them." I thought this would do. I began to block out the chapters, devise incidents, and "brood up" my heroine. "Anne" began to expand in such a fashion that she seemed very real to me. I thought it rather a shame to waste her on an ephemeral seven-chapter serial. Then the thought came: "Write a book. You have the central idea and the heroine. All you need to do is to spread it over enough chapters to amount to a book." The result was Anne of Green Gables.

I wrote it in the evenings after my regular day's work was done. I typewrote it myself on my old second-hand typewriter that never made the capitals plain and wouldn't print "m's" at all. Green Gables was published in 1908. I did not dream that it would be the success it was. I thought girls in their 'teens might like it but that was the only audience I hoped to reach. But men and women who are grandparents, boys at school and college, old pioneers in the Australian bush, Mohammedan girls in India, missionaries in China, monks in remote monasteries, premiers of Great Britain, and red-headed people all over the world have written to me telling me how they loved Anne and her successors. Since then I have published sixteen books. Twenty-three years ago I married a Presbyterian minister, the Reverend Ewan Macdonald, and came to Ontario to live. I like Ontario very much, but anyone who has once loved "the only island there is" never really loves any other place. And so the

scene of all my books save one has been laid there. And in my dreams I go back to it.

List of my books: Anne of Green Gables, Anne of Avonlea, Anne of the Island, Anne's House of Dreams, Rainbow Valley, Rilla of Ingleside, Chronicles of Avonlea, Emily of New Moon, Emily Climbs, Emily's Quest, Kilmeny of the Orchard, The Story Girl, The Golden Road, Magic for Marigold, A Tangled Web, The Blue Castle, Pat of Silver Bush.

Jane Of Lantern Hill

1

Gay street, so Jane always thought, did not live up to its name. It was, she felt certain, the most melancholy street in Toronto . . . though, to be sure, she had not seen a great many of the Toronto streets in her circumscribed comings and goings of eleven years.

Gay Street should be a *gay* street, thought Jane, with gay, friendly houses, set amid flowers, that cried out, "How do you do?" to you as you passed them, with trees that waved hands at you and windows that winked at you in the twilights. Instead of that, Gay Street was dark and dingy, lined with forbidding, old-fashioned brick houses, grimy with age, whose tall, shuttered, blinded windows could never have thought of winking at anybody. The trees that lined Gay Street were so old and huge and stately that it was difficult to think of them as trees at all, any more than

those forlorn little things in the green pails by the doors of the filling station on the opposite corner. Grandmother had been furious when the old Adams house on that corner had been torn down and the new white-and-red filling station built in its place. She would never let Frank get petrol there. But at that, Jane thought, it was the only gay place on the street.

Jane lived at 60 Gay. It was a huge, castellated structure of brick, with a pillared entrance porch, high, arched Georgian windows, and towers and turrets wherever a tower or turret could be wedged in. It was surrounded by a high iron fence with wrought-iron gates . . . those gates had been famous in the Toronto of an earlier day . . . that were always closed and locked by Frank at night, thus giving Jane a very nasty feeling that she was a prisoner being locked in.

There was more space around 60 Gay than around most of the houses on the street. It had quite a bit of lawn in front, though the grass never grew well because of the row of old trees just inside the fence . . . and quite a respectable space between the side of the house and Bloor Street; but it was not nearly wide enough to dim the unceasing clatter and clang of Bloor, which was especially noisy and busy where Gay Street joined it. People wondered why old Mrs Robert Kennedy continued to live there when she had oodles of money and could buy one of those lovely new houses in Forest Hill or in the Kingsway. The taxes on a lot as big as 60 Gay must be ruinous and the house was hopelessly out of date. Mrs Kennedy merely smiled contemptuously when things like this were said to her, even by her son, William Anderson, the only one of her first family whom she respected, because he had been successful in business and was rich in his own right. She

had never loved him, but he had compelled her to respect him.

Mrs Kennedy was perfectly satisfied with 60 Gay. She had come there as the bride of Robert Kennedy when Gay Street was the last word in streets and 60 Gay, built by Robert's father, one of the finest "mansions" in Toronto. It had never ceased to be so in her eyes. She had lived there for forty-five years and she would live there the rest of her life. Those who did not like it need not stay there. This, with a satirically amused glance at Jane, who had never said she didn't like Gay Street. But grandmother, as Jane had long ago discovered, had an uncanny knack of reading your mind.

Once, when Jane had been sitting in the Cadillac, one dark, dingy morning in a snowy world, waiting for Frank to take her to St Agatha's, as he did every day, she had heard two women, who were standing on the street-corner, talking about it.

"Did you ever see such a dead house?" said the younger. "It looks as if it had been dead for ages."

"That house died thirty years ago, when Robert Kennedy died," said the older woman. "Before that it was a lively place. Nobody in Toronto entertained more. Robert Kennedy liked social life. He was a very handsome, friendly man. People could never understand how he came to marry Mrs James Anderson . . . a widow with three children. She was Victoria Moore to begin with, you know, old Colonel Moore's daughter . . . a very aristocratic family. But she was pretty as a picture then and was she crazy about him! My dear, she worshipped him. People said she was never willing to let him out of her sight for a moment. And they said she hadn't cared for her first husband at all. Robert

Kennedy died when they had been married about fifteen years . . . died just after his first baby was born, I've heard."

"Does she live all alone in that castle?"

"Oh, no. Her two daughters live with her. One of them is a widow or something . . . and there's a granddaughter, I believe. They say old Mrs Kennedy is a terrible tyrant, but the younger daughter . . . the widow . . . is gay enough and goes to everything you see reported in *Saturday Evening*. Very pretty . . . and can she dress! She was the Kennedy one and took after her father. She must hate having all her fine friends coming to Gay Street. It's worse than dead . . . it's decayed. But I can remember when Gay Street was one of the most fashionable residential streets in town. Look at it now."

"Shabby genteel."

"Hardly even that. Why, 58 Gay is a boarding-house. But old Mrs Kennedy keeps 60 up very well, though the paint is beginning to peel off the balconies, you notice."

"Well, I'm glad I don't live on Gay Street," giggled the other, as they ran to catch the car.

"You may well be," thought Jane. Though, if she had been put to it, she could hardly have told you where she would have liked to live if not at 60 Gay. Most of the streets through which she drove to St Agatha's were mean and uninviting, for St Agatha's, that very expensive and exclusive private school to which grandmother sent Jane, now found itself in an unfashionable and outgrown locality also. But St Agatha's didn't mind that . . . St Agatha's would have been St Agatha's, you must understand, in the desert of Sahara.

Uncle William Anderson's house in Forest Hill was very handsome, with landscaped lawns and rock gardens, but she wouldn't like to live there. One was almost terrified to walk over the lawn lest one do something to Uncle William's cherished velvet. You had to keep to the flat stepping-stones path. And Jane wanted to run. You couldn't run at St Agatha's either, except when you were playing games. And Jane was not very good at games. She always felt awkward in them. At eleven she was as tall as most girls of thirteen. She towered above the girls of her class. They did not like it and made Jane feel that she fitted in nowhere.

As for running at 60 Gay . . . had anybody ever run at 60 Gay? Jane felt as if mother must have . . . mother stepped so lightly and gaily yet that you thought her feet had wings. But once, when Jane had dared to run from the front door to the back door, straight through the long house that was almost half the length of the city block, singing at the top of her voice, grandmother, who she had thought was out, had emerged from the breakfast-room and looked at her with the smile on her dead-white face that Jane hated.

"What," she said in the silky voice that Jane hated still more, "is responsible for this outburst, Victoria?"

"I was running just for the fun of it," explained Jane. It seemed so very simple. But grandmother had just smiled and said, as only grandmother could say things:

"I wouldn't do it again if I were you, Victoria."

Jane never did it again. That was the effect grandmother had on you, though she was so tiny and wrinkled . . . so tiny that lanky, long-legged Jane was almost as tall as she was.

Jane hated to be called Victoria. Yet everybody called her that, except mother, who called her Jane Victoria. Jane knew somehow that grandmother resented that . . . knew that for some reason unknown to her, grandmother hated the name of Jane. Jane liked it . . . always had liked it . . . always thought of herself as Jane. She understood that she had been named Victoria after grandmother, but she did not know where the Jane had come from. There were no Janes in the Kennedys or Andersons. In her eleventh year she had begun to suspect that it might have come from the Stuart side. And Jane was sorry for that, because she did not want to think she owed her favourite name to her father. Jane hated her father in so far as hatred could find place in a little heart that was not made for hating anybody, even grandmother. There were times Jane was afraid she did hate grandmother, which was dreadful, because grandmother was feeding and clothing and educating her. Jane knew she ought to love grandmother, but it seemed a very hard thing to do. Apparently mother found it easy; but, then, grandmother loved mother, which made a difference. Loved her as she loved nobody else in the world. And grandmother did not love Jane. Jane had always known that. And Jane felt, if she did not yet know, that grandmother did not like mother loving her so much.

"You fuss entirely too much about her," grandmother had once said contemptuously, when mother was worried about Jane's sore throat.

"She's all I have," said mother.

And then grandmother's old white face had flushed.

"I am nothing, I suppose," she said.

"Oh, mother, you know I didn't mean *that*," mother had said piteously, fluttering her hands in a way she had which always made Jane think of two little white butterflies. "I meant . . . I meant . . . she's my only child. . . ."

"And you love that child . . . his child . . . better than you love me!"

"Not better . . . only differently," said mother pleadingly.

"Ingrate!" said grandmother. It was only one word, but what venom she could put into a word. Then she had gone out of the room, still with that flush on her face and her pale blue eyes smouldering under her frosty hair.

2

"Mummy," said Jane as well as her swelled tonsils would let her, "why doesn't grandmother want you to love me?"

"Darling, it isn't like that," said mother, bending over Jane, her face like a rose in the light of the rose-shaded lamp.

But Jane knew it was like that. She knew why mother seldom kissed her or petted her in grandmother's presence. It made grandmother angry with a still, cold, terrible anger that seemed to freeze the air about her. Jane was glad mother didn't often do it. She made up for it when they were alone together . . . but then they were so very seldom alone together. Even now they would not have very long together, for mother was going out to a dinner party. Mother went out almost every evening to something or

other and almost every afternoon too. Jane always loved to get a glimpse of her before she went out. Mother knew this and generally contrived that Jane should. She always wore such pretty dresses and looked so lovely. Jane was sure she had the most beautiful mother in the whole world. She was beginning to wonder how any one so lovely as mother could have a daughter so plain and awkward as herself.

"You'll never be pretty . . . your mouth is too big," one of the girls at St Agatha's had told her.

Mother's mouth was like a rosebud, small and red, with dimples tucked away at the corners. Her eyes were blue . . . but not an icy blue like grandmother's. There is such a difference in blue eyes. Mother's were just the colour of the sky on a summer morning between the great masses of white clouds. Her hair was a warm, wavy gold and to-night she was wearing it brushed away from her forehead, with little bunches of curls behind her ears and a row of them at the nape of her white neck. She wore a dress of pale yellow taffeta, with a great rose of deeper yellow velvet at one of her beautiful shoulders. Jane thought she looked like a lovely golden princess, with the slender flame of the diamond bracelet on the creamy satin of her arm. Grandmother had given her the bracelet last week for her birthday. Grandmother was always giving mother such lovely things. And she picked out all her clothes for her . . . wonderful dresses and hats and wraps. Jane did not know that people said Mrs Stuart was always rather overdressed, but she had an idea that mother really liked simpler clothes and only pretended to like better the gorgeous things grandmother bought for her for fear of hurting grandmother's feelings.

Jane was very proud of mother's beauty. She thrilled with delight when she heard people whisper, "Isn't she lovely?"

She almost forgot her aching throat as she watched mother put on the rich brocaded wrap, just the colour of her eyes, with its big collar of grey fox.

"Oh, but you're sweet, mummy," she said, putting up her hand and touching mother's cheek as mother bent down and kissed her. It was like touching a rose-leaf. And mother's lashes lay on her cheeks like silken fans. Some people, Jane knew, looked better farther off; but the nearer you were to mother, the prettier she was.

"Darling, do you feel very sick? I hate to leave you but . . ."

Mother didn't finish her sentence but Jane knew she meant, "Grandmother wouldn't like it if I didn't go."

"I don't feel very sick at all," said Jane gallantly "Mary will look after me."

But after mother had gone, with a swish of taffeta, Jane felt a horrible lump in her throat that had nothing to do with her tonsils. It would be so easy to cry . . . but Jane would not let herself cry. Years ago, when she had been no more than five, she had heard mother say very proudly, "Jane never cries. She never cried even when she was a tiny baby." From that day Jane had been careful never to let herself cry, even when she was alone in bed at night. Mother had so few things to be proud of in her: she must not let her down on one of those few things.

But it was dreadfully lonely. The wind was howling along the street outside. The tall windows rattled drearily and the big house seemed full of unfriendly noises and whispers. Jane wished Jody could come in and sit with her for a while. But Jane knew it was useless to wish for that. She could never forget the only time Jody had come to 60 Gay.

"Well, anyhow," said Jane, trying to look on the bright side of things in spite of her sore throat and aching head, "I won't have to read the Bible to them to-night."

"Them" were grandmother and Aunt Gertrude. Very seldom mother because mother was nearly always out. But every night before Jane went to bed she had to read a chapter in the Bible to grandmother and Aunt Gertrude. There was nothing in the whole twenty-four hours that Jane hated doing more than that. And she knew quite well that that was just why grandmother made her do it.

They always went into the drawing-room for the reading and Jane invariably shivered as she entered it. That huge, elaborate room, so full of things that you could hardly move about in it without knocking something over, always seemed cold even on the hottest night in summer. And on winter nights it was cold. Aunt Gertrude took the huge family Bible, with its heavy silver clasp, from the marble-topped centre table and laid it on a little table between the windows. Then she and grandmother sat, one at each end of the table, and Jane sat between them at the side, with Great-grandfather Kennedy scowling down at her from the dim old painting in its heavy, tarnished gilt frame, flanked by the dark blue velvet curtains. That woman on the street had said that Grandfather Kennedy was a nice friendly man but his father couldn't have been. Jane always thought candidly that he looked as if he would enjoy biting a nail in two.

"Turn to the fourteenth chapter of Exodus," grandmother would say. The chapter varied every night, of course, but the tone never did. It always rattled Jane so that she generally made a muddle of finding the right place. And grandmother, with the hateful little smile which seemed to

say, "So you can't even do this as it should be done," would put out her lean, crapy hand, with its rich old-fashioned rings, and turn to the right place with uncanny precision. Jane would stumble through the chapter, mispronouncing words she knew perfectly well just because she was so nervous. Sometimes grandmother would say, "A little louder if you please, Victoria. I thought when I sent you to St Agatha's they would at least teach you to open your mouth when reading even if they couldn't teach you geography and history." And Jane would raise her voice so suddenly that Aunt Gertrude would jump. But the next evening it might be, "Not quite so loud, Victoria, if you please. We are not deaf." And poor Jane's voice would die away to little more than a whisper.

When she had finished grandmother and Aunt Gertrude would bow their heads and repeat the Lord's Prayer. Jane would try to say it with them, which was a difficult thing because grandmother was generally two words ahead of Aunt Gertrude. Jane always said "Amen" thankfully. The beautiful prayer, haloed with all the loveliness of age-long worship, had become a sort of horror to Jane.

Then Aunt Gertrude would close the Bible and put it back in exactly the same place, to the fraction of a hair, on the centre table. Finally Jane had to kiss her and grandmother good night. Grandmother would always remain sitting in her chair and Jane would stoop and kiss her forehead.

"Good night, grandmother."

"Good night, Victoria."

But Aunt Gertrude would be standing by the centre table and Jane would have to reach up to her, for Aunt Gertrude

was tall. Aunt Gertrude would stoop just a little and Jane would kiss her narrow grey face.

"Good night, Aunt Gertrude."

"Good night, Victoria," Aunt Gertrude would say in her thin, cold voice.

And Jane would get herself out of the room, sometimes lucky enough not to knock anything over.

"When I grow up I'll never, never read the Bible or say that prayer," she would whisper to herself as she climbed the long, magnificent staircase which had once been the talk of Toronto.

One night grandmother had smiled and said, "What do you think of the Bible, Victoria?"

"I think it is very dull," said Jane truthfully. The reading had been a chapter full of "knops" and "taches," and Jane had not the least idea what knops or taches were.

"Ah! But do you think your opinion counts for a great deal?" said grandmother, smiling with paper-thin lips.

"Why did you ask me for it then?" said Jane, and had been icily rebuked for impertinence when she had not had the least intention of being impertinent. Was it any wonder she went up the staircase that night fairly loathing 60 Gay? And she did not want to loathe it. She wanted to love it . . . to be friends with it . . . to do things for it. But she could not love it . . . it wouldn't be friendly . . . and there was nothing it wanted done. Aunt Gertrude and Mary Price, the cook, and Frank Davis, the houseman and chauffeur, did everything for it. Aunt Gertrude would not let grandmother keep a

housemaid because she preferred to attend to the house herself. Tall, shadowy, reserved Aunt Gertrude, who was so totally unlike mother that Jane found it hard to believe they were even half-sisters, was a martinet for order and system. At 60 Gay everything had to be done in a certain way on a certain day. The house was really frightfully clean. Aunt Gertrude's cold grey eyes could not tolerate a speck of dust anywhere. She was always going about the house putting things in their places and she attended to everything. Even mother never did anything except arrange the flowers for the table when they had company and light the candles for dinner. Jane would have liked the fun of doing that. And Jane would have liked to polish the silver and cook. More than anything else Jane would have liked to cook. Now and then, when grandmother was out, she hung about the kitchen and watched good-natured Mary Price cook the meals. It all seemed so easy. . . . Jane was sure she could do it perfectly if she were allowed. It must be such fun to cook a meal. The smell of it was almost as good as the eating of it.

But Mary Price never let her. She knew the old lady didn't approve of Miss Victoria talking to the servants.

"Victoria fancies herself as domestic," grandmother had once said at the midday Sunday dinner where, as usual, Uncle William Anderson and Aunt Minnie and Uncle David Coleman and Aunt Sylvia Coleman and their daughter Phyllis were present. Grandmother had such a knack of making you feel ridiculous and silly in company. All the same, Jane wondered what grandmother would say if she knew that Mary Price, being somewhat rushed that day, had let Jane wash and arrange the lettuce for the salad. Jane knew what grandmother would do. She would refuse to touch a leaf of it.

"Well, shouldn't a girl be domestic?" said Uncle William, not because he wanted to take Jane's part but because he never lost an opportunity of announcing his belief that a woman's place was in the home. "Every girl should know how to cook."

"I don't think Victoria wants very much to learn how to cook," said grandmother. "It is just that she likes to hang about kitchens and places like that."

Grandmother's voice implied that Victoria had low tastes and that kitchens were barely respectable. Jane wondered why mother's face flushed so suddenly and why a strange, rebellious look gleamed for a moment in her eyes. But only for a moment.

"How are you getting on at St Agatha's, Victoria?" asked Uncle William. "Going to get your grade?"

Jane did not know whether she was going to get her grade or not. The fear haunted her night and day. She knew her monthly reports had not been very good . . . grandmother had been very angry over them and even mother had asked her piteously if she couldn't do a little better. Jane had done the best she could, but history and geography were so dull and drab. Arithmetic and spelling were easier. Jane was really quite brilliant in arithmetic.

"Victoria can write wonderful compositions, I hear," said grandmother sarcastically. For some reason Jane couldn't fathom at all, her ability to write good compositions had never pleased grandmother.

"Tut, tut," said Uncle William. "Victoria could get her grade easily enough if she wanted to. The thing to do is to study

hard. She's getting to be a big girl now and ought to realize that. What is the capital of Canada, Victoria?"

Jane knew perfectly well what the capital of Canada was but Uncle William fired the question at her so unexpectedly and all the guests stopped eating to listen . . . and for the moment she couldn't remember for her life what the name was. She blushed . . . stammered . . . squirmed. If she had looked at mother she would have seen that mother was forming the word silently on her lips but she could not look at any one. She was ready to die of shame and mortification.

"Phyllis," said Uncle William, "tell Victoria what the capital of Canada is."

Phyllis promptly responded: "Ottawa."

"O-t-t-a-w-a," said Uncle William to Jane. Jane felt that they were all, except mother, watching her for something to find fault with and now Aunt Sylvia Coleman put on a pair of nose-glasses attached to a long black ribbon and looked at Jane through them as if wishing to be sure what a girl who didn't know the capital of her country was really like. Jane, under the paralysing influence of that stare, dropped her fork and writhed in anguish when she caught grandmother's eye. Grandmother touched her little silver bell.

"Will you bring Miss Victoria another fork, Davis?" she said in a tone implying that Jane had had several forks already.

Uncle William put the piece of white chicken meat he had just carved off on the side of the platter. Jane had been hoping he would give it to her. She did not often get white meat. When Uncle William was not there to carve, Mary

carved the fowls in the kitchen and Frank passed the platter around. Jane seldom dared to help herself to white meat because she knew grandmother was watching her. On one occasion when she had helped herself to two tiny pieces of breast grandmother had said:

"Don't forget, my dear Victoria, there are other people who might like a breast slice, too."

At present Jane reflected that she was lucky to get a drumstick. Uncle William was quite capable of giving her the neck by way of rebuking her for not knowing the capital of Canada. However, Aunt Sylvia very kindly gave her a double portion of turnip. Jane loathed turnip.

"You don't seem to have much appetite, Victoria," said Aunt Sylvia reproachfully when the mound of turnip had not decreased much.

"Oh, I think Victoria's appetite is all right," said grandmother, as if it were the only thing about her that was all right. Jane always felt that there was far more in what grandmother said than in the words themselves. Jane might then and there have broken her record for never crying, she felt so utterly wretched, had she not looked at mother. And mother was looking so tender and sympathetic and understanding that Jane spunked up at once and simply made no effort to eat any more turnip.

Aunt Sylvia's daughter Phyllis, who did not go to St Agatha's but to Hillwood Hall, a much newer but even more expensive school, could have named not only the capital of Canada but the capital of every province in the Dominion. Jane did not like Phyllis. Sometimes Jane thought drearily that there must be something the matter with her when there were so many people she didn't like. But Phyllis was

so condescending . . . and Jane hated to be condescended to.

"Why don't you like Phyllis?" grandmother had asked once, looking at Jane with those eyes that, Jane felt, could see through walls, doors, everything, right into your inmost soul. "She is pretty, lady-like, well behaved and clever . . . everything that you are not," Jane felt sure grandmother wanted to add.

"She patronizes me," said Jane.

"Do you really know the meaning of all the big words you use, my dear Victoria?" said grandmother. "And don't you think that . . . possibly . . . you are a little jealous of Phyllis?"

"No, I don't think so," said Jane firmly. She knew she was not jealous of Phyllis.

"Of course, I must admit she is very different from that Jody of yours," said grandmother. The sneer in her voice brought an angry sparkle into Jane's eyes. She could not bear to hear any one sneer at Jody. And yet what could she do about it?

3

She and Jody had been pals for a year. Jody matched Jane's eleven years of life and was tall for her age, too . . . though not with Jane's sturdy tallness. Jody was thin and weedy and looked as if she had never had enough to eat in her life

. . . which was very likely the case, although she lived in a boarding-house--58 Gay, which had once been a fashionable residence and was now just a dingy three-story boarding-house.

One evening in the spring of the preceding year Jane was out in the back yard of 60 Gay, sitting on a rustic bench in an old disused summer-house. Mother and grandmother were both away and Aunt Gertrude was in bed with a bad cold, or else Jane would not have been sitting in the back yard. She had crept out to have a good look at the full moon . . . Jane had her own particular reasons for liking to look at the moon . . . and the white blossoming cherry-tree over in the yard of 58. The cherry-tree, with the moon hanging over it like a great pearl, was so beautiful that Jane felt a queer lump in her throat when she looked at it . . . almost as if she wanted to cry. And then . . . somebody really was crying over in the yard of 58. The stifled, piteous sounds came clearly on the still, crystal air of the spring evening.

Jane got up and walked out of the summer-house and around the garage, past the lonely dog-house that had never had a dog in it . . . at least, in Jane's recollection . . . and so to the fence that had ceased to be iron and become a wooden paling between 60 and 58. There was a gap in it behind the dog-house where a slat had been broken off amid a tangle of creeper and Jane, squeezing through it, found herself in the untidy yard of 58. It was still quite light and Jane could see a girl huddled at the root of the cherry-tree, sobbing bitterly, her face in her hands.

"Can I help you?" said Jane.

Though Jane herself had no inkling of it, those words were the keynote of her character. Any one else would probably

have said, "What is the matter?" But Jane always wanted to help: and, though she was too young to realize it, the tragedy of her little existence was that nobody ever wanted her help . . . not even mother, who had everything heart could wish.

The child under the cherry-tree stopped sobbing and got on her feet. She looked at Jane and Jane looked at her and something happened to both of them. Long afterwards Jane said, "I knew we were the same kind of folks." Jane saw a girl of about her own age, with a very white little face under a thick bang of black hair cut straight across her forehead. The hair looked as if it had not been washed for a long time but the eyes underneath it were brown and beautiful, though of quite a different brown from Jane's. Jane's were goldy-brown like a marigold, with laughter lurking in them, but this girl's were very dark and very sad . . . so sad that Jane's heart did something queer inside of her. She knew quite well that it wasn't right that anybody so young should have such sad eyes.

The girl wore a dreadful old blue dress that had certainly never been made for her. It was too long and too elaborate and it was dirty and grease-spotted. It hung on the thin little shoulders like a gaudy rag on a scarecrow. But the dress mattered nothing to Jane. All she was conscious of was those appealing eyes.

"Can I help?" she asked again.

The girl shook her head and the tears welled up in her big eyes.

"Look," she pointed.

Jane looked and saw between the cherry-tree and the fence what seemed like a rudely made flower-bed strewn over with roses that were ground into the earth.

"Dick did that," said the girl. "He did it on purpose . . . because it was my garden. Miss Summers had them roses sent her last week . . . twelve great big red ones for her birthday . . . and this morning she said they were done and told me to throw them in the garbage pail. But I couldn't . . . they were still so pretty. I come out here and made that bed and stuck the roses all over it. I knew they wouldn't last long . . . but they looked pretty and I pretended I had a garden of my own . . . and now . . . Dick just come out and stomped all over it . . . and *laughed*."

She sobbed again. Jane didn't know who Dick was but at that moment she could cheerfully have wrung his neck with her strong, capable little hands. She put her arm about the girl.

"Never mind. Don't cry any more. See, we'll break off a lot of little cherry boughs and stick them all over your bed. They're fresher than the roses . . . and think how lovely they'll look in the moonlight."

"I'm scared to do that," said the girl. "Miss West might be mad."

Again Jane felt a thrill of understanding. So this girl was afraid of people, too.

"Well, we'll just climb up on that big bough that stretches out and sit there and admire it," said Jane. "I suppose that won't make Miss West mad, will it?"

"I guess she won't mind that. Of course she's mad at me anyhow to-night because I stumbled with a tray of tumblers when I was waiting on the supper table and broke three of them. She said if I kept on like that . . . I spilled soup on Miss Thatcher's silk dress last night . . . she'd have to send me away."

"Where would she send you?"

"I don't know. I haven't anywhere to go. But she says I'm not worth my salt and she's only keeping me out of charity."

"What is your name?" asked Jane. They had scrambled up into the cherry-tree as nimbly as pussy cats and its whiteness enclosed and enfolded them, shutting them away into a fragrant world all their own.

"Josephine Turner. But every one calls me Jody."

Jody! Jane liked that.

"Mine's Jane Stuart."

"I thought it was Victoria," said Jody. "Miss West said it was."

"It's Jane," said Jane firmly. "At least, it's Jane Victoria but *I* am Jane. And now"--briskly--"let's get acquainted."

Before Jane went back through the gap that night she knew practically all there was to be known about Jody. Jody's father and mother were dead . . . had been dead ever since Jody was a baby. Jody's mother's cousin, who had been the cook at 58, had taken her and was permitted to keep her at 58 if she never let her out of the kitchen. Two years ago Cousin Millie had died and Jody had just "stayed on." She

helped the new cook . . . peeling potatoes, washing dishes, sweeping, dusting, running errands, scouring knives . . . and lately had been promoted to waiting on the table. She slept in a little attic cubby-hole which was hot in summer and cold in winter, she wore cast-off things the boarders gave her and went to school every day there was no extra rush. Nobody ever gave her a kind word or took any notice of her . . . except Dick who was Miss West's nephew and pet and who teased and tormented her and called her "charity child." Jody hated Dick. Once when everybody was out she had slipped into the parlour and picked out a little tune on the piano but Dick had told Miss West and Jody had been sternly informed that she must never touch the piano again.

"And I'd love to be able to play," she said wistfully. "That and a garden's the only things I want. I do wish I could have a garden."

Jane wondered again why things were so criss-cross. She did not like playing on the piano but grandmother had insisted on her taking music lessons and she practised faithfully to please mother. And here was poor Jody hankering for music and with no chance at all of getting it.

"Don't you think you could have a bit of a garden?" said Jane. "There's plenty of room here and it's not too shady, like our yard. I'd help you make a bed and I'm sure mother would give us some seeds. . . ."

"It wouldn't be any use," said Jody drearily. "Dick would just stomp on it, too."

"Then I'll tell you," said Jane resolutely, "we'll get a seed catalogue . . . Frank will get me one . . . and have an *imaginary* garden."

"Ain't you the one for thinking of things?" said Jody admiringly. Jane tasted happiness. It was the first time any one had ever admired her.

4

Of course it was no time before grandmother knew about Jody. She made a great many sweetly sarcastic speeches about her but she never actually forbade Jane going over to play with her in the yard of 58. Jane was to be a good many years older before she understood the reason for that . . . understood that grandmother wanted to show any one who might question it that Jane had common tastes and liked low people.

"Darling, is this Jody of yours a nice little girl?" mother had asked doubtfully.

"She is a very nice little girl," said Jane emphatically.

"But she looks so uncared for . . . positively dirty. . . ."

"Her face is always clean and she never forgets to wash behind her ears, mummy. I'm going to show her how to wash her hair. Her hair would be lovely if it was clean . . . it's so fine and black and silky. And may I give her one of my jars of cold cream. . . . I've two, you know . . . for her hands? They're so red and chapped because she has to work so hard and wash so many dishes."

"But her clothes. . . ."