

DEAN'S
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ANGER.
A STORY FOR BOYS.



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ANGER.—A STORY FOR BOYS.



„UNCLE, please tell us a story ?” The old

man thus addressed, started as if he had been awakened from a dream, and, looking round at the young faces which were gazing eagerly at him, he said pleasantly, "And what shall the story be about?" "Oh, about something that happened to you when you were a boy, uncle—a real, true story." "I think that kind is always the nicest," said a sweet, gentle-looking little girl. An expression of sorrow passed over the old man's face; then, after a pause, he said: "Well, children, I *will* tell you something that happened to me in my youth; it was that which brought these gray hairs before their time, and robbed me of the joy of youth for ever.

"I once had a sister. She was a sweet, loving child; timid and retiring, and of a most yielding disposition, except where right and wrong were concerned, and then her firmness was remarkable in one so young. I loved her better than anything in the world, though I was exactly her opposite in all respects. Headstrong and impetuous, irritable and passionate, while my dear mother lived it was all my deep

love for her could do to keep me even in partial restraint; but about three years before, she had died, leaving Lucy, myself, and an infant brother, under the care of an uncle. This uncle, though I believe a good man, and sincerely desirous of doing his duty towards us, had yet but little influence over me, for I was always more easily influenced by love than by harshness.

“ Like most boys, I was fond of fishing, and I had a fine opportunity for enjoying this pastime. At the foot of my uncle’s garden was a very large pond, plentifully stocked with fish; here I was permitted to amuse myself at liberty, with but one restriction. There was a certain part of the pond where Lucy and I had been forbidden to go; my uncle had marked it by putting a few stakes at each end of the place. This idea vexed me extremely, for boys about twelve years old do not like to have it supposed that they cannot take care of themselves.

“ Lucy was generally my companion while fishing: not that she liked it, for

she sometimes betrayed an unwillingness to accompany me, which, compared with her delight in being with me on every other occasion, and her desire to please me, might have shown me, had I chosen to see it, how much she disliked it.

“ One afternoon, I took my rod, and called to Lucy to put on her bonnet, and come. I think she was not very well



that day, for she hesitated more than usual, and at last said timidly, ‘ Would

you mind very much, Arthur, if I didn't go with you to-day?' I looked at her surprised. 'Not mind,' I interrupted, 'why, of course you know I want your help, Lucy; but if you choose to be ill-natured about it, I don't care; you may stay at home.' And I turned abruptly away, and walked off, pretty sure, however, that Lucy would not be far behind me. I was right. A minute after, I heard the patter of little feet upon the garden walk, and she was by my side.

"We walked on in silence, and when we arrived at the pond, I baited my hook, and threw it into the water. But it was a bad day for fishing; and after waiting a long time, I grew tired and impatient. I felt cross and irritable; angry with myself—angry too with Lucy: for there is nothing irritates one more against a person, than a sense of having injured them.

"Just about the middle of the spot we had been forbidden, and standing a little way out in the water, was a large tree whose spreading branches cast a deep shadow all around it. I had often looked

at this place with longing—it was so admirably adapted for fishing; but had never yet seriously thought of disobeying my uncle's express commands. Now, however, I was in no mood to withstand temptation. I paused but one moment after the idea presented itself—the next I was within the boundary stakes. Without stopping to think, I threw the line, and the hook catching on one of the trees, the rod was jerked out of my hands, and to my horror I saw it hanging just out of my reach. I looked at it for a moment in consternation, then an idea struck me. Hastily feeling in my pockets, I pulled out a ball of twine; then picking up a stone which lay at my feet, I tied it to the end of the cord.

“Seeing I would need some help in my endeavours to get at the rod, I glanced round for Lucy. She was standing just outside the stakes, gazing at me with a look of surprise and terror which I shall never forget. ‘Lucy,’ I called out, ‘I want you to help me; come quick?’ She did not move, and I called again, impa-

tient: 'Be quick, Lucy; I can't wait.'
'You know I can't go there, Arthur.'
Her reply sounded so calm that it irritated me more than ever. 'But you must come, Lucy. You shall help me,' I exclaimed violently—'I'll make you do it.' She did not stir. 'Will you come?' I added passionately. 'No, Arthur.' Oh, I knew not what I did; but lifting the hand that still held the stone, with all my force I hurled it at her. I cannot tell what followed. I remember seeing her fall—a little coffin in a darkened room, kissing clay-cold lips that had never, never spoken one harsh word, and a new-made grave. 'No tears for her:' her eyes had seen the King in his beauty; her feet have trod the golden streets of Heaven—but for *me*—never, shall I forget that awful scene."

