STEALING A LOVER.

"There, darling, sit down by the fire and let me take your things off. Albert will be here this evening, and I have so much to tell you first."

Agnes Tressilian looked very beautiful in the soft glitter of the silver candelabra and the ruddy glow of the fire, as Barbarine Cliffe untied her bonnet-strings and loosened the clasps of her cloak. Her face was a pure, perfect oval, with blue, languid eyes, and lips of fresh, vivid scarlet, and her hair fell in a shining shower of gold from the fillet of blue ribbon that she wore.

Barbarine Cliffe was what is ordinarily termed a pretty girl, but Barbarine looked plain and coarse, with her fresh cheeks and hazel-brown eyes, by the side of this blonde sylph.

"Who would have thought, darling," went on Barbarine, pressing the soft dimpled hands in hers, as Agnes sat smiling before the fire, "that I should so soon have claimed your part of our old school-girl compact of being each other's bride-maids. I hope you will like him, Agnes—I don't believe you can help it—and I am very sure you will admire him."

She prattled away in the innocent fullness of her girl-heart, as she led Miss Tressilian up to the dainty casket of a little room provided for her, and Agnes listened, and smiling and radiant as a saint.

"Well, Barbarine, has she come?"

It was the first question that Albert Vining asked, when his betrothed wife came tripping across the parlor threshold to meet him! Barbarine nodded, brightly.

"Pshaw! I am sorry?"

"Albert!" she remonstrated, almost inclined to be vexed.

"But we have been so happy together, all by ourselves, Rina. And now this third one comes to spoil it all."

"You will like her so much, Albert," she pleaded.

"Shall I?" He shrugged his shoulders a little dubiously. "Well, for your sake, Rina, I'll try."

Barbarine Cliffe smiled triumphantly to see the unconscious start of admiration that Mr. Vining gave, when the parlor-door swung open and Miss Tressilian glided in, robed in a dress of white cashmere, with a blue-velvet band twisted through her hair—rose-cheeked, golden-tressed and beautiful as a dream.

"I knew he would admire her," thought unselfish little Barbarine; "and oh! I am so glad!"

There was no more question of Miss Tressilian's being "a third one" after this. How gracefully she harmonized with all their plans—how prettily she gave her sympathy on whichever side it was pleaded for. Barbarine was happier than ever—and Mr. Vining, was he happy? Yes, in a sort of dream, or fever, or exultation—something so different from all he had previously known that he scarce knew by what name to call it.

Agnes Tressilian went away, after a month's visit to her old school friend, and Mr. Vining escorted her to her home among the Catskill Hills, at Barbarine's especial request.

"She is too beautiful to travel alone!" said the bride-elect, "and I shall feel easier if you come back and tell me you saw her safe home!"

"What a whimsical little woman you are, Barbarine," said Mr. Vining, but he obeyed, nevertheless.

"He will be back to-morrow!" thought Barbarine, as she sat down to her embroidery, singing to herself and counting the days to her wedding. Only twenty-seven of them now!

But when the morrow came the servant brought in a note, at the hour she had expected Albert Vining himself to arrive—a note that blanched Barbarine's peach-blossom of a cheek and sent a keen stab to her poor little tender heart, as if a knife had cleft its way through the quivering flesh.

He had left her, to transfer his recreant allegiance to Agnes Tressilian—that was the upshot of it all. He did not love her any longer, since beautiful Agnes Tressilian's face had dawned upon his life.

And Agnes? She had accepted him—she lied, was false to the ideal of friendship poor, simple little Barbarine had worshiped so blindly.

Barbarine clasped her hand over her forehead, and tried to think that she was in a wicked dream—a dream which must come to an end soon.

"I will go to her," she thought, rising suddenly up, with her sweet face as pale as a moonlight snow-drift. "I will have the truth from Agnes' own lips. Else, I never, never can believe it."

Miss Tressilian had not expected ever again to see the face of the girl she had so wickedly wronged. She had thought Barbarine Cliffe would suffer unremonstratingly, and in silence—but she had misjudged matters in this respect. Barbarine could not give up her life-hope without at least one struggle.

"It isn't my fault!" said Agnes Tressilian, with a toss of the showery golden ringlets, "that Albert loves me better than he does you. You ought not to blame me!"

"Agnes! Agnes!" wailed the broken-hearted girl, putting up her trembling hands as if she would ward something away from her, "the fascination was never on one side alone! You dare not deny that you stole his heart away from me!"

No, Agnes Tressilian dared not deny it. She colored, bit her lip, and sent a glittering, arrowy ray from her lovely blue eyes, that was half malice and half triumph.

"At any rate, he is mine, now," said she, exultantly. "In this world of love, the race is to the swift, and the battle is to the strong! I am sorry you take it so much to heart, Barbarine Cliffe—but love will not be controlled or driven!"

Barbarine rose quietly up. "I forgive you, Agnes," she said, gently. "The time may come when you will be glad to remember that!"

"I don't want your forgiveness!" flashed back the blonde beauty; "I will not have it!"

So Agnes Tressilian was married to Albert Vining, the loveliest bride that ever the sun shone on, and Barbarine hid away her broken heart, covering it up with the sweet memories which were all that she had to dwell on now.

"It was a little shabby to poor Barbarine Cliffe," said Mrs. Vining, tossing back the yellow curls from her alabaster, fair brow; "but I was so much better suited to Albert than ever she could be! It will be a great deal more sensible for all parties in the long run!"

"Humph!" said old Mrs. Gregory, Agnes' aunt; "how would you like it for some other woman to put in a claim for Albert on this ground that she was better suited than you to his particular needs and requirements."

"But we are married!" said Agnes, looking alarmed.

"Marriage isn't always such a safeguard as some people seem to think," said Mrs. Gregory, and she took snuff, and plunged into her book again.

She met Barbara Cliffe sometimes in the years that followed—not in what the world calls society, where people meet to compare their diamonds, envy each other's Paris dresses and talk with those they never cared two straws about—but in the peaceful shadow of rich moors, where patient sufferers lay waiting for the great tide of eternity to float them away—in dreary purlieus, where Mrs. Vining went to scold dressmakers, and hurry up pale sewing girls. "A regular Sister of Charity!" said Agnes, scornfully; "Barbarine was just made for that sort of thing!"

So it happened that Barbarine Cliffe had occasion to go to her beautiful rival's handsome house one day to plead for an overworked seamstress to whom Miss Vining owed money—"a mere trifle"—she called it, but to Ruth Morris it was far more than that—and Antonia, the French child, showed her directly to "Madame's own room."

But Barbarine stopped on the threshold, appalled. Agnes lay with her face buried among the sofa cushions, the lace scarf torn away from her ebony shoulders, the diamonds sparkling, like scattered dew, all over the floor, and her lovely yellow hair tangled and disheveled.

"Agnes, are you ill?"

Mrs. Vining sat up, ghastly pale, with a wild, hysterical laugh.

"Look here!" she cried, holding up a sheet of crumpled paper. "Oh, Barbarine, you are avenged at last!"

Yes, she was avenged. Albert Vining had stricken her down to the very ground with the same cruel blow he had dealt poor Barbarine years ago, only keener and more sharp in that he was her husband.

He had left her forever, with some fairer and fresher beauty, who cared for his fascinating ways and tender voice more than all else the world had beside of fame or honor! He had left her!

Barbarine knelt down, and took that poor drooping head tenderly upon her breast.

"I thought you would exult over me!" sobbed Agnes. "I thought you would be glad!"

"Did I not tell you, then, that I forgave you, Agnes?"

"Yes—but—but—I have deserved this, Barbarine! I have filled the cup for myself, and now I drink it to the dregs."

And Barbarine, tender and pitiful as she was, felt that it was true! And she was avenged.

Especially to Women.

—"Sweet is revenge, especially to women," said the gifted, but naughty, Lord Byron. Surely he was in bad humor when he wrote such words. But there are complaints that only women suffer, that are carrying numbers of them down to early graves. There is hope for those who suffer, no matter how sorely, or severely, in Dr. R. V. Pierce's "Favorite Prescription." Safe in its action it is a blessing, *especially to women*, and to men, too, for when women suffer, the household is askew.

In a marriage register in the Church of St. James, Bury St. Edmunds, says an English journal, the following curious notice appears: "1832, Nov. 5, Christopher Newman, Charity Morrall. Charity Morrell being entirely without arms, the ring was placed upon the fourth toe of the left foot, and she wrote her name in the register with her right foot."

—You invite disease when you neglect a regular action of the bowels, and incurable disease may result. Regulate the bowels and the entire system with Burdock Blood Bitters, which acts upon the bowels, stomach, liver and blood. 246

A man who went hunting in the wild mountainous region near Stratton, Vt., recently, was found dead after three days, with his gun lodged in a crevice of the rocks, where apparently it had accidentally discharged both barrels into his body. The snow was tramped hard about the corpse by the efforts of his dog to arouse and comfort his master.

—S. Chadwick, of Arcadia, Wayne Co., writes: "I have had severe attacks of asthma for several years. I commenced taking Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil. The first dose relieved me in one hour. I continued taking it in teaspoonful doses for a few days, and have not had an attack of it since, now nearly one year."

Bad Improvement.

—The great drawback to the silk and pull-over hat is their weight and hardness to the head, giving the hatter trouble to sell besides being uncomfortable to the wearer. The trouble has been to make a light hat and have it stand and keep its shape. This has been accomplished by Smith, the hatter. By carefully selecting his materials and by use of the patent steel wire for the brims he has built a silk hat fitting as easy as a soft hat, and after a trial of six months there is not a man having worn one but that gives it the preference, and praises the maker for introducing what has long been wanting. ed-x

Gentleman: "How are matters progressing in the church, Uncle Rastus—flourishing?" Uncle Rastus: "I 'laint preachin' ds no mo', sah." Gentleman: "Why, what's the trouble?" Uncle Rastus: "Ellis all owin' ter de drought, sah." Gentleman: "The drought?" Uncle Rastus: "Yes, sah. Yo' see, I prayed fo' rain fo' foah Sundays in concession, sah, an' da didn't no rain come, an' so de membahs ob de congregashun axed fo' my resignashun on de groun' ob disinnability."

—What a comfort to be able to gratify one's appetite once more without pain, after long suffering from dyspepsia! Victims of indigestion wise enough to accept the general verdict in favor of Northrop & Lyman's Vegetable Discovery and Dyspeptic Cure as true, and use the article, can enjoy the welcome relief. Obstinate dyspepsia, constipation and biliousness, invariably yield to its potent regulating action.

At a fashionable dinner party Goldmark is introduced to a pretty young lady from the country. It appears to him that she does not seem sufficiently impressed with the honor she has just received, and so he adds as a gentle reminder: "Carl Goldmark, the composer of the 'Queen of Sheba.'" Whereupon the rural belle, with charming naïveta, replies: "Remunerative position; isn't it?" Goldmark withdraws in disgust.

No More Restless Nights.

—"Hallamore's Expectorant," is a most certain and speedy remedy for bronchitis, coughs and all chest troubles. In the nursery it is invaluable, as children are fond of it and take it readily. Coughing ceases immediately it is taken; restlessness is gone and refreshing sleep ensues. In 25 cent bottles at all drug stores. edx

"Layin' out another railroad?" "Surveying for one," was the reply. "Gets threw my barn?" "Don's see how we can avoid it." "Wall, now, mister, I calkerlate I've got sumthin' few say 'bout that. I want you to understan' that I've got sumthin' else tew dew besides running out tew open and shet them doors every time a train wants to go threw."

—A lady writes: "I was enabled to remove the corns, root and branch, by the use of Holloway's Corn Cure," who have tried it have the same experience.

Stranger (to little boy near Riverside Park): "Can you direct me to General Grant's tomb, boy?" Little boy: "Yes, sir. Keep straight ahead till you come to a peanut booth. Cross over to de hard-boiled egg and sausage shanty, an' ax de man in charge where de rifle gallery is, then find out where the ten-pin alley is, and just beyond that is de tomb."

"Health Saved is Health Gained."

—Save it from the trying effects of coughs or colds by a timely and judicious use of "Hallamore's Expectorant," a preparation containing the purest, safest and best known ingredients for the prompt relief and cure of all such troubles. In 25 cent bottles at all drug stores. edx

Dumley had related a side-splitting joke, and the company laughed consumedly. Featherly seemed to be particularly amused. "Rather good, eh, Featherly?" said Dumley, very much pleased. "Y-yes, indeed," replied Featherly, as soon as he could articulate. "It's g-good every time, Dumley—g-good every time."

—It may be only a trifling cold, but neglect it and it will fasten its fangs in your lungs, and you will soon be carried to an untimely grave. In this country we have sudden changes and must expect to have coughs and colds. We cannot avoid them, but we can effect a cure by using Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup, the medicine that has never been known to fail in curing coughs, colds, bronchitis and all affections of the throat, lungs and chest.

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—These common and dangerous complaints are due to a bad condition of the fluids, unhealthy changes in the blood and secretions—the liver being equally at fault with the kidneys. Regulate these conditions with Burdock Blood Bitters, one of the best system renovators known to medical science. 246

Tramp (at the back door): "Will you please give me something to eat?" Woman: "Not a thing." Tramp: "Nor nuthin to drink." Woman: "Nor nuthin' to drink." Tramp: "No cast-off clothes?" Woman: "None." Tramp: "Well, would you tell a poor, unfortunate man what time it is?"

—Free and easy expectoration immediately relieves and frees the throat and lungs from viscid phlegm, and a medicine that promotes this is the best medicine to use for coughs, colds, inflammation of the lungs and all affections of the throat and chest. This is precisely what Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup is a specific for, and wherever used it has given unbounded satisfaction. Children like it because it is pleasant, adults like it because it relieves and cures the disease.

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Said William to Martha: "But you must remember, my dear, that my taste is better than yours." Said Martha to William: "Undoubtedly, when we come to remember that you married me and I married you." And William said not a word, but seemed to be thinking.

—Worms derange the whole system. Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator deranges worms, and gives rest to the sufferer. It only costs twenty-five cents to try it and be convinced.

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—Opium, morphine and kindred habits. Valuable treatise sent free. The medicine may be given in a cup of tea or coffee, and without the knowledge of the person taking it, if so desired. Send two 3c. stamps for full particulars and testimonials of those who have been cured. Address M. V., Luban, agency, 47 Wellington street east, Toronto, Canada. 6d

Small boy (in store): "I want to get a Christmas present for the mother." Proprietor: "How would a pair of slippers do, sonny?" Small boy: "Have you got 'em made of cloth, an' without any heels?" Proprietor: "Yes." Small boy (eagerly) "Gimme a pair."

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