

The Broken Circle!

CHAPTER VII.

"She must have known what she was writing," replied the general. "She was sweet-tempered, and never complained, but she died young, and of no complaint to which men could give a name. She was not happy, and she asked me to save you."

Martin Ray stepped forward. "I will not allow you to speak in that fashion," he said. "Their mother loved me, and they love me; you will never set my children against me."

"I have no wish to do so," said the general coldly. "Knowing your true character, as I suspect my sister knew it before her death, I can imagine you to be quite unfit to have the charge of young girls; therefore I bring their mother's message to them, and they can make their choice."

"Why am I unfit?" cried Martin Ray, his face white with rage. "In what way?"

"I judge you from your father's character. You are without honor, honesty, and loyalty. You are the very ring-leader of sedition; treason is a natural atmosphere to you. You live on the hard earnings of the people whom you mislead. You spread disaffection, rebellion, ruin, misery, and death wherever you go."

A low cry came from Leah's lips. It seemed to her that those words of her uncle's gave life to a horrible spectre that had always haunted her.

"It," continued the soldier, "you were honest. I should have some respect for you. But you are an impostor. You, and such as you, live on the hard-earned pence of the men you deceive. If you gave to the people, instead of taking from them, one right penny, you would have a right to say 'save some little faith in you.'"

"I have given my life to the cause I have at heart," rejoined Martin Ray.

"The cause of anarchy and rebellion—the cause of revolution, which you would spread like a firebrand all over the land. How many men's lives have you to answer for, Martin Ray? You have kept yourself safe; but how many men have you slain by your teaching? You have found men vain and weak, ready to listen to anything which appeared to lighten their burdens; and what have you taught? Did you ever teach a man to be patient, to rest content with the condition in which Heaven had placed him, to

work soberly, honestly, and justly? No. You taught him to long for his neighbor's property, to rebel against rightful authority, to look with envious eyes on all those above him, to brood in sullen anger until murder ran riot in his heart. Those who are your doctrines."

"Whatever they are, I believe in them," said Martin Ray.

"Many young men owe their ruin and death to you," continued the general. "You have urged them to rebel; you have seen them suffer loss, seen them condemned to prison, to exile; yet you have never paused, nor taken pity, nor spared."

"I have done my duty," declared Martin Ray.

"You are not a fit person to have charge of girls like these. You would sell them heart and soul to further your cause," and Leah shrank at the words, a sudden pain piercing her heart. "You value their youth, their fresh, sweet grace and beauty, only so far as they will help you and lure men to your belief whom you cannot teach yourself. I declare to Heaven," he continued, passionately, "that I am relieved and grateful to find them as they are! I should not have been surprised had I discovered that you had, even young as they are, tried to make platform orators of them."

The random shot went home to the very heart of Martin Ray, and blanched Leah's face with a great fear. This was indeed the furnace of fire which she had longed to be free.

"My children are my own," said Martin—"to do as I will with."

"They are not all your own," rejoined General Hatton. "A dead hand is stretched out from their mother's grave to save them. They belong to her, dead though she may be, as much as they belong to you. They have no business with you; you are no fitting guardian for them. Those two girls have good blood in their veins. Their ancestors were loyal; they gave their lives for the safety and well-being of the throne that you are trying to overthrow; they lived and died in the service of the royal race that you would destroy." His anger seemed to increase as he went on. "I," he continued, "make no boast. I have served my country and my queen as an honest soldier and a loyal man. What could I have but loathing and contempt for one who is the greatest traitor and the worst foe to the royal house that I serve? Light and darkness, day and night should meet and embrace, rather than that I should tolerate you."

"You are unfit for the charge. Heaven knows how they have fared hitherto; but you could never teach them to be honorable, industrious or honest. You are a disloyal subject—you have spent some of the best years of your life in prison; what can you have to do with the training of innocent young girls?"

A cry from Leah interrupted him. "Is it true, father?" she said. "Have you been in prison?"—while Hettie went up to him silently, and placed her hand in his.

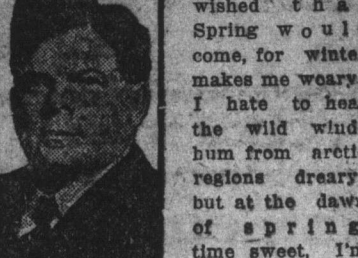
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HINTS OF SPRING.



WALT MATON

I long have wished that Spring would come, for winter makes me weary; I hate to hear the wild winds hum from arctic regions in my ears; but at the dawn of spring-time sweet, I'm longing for December, for there are rugs that I must heat, and stoves I must dismember. Housecleaning and its deadly snares I gladly would abolish, for I must carry out the chairs, and rub them down with polish. Oh, I forgot housecleaning chores, when I was wildly singing of birds and bees and other birds that gentle Annie's bringing. I clean forgot the brooms and mops that make life also-rainish, when I was calling on the cops to make the winter vanish. The women now impatient wax, they're restless and uneasy; they long to renovate our shacks and make existence cheesey. I'll have to carry out the chairs, and scrub the door and casement, and pack big bureaus up the stairs, and ranges in the basement. And when I'm on my spavined knees, some punk utenasia swinging, not all the birds in all the trees can cheer me by their singing. The women yearn to tear apart the house in which I'm dwelling; in vain for me the tulips start, in vain the birds are yelling. I look upon the drifted snow, I mark its gleam and glitter, and how I hate to see it go, to feel that it's a quitter!



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upon the building, and used 1000 cubic feet of stone, and 4000 bags of cement and lime, all purchased from his savings as a postman.

The strange castle he has reared is rectangular in shape, and is a conglomerate presenting many different styles of architecture. There are parts of a Swiss chalet, an Algerian house, a feudal castle, a mosque, while other sections of the building are distinctly the builder's own invention. Sculptured animals, birds and giants adorn the various facades

SIDE TALKS.

By Ruth Cameron.

THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

"Was ever anything quite so bad as it seemed in the middle of the night?" I very much doubt it. Even such final and awful calamities as the death of some loved one seem more unendurable then. Not because the thing itself looks any worse. It couldn't. But just because we have less strength to bear up under it.

A woman who has had a great anxiety come into her life in the last few months told me that she got along pretty well in the day time but that in the middle of the night she woke up and lay for about two hours thinking of her troubles—wondering what the outcome was to be, searching for some way out.

She could not have told me anything that would have made me more anxious about the way she is going to get through this difficult time. For I know of no habit in the world that can work such havoc with body, mind and spirit as that one.

The Very Worst Time to Think. There is no time in the 24 hours when one is less competent to deal with one's troubles than in the watches of the night.

In the first place, one's strength, mental, physical and spiritual, is at its lowest ebb at that time. In the second place, one is ruled by emotion rather than judgment. In the third place, lack of anything to distract one's mind and relieve the tension of thinking of something unpleasant results in the mind's traveling at a terrific rate, racing like a motor power disconnected from the engine.

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How to Stop Yourself. The best time to stop is the first time you are tempted to let your mind go in the middle of the night. But it can be stopped at any time. Tell yourself over and over again that there is no use thinking over in the night because all your thoughts are distorted. Say to yourself, "I will wait until morning and things will look different then."

Don't let your mind get started racing. Think of anything else but the fatal subject. Remind yourself of your own smallness in the scheme of the universe and see if that does not make your concerns seem a little less worthy of such mental turmoil. Remind yourself of the fact that you are hurting yourself and making yourself less able to avert whatever evil you dread. Think of some book you have read during the day. Reconstruct some far off scene in your mind. Do anything to keep off the fatal subject.

It's Hardest at First. It's not easy, I won't tell you that. But there is this comfort. Every victory makes the next victory easier. If you have had the habit of lying awake a couple of hours and cut your wakefulness down to an hour and a half, you will find it easier to get it down to an hour, and gradually to eliminate it altogether. And no matter what other riches life may bring you, none will more add to the sum of your happiness than this power of mind control.

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