

"Yes, my Teresa," answers the boy; "they are very beautiful indeed."

"Won't papa be surprised when he finds us out here to meet him?"

"Surely; that is, if we do not miss him. You see when I proposed that we should come out to meet him coming home I didn't think that it would begin to snow."

"That's so," said Teresa. "If it begins to fall faster we may not be able to see; and then our little trick to please papa may fail. You know the way, Giovanni, do you not?"

"Oh, that's no trouble," answered Giovanni, evasively. "All we have to do is to walk straight on. We can do that no matter how hard it snows."

"And besides," added the girl, "Mamma can see down through the snowflakes just as easily as though it were not snowing at all. Doesn't it seem long since mamma went to heaven?"

"It is long, Teresa. She's been happy for—why, it is just one year to-night since she kissed us good-by, and told us that she would wait for us with God."

"Yes, Giovanni; and she told us not to cry, and to remember that we should all soon meet again."

Here Teresa dashed forward and began catching the snow drops in her little hands. As she moved lightly among the falling flakes she looked like a perfect creature of the snow. But even as she flitted about as airily almost as the circling crystals, the air grew denser and denser till there seemed to be a thick white curtain shutting them off from all the world. Teresa hastened to regain her brother's hand. Looking up earnestly into his eyes, she said:

"Giovanni, do you think we'll get lost?"

Giovanni answered the question after a moment's pause. But in that pause there came a change over his life and character—a change so complete and startling that it is nameless.

He had never known a trouble—never

encountered a danger. But now! He realized it at once; he and Teresa were alone in a snow-storm upon a vast prairie, with nothing to guide them to safety and shelter.

"Teresa," he answered, "we may get lost, but I'll take care of you. Do you trust me, my little sister?" and Giovanni bent his head and looked anxiously into Teresa's eyes.

The sister for her answer threw her arms about his neck and kissed him. Then, with a mighty responsibility upon him, Giovanni pushed forward.

"Remember, Teresa, this is carnival—the last day. To-morrow will be Ash Wednesday."

"Am I not dressed for carnival?" answered Teresa. "Oh! wasn't it beautiful the year before last at Rome! You remember, Giovanni!"

"Yes, indeed; the corso was like a picture out of a fairy-book when you and I and mamma and papa sat upon our balcony and threw confetti upon all the gay people below."

"Didn't some of them look funny," exclaimed Teresa, her eyes gleaming with the pleasure of memory. "Such queer masks! Why, there was one with a donkey's head—and he brayed just lovely—it was so like a donkey."

"Yes; and then the race. Wasn't it exciting to see the horses come tearing down the corso, and the people with faces like barrels, and the funny looking fellows with caps and bells, and the shepherdesses rushing out of the way, and shouting and screaming. And then the pretty banners from all the houses, and the damasks and streamers, and the Pope's colors; and, Giovanni, *mio*, our bright blue Italian sky above it all—ugh! It wasn't a bit like this ugly American sky."

Yes; but our sky never sent us such pretty snow as this," said Giovanni.

"That's true," said Teresa. "And, Giovanni, just after the race, do you remember the little girl and the boy,