

## The Shadow of the Angel.

On the morning of the 10th of March I awoke with a strange weight upon my heart. At first I thought it was fatigue, for I had eaten a great deal of fudge the night before at one of the Kittie James' spreads, but afterwards I knew it was a premonition.

At nine o'clock I went to Sister Irmgard's classroom, where we girls had to discuss current events, and prove that we knew something about them. All the newspapers were full of political news, and I had a great many thoughts to express about it. Therefore I was dreadfully disappointed when I found Sister Edna and not Sister Irmgard waiting to take the class. Sister Edna always takes the events class when Sister Irmgard is called away by Mother Emily or to see important visitors; so though deeply pained, I was not surprised. The class work went on as usual, and I held the girls spell-bound, as I often do, by the strange and interesting things I knew and they hadn't even dreamed of. But I don't think Sister Edna heard much that she said. We all noticed that she was absent-minded, and when the discussion was over and I had told all I knew and some things besides, she left the room without waiting to point out my worst errors in a confidential chat.

The next day Sister Irmgard did not come to her classroom, nor the next, nor the next. By that time we knew, of course, that she was ill, and we decided that she had a little attack of influenza. Some of the girls remembered that she had coughed and looked feverish the last day she was with us. We were too busy to think much about anything, however, for a few days. Everybody wanted us to do things that took every minute of our time, and it seemed to me that seven different nuns were taking Sister Irmgard's various classes. We were so interested in watching these nuns, and studying them as individuals, and reading their hearts, and talking them over, and deciding that not one of them could compare with Sister Irmgard in any way, that we did not realize how fast time was passing.

Every morning and evening we asked whether Sister Irmgard was better, and the answer was always that she was "comfortable." We sent her our love, too, and every one of us sent her flowers. But it never occurred to us that she was really ill, with doctors and nurses, and medicines and thermometers and fever charts and the other things that go with real sickness, and I, for one, went to her classroom every morning expecting to see her there. I always had a little thrill when I opened the door and looked for her, and then a little shock when I saw someone else in her place. Away down inside of me something whispered "another whole day." After that—though it seems so strange and terrible to be true as I look back on it—my mind would be taken up with other things. And it was the same with all the girls.

But one day, after Sister Irmgard had been away from us for more than a week, I felt something strange in the convent atmosphere. You know how it is just before a great storm, when nature seems to take a long deep breath and get ready for what is coming? In one way, everything was the same as usual. Work was going on; the convent bells were reminding us of hours and classes; I saw the nuns in the long halls, going about their duties; yet everyone seemed to be listening. While I was wondering what it meant, Sister Edna passed me, walking quickly. She was looking straight ahead, so she did not see me. Her face had the look I had seen on all the other faces I had met that morning—a strained look, wide-eyed and frightened, as if she expected to hear something dreadful. The sound of my heels on the polished floor of the hall seemed to me to echo through the whole building; I found I was walking on tiptoe, without knowing why I did it.

When I opened the door of Sister Irmgard's classroom, I think I had begun to understand what it all meant—for this time I did not expect to see her at her desk. She was not there, but our French teacher, Sister Harmona, sat in her place. Her eyes were red, and when she opened a book I saw her hands tremble. The girls were in their seats—Mable Blossom, Mable Joyce, Kittie James, and dozens of others—and as I glanced at them, and then away, afraid of what I saw, they all looked alike, for every face had the same expression. The girls were leaning a little forward, as if they were on the edge of their chairs, ready to spring up. Their eyes were very wide open, and they seemed to be afraid to speak. The same queer hush lay over the room that filled the whole convent.

I went straight to Sister Harmona's desk and spoke to her, but the voice I had heard saying the words did not seem to be mine. It was cold and steady, though I could feel my heart pounding; and yet my sister Irmgard was ill!

"Sister," I said, "please tell me, is Sister Irmgard very ill?"

## All Stuffed Up

That's the condition of many sufferers from catarrh, especially in the morning. Great difficulty is experienced in clearing the head and throat.

No wonder catarrh causes headache, impairs the taste, smell and hearing, pollutes the breath, deranges the stomach and affects the appetite.

To cure catarrh, treatment must be constitutional—alterative and tonic.

"I was ill for four months with catarrh in the head and throat. Had a bad cough and raised blood. I had become discouraged when my husband brought a bottle of Hood's Sarsaparilla and persuaded me to try it. I advise all to take it. It has cured and built me up." MRS. HOWARD ROBERT, West Lacombe, N. S.

## Hood's Sarsaparilla

Cures catarrh—it soothes and strengthens the mucous membrane and builds up the whole system.

Sister Harmona looked at me and then looked away. She is a plump little nun who makes me think of a fat wren—her eyes are so dark and bright, and she is so quick in all her movements. Usually she is very gay and cheerful. Sometimes I have seen her annoyed or excited over our French verbs, but never sad. So if I could have felt surprised at anything just then, I should have felt surprised to see her brown eyes fill with tears and slowly brim over. I watched the big drops fall, first on her cheeks, then on her white linen guimpe, until she bent her head and fumbled for her handkerchief in her long flowing sleeve. She tried to speak, but could not; but it didn't matter, for now we knew the truth. There was not a sound in the room. It seemed to me I stood there for years watching Sister Harmona's tears falling and falling; but after the first minute I don't think I saw them at all. Instead, I saw Sister Irmgard sitting in her old place. I even thought I heard her voice.

"Oh, my girls, my girls, what will you do next?" How often she had said that to us, in despair! How much she had done for us! How little we had done for her. As I stood, dazed, I remembered it all. The years seemed to roll backward before my eyes, like moving pictures, but reversed, so that the old school days came first; and every picture had Sister Irmgard in it—Sister Irmgard, who knew everything and was willing to teach us all that we could learn.

Then the door opened and Mabel Mariel Murphy came in crying. "Oh, girls," she said, and she dropped into her seat and put her arms down on her desk and buried her face in them, and sobbed. "Oh, girls, Sister Irmgard is dying!"

The words rolled about the big quiet room as if they, too, were frightened, and were trying to get out and away from themselves. No one answered them. No one could. I went to my seat and stared out of the window, and tried to be calm and to understand what it all meant. Two of the minims were rolling their hoops along a path that was too narrow for them both, and I watched the hoops meet and go down. An old gardener was coming towards them wheeling a barrowful of fresh earth for the early flower beds. I watched him, too, and wondered how these little things could go on happening when Sister Irmgard was dying. Finally I heard Sister Harmona speaking.

She was saying that we must not give up hope. Sister Irmgard had a serious case of pneumonia—a very serious case, indeed; and the crisis, to-day, found her extremely weak; but a great specialist had been sent for, and he was doing everything that could be done. We must remember, she said, that the one thing we could do for Sister Irmgard was to keep steadily at work, as she would wish us to do, and lighten the tasks of her substitutes by helping them in every way. She asked us to pray for Sister Irmgard—as if she needed to—when we were all doing it, deep in our hearts, that very minute! She turned to her notes then, and began the French lesson, and every girl there set her teeth and resolved to go through that lesson well, if she died doing it. We got through, every one of us, and Sister Harmona was simply wonderful in helping us, and understanding us, and keeping so busy at the same time, that we couldn't think. At the end of the lesson she gathered up her notes and turned to us with a little smile that shone dimly through her tears, like a rainbow through a mist.

"How good you are, my children," she said in French. "Some day I will describe this hour to Sister Irmgard, and it will make her happy. Adieu. Pray for her."

Then she went away without another word, and we began to talk to one other, almost in whispers, for her last words had comforted the girls.

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hour to Sister Irmgard, and it will make her happy." Sincerely that sounded as if she thought Sister would get well. But Mabel Mariel Murphy, who is very devout, was sure Sister Harmona merely meant that she would tell Sister Irmgard when they met in heaven.

I left them arguing over this when I went to Sister Cecilia's room to take my music lesson. If Sister Irmgard wanted us to go on as usual while she was dying, I would go on—as long as I could. But what I wanted to do was to sit still and pinch myself until I awoke from my horrible dream.

When I turned into the music hall I noticed that even here everything seemed unreal. Usually this hall is the noisiest place in the convent, for dozens of girls are practicing dozens of different things on dozens of different pianos, and the racket is frightful. But to-day half the pianos were silent and the rest were going intermittently while little groups of girls stood on every side, taking their breath. Even the nuns were stopping to speak to one another—asking a quick question, and then going on with a gesture of despair.

The long, dim hall seemed gloomier than ever before, as if the Angel of Death, hovering over the convent had covered everything in it with the shadow of his great black wings.

I knew now what the look on all those faces meant. It meant fear. It always meant terror—and you cannot imagine how strange it seemed to me to see this in a convent, where they think of death as a welcome friend, waiting to open the door of heaven and let them pass in. A Sister who dies finds her reward a little sooner than the rest, they say. That is all; why should they grieve for her? I wondered why, and yet I knew. It was because Sister Irmgard herself was different. They all loved her. They all needed her, just as we girls did. They felt that they could not go on without her.

As I dragged my feet down the hall that seemed a thousand miles long, I caught a few words here and there. Some one said tanks of oxygen had been sent in, and that another great specialist was coming. One Sister told another, with a break in her voice, "I can't imagine Sister Irmgard without her. Surely the very walls will fall if Irmgard goes." And the other answered, brokenly, "She is the bearer of our torch." An Irish lay Sister who was on her knees polishing the floor, stopped them to ask for news and after they had answered and passed on, she remained on her knees bled in a queer little babble, praying, with her face in her hands, and her tears falling between her fingers.

I was at Sister Cecilia's door now and I opened it and went in with reluctant feet. Sister Cecilia has been my teacher for many years, but I have never loved her, though I love her music. The girls yawned the best of herself into that. Certainly, there doesn't seem to be much left to go anywhere else. She teaches only a few of the most advanced pupils, and she wants them to devote every minute to music. We have a dreadful time making her see that there are other duties at St. Katherine's which require our attention, too—such as our studies. She expects more from Janet Trevelyan and from me than from anybody else, and if it were not for Sister Irmgard, she would plant us both on piano stools and keep us there until we graduate and leave school. But when she gets too impossible, Sister Irmgard drops into her room, and they have a little visit, and Sister Cecilia is lovely and reasonable for weeks afterward.

Today, after the first minute or two, I was glad I was with her. She is so cold and severe that I would never think of crying on her, and as she never thinks of anything but music, I knew she would keep me up to the mark. We greeted each other politely (we are always as formal as if we were meeting at a tea), and I sat down at the piano and began to play the Chopin Nocturne in G minor, while Sister Cecilia roamed about the room, the way she always does, stopping short when things go wrong, and sometimes breaking into a dreadful little groan if she thinks they are worse than usual. Today she was very quiet, but I shouldn't have minded if she hadn't been. I forgot her.

The Nocturne fitted into everything else, and at first I didn't mind playing it. Sister Cecilia had a large music room with two big windows overlooking the convent garden. I was playing without notes—she always makes us memorize everything for the second lesson on it—and from where I sat I could look out over the garden to the infirmary wing of the convent—the wing where at that very hour Sister Irmgard lay dying. I looked from window to window, and wondered which room she had. Then I decided that I knew, and I seemed to see the room itself, with the great doctors and nurses working over her, fighting death, and nuns praying close beside her.

I was playing the Gregorian chant in the Nocturne by this time, but I didn't realize it until sudden the Alleluia rang out. I had loved that

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Mrs. JOSEPH SMITH, Box 25, Creelman, Sask., writes: "I write you these few lines hoping they will be a help to someone suffering from heart and nerve trouble. I doctored for three years but continued to get worse. I tried three different doctors, and got no relief, and tried all the drugs I could find but all failed. I became very weak, and my blood was turned to water. I tried Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills, and after taking five boxes, I got great relief. I was so thin, I only weighed 90 lbs., but after taking five boxes I was completely cured, and I am well and strong to-day, and weigh 150 lbs., and I can now work my day, and do not feel tired or fagged out. If anyone would like to hear more of my case, I would be pleased to answer any questions."

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while I was practicing it—it's so big and victorious and triumphant; but now, at the first note of it, something in me gave way with a sudden snap, and I stopped playing and crumpled up over the keyboard. How could I play an Alleluia when Sister Irmgard was dying? How could I ever play or do or be anything again when she was gone?

(Concluded in next issue.)

## Wire Wounds.

My mare, a very valuable one, was badly bruised and out by being caught by a wire fence. Some of the wounds would not heal, although I tried many medicines. Dr. Bell advised me to use MINARD'S LINIMENT, diluted at first, then stronger as the sores began to look better, until after three weeks, the sores having healed, and best of all the hair is growing well, and is NOT WHITE as is most always the case in horse wounds.

F. M. DOUCET, Weymouth.

"A man cannot have any idea of perfection in another that he is never sensible of in himself.—Steele.

If an ice wagon weighs two tons, a block of ice 200 pounds, the team 3,000 pounds and the man on the front of the wagon 160 pounds, what does the man on the back of the wagon weigh? The ice.

Who was Jonah's tutor? The whale that brought him up.

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It looks funny to see a man walking along the street pushing a baby buggy and smoking a cigarette.

Minard's Liniment cures Dandruff.

But a man's obituary notice always comes too late to get him a better job.

## LITTLE BOY

## WAS SO SICK

Did Not Think He Could Live.

## CHOLERA INFANTUM WAS THE CAUSE.

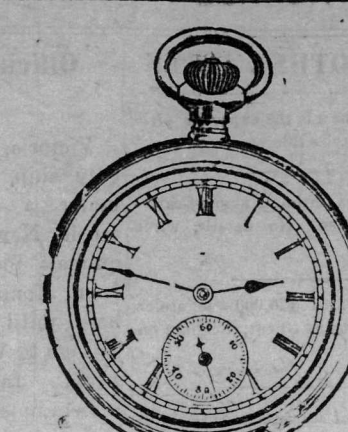
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