

UNDER THE LILAC TREE.

CHAPTER II.

The old proverb states that the course of true love never runs smooth. Ours ran smoothly enough. The doctor laughed when Mark told him of our engagement. My mother was delighted; she had liked Mark from the first. The one great drawback was that he was compelled to go to India for four years. He was a civil engineer by profession, and a lucrative appointment had been offered to him on a railway which was being extended. The advantages that would accrue to him were great. He would gain immensely in experience and knowledge, and he would make money.

But during the first few happy weeks we did not think much of the parting. It was a dark cloud ahead of us, a cloud that had a silver lining; for when the four years were ended Mark was to return home and we were to be married. I should, he promised me, always have a home in the country. He could never ask me to live in the town. It was in the month of May that we met, and in July we parted, but during the interval we spent the greater part of the time together. Other summer days have dawned for me, but none like those on which my young lover came in the early morning, while the dew sparkled on the grass, when we walked through the woods and down by the river, noting with loving eyes all that was so fair and beautiful around us, returning from our long rambles, our hands filled with wild flowers, to find my mother waiting breakfast for us, the table set out on the lawn. Then Mark would linger and pass the morning with me. He came back in the afternoon, and stayed with us until the moon rose.

How I loved him! Then I saw only the beauty of a great passion; now I see its pain and its pathos; now I know that the mighty power of love has not been given to us to be centered in any creature. Then I had one idol, and alas, I worshipped it! I had no life apart from my young lover's. I never tired of looking at the dark beauty of his face, of listening to his voice, and when he was absent from me, of recalling every word he had spoken. I had no life, no love, no care no thought apart from him. I read the love stories of others, written in poetry and prose; but no love was like mine. Surely wise people, while they laughed, would have wept over it! If he had asked for my life, I should have given it to him, as I had given my love, freely and with a smile. I felt something like pity for those he did not love; I felt that every girl living must envy me.

Mark Upton cared for me quite as much as I loved him. We spent those weeks in a land into which no care, no sorrow came—the fairland of love and hope. Every hour brought us closer together, bound us by newer and sweeter ties, while the summer flowers bloomed, the corn grew up in the fields, and the lilacs withered. I do not know what comes into other lives; but I hope that Heaven give such a glimpse of happiness as mine to all.

On one occasion I heard the doctor laughing as he talked to my mother. He asked her if she knew that in some parts of England the beautiful fragrant shrub known as southernwood was called "lad's love." My mother replied that she had never heard it so called, and asked why it was named "lad's love." I listened half curiously for the answer. "Because," he said, "it dies in a year, as lad's love often does." He looked at me as he spoke, and I knew that he was thinking of Mark's love, which after all, was a lad's love, and might live for a year or die in a day. But he did not know. He was old and immersed in the cares of a grave profession. How could he understand our love, loyalty, and constancy?

One evening Mark had gone home, but the stars were so bright that I remained out of doors, watching the night sky. The dark blue vault was a mass of shining, twinkling gold. They were so bright and clear, and the faint mystic light they threw upon the earth was so dreamily beautiful, that I was entranced.

"Nellie," cried my mother, "do come in!" "Mamma," I answered, "you come out!" Almost to my surprise she came and we stood together watching the far-off wonderful orbs.

"How bright they are, those beautiful stars!" said my mother. "Ah, Nellie, how many thousand years have they been shining? What have they seen? And, my darling, how soon they will be shining on our graves!"

"But I, with my warm deep love—I felt no fear of death. Not even the stars in heaven shone so brightly or were so true as my love. I said to her that I might die, but that the love that filled my whole soul never could. She looked at me with sad sweet eyes. When the stars shine in the night sky her look and her words come back to me.

"Nellie," she said, "you should never give to a creature the love that is due to the creator. I have often thought dear child," she continued, "that you love Mark too much. It is not safe to confer all your happiness in one person. If anything happens to that one, your whole life is shipwrecked."

"There can be no shipwreck where

Mark is," I answered, strong in my faith and love.

My mother sighed. "Nothing gives me more pleasure, Nellie, than to know how happy you are with Mark. I believe he is true as a mackerel."

"True as a man can be, mamma, means infinitely true," I interrupted. "Ah, no, my dear Nellie! Men are but mortal; their power of loving is not infinite. I do not wish to sadden you, to cloud your faith, to dim your love or lessen your trust; but I should like to warn you. Love with caution."

"There need be no caution where Mark is concerned, mother," I rejoined. "I am old," she continued, "I have seen a great deal of life. I do not say—Heaven forbid—that all men are false, or all women; I do not say that one sex is more false than the other; but I have seen love betrayed, trust misplaced. I have known the honest heart of a man broken because a woman deserted him, and I have known a loving and tender-hearted girl die because her lover left her."

I raised my face to the stars shining in their calm eternal beauty. Strong in my youth, ignorance, and faith, I said lightly: "Nothing of that kind can ever happen between Mark and me."

"Some loves," said my mother, "last forever, some for a day; and oh, my dear Nellie, it seems to me that this last is, in these prosaic times, the commonest form of love."

"Love for a day!" I echoed. "Ah, thank Heaven that is not Mark's love!" My mother looked at me anxiously. I wonder how many mothers have given to their daughters just the same feasible advice, and just as much in vain!

"Do you quite understand, Nellie," asked my gentle loving mother, "what I mean, what I want you to do? Mark is to be absent four years. I do not say that this love will change or grow less; but I beg of you to leave yourself one chance. Do not give him such entire love, that if he should die or forget you, or any circumstances should part you, your whole life would be ruined. Love with caution, Nellie."

"There is no need for caution with Mark!" cried my happy heart. To Mark, my handsome lover, I might give in superabundance the love which filled my heart; and the words of my mother's warning fell on heedless ears.

I can remember a warm day in June, when Mark and I sought the shade of the tall trees that grew by the river. A refreshing breeze came over the water, and the birds were silent in the great hat. We were talking of our marriage of that bright future, which, like the June sunshine, had no shadow. Suddenly Mark asked me:

"Have you any relatives, Nellie? You and your mother seem quite alone in the world."

I told him that my father was an only child, my mother also, and that I was the same. The only relatives I had ever heard of were some distant ones in America; but I had none in England.

"It must have been lonely for you, my darling, before I came," he said. I told him how my home-duties and my love of nature, of flowers, trees, and birds had filled my life. I had lived then in the gray of the twilight; I lived now in the light of the glorious sun.

"How little I dreamed that morning that fair May morning, I was to meet my fate!" said Mark. "Nellie, I shall never forget how your hair gleamed in the sunshine."

I looked up at him with happy eyes; his praise was so sweet to me. "We were talking about relatives, Mark," I said. "Have you many?" "Ours is a very peculiar family," he said laughing. "We have some relatives on my mother's side who are very poor; they live in London. On my father's side we have some distant relatives who are very rich; but we do not correspond with either. These rich people have a title too; but I shall never trouble them. If ever I have a title it shall be through winning it; if ever I have a fortune I shall have made it."

My noble Mark! My whole heart bowed down before him; he was so brave, so gallant, so independent, as all true men are.

I never recalled that conversation, those few words, until I knew who Mark Upton's relatives were.

CHAPTER III.

When the corn was cut down, and the ripe fruit gathered in from the orchards; when the "fres" and happy barley lay under the scythe, Mark had gone.

When the hour of parting came, I believe Mark would have given up the appointment, with all its advantages, rather than leave me. Twenty times he kissed me with despairing passion and love, left me, and returned. He could not leave me; I could not let him go. My mother said it was useless to prolong the agony of parting.

Mark looked at her with a white set face. "I cannot go," he said hoarsely. "He had to leave Graecieu by the last train that evening, and sail from London on the morrow. He had spent the whole of the previous day with us, and he was at the cottage early on this morning of the last day. Outside the very glory of summer lay over the land. We stood watching the golden sunshine with the chill of our parting upon us, a chill more bitter than the chill of death. Mark had loosened my hair, and had cut off a long-shining tress.

"That shall lie next my heart, Nellie, even when I am dead," he said. "Promise me that no hand but mine shall touch these golden curls of yours while I am away. You are very beautiful, Nell, although you do not seem to know anything about it; and men will admire you; but you must not listen

to them. You are mine, all mine—mine only."

I told him—truthfully—that all other men were to me like shadows. "Promise me, Nell," he said as he kissed my lips again and again, "that no one shall kiss you while I am away."

"Dear heart, what fear!" I cried. Then in my turn I began to exact a promise. "You will love and think of me too, Mark?"

"I shall think of no one else, Nell. And you will not call any one else beautiful, or—"

He interrupted me with a laugh. "Perhaps I should be happier if I could think less of you, Nellie," he said. "My life will be one unceasing longing for you."

"My dear Mark," said my mother, "if you are to catch the six o'clock train, it is time you went."

His face grew white and a dark shadow came into his eyes.

"Nellie, just come a little way with me," he said. "Let our last farewell be spoken where we first met."

Once more we stood by the lilac trees; every flower was dead, but the green leaves were there still.

"I shall leave you here, my darling," said my lover in a low voice. "I shall be four years away from you, Nellie. Promise me that when I return you will meet me here, in this same place. Here, where I met the sweetest love ever given to man—here I shall return to claim my life. Good-by, Nellie."

"Good-by, Mark," I whispered. For one brief moment he put his face on mine; he kissed my brow and my lips; for one moment, sweet and bitter as death, I lay with my head upon his breast; and then he was gone. There was a blinding mist all around me, a surging as of great waters in my ears. A sharp and bitter pain seemed to pierce my heart; I felt my whole frame tremble. Then the blue sky, the green earth, the trees, and the river were all one, and I reeled and fell upon the grass. I could not weep; I could not cry out. No word came to relieve my dumb anguish and despair.

"Oh, child, be warned," said my mother that evening, "be warned! You must not give to any creature the love that belongs to One only."

I lived through it—through the rest of the long bright days, through the sunny evenings, the moonlit nights. For some weeks I had no companion ways, but I did not let my mother know how sorely I grieved.

Four years, four long dreary years I must wait, but there was hope at the end. He would come again, my brave young lover. My mother helped me by setting me to work. I could make so many beautiful things for my future home in four years, she said. I could paint; I could do a hundred things that would fill the time, and I should know that I was working for him.

One whole year passed by. Every mail brought me a letter, a glowing love letter, and I was growing happy again. Only three years to wait now until I should see Mark under the lilac tree! Then clouds began to gather.

Mr. Upton who, although he had laughed at us as young lovers had suddenly, he fell down in the street, and was carried home senseless. He never spoke again. He died the same evening, to the grief and distress of every one who knew him.

Mark felt his father's death keenly. He wrote to me more lovingly than ever. He said that I was all that he had in the world now, and that he must, if he could, love me even more. It was in May that the doctor died, and for one year afterward everything went on as of old. I had but two years more to wait. Time passed more quickly. Only two years! My mother had ceased to warn me. She said no more to me about caution in love.

Three years had passed. I reminded myself every hour in the day that I had but one more year to wait. Mark's letters were full of love, full of eagerness and hope. He had been prosperous beyond expectation. He had never missed writing to me, until a day came when the Indian mail brought me nothing from him—not a word, not a line. It was the first time such a thing had occurred, and my mother tried to comfort me. The next mail brought me a letter, but the one after that did not, and my confidence was gone—I no longer felt sure that by every mail I should have news from my lover. Like the sharp thrust of a sword, an idea came to me one day that the letters were shorter and colder. I hated myself for my miserable fancy. How dared I think such treason of my lover Mark? Then in the month of October my mother died, and after that the Indian mail brought me no more news of Mark—not a single line.

My mother never knew that a great cloud had overshadowed me. She did not know that my heart was breaking because I had no news from Mark.

Let me tell it quickly. My dear mother was buried, and I was alone in the world, save for my lover so far away—alone, save for him, and when July of the next year should come, the four years would be ended, and he would return.

I thought deeply over my plans. It seemed useless now to leave the cottage; it was best for me to remain there until Mark came home again. Our old and faithful servant, Dorothy Clarke, was sufficient protection for me. I had money enough for one year, and I had my little income of twenty pounds per annum also. I had thought once of going away, but why should I go—what could I do? And I must be here when Christmas came. I was still waiting in dry-eyed, mute anguish, for the letter that I was never to receive. I wondered often that golden hair of which my lover had been so proud had not turned gray. I was helpless in my great grief. I wrote to Mark. I told him that my mother was dead and that I was alone in the cottage, waiting for him—that neither his silence nor absence shook my faith. He might be ill; and an accident might

have happened to him—anything, everything would I believe, except that he had forgotten me. I never thought of that; it never occurred to me as a solution of the mystery of his silence. There was no one to whom I could appeal for news of Mark. His father was dead; the rector of Graecieu had not heard from him for many months; the lawyers who had forwarded the money realized by the sale of his father's property had not received any communication from him since he had sent the formal receipt for it. There was no one in Graecieu who knew his present address.

There was nothing to be done but wait in patience as best I could. Every morning hope revived in my heart; every evening it died. Every morning I rose, praying wildly to Heaven that I might hear from Mark that day; every night I lay down to sleep with bitter tears because a letter had not come. Every morning, week after week, month after month, I went up to the gate to meet the postman. He never had anything for me. He knew that I wanted an Indian letter, and he would look at me with a piteous shake of the head, and pass on. But one morning when the snow lay on the ground and the bells were chiming, the postman came. He bade me no cheerful "Good-morning" as he placed the letter in my hands and hastened away. He knew what had befallen me. Inside the envelope was my last letter to India, returned to me through the Dead-Letter Office, and on it was written in an official hand, "Gone away—left no address."

To Be Continued.

REMOVED THE STOMACH.

REMARKABLE SURGICAL OPERATION IN ST. LOUIS.

Dr. Bernays Performed a Complete Excision of the Stomach of Conrad Beck, Who Suffered from Cancer—Beck Recovered from the Operation, but Was Too Debilitated to Live.

What was regarded at St. Louis, as the greatest surgical operation of the age was performed at the Rebekah Hospital last Wednesday morning, and the fact that it gave promise of complete success was responsible for the disclosure of the details. It was the excision of the entire stomach of Conrad Beck, a machinist, 46 years old, of St. Louis.

In several ways the operation was more arduous and complicated than the similar and successful undertaking at Zurich, Switzerland, on Sept. 6, 1897, of Dr. Carl Schlatter, who removed the whole stomach of Anna Landis, a working woman, 65 years old. Each operation was impelled by cancerous growth that menaced the patient's life.

Beck was the first man in the world to submit to such an undertaking. Dr. A. C. Bernays, who performed the operation, is one of the most eminent surgeons in the West. He was assisted by Drs. Robert E. Wilson, Frank M. Floyd, and Spencer Graves. Dr. Bernays gave out a carefully prepared statement of the case as follows:

"The patient was sent me for operation by Dr. Summa, who had diagnosed the case as an incurable

CANCER OF THE STOMACH.

By severe hemorrhages and pain, and by inadequate digestion, all caused by the cancerous tumors, the patient was much reduced in strength, and had lost about 27 pounds in weight. Dr. Summa thought that as the tumor had not given rise to obstruction, a removal of the growth could be attempted. It was thought that only a portion of the stomach was involved.

"On Wednesday morning I opened the abdomen in the usual way, and upon examination of the stomach it was found that the major curvature was not involved at all, that the disease was located along the minor curvature, and that it extended the whole length of the esophagus to within an inch of the pylorus. This latter outlet of the stomach was entirely free from disease. It was found that all of the organs excepting this small portion of about one inch would have to be removed in order to give the patient a chance to get well. This operation was done, and the lower end of the esophagus was united to the pyloric end or outlet of the stomach.

"I have done three or four times in past years operations on cases in which the removal of the entire stomach might have resulted in a cure, but never have had the knowledge necessary to warrant me in the operation and have also lacked in courage. The recent successful operation by Dr. Schlatter in Zurich gave us some encouragement and furnished a precedent, but the operation, in my opinion, based upon the experience of Wednesday morning, will never become a common one. It is exceedingly difficult of performance and requires great resourcefulness and endurance on the part of the surgeon and his assistants.

"The operation lasted two hours and six minutes. It was somewhat different from Schlatter's. The patient is

DOING FAIRLY WELL.

In fact, the danger of shock and hemorrhage is now over, and if he does not get well it will be from the impossibility of properly nourishing him."

The difference between the St. Louis operation and Dr. Schlatter's is in the fact that the Swiss physician removed the pylorus and effected a suture between the upper end of the jejunum and the lower extremity of the esophagus. Dr. Floyd explains that Dr. Schlatter must have experienced less difficulty in concluding his operation than did Dr. Bernays in finishing his.

"It was much easier," he says, "to join the ends of the jejunum and esophagus because the orifices of them fitted with much more nicety. But the upper orifice of the pylorus being of greater dimensions than the lower end of the esophagus, the junction in the operation on Beck was necessarily a task of greater difficulty."

Though the continuity of the patient's alimentary canal was restored by the suture between the pylorus and esophagus, Beck was sustained with injected nourishments. The surgeons declare the cancerous growth had attained such extent there was not the slightest hope of Beck's recovery before the operation.

The history of Beck's case is almost the same as that of Anna Landis. She, too, was nourished by injections. After a while, however, she resumed eating in the ordinary manner, and on Oct. 11 left bed. Dr. Schlatter consumed two hours and a half in his operation.

Later, Beck died late Friday night. The surgeons say the operation was nevertheless a scientific triumph, the patient's debilitated condition alone frustrating permanent success.

ANOTHER MYSTERY EXPLAINED.

Mr. Lynch and his friend were discussing family names and their history.

"How did your name originate?" asked the friend.

"Oh, probably one of my ancestors was of the grasping kind that you bear about so often. Somebody gave him a 'ynch,' and he took an 'L.'

"Speaking of the somnambulist," said the Cheerful Idiot, "he at least is no idle dreamer."

The Poet—"Which of my poems do you think is the best?" She—"I haven't read that one yet."

She—"Mr. Footlights doesn't look like an actor does he?" He—"No; and he doesn't act like one, either."

He—"My heart is on fire mit love for you!" She, coldly—"Vell, as dere is no insurance you hat petter put dot fire out."

Judge—"Why did you steal the complainant's turkeys?" Colored Prisoner—"He had no chickens, your Honor."

Miss Ethel—"I wonder if that gentleman can hear me when I sing?" Maid—"Of course he can. He is closing the window already."

"Those new neighbors seem to be great borrowers." "Borrowest One night when they gave a dinner they borrowed our family album."

Patience—"What is the cheapest-looking thing you ever saw about a bargain counter?" Patrice—"A husband waiting for his wife."

He Wouldn't Do.—Friend—"Wouldn't you like to have me sit here and shoot at the poets when they come in?" Editor—"No. You are too poor a shot."

Willie—"Mamma, can people leave parts of themselves in different places?" "No; don't be ridiculous!" "Well, Uncle Tom said he was going to South Africa for his lungs."

Brown—"Do you know that the majority of physicians are comparatively poor men?" Jones—"No, I wasn't aware of that; but I know some of them are awfully poor doctors."

Author—"What do you think of my new book?" Friend—"It certainly contains much food for thought." Author—"Do you really think so?" Friend—"Yes; but it seems to have been wretchedly cooked."

"Want a situation as errand-boy, do you? Well, can you tell me how far the moon is from the earth, eh?" Boy—"Well, guv'nor, I don't know, but I reckon it ain't near enough to interfere with me running errands." He got the job.