

WINTER CLOUDS.

Arise, ye winter clouds, and fill
The sky with rich array!
Come, in your majesty, and rule
The northern night and day!
With your great wings of vapor spread
O'er argosies of snow,
Sail out and drop the white gold down
Upon the land below!

No vanished season can rebuke
Our greeting to you here.
We bade the summer fond farewell
With no unmanly tear;
We praised the prospect of the spring;
The autumn's fullness knew:
And now, O winter clouds, arise,
For strong hearts wait for you!

From snowy roadways of the land
Our song shall greet you clear;
On icy plains of stream and lake
Shall you behold our cheer;
By many blazing hearthstones, warm
Through frosty night and day,
Shall friendly hearts and faces meet
And own your genial sway!

Arise, ye winter clouds, arise
To your vast homes again!
Sail in the clear wind o'er the hill,
The valley, and the plain!
Let the high mountains be your throne
Aneath the circling skies!
Arise unto your northern realm,
Ye winter clouds, arise!

Mississquoi.

C. L. CLEVELAND.

BENEATH THE WAVE

A NOVEL

BY

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CHAPTER XIII.

FALSE!

Isabel was very gracious in her manner to the tutor when they met at dinner. She smiled upon him, and all the world seemed very bright and beautiful to Philip Hayward in that hour. He scarcely noticed the gloomy looks of his patron Sir George. He did not notice, or at least did not care for Mr. Trevor's marked coldness of manner, and he scarcely noticed that Hilda Marston's soft, clear eyes wandered more than once involuntarily to his face. This foolish girl was comparing him with Mr. Trevor. She was listening to his simple words; words which told of thought, of strong will, of deep and tender feelings—feelings which she knew were all wasted on the heartless, beautiful woman by his side.

Then she looked at the Squire of Sanda, her lover. For his years, Mr. Trevor was a good-looking man. He was tall, thin, grey-haired, and gentlemanly. He had a high nose, a clear, fresh skin, a narrow forehead, and small, meagre, pale-coloured eyes.

Then, when he spoke, Hilda's ears were naturally sharpened just now, and she blushed and bit her lips when she heard his shallow, pompous words. Not that any particular fault could have been alleged against his conversation, but it was like an endless echo. Nothing new or fresh flowed from Mr. Trevor's thin lips. And poor, clever Hilda! Was she to sit all her life listening to this correct, but weary babble? The poor girl sighed a heavy, audible sigh when she thought of it. She was an honest girl, this; honest and pure, and she began at that moment to think that even little Ned's welfare could be purchased at too heavy a price.

"Your brother sent his best love to you, Miss Marston," said Philip Hayward to her presently, in his sweet, clear-toned voice.

"Did he?" she answered. "Dear little Ned!" and she sighed again.

This sigh reached Mr. Trevor's ears. "I trust that young Edward is fairly attentive to his studies, Mr. Hayward?" asked the Squire.

"Oh, yes," answered Hayward with a smile. "As attentive as we can expect a fine, bold, healthy lad to be."

"Which means, I fear, that he loves play better than work," said the Squire.

"We all do that, Mr. Trevor," said Hayward, with another smile; "only we grown-up people know that we must work or be nothing."

"No doubt," replied the Squire, "industrious habits are essential to success."

There you see, he talked as well as his neighbours, and yet what a dull, weary man the Squire of Sanda was!

"I hope you came him well, Mr. Hayward?" said Isabel, smiling.

"I have never struck a boy, and never will," replied Hayward, gravely.

"Of course not. I was only jesting," said Isabel.

"Yes, I knew you were only jesting," said Hayward, looking at her with his thoughtful, trustful, eyes.

What a sweet expression he had. You read this young man's chivalrous, simple nature in every line of his pleasant face. He was not handsome; not absolutely handsome, at least, and yet he was so good-looking that he was generally called so. He was still very pale from the effects of his late accident, and his arm was in a sling, but this first evening at Massam he looked so bright, happy, and confident. He was so proud, poor fellow; proud because he believed he was not quite indifferent to Isabel.

Sir George, indeed, grew pale and bit his lip, when he saw the smiles Isabel lavished on the tutor. He was a madman, he told himself; utterly mad to be jealous of every look that this woman bestowed on another man, and yet he could not help himself. Isabel, who was tired of him, as she tired of most things, never noticed his restless ways and agitated manner. She was amusing herself with Hayward, and gratified at the unmistakable devotion that his looks displayed.

"And how did you leave the 'Spectre,' and the lovely Amelia Shadwell?" asked Isabel, in her careless way, during a pause in the conversation.

"Both very well," answered Hayward, good-naturedly.

"How terribly tired you must have been of Miss Amelia's beef-tea," went on Isabel, smiling.

"It was very good of her to make it," said Hayward. "I never can repay either Mrs. or Miss Irvine for all their kindness."

"You could repay Miss Irvine, you know," half-whispered Isabel.

"You should not say that," answered Hayward, with sudden gravity.

"Nay, if you look so serious, I shall think you mean to do so," went on Isabel jestingly.

But to this Hayward made no reply. He only looked at Isabel with some reproach in his grey eyes, who dropped hers as he did so with affected penitence.

"You must forgive me," she said in a low voice; "you know I am always jesting."

"You must not jest about my kind friends any more, then," answered Hayward. He was indeed too chivalrous to allow it, and yet many a man would have smiled and even joked over the remembrance of his parting with Miss Amelia Irvine.

This young woman having made up her mind that she was in love with the tutor, was not one of those who allow "concealment like a worm to feed on her damask cheek." When Hayward announced his intention of proceeding to Massam, Amelia, indeed, grew desperate, and, bursting into tears, began sobbing bitterly.

"My dear Miss Amelia," said Hayward, approaching her, though it must be admitted that he was very much afraid to do so.

"Don't go," cried Amelia, "Hayward, don't!" And she threw herself on a seat, stiffening her form rigidly, and making contortions as if she were about to choke.

"But I must," said Hayward, nervously. "You see, my dear Miss Amelia, Sir George Hamilton expects me, and it would never do for me to offend him."

"Will you return?" said Amelia, still apparently choking.

"Of course, I will return," answered Hayward, kindly; and, indeed, it was only after making the most solemn promises to do so, that he was allowed to go away.

"She is only a child," Hayward told himself, in good natured excuse for her conduct, though in reality Miss Amelia was at least twenty. "A kind-hearted child, to whom I must always be indebted for her goodness to me." And in this kindly spirit the tutor endeavoured to think of Amelia Shadwell. Thus he would not allow even Isabel to laugh at her, and Hilda Marston liked him all the better for the way in which he spoke of this foolish girl.

"Well, what do you think of our hero?" Isabel said to Hilda when they returned to the small drawing-room together.

"I think what I always thought," said Hilda, quietly, "even before he was a hero."

"And what do you think?" asked Isabel, surveying herself in one of the long glasses.

"That he is a gentleman," replied Hilda.

"A gentleman!" repeated Isabel, arranging a curl, "that does not express much."

"To me it does," answered Hilda quickly, "for I know few gentlemen."

Upon this Isabel turned round, and looked at her companion, whose face had suddenly flushed, and whose eyes were sparkling.

"Indeed!" said Isabel. "Do you mean that you know few who possess the qualities that you think a gentleman should possess?"

"I know few," said Hilda, with a little quiver in her voice, "on whose lips you never hear a mean or ignoble word, few who regard the humblest woman with respect and honour, and in whose simple assertion I could entirely trust."

"So that is your idea of a gentleman," said Isabel, again turning her attention to the glass.

"And you think that Mr. Hayward is all this, do you?"

"I have always seen him act as a gentleman," answered Hilda, and after saying this she left the room; Isabel looked after her as she did so, with an amused smile.

"So, she has lost her heart," she was thinking. "Poor Hilda Marston, she may spare herself the trouble." And she smiled again, for she knew it was not Hilda that Hayward cared for.

But the very fact that she thought another woman did like him, added piquancy to Isabel's wish to entirely captivate the tutor. Sometimes she had read unspoken disapproval of her ways in Hilda's grey eyes, and as Isabel deemed such disapproval impertinence, she was not displeased to have it in her power to revenge herself by tacitly wounding her humble companion.

Never, therefore, did Isabel make herself more charming than she did this evening to the penniless tutor. And what could he think? He heard her speak in tones of polite indifference to the owner of the broad acres of Massam. He met her sweet smiling glances, listened to her winning,

flattering tongue, and the old infatuation grew stronger, the old passionate admiration more powerful in the young man's heart.

During the whole of the next day it was the same thing. Isabel had agreed to ride again in the afternoon with her military admirer, Capt. Warrington, but in the morning she received a note of apology from him. He had been recalled to town, to be present at a court-martial, but he trusted to meet Miss Trevor again, and so on. Thus Isabel was thrown back for amusement on the unfortunate tutor. She drove him over during the morning, in the late Lady Hamilton's pony chaise, to see the Featherstones, and told them before him of his bravery in rescuing Sir George Hamilton.

"Why did you tell them that?" he asked as they were returning from this visit.

"Why should I not?" answered Isabel.

"Why should people not know how brave you are?"

"I fear bravery had very little to do with it," said Hayward, casting down his eyes.

"What had to do with it, then?" asked Isabel, in her bright, fearless way.

"I went because you bid me go," answered Hayward, with a passionate ring in his voice, that almost touched Isabel's cold heart.

"No, no, that is folly," she murmured, and she jerked the reins that she was holding nervously as she spoke.

"Is it all folly, Isabel?" asked Hayward.

"Of course it is," she answered in her old coquettish manner. "But I am glad, sir, you went at my bidding," she added. "Remember, you have always to do my bidding."

"Yes, I will always do it," answered Hayward; and he stooped down and kissed the small gauntleted hand that held the reins.

Thus you see Isabel was playing with fire. She was arousing feelings for her amusement that she could not quench. She had done this with Sir George Hamilton, but his gloom and taciturnity had disgusted her; and now she was doing it again with a noble, honest-hearted man.

Sir George watched all the day with passionate anger and jealousy her intimacy with the tutor. He began to believe that they must have been lovers long ago; to torment himself, in fact with a hundred fancies. But Mr. Hannaway, the lawyer, dined at Massam the second evening that Hayward was there, and the acute man of the world had a word to say to his patron on the subject.

After dinner Isabel was playing billiards with Hayward, and Sir George and Mr. Hannaway were watching the game, though at a considerable distance from the players. Sir George's face was pale, and his brows were bent. Mr. Hannaway, having enjoyed a good dinner, was rosy and smiling, and in the humour to do a good turn to everyone around him.

"That seems an intelligent young fellow," he said to Sir George, alluding to Hayward.

"Yes," answered Sir George; "do you think him good-looking?"

Mr. Hannaway's quick ears detected the anxiety expressed in the last sentence, and he answered affably,

"Yes—ah yes, tolerably so. It is good-natured of Miss Trevor to be so kind to him."

"Perhaps she likes him," answered Sir George, with a forced smile.

"Or perhaps she likes somebody else, and is too proud to show it, eh, Sir George?" suggested the acute man of law.

Sir George made no answer to this, but the idea was balm and pleasantness to his soul. What if this were true, he thought? He remembered at this moment how she had asked him to be her friend in the conservatory. How she had seemed to care for him then, and how he had repelled her kindness. Perhaps it was but her maiden pride all this indifference, he began to argue; watching with eager eyes the beautiful smiling face and supple, graceful form.

By chance Isabel's eyes fell on his eager, anxious, set white face. The expression there of deep and concentrated emotion immediately attracted her attention, and she smiled, calling Sir George with a gesture to her side.

"Shall we have a game now, Sir George?" she said. "I have beaten Mr. Hayward. You have never once played with me?"

"No," he answered in an agitated voice, "but do not let us play. Miss Trevor, he went on, in a low, earnest tone, 'I wish to say a few words to you—I must say a few words to you'."

Mr. Hannaway by this time had advanced towards Hayward, and had engaged him in conversation. Isabel glanced for a moment at the tutor, and then said—

"What is it you wish to say, Sir George? I am—always ready, you know, to listen."

"Not here," he answered hurriedly. "I cannot say what I would say to you here. You once said you were fond of flowers," he went on, "will you let me gather some now?"

"Yes," said Isabel slowly. She saw something momentous was coming; and Mr. Hannaway, whose face was turned toward Sir George and herself, perhaps saw this also.

"Let us try our luck, Mr. Hayward," he said, taking up a cue. "I am no great player, but I feel in the humour to try my luck to-night."

Hayward glanced at Isabel, but he only saw her talking apparently quietly to their host. He had monopolised her nearly all day, he remembered, and so he smiled pleasantly at Mr. Hannaway.

"I am a bad player also," he said, "but I shall be glad to play."

As the two men commenced their game, Sir George offered his arm in silence to Isabel. She took it gravely. She was speculating on what he was going to say; was interested in the sudden change which had overcome him. "Is he going to tell me the secret, I wonder?" thought Isabel. "The secret, that people are always hinting at to me, about his life?"

She could feel his arm tremble as he led her down the dimly-lighted corridors of the house. He went straight on until they came to the left wing, and then entered the morning-room, closing the door behind them. This room opened into the small conservatory, where Isabel had gathered the flowers on the first evening that she had spent at Massam, and where she had told Sir George that she had wished to be his friend.

Sir George was thinking of that interview now, of that, and of other things. He placed a seat for Isabel, and then with a sudden vehemence took her hand.

"Isabel," he said, his voice trembling and broken with emotion, "do you remember what you once said to me in this room?"

"What was it, Sir George?" asked Isabel.

"You—a young and lovely girl," went on Sir George, with increasing agitation, "told me—a man, old before my time—that you wished to be my friend. Do you still wish this Isabel?" he continued. "Or are you changed?"

"I thought that—you were changed, Sir George," answered Isabel.

"No, no. But perhaps I am changed," he added, and his voice sank almost to a whisper, "for now I know your power."

Isabel's heart gave a great, triumphant throb as these words reached her ears.

"You mean?" she said, and she looked at him with her bright, inquiring eyes.

"I mean," answered Sir George, "that when you came here—when, in fact, I first knew you, I was, I felt, too old—not in age perhaps exactly—but, Isabel, I have had cares and griefs, such cares and griefs that I cannot tell you!" And Sir George covered his face, apparently overcome with emotion.

"You mean," said Isabel, speaking as no loving woman could have spoken, "that there is an obstacle between us?"

"Yes," answered Sir George, in brief and bitter tones.

"That cannot be overcome?" went on Isabel.

"No, no, I do not say that!" cried Sir George, passionately. "I do not say that cannot be overcome." And he began to pace the room with hasty strides. "Isabel," he went on, coming back to her after a few moments, and once more taking her hand, "what I mean is this: There was an obstacle, there is an obstacle between us; but—if you love me—"

"Yes?" said Isabel, still enquiringly.

"It need not part us. If you love me—remember—if you love me, Isabel—I ask you to be my wife!"

Isabel was silent for a moment, and she then said—

"And you can legally do this?"

If Sir George had not been so impulsive and passionate, and so deeply in love himself, he might have heard her true answer to his inquiry if she loved him, in these cold words. As it was, his real feelings blinded him to her want of any. He was, in fact, too much excited to notice her calculating coldness.

"Yes, yes," he answered, "I can do this. But remember, Isabel, he went on, almost warningly, "that there is still a great gulf between us. You are young, bright, and happy—I am a gloomy, care-worn man."

"And these stories that they tell about you?" asked Isabel.

"What stories?" replied Sir George, sharply.

"They say," said Isabel, with the fearlessness and defiance of her nature, "that you are connected with some woman."

"The person to whom you allude," answered Sir George, with quivering lips, as Isabel waited to hear his answer, "is dead."

For a moment or two there was silence in the room after this announcement, Sir George beginning once more to pace up and down with restless steps and knitted brow. Then Isabel made up her mind. She followed Sir George's uneven steps. She laid her white, supple hand upon his arm.

"You asked me," she said, "if—if if I were changed to you. I tried to change. They told me even that you had a wife."

"It is a lie!" fiercely interrupted Sir George, grasping her hand.

"But—but I did not know," went on Isabel. "I was afraid to show my feelings—I tried to hide them."

"Then," went on Sir George, with passionate eagerness, "I am not indifferent to you?"

"No," whispered Isabel, and she hid her face upon his arm.

So she won. With a murmured cry of joy Sir George now caught her to his breast, holding her there, and whispering words of love. Then, suddenly, as if some fresh thought had struck him, he put her away; pushing her apart from him for a moment, and looking straight into her lovely face.

"You will never make me jealous, Isabel, will you?" he said.

"Foolish one," she answered, smilingly, "why do you ask? You, whom I have chosen before all other men."

CHAPTER XIV.

REAPING THE WHIRLWIND.

By Isabel's wish, this strange engagement was kept a secret for the next few days between Sir