

FAMILY CIRCLE.

THE STORY.

Mrs. Goldenrod's Boarder.

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But I must hasten on with my story. It must have been July, I think—I know it was in midsummer somewhere, when I stepped out towards evening to do some marketing. The place was full of visitors, and Polly and I moved with difficulty through the crowd. It was a lovely evening, the sea just breaking up the beach with a whispering noise, and the air was as cool and refreshing as could be. Everybody seemed happy, and Polly was as full of fun as a kitten, wanting to stop and look at everything at once. Suddenly we turned a corner, and there was the band beginning to play, Gentleman George with his fiddle in the midst of them, scraping away at a great rate. Polly was off like a shot. There was no stopping her.

"George, George," she cried, "Is a comin', George," for she was exceedingly fond of him.

Then whether she caught her foot or slipped, I don't rightly know to this day, but down she fell in the middle of the road, with a carriage just coming along, and the horses almost on to her. If Gentleman George hadn't sprang forward and caught her in his arms, it would have been all over with our Polly in another minute.

Oh, it was horrible. I cannot bear to think of it even now. My Polly lying in the road with her hair all tumbled in the dust, the basket she was carrying rolled away, eggs and all, into the gutter, and the horses rearing and prancing right over her head; the carriage, and the young lady sitting in it with a scared look on her pretty face, and Gentleman George—the suspense and horror of that moment was awful.

Well, he gave the child to me, and "thank heaven, she is safe," said I, all of a tremble. "Thank you, too; for it was you who saved her. But what is the matter, George? You haven't hurt yourself, have you?" He was looking so terribly white and shaken, that I couldn't help noticing it, excited as I was about Polly.

"Hurt! Oh, no," said he, staring after the carriage that was just turning up a side street, as though he were dazed.

"What is the matter?" I said again, pulling his sleeve; for the look on his face frightened me. Then he roused himself, and patted Polly's head, saying,

"Nothing is the matter, Mrs. Goldenrod: I am all right, thanks. Don't you worry about me, but take care of the child."

And with that he went back to his place in the band; and in another minute he was fiddling away for all the world as though nothing had happened.

So Polly and I turned up the side street, and there was the carriage waiting, and the young lady in it. As soon as she sees us, she gives a start, and out she jumps on the pavement.

"Oh, I'm so thankful that your little girl wasn't hurt," she said very earnestly. "It was terrible to look on and know that one could do nothing. What an awful fright it must have given you."

"It did, indeed," I said, gazing into her sweet face, and thinking what a kind heart she must have; for she couldn't speak without the tears coming into her eyes. "It alarmed me greatly, and if it had not been for Mr. George—"

"Ah," she said, catching her breath, "I wanted to ask you about him. Do you know him, and can you tell me where he lives?"

"If you are thinking of giving him money for what he has done, you must not do it, as he would be offended and would not take it. He is very high strung."

"Oh, no, no, no; I would not dream of such a thing."

She was quiet for a minute, then added:

"We are old friends, George and I; I've lost sight of him for a long time, and now—"

"He says he has no friends,"

She gave quite a start, changed color, and her eyes filled with tears. "Oh, did he say that? Poor George! He didn't know. He didn't understand. Oh, if you know him well, you can help us so much!"

"I'll help you to the utmost in my power, if I could be sure that I was helping him at the same time. But how am I to know that he will approve?"

"I'll take the responsibility of that," she began, smiling; "but all I ask of you is to let me know his address; the rest I can manage myself."

"I don't know whether he would permit me to give you his address."

At this she stamped her foot impatiently, saying,—"Well, if you won't help me, I must ask one of those men who were with him. You can judge for yourself whether he'll like that better."

"You are right," I answered; "and as you are determined to see him, you had better leave it to me; but I must ask him first, and—"

"Hurry up, mamma," said she; "George will be home to supper before Polly, and—"

"Does George take supper with you?" asked the young lady, quickly. Then, as the child nodded, she looked at me triumphantly and added, "Polly will give me a cup of tea, too, if I come home with you now."

"Yes, indeed," said Polly. And she took hold of her hand as trustfully as though she had known her all her life; and I couldn't help laughing; it was all settled before I could say a word.

"One moment and I will be ready," said the young lady, her eyes dancing to think how she had outwitted me. And she tore a leaf out of her pocket-book, and scribbled something on it, then gave it to the coachman.

"Wait for my father," said she, "and when he comes, give him that. And now I can start as soon as you like, Mrs. —By the way, I don't know your name."

"Goldenrod," I answered, "will you favor me with yours?"

"Of course. My name is Greyson—Nellie Greyson," said she, as she walked by the side of me, holding Polly's hand.

"Have you ever heard George mention it?"

"He never mentions any names to us," I said.

That was true enough; but in his fever he had often called for Nellie, and talked about her disappointing him, and not standing by, or believing in him and a great deal more in the same strain, but I was not going to tell her that.

The young lady talked on pleasantly until we came to our gate; then I sent Polly up-stairs, and asked Miss Greyson into the kitchen.

"Excuse my bringing you in here," I said; "we are house-cleaning, and all the other down-stairs rooms are in confusion just now, and George's room is very small, and at the top of the house. If you wish to see him in private, Matthew and I will step out in the garden, and I will see that the children are kept out of the way."

"No, no! I only want to speak to him a minute." And she sat down with her back to the window, and looked at me very earnestly. "Oh, Mrs. Goldenrod, you've been kind to him, I am sure; and when he's so sorely needed kindness. Won't you believe me when I say that I come as a friend, and that George will be glad to see me."

I scarcely knew how to answer her, and while I was wondering what to say, I heard a click at the gate. Now, thinks I, we shall know the rights and wrongs of it.

But the young lady heard nothing. She was so absorbed with the things about her, and apparently thought that I had George in hiding somewhere.

"He doesn't come in yet, I suppose?" she asked again.

"Oh, Mrs. Goldenrod, I wish he would come quick; it makes me so nervous waiting for him."

And there he was, looking in at the window all the time, wondering who it was sitting with me. But when he heard her voice, he gave a start and turned away, and I ran out quick and caught hold of his arm.

"Come in, George, and get your supper. Why, what is wrong? You look as though you had seen a ghost."

"I have," he said, more to himself than to me; "the ghost of old happy days that I thought were over forever. But who is that with you, Mrs. Goldenrod?"

"A friend," I answered; "come in and see."

He followed me into the house like a man in a dream, and

there was the young lady standing waiting for him. It was easy to see that there was something more than common between them.

"Nellie!" he cried, almost as if someone had struck him. "Oh, George! George! I have found you at last," she cried; and she ran up to him, holding out her arms. But he turned away, shuddering.

"No, no; you forget!" And his voice was so harsh and changed that I would not have known it. "That is all over. I am a thief, and a forger, and—"

"You're not, George! Oh, you're not!"

"You believe I am; so it is the same to you as if I was."

"I don't believe it. I never believed it for a single moment. And now—oh, George!"

"Then why didn't you tell me so. Oh, Nellie, your silence was worse than all the rest. I could have borne everything but that; but when you, too, turned from me! I wouldn't have expected you to keep our engagement? But if you had sent me a word, or a line—oh, my darling, it would not have cost you much!" And he threw himself down on Matthew's big chair, and laid his arms on the table, and his head on them, and gave a groan. "I never turned from you. They lied to you, George, and you believed their lies. And I couldn't come to you, though I tried, for you'd gone right away, nobody knew where. And you thought that I doubted you, too—I, who would have taken your word against the world. Oh, George! dear George! What you must have suffered! But it is all over now, and I am so thankful! It is all over now."

She was kneeling beside him as of long ago, and had his hands in hers; and he could not help looking at her, whether he would or not; but the look he gave her was enough to break her heart.

Over, Nellie! No, no; it is not over, and never will be this side of the grave. It is good of you, dear, to wish to stand by me; but it won't do; no, it won't do. I am a disgraced man in the eyes of the world, and I mustn't let you sacrifice yourself. You have taken away the sharpest sting of all, darling; but you shall never share the dishonor of my name."

She gave a sob at that, and clung closer to him.

There is no talk of dishonor any more, George. My father is as anxious to find you now as I am; yet when I first told him I knew you were not—what they said you were; and even if you had been I could not have helped loving you—he was almost mad; and said he would have prosecuted you if it had not been for me; and he was more than half inclined to do so still. So I had to keep quiet, for your sake, until he was more reasonable. And now, George—now it is all over—the pain, and the doubt, and the parting; for they have found out who did it, and your name is cleared."

I did not hear him say anything then, and what happened I cannot tell you; for I thought it my duty to step outside and leave them to themselves.

When I came to the gate, there was the young lady's carriage driving up, with an old gentleman in it.

"Does Mr. George Benton live here?" he asked.

"Yes," I answered, jumping at once to the conclusion that that was his rightful name. And I showed him into the kitchen, taking care to make as much noise as possible, even stepping on the cat's tail which brought forth the coveted noisy objection on her part.

The young lady was sitting in Matthew's chair when we came in, and George was sitting on the kitchen table, looking at her, and seemed as though he would not be done looking for a good while; but he jumped down pretty quick when he saw who was with me.

"George," said the old gentleman, holding out his hand in a shame-faced sort of way, "your name is cleared, and I ask your pardon for ever having doubted you. You will own, though, that appearances were against you, and the circumstantial evidence—"

"Say no more about it, sir. The evidence that I was a scamp was so strong, that I found it hard sometimes to know myself for an honest man. No jury could have acquitted me, nor no one else who wouldn't trust my own word and their own bare knowledge of me—as Nellie here has done, against all appearances; and it isn't many who will do that."

"It takes a woman to believe against reason," said the old gentleman, smiling. "Forget and forgive, my boy, and I will do my best to make amends for what is gone."

There was a great deal of talk after that, and Gentleman George made a great mountain of the little we had done for him, and the young lady thanked me with tears in her eyes, and the old gentleman shook my hand, and Matthew's, too, when he came in, and they kissed Polly all round; and said that she it was who had brought them together, and—well, had a great time praising Polly at the parting. And Gentleman George named his first little girl, Polly, after our Polly, and he and his beautiful wife often come down to see us and to talk over things with Matthew; and he's building a handsome mansion at his country seat and one of the cosiest of cottages, which he insists that we shall occupy for good and all, because he says he needs a superintendent, and he wants the superintendent right handy, and he knows of none that would suit him so well as the man who was the means of bringing him the greatest happiness a man can find in this world.

The White Day Lily.

There are day lilies and day lilies, but the day lily *par excellence* is the white day lily, *Funkia grandiflora alba*. Not a dozen other plants can be found that combine as many merits and as few faults. Its foliage is handsome, its flowers uncommonly beautiful, its culture of the easiest. It is perfectly hardy and never fails to produce a profuse and long continuous crop of fragrant flowers that come at a time when nearly all the true lilies are through blooming. It ought to be considered as indispensable to a yard as is the lilac or the rose. It is one of the few flowers I like to recommend to busy women who love flowers but are obliged to neglect them for their household and children.

All a plant of the white day lily asks is root room in fair soil; it will do the rest. I have seen a two-year-old clump that never had twenty minutes care given to it, that produced over two hundred flowers in the season, and how could one ask for a lovelier flower? A little smaller, but much resembling the old garden favorite, *Lilium candidum*, its snow white chalice perfumes the air, day after day, week after week, as fast as one blossom fades another taking its place. For a long time we, as a people, failed to appreciate perennials, now we begin to see their great value, and I prophesy that the time will soon come when the bulk of every household's planting will be of those tried and true perennials that give a maximum of beauty for a minimum expenditure of time and labor. In that glad time we will expect to see in every flower border a great clump of our fragrant favorite, the white day lily.

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THE QUIET HOUR.

At Thy Feet.

Low at Thy feet, I bow, O blessed Master!
Here let me lift my waiting heart to Thee;
Here let me feel Thy touch of love and healing;
Here let me lie in my humility!

As birds of song who swell the sweetest praises,
Build low their nests beneath the grassy mound,
So thro' life's shadows keep me, blessed Master,
Low at Thy feet, where perfect peace is found!

Here fill my soul with Thy reviving Spirit,
Inspire my lips to sing a nobler song;
Till at the dawn of that eternal morning,
I shall rise to join the choral throng.

Sweet it will be to burst these earthly fetters,
And soar above where angel faces greet;
But sweeter far to clasp Thy hand of welcome,
Kneeling in rapture at Thy sacred feet.

Prayer.

I have lately taken to turn to the character of God for comfort. Would it be like Him, the tender Father, to hold aloof from the weary, struggling, sorrowing child, and only be really near to those to whom He has given power of prayer and enjoyment? For if the power and access and peace are all His gifts (and who dare say they are not?) it would simply be unfair if he gave most love and care to those that have them, or when they have them.

Therefore, the only consistent conclusion is, that He is really just as near, just as loving, when we do not see or feel anything that we want to do, as when we do. Also, that as His sovereignty and His love are co-equal and universal, they must be applying here, and He only withholds the enjoyment and conscious progress we long for because He knows best what will really ripen and further us most.

And do we not wrong His tenderness by our distress at not being able to pray as we would when we feel weak and ill? Does He not know, not only that we would pray if we could, but also how much we are losing as to enjoyment by not feeling able, and so I do think sympathizing with us in this distress as much as in any other? There are not many things that have made me more vividly conscious of the antagonism of the old and new nature than the pouring out of such prayers as may involve suffering in their answers. There is a shuddering and shrinking and wincing. One trembles at the possible form the answer may take and is almost ready to forego the desired spiritual blessing for very cowardice, but yet one prays on, and desire is stronger than fear, heaven is stronger than earth, and one pleads and wrestles to be "purged and made white," even if these are to be inseparable from the following words, "and tried"—"I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection," even if this be linked with the "fellowship of His sufferings."

Our Lord's Life a Life of Health.

It was a life of health. Among its many sorrows and trials, sickness alone was absent. We hear of His healing multitudes of the sick—we never hear that He was sick Himself. It is true that the "golden Passion of the book of Isaiah" says of Him:—"Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed;" but the best explanation of that passage has been already supplied from St. Matthew, that He suffered with those whom He saw suffer. He was touched with a feeling of our infirmities; His divine sympathy made those sufferings His own. Certain it is that the story of His life and death shows exceptional powers of physical endurance. No one who was not endowed with perfect health could have stood out against the incessant and wearing demands of such daily life as the Gospel describes. Above all, He seems to have possessed that blessing of ready sleep which is the best natural antidote to fatigue, and the best influence to calm the overworn mind, and "knit up the ravelled sleeve of care." Even on the wave-lashed deck of the little fishing boat, as it was tossed on the stormy sea, He could sleep, with no better pillow than the hard leather-covered boss that served as the steersman's cushion. And often in those nights spent under the starry skies, in the wilderness and on the mountain-top, He can have had no softer resting-place than the grassy turf, no other covering than the *tallith*, or perhaps some stripped *abba*, such as often forms the sole bed of the Arab at the present day. And we shall see in the last sad scene how the same strength and constitution and endurance, even after all that He had undergone, enabled Him to hold out—after a sleepless night and a most exhausting day—under fifteen hours of a trial and torture, and the long protracted agony of a bitter death.—"Farar's Life of Christ."

"Alas! that man so often comes to see what his duty is when he no longer has the ability to perform it. When the friend stands alive before us when he stretches out his arms to us, and seeks us, with his eye, the thought of all we might be to him never enters our minds. But when death has laid him prostrate, when the wan hands are folded upon the lifeless corpse, and the lid draws its curtain for ever over the bright and faithful eye, then do we begin to think and ask ourselves: 'Of what kind was the love with which I loved? Was it that which seeks to minister, or that which requires to be ministered unto? Spirit of Jesus Christ! rid me of the love that seeks only self and its gratification, and teach me that which seeks the good of others.'—A. Tholuch, D. D.