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A TALE OF SACRIFICE BY FRANCES NOBLE

CHAPTER XXIV.—CONTINUED

They were to go away in two or three days now, so Father Walms-ley came up on the following morning to hear Gerty's confession and give her Communion, because

Then as he rose to leave her, for my life, poor offering though as if with an irresistible impulse as if with an again, with a And the hope brought by the

'Father Walmsley, if-it is coming-what I thought, what I told you of, you know, three months afraid; I have been growing so— used to it, until God has made me

while you are away, do all in your power to recover and grow strong; tell yourself you must do so, for your father's sake; be very obedient and do whatever is ordered for your good, or I shall have to write you a lecture, you know, on self-will and morbid fancies, eh, Gerty?" And with a very kind farewell and "God bless you!" he left her alone, having had a hard struggle to conceal his admiration and edification, no less than the sorrow, despite his cheery words, which had taken root in his heart.

And so, two days later, Gerty and her father, with an old confidential servant to attend as nurse to Gerty, were established once more at Beachdown, the little watering-place, which was good for watering-place, which was good for Gerty now for the reason which had made it not so good before, because it was quiet and retired. And the change and bracing air made her at first often feel so much better and stronger that her father told himself his darling was going better and stronger that her father doubtedly a handsome young man of yiglets his last night's offering.

smiled, but he always knew when an enemy was at the gates. She was sitting up in bed, reading. A cheerful fire burned in the small grate, and among the number of edifying books of all sizes and periods on the table at her side tor's business, smiled pleasantly as hendsome young man of yiglets his last night's offering. told himself his darling was going to recover much more quickly than the doctor had expected, refusing even on her weaker days to admit any thing like a real fear into his heart the question. He was undoubtedly a handsome young man, tall, well-built, and particularly even on her weaker days to admit any thing like a real fear into his heart the question. He was undoubtedly a handsome young man, tall, well-built, and particularly even on her was undoubtedly a handsome young man, tall, well-built, and particularly even on her weaker days to recover much more quickly than the doctor had expected, refusing even on her weaker days to admit any tall, well-built, and particularly even on her weaker days to admit any tall. even on her weaker days to admit anything like a real fear into his heart that he might be mistaken—that the apparent rallying might be only delusive. How could he, that poor watchful father—how could he yet bring himself to believe that not only the brightness of his little. Sunbeam, but that Sunbeam itself, pale and shadowy as it was now. Sunbeam, but that Sunbeam result, pale and shadowy as it was now, might soon be hidden from his loving eyes for ever in this world? Peter bluntly.

Reginald Payne raised his shoul-How could he, when Gerty was so cheerful always, so peaceful and calm during the long, delicious talks they held together sitting on the shore, or gazing out over the sea from their window on days week."

week."

week."

week."

"As you will," said the junior partner suavely, and the clerk, after a moment's hesitation, in which his lips parted as if to speak, but closed again, turned on his heel and left. when she was too weak to go out, or when he read the cheerful letters her cousin; so that when Lady Hunter wrote in reply, though she was anxious and solicitous concern-

then she told that his last letter had betrayed terrible gloom and restless discontent, with all his old uneasiness increased a hundredfold. "He does not write your name openly, love," she wrote, "but his thoughts are visible in every line. I am telling you this, darling, because you would fancy it all, and even worse, perhaps, if I did not; and I know the certainty is easier to bear, because it makes you have something definite to ask for when you offer up the prayers in which

even I can join, Gerty. But if my doing so has caused one useless pain to your cruelly tried heart, forgive me, love, for you know all I would do, if I could, to save you pain and bring you happiness. Write soon, dear, and tell me you are getting quite strong and hopeful again, and dute strong and hopeful again, and how soon I may come and see you in your dear old Grange after the season is over. I wish it were over already, love, for I seem to have no heart for gayety this time; I think so constantly of last year, and all that has come since."

I the Hunter was right as even in the first straight and her only son, Payne senior had offered Peter a clerkship in his office.

Will not dirty job. But I wish to Heaven the old chap had never gone away."

Sitting down on the side of the bed, he smiled at her, with a fine straightness. "What's been shutting doors for you?" he said.

"Well, Peter dear, they will come, in his office."

I the Hunter was right as even

you have always been his best friend; you will be so—always still in the future?" And the sweet brown eyes, so calmly lustrous now, looked at him with mournful entreaty.

"Do you doubt it, my child?" he said, still cheerily; "and yours too, I hope, Gerty."

Then as he rose to leave her.

Then as he rose to leave her.

never-tiring prayer brought the color again to Gerty's face and the bright light to her eyes as she gazed out at the tossing sea, asking you of, you know, three months since, do not be uneasy, I—am not afraid; I have been growing soused to it, until God has made me almost wish for it to be His will, because—I know if—I were taken. because—I know, if—I were taken, could never it would be in answer—to my prayer—for him, for Stanley Graham I know he would not be let to shut his heart to grace long after because—if I die—it will be after because—if I die—it will be and I shall quietly away, without a wish on quietly away, without a wish on a shee. after, because—if I die—it will be that—God wants him, and I shall be, oh! so happy in that knowldge."

Almost reverently now the good for ever fading from her view; priest replied:

"Gerty, thank God, who has enabled you to be resigned, to say from your heart, whatever happens, the love which had been such idolatry changing and softening into the more pure heavenly feeling, which made the sacrifice of her from your heart, whatever happens, 'God's will be done,' even if it should be to die and give up all thought of earthly love." Then recovering from his emotion, he added, still seriously but cheerily:

"The added, still seriously but cheerily: the willing sacrifice, constitution of the way and provided the sacrifice of her own life appear as nothing by the added, still seriously but cheerily: the willing sacrifice, constitution of the way and provided the way and the willing sacrifice, constitution of the way and the

"But we must not throw away our lives, Gerty—we must not knowingly neglect our health; so, suggested it, Gerty prayed on, with a strength which rose superior to her bodily weakness, during these last quiet days by the sea at Beach-

> TOMORROW "Do I understand you refuse to type this letter?"
> "I refuse," said Peter Kelvin, and placed a draft on the office

TO BE CONTINUED

table.

It was not precisely a usual method of addressing a firm partner, even a junior partner, and the confidential correspondence

vaguely, you did.

'Yes?' he again queried, adjusting leisurely the massive and artistic paper-knife in the tray before him. The junior partner was messag

the your own decision," he said.

"I'd better go then—tomorrow. Today is Friday and the end of the

lips parted as if to speak, but closed again, turned on his heel and left the room by a door communicating with the small private office which had been allotted him.

never gone away," vehemently reflected Kelvin's son. "That accident was a bad thing for him and a worse for us. And the world will call me a fool, and so perhaps I of her hands and held them in his

Then unlocking a drawer in his table, he took from a far-back corner a small leather case. Inside a photograph. A girl's face; short curly dark hair, and eyes dark, roguish, yet with winsome appeal. A laughing mouth whose upturned corners were wholly adorable.

Nancy! Nancy Payne!
Here was the worst of all. He
dared not think of his mother yet. But of course, he must give up all thought of Nancy. He must end, without explanation, abruptly and apparently cruelly, that blossoming friendship, ripening, he dared to hope, to love. He could not tell Nancy that he believed her adored and brilliant brother to be a scoun-

He closed the little case with a tightened.

otherwise; neither perhaps,

would he. door. How should he conceal from office, the door of which stood ajar, her his anxiety, his fear? A God-everything must be hidden from her

with her never-failing smile. Sometimes it was a trifle crooked, a little wavering. That was when, valiant resistance notwithstanding, some hostile fearsomeness hesigned has been pretty close to the grindstone lately, so he's off for a week. Come on. Sit down. Take this letter."

Peter seated himself in the little wavering in the little wavering in the little wavering. hostile fearsomeness besieged her brave soul's citadel. She always smiled, but he always knew when an enemy was at the gates.

of violets, his last night's offering. No more violets for the present, and perhaps no more Anna to make the little fire and keep her comfortable.

surprisingly precise application to the days need that she fairly bubbled over with the exciting dis-covery, and Peter would be invited to share it. A wide Catholicity marked her taste in reading. Fathers, Early and Late—philoso-phers, ancient and modern—each

phers, ancient and modern each contributed his individual ray.
"It's like the sun isn't it now?" she would say. "The light that's poured upon us. Wherever there's a down?" flower or a bit of moss, or a heart or a mind that can receive it, there it his stick and Peter feared for conseflower or a bit of moss, or a heart or gets in. Doesn't it, Peter? You needn't look so quizzical, now."

beart for gayety this time; I think so constantly of last year, and all that has come since."

Lady Hunter was right, as even while kindly and cheerily.

"But you look quite happy, Gerty—quite as if you intended to come back as strong as ever again. Your father needs consolation most of the two, I think," he said, with a smile.

"Poor papa!" And Gerty clasped her hands as if in pain for a minute; then she added in a low, earnest tone, "Father Walmsley, you have always been his best friend; you will be so—always still in the future?" And the sweet brown eyes, so calmily looked at him with mournful entreaty.

"Do you doubt it, my child?" he said, still cheerily; "and yours to the side of the two, I think, "or the side of the two, I think, "he said, with a smile.

"It may not be all for my sake a successful business and unhappy," she said to herself almost jayously, be said to herself almost jayously, in the future?" And the sweet brown eyes, so calmily lustrous now, looked at him with mournful entreaty.

"Do you doubt it, my child?" he said, still cheerily; "and yours to the first of the wash of the convergence of convertion. It is a my to the first of the said to herself almost jayously, he said to herself almost jayously, in the future?" And the sweet brown eyes, so calmily lustrous now, looked at him with mournful entreaty.

"Do you doubt it, my child?" he said, still cheerily; "and yours to first the said to her first the said to her first has even to hear for his sake, than if she had been told he who were not "good business man, any more than Kelvin did—or could, poor fellow!"

Payne senior tended to look upon to file said, who were not "good business man, any more than Kelvin did—or could, poor fellow!"

Payne senior tended to look upo

wn.
"I think it's grand," he said. "Now you turn your handle well and go to sleep. If you don't keep on turning where shall I be?" She laughed then. He loved to provoke his old mother to that merry, girlish laugh of hers. The shadows which had touched her patient face and saddened the corners of her lovable mouth fled

away.

"It's all right, I know it is," she said. "Good night and God bless you, my own dear. Don't forget the patent door opener. With you and Cousin Maggie and the Light—and the handle—why, of course it's all right—for us all."

III. -OPENING DOORS

How he wished as he entered the closed the little case with a His honest, obstinate lips ened.

An opposite conviction possessed him as, arriving unusually early on He always went into her room to this, his last day, he hung up his wish that dear absurd old mother of his goodnight. She would not have

Tonight he hesitated outside the door. How should he conceal from office, the door of which stood ajar, To his surprise, a loud and cheer-

am, doctor or no doctor. No more infernal doing nothing for me. So

tended for his own had resulted in letters of inextricable confusion.

How was she going to manage without Anna, whose training in domesticity was so stimulating a task?

Sometimes, when he came in, the Sometimes, when he came in, the chosen extracted from the chosen of such standard forms and Reginald?"

Mr. Payne's kind eyes shot a standard form of his

fierce glance over the top of his pince-nez at his confidential clerk. "Reginald tells me you've resigned your position—find the work unsuitable. Whoever supposed it suitable—for you, with about as much judicial capacity as a broom stick. But that's no reason for quarreling with your bread and butter. Is it true?"

"It is true, sir. Won't you sit

quences.
"Then you're a greater fool than Tonight, though the smile was just a little of the not-to-be-beaten order, the brown eyes were very bright, and:

"Now do see here," she said.
"This is such a nice little book the such as the such as a such a nice little book the such as a such a nice little book the such as a such a nice little book the such as a such a nice little book the such as a such a such as a such as a such a ing Gerty's delicate health, she plainly had no fear as to her ultimate recovery.

Once, in a letter which came during the third week of their stay in Beachdown, Lady Hunter mentioned Stanley Graham, from whom Gerty knew she heard so seldom, as he had said must be the case. He was in Italy just now, she wrote, traveling up and down, now and then staying with his uncle at Nice; and then she told that his last letter had betrayed terrible gloom and betrayed terrible gloom and single grey winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing the grey-winged pigeons in their suddenly, staring at without seeing was che had a mice little book your cousin Margaret sent me that Christmas. She always knows my taste. Last year she sent me Marcus Aurelius, and you'd be surprised what choice bits delicate harmonies of color and shad said must be the case. He was in Italy just now, she wrote, traveling the proving for the wide was yet had a pain, for how reconcile those delicate harmonies of color and shad said must be the case. He was in Italy just now, she wrote, trave

woven by Reginald Payne for his own dubious purposes? "Tampering, that's what he's been doing!" shouted Peter's inner conviction, regardless of proofs. "Tampering with a poor old trusting soul's invested money. No; I will not, I will not dirty my fingers in that dirty job. But I wish to Heaven the old chap had never gone away." and adjusted a violet leaf, while summoning his forces of dewindered and su Will Suit You Best

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