

## \* \* The Story Page. \* \*

### In Her Place.

Arthur Robinson was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. He had always been a good son to her, and, because of his devotion, she loved him with that blind adoration mothers often feel for an only child. He was all the world to her, and, if she thought at all upon the other side of the question, she supposed she was to him. So she gave a little start of surprise as he said at breakfast one Saturday morning, "Mother, I'd like to bring you some company this afternoon; may I?"

"Certainly, dear; who is it, one of the boys from the office?"

Arthur's face flushed, as he answered, "Oh, no, mother, it's Mr. Taylor's daughter, Mary. You know Mr. Taylor has invited me there a good many times, and every time I went I liked her better, until, mother, I knew I couldn't be happy without her, and so I told her so, and she has promised to come here to stay some day. So I want to bring her to see you. I know you will like her. Aren't you glad?" he added, in the boyish way his mother had always thought especially charming.

"I am always glad when you are happy, Arthur," answered his mother.

Her tone lacked the fervor Arthur had expected, so he went away a little disappointed, and all the morning Mrs. Robinson went sorrowfully about her simple household duties. These new hopes of Arthur's had been such a surprise to her. True, she had often heard him speak of going to Mr. Taylor's home to dinner and to spend the evening, but she had never thought that the Miss Taylor whom he mentioned was more to him than any acquaintance. Mr. Taylor filled a responsible position in the office where Arthur was employed, commanding a large salary, and was able to give his family a much more luxurious home than this modest one of hers.

As she carefully washed and set away the delicate china which had been her mother's, she wondered how long it would be before they all were broken, for, of course, brought up as Miss Taylor had been, she would know nothing of housekeeping. Then, with the unselfishness which is such a beautiful characteristic of mother love, she said, "There, how silly I am! I chose for myself and never regretted it, and I guess Arthur can do the same. She must be a nice girl or he wouldn't love her. So I'll do my best this afternoon."

Accordingly, she met them with her sweet and gracious courtesy, brought out slices of the pound cake, on which she prided herself, and served tea in her delicate cups. But still, Arthur was conscious that the call was not all he had hoped. The world in which his mother had always lived was too different from Mary's for them to blend immediately.

Next day his mother praised her sweet face and stately form, and Arthur said, "Yes, she is lovely, and when she is your daughter she will be such a help and comfort to you, mother."

The mother answered, "Yes, I hope we'll all be very happy."

"Indeed we will, mother dear; only three months more."

The three months sped away, and one golden October day, in the presence of loving friends, Arthur Robinson and Mary Taylor made the solemn promises which were to affect their whole lives for better or for worse, and it was all over. Rather it had just begun, for another new home was founded, with all its almost infinite possibilities for good or ill.

As soon as Arthur brought his bride home, Mrs. Robinson resigned her place as mistress, saying, "Here, my dear, this is Arthur's house, and it is only right that you should be at its head. I'll try never to interfere with you, but if you want my advice I will be glad to give it. However, I think you will get on nicely, for I have Lucy well trained now."

"Thank you, I hope to," answered young Mrs. Robinson.

Thus her mother-in-law, old Mrs. Robinson, now became an observer in the house where she had so long been chief actor. From her quiet post of observation she began to see strange things. It seemed that Lucy's training, on which she had so prided herself, had been all wrong. The very first day changes began.

"Don't set the table in that old-fashioned way, Lucy. It takes away my appetite to see it. Put the knife and forks here like this."

So Lucy began learning the new ways. In cooking she had even more trouble. All the dishes on which Mrs. Robinson had prided herself, and whose preparation she had so carefully taught Lucy, were set aside and concoctions from a modern cook book were substituted. Mary had taken a course at cooking school, so thought advice quite unnecessary, though the family were in eminent peril of indigestion as a result of her crude efforts.

Arthur, like the average man, was very susceptible to well cooked meals, and one day, when a more pronounced

failure than usual appeared at the table, he said, "Mary, I wish you'd tell Lucy how to do this better, or get mother to show her."

Mary answered, "I am sorry you don't like it, dear."

But she failed to explain that she would not let Lucy do it after her own way, and his mother said nothing, because she knew it was useless. Then an uncomfortable silence settled over all three, and Arthur wondered to himself why his mother wasn't more helpful to Mary.

All Mrs. Robinson's cherished household goods were set away, too. Of course it was natural that Mrs. Arthur should want her wedding gifts to have a prominent place, but there was room enough for both, and it did grieve the old lady when her cherished mahogany, her oil paintings, and the dainty china were banished to her own room. But for love of Arthur she kept quiet.

One day, however, came a more startling innovation. In the good old times she and Arthur had spent their leisure in the dining room. It was large, cheerful and more homelike than the parlor. Moreover, who ever knew a woman of a generation ago to use her parlor except for callers and visitors. But Mrs. Arthur would not endure eating in a room that was used as a sitting room. There was no reason why they couldn't sit upstairs when they were alone. So, though Arthur gave a mild protest, she won the day, and Arthur and his bride spent the evenings in their own room, while his mother must do likewise. Sometimes she joined them, but she felt Mary was happier without her, and so her evenings were mostly solitary. And as she sat in her own room and listened to the gay laughter across the hall, she evolved a plan, which she soon broached to her son as follows:

"Arthur, I think I'll go to stay with Cousin Maria awhile."

"With Cousin Maria, mother? You used to say you always found her so wearying."

"Oh, Maria has her good qualities," answered his mother evasively, "and young people are better off alone."

And so, though Arthur protested that his mother was a necessary part of his home, Mrs. Robinson was firm in her resolution to go. Even Mary missed the dear old lady after her departure, and, on her occasional visits, tried to persuade her to stay. Still she was very happy with Arthur; and when one day God sent a tiny Arthur the second to gladden their hearts, there seemed nothing more to be desired.

As she sat holding her boy, she used, after the manner of mothers, to plan for his future—what a great and good man he should be; he would care for his father and mother so tenderly in their old age, and when one of them should be left alone, she knew her boy would bring that desolate parent to his own home, there with children and grandchildren to peacefully end his days. Then, like a flash came the thought, "His wife may not like you in their home." Then, for the first time, she put herself in Mrs. Robinson's place, and looked at the events of the past few months from her standpoint.

As a result of that review, she said, "Yes we'll do it this very morning, Arthur, boy. We'll surprise papa and grandma, too. She hasn't seen you in three weeks, and I know she wants to."

Old Mrs. Robinson was surprised to see her daughter-in-law and the wonderful baby. But she was still more astonished when that stately young woman kissed her tenderly and said, "Can you ever forgive me mother, dear? If you can, please get ready, for baby and I have come to take you home with us to stay; won't you please come?"

Being a wise woman, she asked for no explanation, but heartily returned the kiss, "Certainly, dear; I'll stay as long as you want me."

And to this day the Robinson home is one of the happiest I know, because the touch of baby fingers taught this young mother the lesson of putting herself in another's place.—Ex.

### \* \* Averting A Tragedy. \* \*

BY CAROLINE K. HERRICK.

The children had been sent to bed, and Mrs. Berkeley sat talking to her brother of all that had happened in her home since his last visit, more than a year ago. The talk was largely of the little motherless niece, to whom she had given a mother's care for three years past, now doubly orphaned by her father's death.

"The child grows dearer to me every day," she said. "If my boys had a sister, I think I could hardly love her better than I love poor George's child. She has such a loving, sensitive nature. You should see her when I am telling the children the story of Jesus' life of love; of his pity for the poor and sick, his tenderness to the children. The whole story is as real to her as the daily news is to me. She can hardly believe that his own brethren did not believe and love him, and her eyes fill with tears when I tell how his enemies put him to

death. She is one of the "pure in heart" who "see God," and the sense of his nearness that my soul longs for, and strives after, and realizes only in rare moments of exaltation, is to her a common element of daily life. My little Hilda is God's messenger to me, constantly reminding me that to enter into the kingdom of heaven now, in this life, I must 'become as a little child,'—really meaning what I pray, really believing what I say I believe, making the Lord Jesus a living, ever-present friend, not merely the hero of a thrilling story of long ago."

"Yes," said her brother, "few of us realize how much we may learn from the children. We feel so superior in our larger experience. We recognize our responsibility to teach them, but we too often forget that we must go back and look with their eyes at the things we would teach them, before we can know how best to reach the child's mind. That was a good idea of yours, to make an album of pictures from the life of our Lord, to teach the children from. Were the pictures I sent you from Dresden what you wanted?"

"Exactly what I wanted. They make a complete series, and are so well chosen. Some are quite new to me. One of the new ones I have put among those of which I am going to have lantern-slides made for our stereopticon entertainment at Christmas. It represents the crucifixion, and treats the subject in a manner quite different from the conventional rendering with which we are so familiar. The artist's name does not appear on it, but you will recognize it by my description. The three crosses are placed on one side of the picture, the central one in advance of the other two, which are dimly seen in shadow, while a strong light falls on the figure of the Saviour, seen in profile, sharply relieved against a background of somber clouds. The knees are drawn up, so far as the nailed feet will permit, the body hangs heavily forward on the strained arms, the head is thrown backward, and the parted lips seem to utter a cry that can be heard. Every line expresses utmost agony. I have never seen anything that made me realize so vividly how terrible death by crucifixion must be."

"I remember the picture," said Mr. Grandon, "and did not intend to have it included among those I sent. I thought it too dreadfully realistic. By the way," he added, "I have some other pictures which you may like to see. I got them out West last year, when I went there, before sailing for Europe, to learn the particulars of George's death, about which I wrote you at the time. You will remember, I told you he had been murdered by the Indians."—Mrs. Berkeley shuddered, and raised a protesting hand,—"and I have brought a number of photos of Indians in their war paint, to show what fiendish-looking creatures they are, and a picture representing the scene of one of their raids, with the mangled bodies lying around. The face of one of these looks very much like George. If I show it to Hilda, it will make her understand, better than any description can, just how her father died. You know the way they do,—gathering together the hair on the top of the head, and"—

His words were cut short by his sister's hand laid over his mouth.

"Mark Grandon!" she cried, almost in a shriek, "are you beside yourself? Have you lost all sense of pity? Must you not only torture me with the horrible details of my dear brother's murder, but even propose to show your awful pictures and tell your barbarous story to that innocent, tender-hearted child, who shudders when she sees a horse whipped, and cries for pity over a hurt kitten? O brother!" she went on, her indignation softening into reproach, "you couldn't be so unfeeling if you had been here when I had to tell my poor lamb that her father was dead,—and dead by violence. She knew her father had gone out there to work for her sake, and the thought intensified her grief when she heard of his death. She broke away from my arms and threw herself upon her bed, crying, 'Auntie, O auntie! he did it for me; he went among those wicked men for me!' What a cruel monster I felt myself! How I wished I could have concealed the horrible fact, and let her suppose he died in some illness! If you had seen that poor child's agony, you would rather cut off your hand than revive it!"—with added intensity—"by showing her those shocking pictures."

"My dear sister," said Mr. Grandon, "you need not fear that I will ever show the pictures to Hilda. I deceived you only for a moment, in order to urge, by illustration rather than by argument, the request I am going to make. Do not show the children of your Sunday School that picture of the crucifixion. You may say they are familiar with pictures of the subject. So much the worse. But you need not give them the more painful shock that would be conveyed by a picture shown as you propose to show this. Think how it will look to the children! The darkened hall,—most children are nervous in the dark; nothing visible but the brilliantly

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