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HAWTHORNDEN

A STORY OF EVERY DAY LIFE

BY MRS. CLARA M. THOMPSON

CHAPTER XIX. REMINISCENCES

During the Christmas holidays, when Rosine had nearly given up hope that she might renew her acquaintance with Miss Greenwood...

The Colonel, who was somewhat old-fashioned in his notions, questioned once or twice the propriety of so young a miss taking so long a drive alone in an omnibus...

Rosine pressed the hand she held in hers, she could not speak, but she looked with her tearful eyes into the face of her friend, with a look that told at once how fully she reciprocated her warm affection.

"Dear Rosine, I wish you to know that I did not always live as I do now. My childhood's home, for which I sometimes have such a longing as I cannot describe, was in a lovely country town...

Rosine entered after her light tap, but found no one within; though the door to one of the inner rooms was ajar, and she was startled by the sound of sobs and bitter weeping coming from within...

"My sweet child," she said, "I am glad of your happy face today. I have been at my prayers; it is the golden hour, as the Italians call it, but I see I have lightened it."

place made sacred by prayers and tears, no word was spoken as they passed before each representation. When they returned to the parlor a heavy sigh escaped the young girl's lips...

"O, thank you," said Rosine, slipping her hand into her friend's: "I should love to hear more of him; the Doctor once spoke of him in the most affectionate terms, but I never dared to ask any more than he chose to tell."

"Ah, yes," replied Dora, "Edward Hartland could speak of him from the heart as I can, for he loved him well." She paused a moment to recover herself from the agitation some memory had produced.

"Dear Rosine, I wish you to know that I did not always live as I do now. My childhood's home, for which I sometimes have such a longing as I cannot describe, was in a lovely country town...

"About this time my poor mother was taken from me, and I was left, at the age of eighteen, with the care of Harry and the house, my father being no more at home than formerly; you will guess that all I could spare went to aid Ernest in his studies."

like a withering blast; it was as if the hot breath of a furnace should pass over these jasper and rose; pointing to the window, "and change them in a single moment of time to dry and withered sticks. Our beautiful country home was broken up, my brother was ordered to choose between his own kindred and his friend; he made his choice, and was forever separate from his family."

"Go on, please," she replied in a voice almost inaudible from emotion, "you must let me weep with you."

"Thank you, darling," continued Dora, "I am afraid I am selfish, but it is sweet solace to speak to you of these things, and the knowledge of them will lead you to know Dr. Hartland better; but the saddest, saddest tale is yet to tell. The year you finished his profession with high honors, Ernest did not appear to mourn continually for his friends, as I did, but when we met, (as we did occasionally by stealth) he could speak but little, only pressing me to his heart, and begging me to do as he had done, pleading for others as well as himself."

"God, noble Ned," replied Dora, "I dare say he longs for your sympathy, but less selfish than I am, he would dread making you unhappy. Try to comfort him if you can, Rose, for his young life was sadly blighted. But I wish you to know Harry," she added, changing the subject for fear of returning emotion, and opening the locked case had shown her friend in a former interview.

"He is not like Ernest, but a brave, fine fellow, with a conscience like the purest crystal; I expect him here long, you may be sure he will be in haste, for never was there a heart that beat more fondly for his own home and friends. Hark! that sounds like a salute," she continued as the noise of a heavy cannon reverberated across the water; "he will come here at once, and he must not find me in tears," she said, gazing to the mirror to arrange the dark tresses of her hair. Rosine gave a little shriek to her own looks, as she sat looking far out into the sea, wondering if she could really know that gentleman and if he would recognize her. In all her visits to her friend she had not once met the Commodore, and her dread of meeting him was much increased by the recital of the morning, but today she was doomed to encounter his dreaded presence.

mass of grey hair, together with an immensely grizzled beard and moustache, gave his face a somewhat savage look. A broad, self-assured chin, and long Roman nose, told of a powerful will; in his eyes alone, which were very dark and lustrous, Rosine saw a resemblance to the daughter. She was gazing down the bay with the telescope when he entered.

"Well, Dora," he said, coming towards her and clapping her on the shoulder, "do you see him? That's his ship just anchored—wants heavy repairs. I hope we may bring the boy to reason yet before she's ready for service. But who have you here? He added as he laid down the glass and brought Rosine forward to introduce her. At the first sight of the young girl the Commodore's face lighted up, and he prepared as bland a smile as could be painted on so rough a visage, but at the name "Miss Brown," there was a change, the frown returned, and he drew back, bowing very slightly, freezing Rosine in an instant. He turned away from her at once, and continued his conversation with his daughter. "I have business in town immediately, and shan't be here when he comes up to the house; but you'll see him, and if you won't back up your old father in this matter, just hold your tongue and say nothing."

THE CLASH

Father Clement's eyes shone with pleasure and surprise as he beheld his visitor. "Come in, Peter," he cried, "Sit down and tell me what brings you to Warrington today."

"Peter Harmon was a farmer, living a dozen miles away from the little town of Warrington, to which he and his family came every Sunday to attend Mass. A visit during the week was indeed a rare event. "I want your advice, Father," the man explained, after seating himself in a comfortable chair in the priest's study. "There's a clash out to my house—a clash 'twixt the ol' woman an' the new."

"Well, then, who is this 'new woman,' and what is she doing out at your house?" "Why, it's Ann 'Lizabeth, Father," "Ann 'Lizabeth? Your daughter?" "Sure, Father. My oldest girl, that I sent off to school."

"The priest drew a long sigh of relief and his brow cleared. "Well, what is the matter with Ann 'Lizabeth? Haven't I heard you say time and again, that Ann 'Lizabeth is the finest daughter in the whole world?" "She is, Father," Peter answered, and there was no mistaking his seriousness. "I bet there ain't her equal to be found this side of heaven."

"You must become reconciled to God's holy will, Peter. Jake was a good boy—and Ann 'Lizabeth is a good girl," he added, thinking it well to get back to the original subject. "The sure is, Father, Ann 'Lizabeth come back from that school chuck full of new ideas which she learned out of books, an' jes' down turned my farm upside down. Ain't nothin' 'tall done how the way it used to be. I'd jes' take a little dirt in my hand an' crumble it, by the feel of it, tell jes' what we'd plant there; but that Ann 'Lizabeth ain't satisfied. She takes samples from different parts of the farm, puts 'em in little boxes an' labels 'em like the polyanthus does with pills, an' sends 'em off to Washington. An' there they dissect them, or something like that, an' write back an' say jes' what'll grow best in that kind of soil, or maybe that we should add some fertilizer or lime or something else. An' we got to do 'exactly what their letters say. Ann 'Lizabeth don't ask my wishes 'bout nothin'."

"Here the priest laughed outright. "I hear you've paid off the mortgage that's been hanging over your farm all these years, Peter."

"Yes, Seems like I couldn't get to it afore," he explained. "Years ago the crops was pretty good, though the sickness 'mong the children or something 'till that'd allus keep me back. But 'thine the bumpin' crops I've harvested the pes' two years, 'twas easy to get rid of that mortgage and put somethin' by in the bank."

"Then you must admit that Ann 'Lizabeth's method of 'book larnin' farming is a success, Peter."

"Yes, Father, I've got to give Ann 'Lizabeth credit for all she's done. Not even Jake could've worked harder nor done more than that girl, even though she wouldn't do things my way; but now that she's got the farm a runnin' her way, she's turned her 'ention to the house, an' I can't stan' to see Marthy grievein'."

"What has she done to grieve her mother?" demanded Father Clement. "I can't believe that Ann 'Lizabeth would intentionally hurt her."

"That's just the trouble, Father. Ann 'Lizabeth wouldn't an' she don't dream but what mother an' me's jes' tickled over the changes she's made, an' Marthy won't let me tell her no different cause Ann 'Lizabeth wants to be kind to us an' make us happy."

"Where did Ann 'Lizabeth get the money to pay for all this new furniture?" he demanded. "Well, that surprised me, too, when she explained it. Seems that she's been writin' articles 'bout this new kind of farmin'—the pill-box an' book farmin', you know—an' the farm journal pay good prices for 'em; an' with buttin' an' egg money—she's raisin' a thousand 'stead of the usual hundred chickens—she had considerable saved up, an' she spent it all for the new furniture!"

"Well, well!" gasped Father Clement. "To think of Ann 'Lizabeth doin' all that! Why, Peter Harmon, you have a daughter to be proud of!"

"Yes, Father, ain't that jes' what I allus said? Ann 'Lizabeth is jes' great! But what am I to do? I can't stand to see Marthy slip off to the barn to weep over the disgrace that's come to our old mahogany."

"Hm!" Father Clement was in deep thought, searching for a possible solution. "When is your daughter going to be married? Hasn't she been engaged to Jim Carlton for some time?"

"They'd a been married long ago, Father, if it hadn't been for Jake a dyin' in France. Ann 'Lizabeth insisted she'd have to stay with us till the mortgage was paid off an' we're livin' on easy street."

"Pretty fine an' Ann 'Lizabeth," remarked the priest. "Well, Father, I've got to be goin' now," Peter arose. "Jes' you think over what I've told you an' tell me how to manage this clash 'twixt my ol' woman an' the new one."

Father Clement arose also, and he was laughing as he shook hands with the man. "Peter, there is no clash between Ann 'Lizabeth and her mother. Ann 'Lizabeth is a noble, big-hearted, self-sacrificing daughter and Marthy knows it. The clash is all in you, Peter. It is a clash between the old and the new. Take your wife's advice. Be quiet and let Marthy manage the situation. I am sure that everything will be all right."

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