

Like a Rose-Bud She Faded.

Like a rose-bud she faded, In beauty and pride; Like a flower of the forest, In her blooming she died.

As a star of the even Did she wander and die, And her spirit has darted Like a bird to the sky.

A grave we have made her— A round, pebbled grave; And its shadow has struck me With the weight of a wave.

So gentle and lovely, So mild was her way, That she scarce could resist The touch of her clay.

SELECT STORY.

The Judge's Daughter;

OR A STRUGGLE WITH DESTINY.

[CONTINUED.]

To think of his impertinence; she mused, as the door closed after him. Really talking to me as though he had a right to say to whom I should speak and to whom I should not!

Chapter VI.—Hope Crowned.

When Mrs. Raymond re-appeared, she was surprised to learn that Mr. Fisher had gone.

I am very sorry he did not enjoy himself better, she said, I was almost sorry, on his account, that he was to dine with us to-day. But I am sure he will excuse our seeming want of hospitality.

He knew, Kate replied, laconically. Indeed! I presume your father informed him of the circumstances.

Some of the servants, I imagine, answered Kate, carelessly. He seemed to know all the particulars, even that 'the young man,' as he called Mr. Winchester, had attempted suicide.

And why not, to Mr. Fisher? He is an intimate friend of your father's, a gentleman—

A conceited, haughty, overbearing—began Kate.

My daughter, what are you saying? reproved Mrs. Raymond.

The truth, mamma. You don't expect me to say anything else, I hope?

I am sorry to hear you make such remarks about Mr. Fisher, said Mrs. Raymond, gravely. He has never conducted himself in any way unbecoming to a gentleman.

Well, mamma, since it displeases you, I will say no more about him, said Kate as she quitted the room.

The next day Harry was able to sit up, and even to descend to the drawing-room with the assistance of a servant.

He felt keenly his situation, and appeared embarrassed and constrained. The judge's manner to him was courteous and friendly.

Mrs. Raymond was kind and thoughtful, as she ever was. And Kate, gay, piquant, saucy Kate, talked and laughed and sang to amuse him, and almost made him forget his forlorn situation in the pleasure her experienced in his society.

He related his adventures to Judge Raymond, beginning with his voyage to New York, and even explained his reason for so abruptly sundering home ties, and taking up his abode in that city.

The judge shook his head, and looked grave. My young friend, I cannot approve of what you have done.

Instead of leaving your parents in uncertainty and apprehension, you should have returned to them, acknowledged your faults, and if it was impossible for you to finish your studies, you might at least have had your father's assistance in following some pursuit congenial to your tastes.

And, even now, my advice is to go home and relieve your parents' anxiety. I myself will defray your expenses until your education is complete, if you wish to resume your studies.

Harry shook his head emphatically. I thank you, judge, but I must decline your offer.

May I ask, then, what you intend to do?—inquired the judge, a little impatiently.

Work! Harry replied resolutely. Do you not believe me capable of filling some honorable situation?

I do, replied the judge, filled with ad-

miration at the resolute purpose of Harry, and I will see that you have one—where you can have opportunity to realize your ambitious hopes.

While I must censure you for your rash impetuosity, I cannot but applaud your determination to win a place for yourself in the world.

I have a situation in view now which I believe you could fill acceptably, and, besides being remunerative, it will be an excellent opening for you, in case you wish to follow a mercantile profession.

It is a clerkship in the establishment of Day & Smith, wholesale and retail dry goods merchants. I will call at their office, in the course of the day, and secure it for you, if you are willing.

Most willingly do I accept your kind offer, replied Harry, gratefully. And the sooner I commence my labors the better.

But they know me, interrupted the judge, quietly. They will not scruple to employ you upon my recommendation.

If you do not prosper in your new vocation, the fault will be your own, for Messrs. Day & Smith are honorable conscientious men, and are always willing to do what is right by their employees.

Your fellow clerks will be steady, upright young men, and the influences surrounding you will be good.

The day passed away very pleasantly to Harry, and when twilight approached, he had regained his wonted elasticity of spirits.

He was alone in the handsomely furnished drawing-room, and his mind was busy in picturing bright fancies of the future, and in recalling the varied scenes of the past.

He was interrupted in his reverie by the entrance of Kate, arrayed for the opera. She was a vision of loveliness, as she stood in the fading twilight, arrayed in her costly robes and glittering jewels.

Harry gazed at her in admiration. I trust you are quite comfortable, this evening, she said, in a musical voice, taking a seat near the window.

Oh, yes, Miss Raymond, and by tomorrow I shall be quite well again. And now, before I leave this hospitable dwelling, permit me to thank you for what you have done for me.

It was not my life only that you saved, but you have prevented me from committing a dreadful sin. Oh! I did not consider the enormity of the crime I was about to commit.

I am happy to know I have been able to render you any service, Mr. Winchester, she replied, in a low, sweet voice. You must not think of thanking me.

Besides she added, archly, it was not I who saved your life, but the heroic youth who bravely rushed into the water and bore you in safety to the bank.

The only assistance I rendered was to scream. It is the first impulse of a lady to scream when anything happens—at least, I always do, and I dare say your sister does, too—if you have one.

And, if you have, you must tell me about her. And so the subject was changed. Harry told her of his New England home; of his patient, loving mother; his revered father; of his sweet-tempered sunny-haired sister.

I thought my sister Emily the most beautiful girl in the world until I saw you, he said, in conclusion. Kate blushed vividly, but ventured no reply.

At that moment a servant announced Mr. Fisher. This aristocratic and wealthy young gentleman did not appear to notice Harry, but seated himself near Kate with an air of one who feels himself to be of the utmost importance.

Mr. Fisher, allow me the pleasure of making you acquainted with my friend, Mr. Winchester, said Kate, with the air of a princess.

Mr. Fisher acknowledged the introduction with a haughty bow. Then, turning to Kate, he asked in a bland tone if she had forgotten her engagement.

Don't you see I am all ready, with the exception of putting on my hat and mantle? I have been waiting for you this half hour.

Five minutes more, and Harry was alone. And she was waiting for her lover all the time! he mused, bitterly.

Oh, that I had never met her! Even were she free, I am too poor to win her. No, no! I must fight against the love which I feel springing up in my heart for the beautiful, the accomplished daughter of Judge Raymond.

Later in the evening, the judge came in. It is all right, Mr. Winchester, he said, as he seated himself. I have secured you the place we were speaking about this morning, and you can enter upon your duties as soon as you wish after you get able.

For the present you are quite well enough off here, Harry thought of a great many things he wished to ask him, and, in thinking of these and making his toilet, he passed the time until William appeared.

Are you ready, Harry? said William, on entering his friend's room. If so, come along, for I am quite late, and I promised to go early.

He could not bear the thought of remaining idle a single day while there was an opportunity for him to be employed. Had he not idled long enough? he thought, bitterly.

And work was not the hardest lot that might befall man. No, he was willing, anxious to labor, day after day, year after year, if need be—if only he could indulge one hope.

But vain were such thoughts, and the sooner he banished them, the better it would be for his peace of mind.

Chapter VII.—Harry's Friend.

A number of weeks passed away, and Harry had become accustomed to his duties, which were so faithfully performed as to secure to him the consideration and regard of his employers.

He found the situation all that Judge Raymond had recommended. His duties were somewhat arduous, it is true, but he had the satisfaction of knowing that his services were highly appreciated, and his salary was much higher than is generally paid to clerks during their first year.

He had not once been to Judge Raymond's since he left the house to fill his present position, although the judge had earnestly desired him to call whenever he liked, saying he should always be happy to see him.

He knew if he went he should meet Kate, and he felt it would be better for him to stay away. He saw her often in the street; once he met her near his boarding-place.

She spoke to him pleasantly, and asked him if he had forgotten his friends so soon; and when he told her he could never forget her, she colored, and passed on.

Occasionally he saw her riding with Mr. Fisher; and although he knew he had no right to think of her, the sight filled him with misery.

He could not help it. He could no more help it than the rose can help loving the sunshine, and, loving her, he felt that he could never love another. No other voice could ever sound so sweet, no other face could ever be so fair.

At the close of a sultry midsummer's day, he was bending his steps homeward, thinking of his quiet New England home and its inmates, and he determined, now that he was doing so well, to remain silent no longer, but write to his parents that very night, and relieve the anxiety which he knew they felt for him.

As he turned a corner, what was his surprise and pleasure to meet his old friend, William Shirley.

William, my friend? he exclaimed, eagerly, how pleased I am to meet you! Harry Winchester! Is it indeed you? said William, greeting him warmly.

At last, echoed Harry. Have you, then, been looking for me so long? I have been in New York two weeks, and I have looked for you everywhere. I expected you were here.

But why, Harry, have you never written to your parents all these long weeks, and let them know you are alive and well? Your mother is worn almost to a shadow grieving about you.

My poor mother! exclaimed Harry, regretfully. It was wrong, very wrong. Did you not know that before? cried William, in a tone of severity, or have you just awakened to a sense of your unkindness in keeping silent so long?

What has prevented you from writing long ere this? I did not wish to write until I could tell them I was prospering. I have had a great many discouragements—I believe I made a mistake, William, in taking the steps I did, he concluded, abruptly.

I thought you might find it so, replied William. And now I hope you are willing to go back with me next week.

Not so, indeed, answered Harry quickly. My troubles are at an end now, I hope, and I am doing well.

Just then they met Kate Raymond, who bowed to both Harry and William. Is it possible you are acquainted with Miss Raymond? exclaimed Harry.

Quite possible; and I am going to spend the evening there. Indeed! I had hoped to be favored with your company myself, to-night.

Well, since you also are acquainted with Miss Raymond, why not go there with me this evening? Is there any reason why you should not?

No, replied Harry, thoughtfully. I'll think about it—no—yes—on the whole, I believe I will. Tell me, he added, where did you ever meet Miss Raymond?

First at the White Mountains, afterwards at her father's house, answered William. You remember hearing me speak of my Uncle Shelton, who lives here in New York? I became acquainted with Judge Raymond there.

They are old friends, and so, whenever I am here, I see the judge often. You are quite sure you will go? I shall call early, so do not keep me waiting, he concluded, as Harry ran up the steps that led to the door of his boarding-place.

As soon as William was out of sight, Harry thought of a great many things he wished to ask him, and, in thinking of these and making his toilet, he passed the time until William appeared.

Are you ready, Harry? said William, on entering his friend's room. If so, come along, for I am quite late, and I promised to go early.

Harry descended the stairs with his friend, and they passed into the street. They are not expecting me, said Harry, half to himself. Perhaps I had better go back.

Perhaps you had better go back! interrupted William, impatiently. You are strangely sensitive about passing an evening at Judge Raymond's with me. Oh, I see—the young lady, he went on, in a bantering tone. Is that the cause of your hesitation?

No—no! That is, stammered Harry, I believe the young lady is already engaged. At all events, it looks like it. But you spoke of seeing my mother, he added, abruptly changing the subject. Were you there? Did you see my father also, and my sister Emily? Were they well?

Yes and no, replied William, laughing. That is, I saw your mother and Emily, but not at your home. They were at New London, and were both in good health, if I except the wearing anxiety of your mother, which will carry her to her grave before a great while unless you try to relieve it.

Harry sighed deeply at the dubious picture his friend had presented to his vision. And my father—you did not see him? You do not know whether he is angry? Angry! I only know they are all anxious to hear from you.

A pretty way you have taken to repay your parents for all they have done for you! replied William, sternly. Don't be too harsh, William, entreated Harry. I shall post a letter in the morning.

Well, well; I suppose I must not judge you too harshly. I presume you did not mean any wrong, but it looks unkind and unfeeling.

They had by this time reached Judge Raymond's residence, and were admitted at once by a servant, and ushered into the parlor, where they were warmly greeted by the different members of the family.

Ah! Mr. Winchester, you have come to see us at last, said the judge. And you are acquainted with Mr. Shirley. Why did you not speak of it before? he concluded, turning to William.

I did not know that Harry was here; and I certainly did not suppose you knew him. I met him unexpectedly on my way home this afternoon, and prevailed upon him to accompany me here this evening, replied William.

So we are indebted to Mr. Shirley for your visit, said Mrs. Raymond, who had taken a friendly interest in Harry from the moment she first saw him.

Harry replied, in some embarrassment that he had been very much engrossed in business, or he should have called before.

Well, we must excuse you on that plea, I suppose; but you must not stay away so long in future, said the judge, good-naturedly.

The evening was passed in a most agreeable manner, and it was at a late hour that the friends took their departure. Mr. Shirley was to leave town in a day or two, and made his adieux to the family; but Harry was again urged to call often, and he gladly promised to do so.

He no longer stopped to consider the consequences; he only knew he was happy in the presence of Kate Raymond, and for the present that was enough.

Chapter VIII.—A Proposal.

It was a cold, blustering night in December; Harry Winchester stood before the open gate in Judge Raymond's library, thinking. And what was he thinking about so intently? Of the wealth of the owner of this elegant mansion; of his beautiful daughter; of himself and his poverty.

And he, the poor, obscure clerk, loved the daughter of the millionaire! Did she love him? he wondered. If not, why did the color rush into her cheeks whenever his eyes met hers? Why did her hand tremble when he held it in his own? Ah! he could not be mistaken—she loved him even as he loved her.

But her father—the stern, unyielding aristocratic judge! Would he listen to such a thing? No, surely not. Had he not more than once hinted that his daughter could never marry beneath her station? And he was beneath her—in the opinion of the world, at all events.

And perhaps he had been unwise in coming here so much; but Judge Raymond had urged him so kindly, and treated him so cordially, that, with his own desire to be in Kate's presence as much as possible, he could not resist. And the judge did not know—did not imagine, even—the feelings of either his daughter or himself. Had he dreamed of such a thing?

His reverie was broken in upon, at this juncture, by the entrance of the judge himself. Alone, Harry? Where's Mr. Fisher? was his greeting.

He went down nearly an hour ago, was the reply. I think he is in the drawing-room with Miss Raymond. Oh, yes, I dare say. Well, we may as well go down too. Though—let me see—I promised to look up those books we were speaking about the other day. To-night is as good a time as any. It is very comfortable here; please be seated, and I will see if I can find them.

And he proceeded to run his eyes over the library shelves in search of the volumes mentioned. Here they are, he said, at length, coming to Harry's side, and depositing them upon the table. Now we will satisfy ourselves in regard to those disputed passages.

And here, searching the old and time-worn books for half-remembered passages they passed the remainder of the evening. And Mr. Fisher was down stairs chatting and laughing with Kate. The sounds of their voices reached Harry's ears as he sat and listened to the judge, and he wished those old books were in the bottom of the sea.

But, after all, he thought, he might as well be there; he was as down in the parlor with Kate—better, while Mr. Fisher was there; and he smothered his feelings, and talked as animatedly with his host as though he was perfectly well pleased with his occupation.

Meanwhile, Kate sat upon the sofa in the drawing-room absently listening to Mr. Fisher's pleasant conversation, and wishing in her heart that Harry would come down. He is a much more agreeable companion than Mr. Fisher, she thought. But Harry did not come down, and so she talked and laughed with Mr. Fisher.

I wonder why papa does not come down, she exclaimed, at length. I think he is engaged in some interesting researches with Mr. Winchester, said Mr. Fisher.

He seems to take quite an interest in the young man; I hope his kindness will not be thrown away. What do you mean? asked Kate, looking at him in surprise.

Why, I mean that I hope Mr. Winchester will prove to be all he seems. You hope? exclaimed Kate, quickly. What do you know about him that you may not believe he will? He does not keep the best of company, Miss Raymond. That is not a very good mark in a young man; but it may be he is not aware of the character of his associates. I do not wish to prejudice you against Mr. Winchester, he concluded.

You will not, she replied, quickly. Mr. Winchester has ever appeared to me like a true gentleman. I see no reason why I should not treat him like one. Mr. Fisher laughed, a little amused laugh.

And so you may, Miss Raymond. I haven't the slightest objection in the world; only there is one thing I wouldn't like you to do. What, may I ask? inquired Kate, carelessly. I wouldn't like you to treat him like a lover, replied Mr. Fisher, himself beside her.

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A scarlet flush arose to her face, and she drew away from him haughtily. What do you mean by talking to me like that? she demanded angrily.

O Kate! Can you not see, do you not know, that I love you—that I wish you to become my wife—and I am so afraid of losing you, my darling, my beloved one? he cried, passionately; and, seizing one fair hand, he covered it with kisses.

She snatched it abruptly away. I am sorry, Mr. Fisher, very, very sorry indeed; but I do not love you, she said, extremely agitated.

But you did love me before he came, did you not? Had I asked you this question before you saw him, would not your answer have been different? he asked her; and he looked anxiously and earnestly into her face.

It would not. At no time in my life could I have given you a different answer, she replied, in a low but firm voice. But you have led me to believe you loved me. You encouraged my attentions, you smiled upon me; and now you say you do not, that you never did, love me. I believe you are a heartless coquette!

If I have led you to indulge in hopes of my ever becoming more to you than I am, I am sorry, she began. But—

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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