

THE SACRIFICE;

—OR—
FOR HER FAMILY'S SAKE.

CHAPTER XI.

The unconscious Lora, in the meantime, was speeding on her way to Berlin. She was in a first-class carriage, and opposite her sat the man to whom she now belonged. She had heaved a sigh of relief on getting in when she perceived a young cavalry officer already occupying the red velvet cushions in one corner, who, at sight of her, instantly threw his cigar away.

The train rushed on through the snowy, monotonous landscape; she kept her eyes persistently closed. Two or three times she raised her eyes with a sudden start, when her husband addressed some indifferent question to her. She felt worn out in body and mind, as if she were on the verge of a severe illness. She could no longer think clearly.

She clasped her hands together, inside her muff, and in the confusion of her thoughts she asked horrible things of God, to whom she was praying.

A railroad accident—but then so many innocent people must suffer! But is it then really so great a sin for a person to take his own life?

She saw the railroad before her; far down in the distance the two lines ran together, and there, at the end, shone two glowing red sparks, and the sparks came nearer and nearer, and she waited with a wild joy for the hissing, fiery engine to crush her, as she lay there on the rails. She started up again; a shrill whistle; the train stopped and the conductor shouted out the name of the station. The carriage-door was opened, and "Eight minutes here!" was the announcement.

There was a confusion of voices outside; men ran about the platform, talking and shouting; the train hands went along the train with the oil-can, and pounded on the wheels; freight trucks, piled high with trunks and boxes, clattered along. At last the noise subsided a little, and the conductor put his head into the carriage to count the passengers—he was going to shut the door. "Is there a Herr Adalbert Becher from Westenberg here?" asked a telegraph-messenger.

"Certainly," replied Becher. "What is it?"

"A despatch, sir." He took the paper, unfolded it and read it, and a look of dismay spread over his countenance. Then he looked across at Lora, who had listlessly watched the proceedings. "It is nothing," he said; "your brother sent it for a joke—I will tell you about it tomorrow morning." And he smilingly struck her muff with his glove, and thrust the paper in the pocket of his fur coat.

She made no reply. What was it to her? She turned her head to the window and saw the lanterns on the station disappear, and the lights of the city. And they went on and on through the wintry landscape. Once she looked round at him; he had settled himself comfortably, and, tired of her silence, he had gone to sleep. She looked at his face with her great, searching eyes, with an expression of disgust about her lovely, firmly-closed lips. Then she looked at the young officer. He was gazing fixedly at her. She blushed crimson, as if he might have guessed her thoughts, and she quickly put down her veil.

"A miracle!" she prayed again. "O God, send a miracle to save me!"

Every moment it became clearer to her that it would not be possible for her to endure existence with him; that her disgust for him was stronger than the strict sense of duty, which had kept her up during her engagement, that had given her strength to-day to utter "Yes" at the altar.

The train slowed up in the station at Berlin.

"Here we are!" cried Adalbert, waking up; he offered Lora his arm, on which she laid the tips of her fingers, and led her to the carriage which was to take them to the hotel. After a short drive they stopped at the door of the Kaiserhof. In the entrance the usual welcomes from the waiters of the hotel; the rooms were warmed and lighted; they were assured, and two waiters and a porter hastened to lead the way upstairs.

Again Becher offered his arm to his wife. She overlooked it, and gazed with longing eyes through the great panes of glass out into the street, in which the life of the great city was flowing by, men and carriages in endless confusion. Oh, to go out there, to be able to fly away through the strange, unknown streets—for away to that poor little house of her father, there to be hidden away forever! And to know that the present was only a horrible dream!

"Yes," she said hoarsely. But instead of yielding to her wish, he drew her arm within his own, smilingly, it is true, but impatiently and roughly, and held it pressed tightly against his side, as he accompanied her to the stairs.

She submitted. Behind them came the porter, with the wraps and bags; before them were the waiters.

The rooms were on the second floor. A gentleman and a lady came toward them on the red Smyrna carpet of the corridor, both young and both happy. The gentleman was humming a song, and his pretty wife, clinging closely to his arm, cast a wondering glance, as she passed, on Lora's deathly pale countenance.

The waiter in the meantime had opened a door, and she crossed the threshold of the elegant little salon, which seemed to offer her a warm welcome, with its crackling wood-fire, the tea-table all spread, and the fresh odor of violets streaming from a large bouquet of her favorite blue flowers.

But she did not notice this. She crossed mechanically over to the window, and looked out on the street. Her husband's voice came to her as if from a great distance. He ordered the supper, scolded because the bouquet was not elegantly arranged, and declared it was as cold as a barn. "Bring the tea at once! We are half-frozen after such a journey; aren't we, wife?"

At length she was alone with him, and she turned toward him. Her manner seemed to have gained a sudden decision. She leaned against the window; her face stood out like ivory against the dark red velvet of the curtain, and her eyes followed every movement of her husband.

He had just opened the trunk, and then he went to the looking-glass, close beside Lora. He laid down, on the marble console before it, his cigar-case, his note-book, match-box, meerschaum, and the papers out of his pocket, and arranged his beard with a dainty comb.

She waited for him to speak to her, with a beating heart, but with courage. She thought she had made up her mind what she would say to him, quite calmly; she would ask him how he knew that she loved that other man, and why he as he did know it, had still dared to stretch his hand out toward her; and would tell him that she was this fereed to believe that in seeking her he had only desired a suitable mistress of his house. She would certainly conscientiously do her duty by him in that respect, but beyond that—

Her thoughts were checked suddenly, and a deep flush overspread her face. He had seized her hands, and was looking with smiling tenderness into her beautiful, angry eyes. His looks seemed to her like an insult.

"Do not touch me!" she cried, freeing herself hastily.

But she could not go on. "Come, Lora," he interrupted with a laugh. "It is my turn to speak now." And standing a little way off, he leaned against the glass, and began to speak.

It sounded like a school-boy saying his lesson. A long stream of words flowed past Lora's ears, on the trust that married people should have in one another, that she should have in him—yes, must have, for he was a good fellow—a very good fellow, upon my word, Lora. Only one thing he could not hear—such a laughing expression as it pleased her to put on, and especially to-day. And it was his earnest desire to make her happy, and he loved her madly, and he would insist upon it that first was the chief thing, and, as far as he was concerned, his heart lay open before her. He was always a good fellow, and she could twist him round her finger if she only went the right way to work.

She could not follow him closely; she only heard the frequent words, "Love, trust, happiness, good fellow—"

Her lips, which had been scornfully pressed together, opened when at length he ceased. "I must have time to learn to put my trust in you," she said quickly. "Just now—I hardly know you—"

She stopped. The waiter came in, taking the huge tray from his shoulder, he began to set the table quickly and noiselessly.

It seemed to Lora as if her limbs would no longer support her; she sank into a chair, frightened and crushed by the pitiless expression of her husband's eye, who was now stalking angrily up and down, like a maddened animal. She felt that there was no escape for her; that she had been foolish to think there could be; that he had his rights, and that it would be useless to appeal to his delicacy or chivalric feeling. She feared him, his laugh, his flashing eyes.

She kept her hands folded in her lap, her head bent down. A horrible longing for her father seized upon her at this most miserable moment that had come to an unloving wife. The old man had been the only one who had felt that she was sacrificing herself; she seemed still to hear his question: "Lora, are you sure you will be happy with him? Tell me the truth, my girl?"

She could see again the sorrowful look, the last she had met, as she looked out of the carriage once more up to the window at which he stood. This farewell greeting had moved her so strangely, as if it were the last.

She started up. The waiter had left the room; she looked at her husband in desperation.

"I suppose you have been considering how to continue your delightful speech?"

he said with a disagreeable blandness: "Isn't it so, my love? But what if you should at length make up your mind to take off your hat and come to the table? You can continue your first curtain lecture quite comfortably during the meal. I am a man of great patience and wonderful consideration for such a beautiful woman—in a word, a very good fellow." He laughed, and turned to the table to inspect the dishes.

She did not hear anything else he said. Her eyes rested on a half-open paper on the console. At first the blue letters had no significance for her; she read, quite mechanically:

"If Lora would see him alive—come at once."
"RUDOLPH."

Even now she did not comprehend. She stretched out her hand for the paper, as she might have done for a newspaper, to read it, while the others were eating or writing.

"I do not feel like eating anything," she murmured, unfolding the paper. "Lapa—apoplexy—if Lora would see him alive, she must come back at once."

She had read it at length, and understood it, although the despatch was snatched out of her hand with a half-muttered curse.

"My father!" she screamed.

She sprang up and rushed to the door. There she felt herself detained.

"Come, Lora, don't make a scene—for Heaven's sake! It can't be so very bad," he cried, crimson with anger—or dread.

She thrust him away and stood before him trembling in every limb, and with horror in her eyes.

"That was the joke," she gasped, "that!"

All the brutality of his concealment flashed upon her at once. She tried to speak, tried to tell him that she despised him, hated him who would have deprived her of her father's last look, but no word crossed her lips. Silently she turned away and walked to the door.

She heard his words: "I wanted to save you from sorrow, child. God knows you would have heard it soon enough. Where are you going? No train leaves now. Lora, what will the people think? Confound it! Do be reasonable!"

She was already flying down the corridor, and she hurried out through the great vestibule, past the wondering porter, into the street.

"To the Anhalt station," she cried to the nearest cabman; "I must get the express train to Hamburg."

"It goes in half an hour, madam."

"Drive fast—for Heaven's sake!" she cried.

As she was getting in she felt herself supported, and her husband sprang after her into the carriage.

"You will allow me to accompany you," he asked sarcastically. "Only on account of the people, you know. It is not customary to run away from one's husband in this sudden manner. It's a charming evening, too! And what is it all about? Of course it is only a false alarm. The old man has probably drunk too much champagne."

Lora put her hands before her face, and suppressed a cry of horror.

When they reached the station she escaped into a ladies' carriage, and there she lay during the journey, despairing, praying, demanding only to find him living, to look once more into those dear, faithful eyes, only to hear her name once more from his lips.

The train reached Westenberg about midnight. She encountered an icy wind as she left the warm coupe. She drew her veil over her face, and hurried across the platform into the well-known street that led to the town. What did she care for the low mutterings of the man who strode after her—for the fierce winter night, which blew ice and snow into her face? She had only one thought—her father! She fairly flew, leaving her husband far behind; and breathless and full of dread, she at length reached the little house. There was a light in her father's sitting-room, but in the adjoining bedroom both windows were open to the cold air.

She knew what that meant, and she was so overcome that she hardly had strength to pull the bell.

And then steps slowly approached from within, and the door was opened. Her mother stood before her, holding the lamp high above her head.

"Mamma!" cried Lora, gazing at her mother, who seemed to have grown years older in the last few hours.

"Lora, is it you?" cried Frau von Tollen. "But you are too late."

Then the young wife turned, and pushed the bolt in the outer door.

Then she remained standing, her hands clenched, and in her eyes a terrible look of bitter hatred for the man who now was trying to open the door from the outside.

"Why, Lora, what are you doing? Isn't it your husband that—"

She held her mother's arm with a strong hand as she attempted to open the door. "Come," she said, "take me to papa."

"Why, Lora, what—"

"No, no, mamma! He shall not, he must not," she declared; "he must not go to papa." And she drew her mother up the stairs with her, and sank down by the death-bed, and laid her face on the stiff, cold hands of the old man, and bitter tears rolled down her cheeks.

Her wish was granted—she was at last home in her father's poor little house; but so—she had not wished it to be so.

(To be Continued.)

How a man does hate to exchange good money for a receipted bill!

The Farm

BRAN OR OATS.

In considering the value of a food to be used in connection with corn to make a balanced ration the choice is mainly governed by the amount of protein it contains. There is, of course, a difference in foods with respect to their palatability, but of a number of foods most commonly used to balance the corn ration for dairy cows, the protein content is the prime factor, and the object is to select the one in which you can get the greatest amount of protein for the least money. Throughout the corn belt corn furnishes the cheapest base of a ration for any kind of stock, and the problem of the feeder is to get the cheapest balance for it in the way of protein food. As between bran and oats, bran furnishes not only more protein per ton, but it is cheaper per ton at present prices. In 100 pounds of bran there are 12.2 pounds of protein, and its nutritive ratio, by which is meant the ratio between the carbohydrates and the protein, is as 1.37; that is, for every pound of protein there are 3.7 pounds of carbohydrates or fat material. In 100 pounds of oats there are 9.2 pounds of protein, and its nutritive ratio is 1.52. The nutritive of corn is 1.97. It will readily be seen, therefore, that the bran will more nearly balance the corn ration than oats, and the fact that bran can be had cheaper per ton makes the choice between bran and oats a very easy one. Oats alone without any other food makes a very nice balanced ration for milk cows, but it is altogether too high in price to justify feeding it.

BREEDING EWES EARLY.

The best way to get the ewes to breed early is a way that has been tried by a number of most successful shepherds. It was as follows:—

About two weeks before the time that you wish to breed the ewes, change them to different pastures, clover preferred, and commence feeding them oats and a little shelled corn. Not very much corn, just a dash of it. But begin to feed the ewes heavy. You will have to commence feeding rather light, but in two or three days, as soon as all the danger is past from scours, feed the ewes all that they will eat. Let the ram run with them nights. Give the ewes plenty of fresh well water.

It is not much bother to get the ewes to breed early in September if this method is followed, and we have known of a few cases where lambs were dropped early in January. The first year is where the trouble comes in, getting the ewes to breed early the first time. For the ewes that are wanted to be bred early we will say that the best thing to do is to wean the lambs early, put the ewes on a good pasture and give plenty of good clean well water.

Then when the time comes that you wish to breed, put the ewes on a change of pasture and follow the method we have mapped out in regard to the feeding.

COST OF PRODUCING MILK.

After a year's observations with the dairy herd at Cornell University, Prof. H. Wing reaches the following conclusions regarding the food cost of producing milk:

1. With a fairly good herd, carefully fed and kept, milk can be produced for 65c, a cwt., and fat for 16c, a pound for the cost of food consumed.
2. That individuals of the same breed vary more widely in milk and butter production than do the breeds themselves.
3. The large animals consumed less pounds of dry material per 1,000 pounds live weight a day than did the smaller animals.
4. That in general the best yields of fat were obtained from cows that gave at least a fairly large flow of milk.
5. In general the cows consuming the most feed produced both milk and fat at the lowest rate.
6. For the production of milk and fat there is no food so cheap as good pasture grass.

LIVE STOCK NOTES.

It pays to have a horse that is a fast walker. Such are more valuable than a fast trotter.

Make your poultry run the gamut at once. Do not let any fowl into the henhouse this winter unless it gives promise of immediate or future profit.

Barley is unsurpassed as a feed for the production of firm bacon. Oats also are most excellent. Peas and beans produce good results, and mixed with grain are exceedingly valuable.

It never pays to let sheep begin the winter thin. When the pasture gets short begin on the grain ration and keep it up till the sheep are in good order. They will winter better and have better lambs bye and bye.

Cows that have been pampered will not do well if purchased and taken to poorer quarters, or if fed dry feed of poorer quality. They are not used to it and can not stand it as a rule. A cow that has been kept alone as a family cow, and fed her mess of slops and bran from the house every day, will not do well when transferred to a large dairy.

Although the practice of in-and-in breeding has its opponents, who claim that it causes a delicacy of constitution, a predisposition to disease; nevertheless, the fact remains that all great breeders have followed it to a greater or less extent, and it is supposed for the purpose of retaining and fixing desirable characters, which have been developed by modified conditions.

Growing new feathers is quite as trying to a fowl's system as laying eggs. In fact, it is a more exhaustive process. It is true it is no injury to the fowl to lose her feathers; they drop out very easily; but one must remember that there are new feathers behind the old ones, and it requires a healthy condition of the system to grow them. Feeding liberally, therefore, is more important during moulting time than at any other. Even if the fowls lay on a little extra flesh it will benefit them and assist them in their moult.

In feeding all animals care should be taken to have regular hours and not feed more at any time than will be eaten clean. Irregularity in feeding and especially between meals, is the most fruitful source of indigestion. It is what misleads horses which will often grow poor with hay always before them, but which begin to fatten so soon as put to hard work and given grain. It is not the grain altogether, or even chiefly, that makes this difference. At his work, the horse that has been idle is forced to eat at regular hours. His stomach has time to relieve itself of its load, instead of being constantly overloaded.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING.

Two Sisters Supposed the Other Dead Long Ago.

While living in Omdurman, the derelict capital of the Sudan, Mr. J. K. Giffen, the author of "The Egyptian Sudan," noted a pathetic incident which he gives as illustrating the distress of many families during the Mahdi disturbances, when thousands of women were widowed and thousands of children left fatherless by the terrible battles.

We had a woman carrying water for the mixing of mortar. She was as black as coal, but she had beautiful teeth, and at times, when her face lighted up with a smile, was almost handsome. But poverty had been her lot, and it was clearly manifest all over her bony, half-naked body. She was weak and ill-nourished, and when resting quietly had a look of sorrow and pain.

Just before noon one day she was standing before the door when another woman, perhaps a little older than she, but with the same black skin and much the same features and expression, came up and suddenly held out both hands toward our water-carrier. Then, without a word or cry, or without an expression of any kind, they clasped each other and holding each other by the hands, their bodies swaying and heaving, they streamed down their cheeks.

I was amazed, but the men worked away, apparently indifferent to the tragic scene. Occasionally they would glance at the two women, but not for long. Finally one of the women cried, "Thank God!" and both, weeping, started one at the other.

I approached and asked the cause of this joy or grief, whichever it was, that so overcame them. Then one of them told me the story.

They were sisters. They had married in Khartoum and lived near each other in the days of General Gordon. Then came the Mahdi, and Khartoum fell, and their husbands were killed or lost to them. They had been separated and made slaves of other men. Each had supposed the other dead long ago. By accident they had met that day.

BABY ON A WRECK.

Thrown From the Deck to a Tossing Boat and Lived.

How an English baby, sixteen months old, was thrown from the poop of a wrecked ship into a lifeboat while a heavy sea was running, and how it lived for a week in an Indian camp, was told by Colin Watson, a ship's apprentice, who has been four times wrecked, and who has just arrived at Dover, England.

The vessel was the British steamer Glencairn, wrecked off Cape Horn in July. She went on the rocks in a heavy gale, accompanied by fog and snow. Two men were drowned in getting out the lifeboat, which, after a night of great anxiety, was successfully launched at the second attempt. The captain's wife, Mrs. Nicholls, was placed in the lifeboat with her baby. So heavy was the sea that the lifeboat could find no place at which to land, and returned to the wreck.

Next day the boat was again launched, Mrs. Nicholls being lowered into it by a rope. The captain, taking the baby, went to the stern, the lifeboat meanwhile tossing violently a little way off. The second mate balanced himself in the bow with arms outstretched.

Shouting a warning, the captain threw his child from the Glencairn's stern. The baby was safely caught by the mate, and placed in the bottom of the boat, where it began a tour of exploration among the men's sea boots.

When the shore was reached Indians welcomed the refugees and led them to a primitive camp, where they remained for a week. The baby was dressed in skins, and the mother carried it on her back in the Indian fashion. After an adventurous journey across country, the party reached a missionary's house, whence they made their way to Rio Grande, sixty miles distant. Punta Arenas was at length reached, and all returned to England on the steamer Orin.

Charwoman: "Shall I git me luncn now so as to give me strength for me washin', or shall I git me washin' first so as to give me a appetite for me luncn? I think it's strength I want most."