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MY STORY BY KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# MY STORY.

BY

KATHARINE S. MACQUOID,

AUTHOR OF

"PATTY," "MIRIAM'S MARRIAGE,"

ETC. ETC.

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BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ

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## M Y S T O R Y.

## CHAPTER I.

## The Power of Hope.

I soon went back to Madame La Peyre. Angélique was coming out of the room; there were tears in her eyes, but she looked very happy.

"Well," I said, "she is to be told; you are not going to keep it from her?"

"Madame will tell Mademoiselle;" and Angélique stood aside to let me pass, as if she had no voice in the matter, although I knew perfectly well that Madame La Peyre had been guided by her judgment.

"Thou must be patient, Gertrude," Madame said, looking up from her embroidery, "and thou must not be romantic. Angélique thinks that we may tell the news gently, but not till to-morrow morning."

"And suppose she is worse this afternoon, and dies?" How can these two old women delay? They forget how young people live on hope.

Madame shook her head.

"The doctor said this morning that we must be very careful. It seems that the sleep she has now

fallen into is a sort of crisis; therefore we must be patient till to-morrow."

Again I felt suppressed by Madame's calm wisdom—so much deeper than I had expected from her; and yet what a thing is lip-wisdom!

About nine o'clock in the evening Mrs. Dayrell roused. Madame La Peyre was sitting by her, for Angélique had lain down to get a little rest after her long, anxious watching. I was near Madame, but she signed to me to go away as soon as the sick woman moved. I had not been downstairs half-an-hour, when Madame came hurrying into the parlour. She seated herself in perfect silence, but when I looked, I saw that she was disturbed—frightened, I fancied.

"What has happened?—is she worse?"

"No, *Dieu merci*." Then Madame's penitence overcame her, and she wiped her eyes. "Ah, *ma petite!* it is very easy to preach about imprudence, but it is difficult to act out one's own teaching. I do not know how—I fancy our poor Barbara is too clever for me—but, in some way, she has divined from my face that I have a secret which I am keeping from her. Then she raises herself, and cries out, 'You have news of Henri; tell me, tell me quick!' What wilt thou, Gertrude? I was alone, and I cannot be hard, and take away from my poor Barbara this crumb of hope of which she seems to make so much. So I say to her all which Mr. Howard has said. 'I will see Mr. Howard—now, this minute;' she cries out, and my poor Barbara sits upright in bed, with a large red spot on each