

POOR DOCUMENT

LECTURE.
THE ANGEL'S VISIT.
Do I believe in angels? Yes;
And in their rowling to and fro,
I entertained one long ago,
In guise of age and sore distress.
He chambered up the narrow stairs,
And by his heavenly smile I knew
He was a trust angel who
Had come to visit unaware.
"Rest thee, old man," I softly cried,
"And share my humble couch and cheer—
These shall not wait for comfort here,
My home and heart are open wide!"
Believed of temporary cares,
The old man laid him down and slept;
And in my thankfulness I went—
"I entertained him unaware!"
I never shall forget that night,
My happy dream—my slumbers sound:
And when I woke at noon, I found
My angel vanished out of sight.
Perhaps in years that are to be
That angel will return; and yet
I sometimes fear he may forget
To bring my overcoat to me.
—Dorset Tribune.

SELECT STORY.

Helen's Romance.

"And I may go, mamma, may I not? I should enjoy my visit so much."
"But you are so young, Helen. I dread to have you go away from me to mix with a host of young people all strangers to you, and so much older, doubtless than yourself."
"I am seventeen, mamma, and I will be very quiet, and not intrude on any of the older guests," pleaded the lovely Helen, her soft brown eyes full of entreaty.
"O, let the child go with us, Jane," said Mr. Scorne, Helen's uncle; "it can do her no harm to see a few young people and join in their pleasures. You keep your girls so close here in this farm house, that they have no chance of learning society manners, or how to act."
"Surely, no one can say a word against Helen's manners," said Mrs. Townsend, "for you said only yesterday, brother, that she was too gentle for this rough world of ours."
"Her manners are all that is desirable," admitted Mr. Scorne, "but I think the girls ought to go out more."
"Well, then, Helen, you may go with your uncle and aunt to Mrs. Major's," said Mrs. Townsend, "but you must stay only the week for which you are invited, and be sure, that if there are any young men there, you do not allow them to put any silly notions in your young head."
Helen sprang up, and ran off to acquaint her two sisters of her mother's decision. Ethel and Jenny were eager to assist her in preparations for her journey, and when late in the evening, Mr. Major came with his large carriage to convey Helen and her uncle and aunt to his house, the two young girls saw their sister depart with feelings of delight that she was to participate in pleasures of which they were yet too young to share.
Mr. Major owned a handsome farm and a convenient stone house, which he was extremely fond of seeing full of guests every second week in September when a grand revival took place in the church to which he belonged. His two daughters, Annie and Maggie, were admirable housekeepers, although very young; but having lived on a farm since early childhood, they understood every duty belonging to kitchen and dairy, and the guests who filled the house every September found no want unprovided.
Helen Townsend had met these young ladies several times at church, and their father being an intimate friend of Mr. Scorne, proposed that Helen should be invited to make one of the party entertained during September, to which proposal the two girls were only too pleased to accede.
Helen was welcomed by Maggie, who conducted her to a bedroom where she might remove her hat and cloak. Sounds of laughter and conversation were distinctly heard issuing from the adjoining room, and Maggie laughed as Helen shrank from entering.
"I must introduce you to the young friends who are here already, Helen," she said.
"Are they nice?" timidly asked the girl. "I do dread going in before them all."
"If you would rather go at once to the parlor, you can do so," said Maggie, "but I cannot accompany you, for I have so much to attend to before tea time."
"I cannot go into the parlor alone," murmured Helen, turning pale at the idea of being the "observed of all observers."
"I will call Flo Brackett," said Maggie; "she will go with you, and introduce you to all those in the parlor."
Maggie put her head in at the bedroom door, and called to a young lady who was engaged in mimicking the walk of some dandyish acquaintance. She expressed herself ready to leave her fascinating amusement to accompany Helen to the parlor.
When the two girls entered they were surprised to see that it was almost deserted, the guests having strolled down to the river which ran through the grounds. Only one young man sat at a window, idly gazing out on the landscape, and looking intensely bored—as he felt.
"Adrian," cried Miss Brackett, "allow me to present to you the Miss Townsend, of whom we have heard such glowing accounts from Miss Major, and Miss Townsend behind in Mr. Adrian Brackett a studious dignitary of the law."

Helen blushed vividly at being thus made acquainted with Miss Brackett's brother, and for an instant wished that she had staid at home with her fond mother and young sisters.
Adrian Brackett pitied her confusion, and was annoyed at the gaiety of his sister's manner and her unobtrusiveness of the fluidity and nervousness of the young girl, whom he mentally contrasted to a violet, as she stood with drooping head, crowned with a wealth of chestnut hair, her brown eyes like those of a startled fawn, and her white, lovely hand clinging nervously to the folds of the blue muslin dress she wore. He advanced and made some pleasant remark, but Flo, whose propensity for teasing her elder brother was proverbial, interrupted him.
"I know Garrick is dying for a glimpse of my angelic form," she said, "so I will tear myself away from you to find his royal highness, and transport him with the brilliancy of my conversation. Stay here, I could not, well knowing that there is much truth in the old saying about two being company," and she ran from the room, stealing a mischievous glance at her brother as she hummed. "We met by chance," and was out on the croquet grounds hitting the balls with Garrick Meyer the next minute.
Helen wished again that she was at home, but Mr. Brackett was so very kind, and did so much to put her at her ease, that she felt by the time Miss Major came in that she had one friend in the house whose society would not be disagreeable to her.
As for Adrian Brackett, he was charmed with the simplicity and innocence of the young girl. He felt no longer bored, and blessed his sister for bringing him to Mr. Major's for a week's vacation.
Staying in the house was a Miss Clarke, who had looked on the young lawyer with eyes of approbation, and was not at all pleased to see his attention directed towards the lovely Helen Townsend.
Maud Clarke was no longer young, and her friends had hinted to her frequently of late that she would soon be too old for balls and parties, and her father had said he was in despair of ever having a younger man relieve him of the burden of her expenses.
During her visit to Miss Major she had been frequently incensed by hearing Flo Brackett sing "Darling, you are growing old" when within hearing distance, and yet with such a face of innocence and lack of intention to wound, that the fading Maud could not take her to task for impertinence.
Adrian Brackett was a rising young lawyer, and though still young, had already distinguished himself at the bar. Therefore Miss Clarke would not despise him or cavil at a match with him, though in her younger days she had looked far higher for a mate.
As Helen became better acquainted with the guests at the house, she felt more at her ease, and the loveliness of her character impressed all about her. Adrian was her constant companion in all walks and drives, and many a game of croquet did the two enjoy while the other guests were sleeping the hot afternoons away, or lounging over a novel. Even the ambition of Maud Clark to win the heart of the young lawyer would not induce her to expose her already fading complexion to the scorching rays of the September sun.
Mr. Scorne returned to his sister's home leaving his niece at Mr. Major's, and Helen did not wish to accompany him. The days passed so delightfully to her that she almost feared to awake and find that she had dreamed.
When she returned home at the expiration of ten days, she did so with reluctance, and felt a pang of pain she did not care to analyze when she parted with Adrian. She and Flo had become such warm friends that the latter insisted on the former paying her a visit in October to her city home. Helen's mother prepared her child for the visit with many forebodings. She saw, by the blush which mantled her daughter's delicate cheek at the mention of the young lawyer's name, that love had found a place in her child's heart, and she feared to have her more deeply enamored, for it might be that Adrian felt no return of such an attachment, though, who, she thought, could look on her Helen but with eyes of love?
Helen felt sure that before the expiration of her visit to Miss Brackett that she was beloved by Adrian, but he did not declare his attachment to her. She returned to her home, and for several weeks her heart was warmed by the memory of the pleasures she had enjoyed.
Adrian feared his fate too much to put it to the test during Helen's stay with his sister, but after her departure he felt as the case, for a letter giving her love was returned, and he believed from all suspense. He therefore wrote her a long letter, telling her how deeply he loved her, and beseeching her to reply favorably to his suit. He also said, that should her answer be in the negative, he would prefer her silence to convey that such was the case, for a letter giving her reasons for her rejection of his offer would be too bitter.
He directed the epistle to the little country post office near which Helen lived, and then waited in an agony of impatience for his fate to be decided.
It so happened that an uncle of Maud Clarke lived in a small town, and kept the post office. As the daily mail came

in, Maud always, when visiting at the house, assisted in opening it. As fate would have it, she was with her uncle when the mail containing Adrian's letter arrived. The first thing she did on recognizing the handwriting on the envelope, was to slip the letter into her pocket.
When once more alone, she drew it out and sat gazing upon it, buried in thought. She did not doubt but that it was an avowal of love, and should it never reach Helen they might become so estranged that Adrian would never seek to ask an explanation of her silence, and then she, Maud, might catch his heart in the rebound. The plotting girl tore open the envelope, and with hard, angry eyes read Adrian's passionate appeal to Helen.
"To think he should so love this little seventeen-year-old girl!" she murmured, as she looked at the letter in the desk, "while I have done all in a woman's power to win his heart. Fate seemed to be against me. But Helen Townsend shall not win him."
Meanwhile Helen grew pale and thin. She heard frequently from Miss Brackett, and that young lady's epistles only increased the sorrow at her heart, for they were full of praises of a Miss Carrie Maynard who had become her bosom friend, and whom Adrian took to parties and concerts.
"Can men then be so fickle," thought the innocent Helen, "for I am sure Adrian acted as if he loved me, and taught me to care for him."
To her mother this young girl poured out all her sorrows, for no secret was ever too great to be confided to her children, for she sorrowed with them while trying to relieve their hearts of their burdens. Mrs. Townsend's heart ached as she saw how bitterly her Helen grieved over the breaking of her first love-dream, and she regretted ever having allowed her to leave home while so young.
As to Adrian, his state of mind can better be imagined than described. He devoted himself more than ever to the study of his profession, and tried to forget the love he bore for Helen in the smiles of Carrie Maynard, who was much attracted by his winning yet manly bearing and qualities of mind and heart.
Six months passed away, and then Flo was called to the town, where Maud Clarke lived, to see her friend, Lizzie Edmunds, who was very ill. Miss Edmonds was very much attached to Flo, and felt as if her presence would be the best tonic she could have. Flo therefore, was constantly by the bedside of her friend until she was pronounced convalescent.
When out for a walk one day she met Maud Clarke on the street, and the latter invited her to come and see her. Flo, though never very fond of Maud, was quite willing to do as she requested, and one day called at the house of her uncle. But Maud was not at home, and Mrs. Clarke entertained the young girl with a recital of her niece's inattention to the wants of her relatives.
"My hands are crippled with rheumatism, and yet Maud never waits on me. I have been wanting her to write a letter for me for days and days, yet she is too selfish to spend a moment on me in any way."
"Could I write it for you, Mrs. Clarke?" asked Flo.
"Yes, if you would be willing. Would you mind going up stairs? My desk is on the table in Maud's room; she has been using my pens. Just open it and bring down some paper and one of those envelopes."
Flo ran up stairs to do as she was asked. Two desks lay on the table. "Which is Mrs. Clarke's?" wondered Flo. "Well, I'll open the biggest one." She threw open the desk and the very first thing which met her view was the letter Adrian had sent to Helen. "What on earth is this doing in Mrs. Clarke's desk?" thought Flo. Then, like an inspiration, came to her the whole plot. She put the letter in her pocket, and after curbing her impatience sufficiently to write the letter for Mrs. Clarke, took the lonely country road which led to Helen's home.
She saw Helen sitting on the porch in front of the dwelling, but very unlike the Helen who had visited her seven months previously, for she was thin and languid-looking.
The two girls kissed and caressed each other, and Flo explained why she had not been to see her before. Then drawing the letter from her pocket, she said—
"This I found in Maud Clarke's desk this afternoon. Knowing that she assists her uncle with the opening of the mail, I can guess how it came into her possession. It is from Adrian, and Maud's love for him must be her excuse for committing such a crime."
Helen took the letter, and opening it, read the precious words. Her heart felt lightened of a heavy burden, but she burst into tears.
"Does he feel so still, dear Flo?" she asked—"does he not now love your friend Carrie?"
"We can soon discover if he still feels the same," answered Flo, and she telegraphed that night to her brother to come to her at once.
He came, and was amazed and angry at the wrong which had been done him. He went to see Maud, and told her what he thought of her infamous conduct. Then he hastened to Helen, and was not

long in convincing her that she alone held his heart in her keeping.
Mrs. Townsend insisted that Helen should wait two years before becoming Adrian's wife, for she considered her too young to enter on such responsible duties.
When the two years waned, Helen stood a bride at the altar, and plighted vows she felt were made from the bottom of her loyal heart. So ended her romance, and she is now a happy wife and devoted mother.
Maud Clarke still visits her friends and angles for all the eligible men she meets. Her wicked attempt at parting Helen and Adrian was never known except to those most deeply concerned; but she never hears the name of either of those she tried to injure, without the blush of shame mantling her cheek.

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