

up the scattered crumbs. "It's my belief she's been living on 'em ever since, though she does aim to earn money with her painting. She's getting thinner an' whiter every week, but she's as sweet as ever she was. It lies that heavy on my mind that I couldn't help speaking of it last week. Miss Prissie 'ull take things from me that nursed her as she wouldn't take from another. But it weren't much good speaking. She only smiled an' said, 'The Lord will provide, Nannie,' an' I darsent say no more. I darsent even offer to buy one of her paintings, for like as not she wouldn't let me pay for it. Excuse me speaking so free, sir, but if you was wanting a picture of the place—the old church, maybe, or the old 'Ship Inn,' or the water-mill—I could easy get 'em over for you to look at."

"Thank you, thank you, I'll see," the lodger murmured, abruptly, and he passed Mrs. Todd without so much as glancing at her, and went out of the house and down the sunny street with his long, vigorous stride.

"Now I do hope I haven't done more harm than enough," Mrs. Todd mused apprehensively, as she watched him. "Maybe I'd better have asked Miss Prissie to let me have a few things to show him before I spoke. 'Tisn't like him to go off so short like. But my heart was that full, seeing the way she walked, when I mind—"

A big tear bounced into the crumb-tray as Mrs. Todd turned again to her labors.

"Mrs. Todd's lodger," as all the village called him, soon came in sight of Miss Priscilla Latymer walking slowly along the shady country lane that turned off from the main road and led up to the fine old house that had been her home for so many years. She was walking with an almost painful slowness now that she thought herself unobserved, and the heart of the strong man ached with a desperate desire to hurry after her and make her lean upon his strength. But he restrained himself. Not here upon the open way could he venture to greet her.

So he turned aside, and leaning over a five-barred gate watched with unseeing eyes the gambols of the lambs in the meadow.

When he went on again his cheek was red with the flush of remembrance, for he had been dreaming, dreaming of an old May-time when the birds sang, and the sun shone, and a crown of love had been his.

There was no sign of Miss Latymer now, but he knew the way that she had gone, and his feet carried him swiftly along in her wake till he came in sight of the old grey Hall standing amidst its summer-clad gardens.

He found Priscilla in a sheltered spot given over to old-fashioned sweet-smelling flowers, a square encompassed by a tall yew hedge, its velvet turf intersected by beds of quaint and precise designs glowing like jewels against the green background.

A weather-stained and scarred Cupid on a pedestal stared stonily at the intruder, but Mrs. Todd's lodger had eyes only for the frail human figure on the old stone bench.

Miss Latymer had set up her easel, but she had not begun to work. She was sitting perfectly motionless, her head bowed upon her hands.

The soft turf gave no warning of approaching footsteps, and it was not until his shadow fell upon her that she looked up and met his gaze.

"Alan, Alan!" she murmured, confusedly. "It is good to see you even if it is only a dream."

"It is no dream, Priscilla, but a blessed reality. It is Alan Warde come back to see if there's a chance of gaining the happiness you denied him years ago."

Miss Latymer's pale face flamed to a sudden vivid beauty at his words and the touch of his strong fingers about hers.

"You have come back for that?" she cried, with a catch in her sweet voice. "But how could I marry you now, Alan? I had not much to give you then. I have nothing at all now."

"Oh! the Latymer pride!" Alan said, with tender scorn. "Do you think I am going to allow it to part us a second time? I'm not going to pretend that I'm a pauper. I've more money than I

can spend alone, but money is a poor substitute for love."

Miss Latymer sat silent. Her hands shook beneath his, but her lips were set in the proud curve he knew of old.

"Since I have come back to the old village I have had a dream," Alan went on, slowly: "a dream of making the Hall a centre of happiness for our neighbors, a quiet haven for storm-tossed souls."

"The Hall!" Priscilla said, breathlessly.

"I have bought the Hall, but unless you choose to help me I am afraid my dream will never come true. Now, Priscilla Latymer"—he laid masterful hands on her shoulders—"look into my eyes and tell me you don't love me!"

"Oh!" Priscilla said, piteously, with a glance half proud, half appealing.

"Haven't you been asking the Lord to provide?" Alan questioned, tenderly; "and now he offers you a home and an opportunity to work for Him will you let your pride cast them on one side?"

You can't! I have never asked any woman but you to marry me, and I am not going to ask you again. I am going to marry you a month from to-day!" Alan said triumphantly, as he drew her to his breast. "My dear, my dear, don't you know that there's no room for Pride in the Kingdom of Love?"

And Miss Latymer, with a little sigh of infinite contentment, acknowledged he was right.—Adair Halsey, in Christian World.

Miss Happy of Kip.

It had rained all day, a dreary autumn drizzle; and all day books had kept dropping on the floor and pencils had screeched ceaselessly. The teacher was tired. The dreariness of the day had sunk into her heart, and the tiny flame of courage was slowly dying when four o'clock came.

She was wont to say that in heaven it would always be "just after four." "There is a time, you know," she would explain, "when all the restless little feet have disappeared over the hill, and the last shout has died away, and you're all alone, that an indescribable calm and peace seem to rush over you and you linger just a minute before you turn the key, and follow. That minute is heaven, for it is then you can view your task without a trace of bitterness. You forget the hard things and love the whole world."

But even that minute had been denied her to-night. The secretary of the School Board called. "We're having our meeting to-night, and want you to come up. Hope you've decided to stay on another year with us," he had said, and with a few remarks about the wet weather had gone again.

The girl's heart stood still. "Stay on another year!" It echoed hollowly in the deserted room when she repeated it. Barely a year ago when Margaret Cameron had come to Kip to teach. Perhaps she was not enthusiastic, but she was brave. The failure of her father's business had meant that she must leave school and give up her cherished dream of a university education. But Dick, her younger brother—poor Dick was lame, and he was so clever—he must go to university; some day he would be a great doctor. Yes, Dick must go to university, that became her one ambition. And that was the slogan that led her to Kip, a dreary little flag station where a teacher was wanted and a good salary offered. All through the long, cold winter she had fought her way through the blizzards to the little school-house and taught—taught so that the father of the school terror (there's always one terror in a school, you know) vowed she was a clinker, and the mother of the school dunce called her an angel.

At night she had fought the loneliness and schooled herself to meet the next day's battles—for Dick's sake. And back in the city, the girls, when they read her letters, laughed and said they envied her, that teaching must be fun. Putting the hand to the plough is not all; it is keeping it there with a smile that counts. "Stay on another year!"—she felt like a criminal receiving a life sentence.

But now, in the evening, the rain had ceased and the moon was struggling to find an opening in the clouds. Eager to have it over, but scarcely knowing if she could trust herself, she donned coat and rubbers and fairly flew along the road till she came to the bridge over the tiny stream, now swollen and murmuring sullenly. Then the moon suddenly broke through triumphantly and the girl stopped. She did not see the beauty of the moving network of shadows in the beech grove, or the salute of the three graceful elms. She felt a chilly autumn breeze, and the moonlight failed to soften or cast any poetry round the grim outlines of the school-house, standing bare and lonely across the fields, an ugly blot on the landscape.

Once more the loneliness and dreariness rushed upon her. Half prayerfully she cried out, "Oh, I can't! I can't!" Then the head went down and the rest was lost in great dry sobs. The moon slipped behind a cloud; the beeches rustled as if troubled; and the elms sighed. Then it happened.

Over the hill shone a light, and out of the blackness it came till the girl saw two gleaming eyes, and heard a distinct "honk." Instinctively she shrank back, but the car stopped beside her. Some one got out. She gave a glad cry and sprang to meet him. Somehow she found herself in the car with Dick beside her. The school vanished and they seemed to be gliding over smooth roads. Dimly she knew that Dick was telling her that she must not work any more; that it was his turn now and that he was taking her home.

But before she could understand it all the crash came. She felt a buzzing sensation in her ears and slowly realized that she was still on the bridge. The evening express was tooting impudently as it rushed past the tiny station. The moon gazed mockingly down; the beeches tittered and the elms waved helplessly to and fro. Dick and the automobile had vanished.

"That comes from reading too many novels," she muttered disgustedly. "But it's going to come true, just the same. We're going to earn that automobile," she added, and there was a ring of courage in her voice as she said it, and determination in every step as she went up the hill.

Half an hour later she unhesitatingly signed "Margaret Cameron" at the foot of the new agreement, and, as she looked up, her shining eyes met those of the silent, bashful trustee, who blushed, shifted awkwardly, blushed again, and said: "We're awfully glad you're staying. Don't know what we'd do without our 'Miss Happy'."

"Miss Happy?" The teacher was puzzled.

"Yes, didn't you know that is what the kiddies call you? When I asked my boy about it he said he didn't know why, but he guessed it was the way you smiled or something, but anyhow it suited you. I reckon the youngsters think a pile of you, Miss Happy—Miss Cameron." Then, afraid that he had said something, he became awkward again.

That night Miss Happy cried herself to sleep. But they were happy tears and through them she saw the rainbow of promise.

At the same time two boys in Toronto were studying. One, looking up from his book for an instant, found his gaze held by the laughing eyes of a girl in a photograph. "If that's your sweetheart, Cameron, you're lucky," he said. "She's a fine-looking girl."

"She's my sister," the other replied, and "she's a brick."—Muriel Clark, in Westminster.

It Would Be Useless.

Mrs. Black's servant girl had been in the habit of going out to meet the grocer's boy when he came to the back door with goods. Observing this Mrs. Black watched and saw the boy kiss Norah heartily. When the girl came in Mrs. Black said severely:

"Norah, I saw the grocer's boy kiss you this morning when you went out for the groceries. Hereafter I shall go myself."

"All right, mum," said Norah, "but 'twill do yez no good. He sez he won't kiss nobody but me."—Ladies Home Journal.

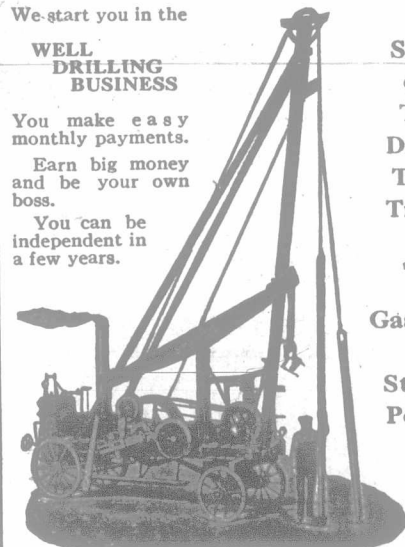
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