

THE MAD



The girl ran up the snow-covered walk and banged on the front door. "Aunt Sis, let me in!" she yelled. "We need to talk right now!" She beat on the door as it creaked open.

Aunt Sis frowned, "What on Earth is the matter Dear?"

"You've made her mad again! This time you **have** to apologize!"

"Oh, my. Well, come in. We'll sit by the fire and have a nice cup of tea."

"It's *different* this time, Aunt Sis. You have to go apologize!"

Sis ushered the girl into the house and closed the door. Brushing snow off the girl's coat, Sis said, "Pardon me, dearest, but tell me, where is *The Mad* located?"

"She's mad all over, and you made her that way!"

Sis hugged the girl. "Now, now, Dearest. If your mother has *The Mad* all over her, seems to me it is her mad."

The girl flinched away. "But you made her that way because of what you did!"

"Well, my goodness. It's not the first time. Just whatever did I do that has the power to set off a full grown woman?"

"She said that you ignored her good advice."

Sis chuckled, gathered the girl into her arms again and whispered, "Her advice is what **she** would do, which told me what I should **not** do. That's exactly why I asked her."

The girl elbowed free and went to stand in front of the fire.

"But you made her mad! Please apologize!"

"She did that to herself, Dear. We've talked about this before, you and I."

"Well, if you'd followed her advice she wouldn't be mad, so it's all your fault."

"I see." Sis went to stand beside her. "You know quite well that anger is her way of controlling people. And you also know The Mad belongs to her, because she's the one who's got it."

"If you would just apologize, she would feel better and leave *me* alone."

"Oh Sweetie, now *you're* doing it." Sis took a deep breath and looked the girl in the eyes. "I haven't done anything to apologize for, and I will not be manipulated by someone else's anger."

"But you must! She's so hard to live with when she's mad!"

"Sweetie, it's not my mad. Not my problem. Not my business."

"But you don't understand what she's like!"

Sis sighed and turned to study the girl. "Dear Heart, no one, and no thing, can make someone else mad. The person feeling mad is the generator of their own feeling. Anger is created by failed expectations, the need to be right, and ignorance. *The Mad* comes from within the one who creates it."

"You've got to be kidding! That is not true! How can you say such a thing?"

"Seems like you're getting a bit angry over there. Going to blame me for how you're feeling?"

"Now you are *really* making me angry."

"I see you've learned to use emotional blackmail. Guess you sat at your mother's knee too long."

"That's not true! You really are the witch Mom says you are!"

Sis smiled at the ready-to-spit-nails-girl standing next to her, and paused to think before she spoke.

"If a witch can't be manipulated; If a witch takes responsibility for creating her own feelings; If a witch knows what's her business, and even more important, what is **not** her business; If a witch refuses to lie; If a witch gathers advice to help her make a decision;

Then, I guess my sister nailed it.”

The girl paled, stepped back, seemed to shrink away from her aunt.

Sis sat down and opened her arms. “My dearest girl, now, do you see why I am proud to be guilty as charged?”

08/24/18