

"None of the other girls have to take their kid sisters along, and besides, I know Ted won't like it." Marion's plaintive voice became pleading. "Can't she wait till some other time, Mother? There will be lots more dances, you know."

"Well, perhaps, she is a trifle young for this affair, dear, and, as you say, there will be plenty of dances more suitable for her than this. On the whole, I think she had better wait," replied the good-natured Mrs. Carleton, who never could resist Marion's pleas if it lay in her power to give her what she asked.

Sandy, listening in the hammock outside, could scarcely credit her senses. That, almost at the last moment, she should be prevented from going to the dance for which she had been planning for weeks was unbelievable—surely she must have dreamt the whole thing, but a well directed pinch convinced her that she was undoubtedly awake. Following this conviction came a storm of wrath against the person responsible for her woe, Marion. It was by no means the first time that Marion had incurred her displeasure by her officious meddling, but this last offence was the climax, and Sandy planned revenge.

Two weeks passed and the night of the Club dance finally arrived. Marion fluttered around the house, giving orders to everyone to do this, that or the other thing for her—"just as if she were the Queen of Sheba, or something, and we all had to obey her commands," thought Sandy resentfully, and glared as just then the "Queen" gave an impatient command to her.

"When Ted arrives take him into the drawing-room, Sandy, and tell him I won't be long," directed Her Majesty.

"Delighted, I'm sure," replied Sandy, sweetly, and stuck out a scornful tongue when her sister's back was turned.

If any of Sandy's family could have seen her during the next twenty minutes they would have received the surprise of their lives. Her total disregard of her appearance had always been the scorn of her sister, the despair of her mother, and a matter of extreme indifference to Sandy herself, yet here she was peering as anxiously into a mirror as ever Marion had done, and not looking altogether satisfied with what she saw. In truth it was not a reflection to inspire any undue admiration; her dress, soiled and crumpled, hung down in a dejected manner on one side; the tousled red-gold mop of hair to which she owed her nickname, hung dispiritedly about her flushed face; run-over shoes, presumably white at one time, but now a streaked, dingy gray with stockings to match, completed the doleful picture of neglect. Sandy's purpose in her intent scrutiny of her own appearance now became manifest. Stripping off the crumpled dress she hastily donned a cool green muslin, replaced the soiled shoes and stockings with some belonging to her sister, and again confronted her mirror. A decided improvement was easily discernible, but the serious problem of subduing that unruly mass of hair still remained. A moment of indecision, a sudden inspiration, a pair of scissors in determined hands, and the offending hair lay scattered in shining curls over the dressing-table. A smile of satisfaction on her face as she once