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FROM MY DIARY.

Mildred has gone down the shady lane for a walk and left me alone. The great pile of sewing we have been doing for Mr. Somerson is all completed, and I have written out the bill.

The bill! Why did my cheek burn and my hand tremble over the task, as if it were a disgrace to ask for the money we have honestly earned?

Perhaps it is because it is something new of Mildred and I to work for our daily bread.

Only two years ago we could pay others for the stitches put into our own dainty clothing.

Two years ago! Then fever took our father, and brought me to the confines of the grave.

When the funeral was over, and friends examined our father's affairs, they found every shilling was claimed by creditors, and we were left poor as well as orphans.

Some of the friends, who pitied us, saved enough to buy a wee cottage, and when I could take up the burden of life again, I was allowed to select furniture from our old house for the new one.

All through this dreadful time Mildred was living with Aunt Janet, and we were glad she was spared.

My beauty was never very marvellous, and when the illness scarred it and left my skin a deep, unattractive red, I could not grieve as I should have done if Mildred's exquisite loveliness had been so swept away.

She came home, after all danger of contagion was over, to our little cottage. Aunt Janet gave her a complete outfit of mourning, made in the latest fashion - for mourning would consult a fashion plate for her shroud, if she knew she was dying - and she looked fairer than ever in the sombre garments.

Poor Mildred! She is only twenty now, and she never knew what work meant till father died.

How can I blame her when she smiles upon Mr. Somerson, and lets his great, noble heart trust in a love she only feigns for him?

such hints, that I am sure he hopes Mildred will preside over it.

Why else do her favorite colors reign in one entire suite of rooms?

Why was the library fitted up exactly like one that took my fancy in a book I read, and of which I spoke?

Sometimes I fancy my brother-in-law to be, will offer me a home also in his splendid house, but I cannot live there, when they are married.

My hand trembles over these words, when I have known for many long weeks what was to be the end.

It is because I am sorry for both, where all the love is on one side, only a weary, heart-sick submission on the other.

Oh, the pity of it, the true, tender heart unanswered!

Better, far better, to toil on alone, bearing the burdens of poverty and sorrow, than to buy rest at the price of truth, promise love and honor, when love has died.

I had written so far, when a shadow fell upon my paper, and looking up, I saw Herbert Somerson standing between me and the window.

His tall, erect figure, the very personification of strength and manliness, cut off the light from my page; but his good, noble face was full of kindness as his eyes smiled upon me.

I thought what a good brother he meant to be to his ugly little sister, and then I was sorry for his wasted love.

"Are you very busy?" he asked. "No, sir, our great pile of sewing is quite ready for your servant to come for it," I said pointing to the heap of neatly-folded linen on the table.

"Never mind the work just now," he answered, very gently, yet I fancied I saw a shadow of annoyance in his eyes.

It was hard to realize the truth, even yet though the sweet wailing words came so tenderly to my ears.

I dared look up at last, to meet the pleading gaze of the deep brown eyes and then my long-guarded secret must have been betrayed in my face, for I was folded in a close embrace, and heard -

"God bless you, my own, my darling!" So we came back again to the glow of the autumn sunset, talking of our future - his and mine.

I forgot Mildred till I saw her standing at the gate of our garden.

Is it the daze of my own happiness, I wonder, or is Mildred's face lighted as I have never seen it since our father died?

Ever thoughtful, Herbert - my Herbert - when we entered the house, said: "You will want to be alone with your sister. I will come this evening to see you again."

Then, bowing to Mildred, he left me. I looked into the face of my sister with a new pain at my heart.

Would she grieve over my happiness, as the death blow to her own hope of ease and wealth?

Would she resent my offer of a home as an insult?

She put her arm about my waist and led me to the couch.

Then she made me sit upon the sofa and knelt so that her face was very near mine, to whisper:

"Rodney has come home!" The very joyousness of her tone told me the rest, even before she spoke again.

I kissed her as our mother might have done, too glad, too grateful to speak.

ATTENTION. Special attention is called this week to the choice selection of CHRISTMAS GOODS arriving at C. L. McINTOSH'S All NEW AND FRESH, comprising Raisins, Currants, Figs, Prunes, Peels, &c., &c., which will be sold at Close Prices.

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