

ROSE ISLAND

By Lilian Leveridge

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Sun Breaks Through.

"If the clouds be dense above us
 And the world is in the wet,
 Still the winds are on the uplands,
 We can hear the music yet;
 Past the duskiness and dimness
 Come the gleam rays into view,
 As the heralds of the splendour,
 When the sun breaks through."
 —Llewellyn A. Morrison.

MAY was well advanced when Barry Sutherland came to Rose Island. June and Brownie could scarcely restrain their joy when told that he was to come and spend the rest of his life there; and for their sakes Robin, too, was glad. With youth's hopefulness they made up their minds that he would soon be well and strong again, and the dread thought of death faded away to a dim, far-away uncertainty.

Careful and loving preparations were made for his reception. Hilda gave up her own room to him, because, being on the ground floor, it was cool and convenient; and she and June worked together to make it as inviting as possible. When it had been freshly "done up" with dainty wild-rose paper and art muslin to match, June brought to it the most beautiful of her ferns and flowers, converting it into a bower of wild, artless loveliness as fair and sweet as her thought could devise.

When the hour of her father's arrival drew near, June could scarcely restrain her impatience. But the first glimpse of his pale, tired face, so different from the face she remembered, instantly checked the exuberance of her spirits.

"Daddy, dear, dear Daddy!" she said softly, allowing herself and Brownie only a brief, gentle embrace; for Daddy had borne just about all he could stand, and was unutterably thankful to go to bed at once in the fragrant, flowery room allotted to him.

After a long sleep he awoke refreshed and called his children to his bedside. "I haven't had a good look at you, yet," he smiled. "How you have both grown! and how well you look! But I don't wonder at it, living in such an ideal spot. You don't know how good it feels to be here. It seems as if I have drifted into a little corner of Heaven."

"O Daddy!" June cried ecstatically, "Do you like Rose Island? Do you like your room?"

"Like it!" His eyes brightened as they fell on the profuse display of flowers and ferns. "Like it! It is sweeter than anything I have ever dreamed."

"I'm so glad you are pleased. And you'll soon get well now, Daddy, won't you?" June asked half wistfully.

Daddy smiled and did not contradict her. "Perhaps so," he replied.

In a few days Barry Sutherland began steadily to improve. The sweet life-giving air which, whether indoors or out, he breathed continually day and night, the rest, good food, good care, pleasant surroundings, and freedom from anxiety, all contributed to fight against the power of the disease. Little by little he became able to exert himself more, and could even enjoy a row on the lake with the young folks.

While the latter were away at school, he and Hilda had many a long talk together. They had never really known each other perfectly before, for since Barry's early boyhood they had drifted apart. Their home had been in a backward country place where for years there had been no school. When at last a school had been built, Hilda, being the eldest of the family, had grown too useful to be spared much from home, and her scant education had been acquired in too desultory a fashion to inspire her with much ambition for self-improvement. Barry,

the youngest, an unusually bright and studious boy, had, on the other hand, come in for all the advantages. These he had seized and used to the utmost of his powers, working his way through high school and even a term at college. Hence came the strange diversity between the brother and sister. Barry had been a successful student, but failing to find the work best suited to his particular bent, had been all but a failure as a business man. Now that his dreams had not been fulfilled and his checkered career seemed drawing to a close, he felt that he had a poor account indeed to offer of his stewardship.

In this peaceful little haven, however, he tried to shake off all vain regrets, and felt grateful for daily blessings. To enter into his children's varied interests, help them in their studies, enthuse with them over the beautiful things of the wild, and best of all, to hear June play and sing to him in the quiet evenings, were his daily joys.

June, the month of flowers and sunshine, was making the world beautiful, but no spot had her bounteous hand more lovingly touched than Rose Island. The fragile, woodsy wildings had made themselves perfectly at home, and were blooming luxuriantly on every hand. But the roses, rioting in all their regal splendour, put their frailer sisters in the shade. Again there were roses, roses everywhere. They tapped coyly at the windows and peeped in at the open door; they trooped in radiant ranks up and down the pathways, and crowded to the water's edge, and their perfume filled the air with intoxicating sweetness. Never had the island so fully justified its name.

But, sudden and appalling, a shadow fell upon Rose Island, touching the hearts of all the inhabitants with a chill. June alone understood the mystery, and her lips were sealed.

On the day before the trial examination, which was to be set by Miss Cameron, June went very early to school to study a lesson she had forgotten to bring home. Upon her arrival she was met at the gate by her seat-mate, Janie Francis, a member of the Entrance Class, who seemed to have been waiting for her. Janie's face was very pale, and wore a look of distress.

"O June," she exclaimed in a low tone, "how lucky that you came early! I'm in such a fix, and I want you to help me. There isn't another girl who will, I know. Do say you'll stand by me and help me out."

"Why Janie, what ever is the matter?" June asked.

"I'll tell you if you'll promise not to breathe a word of it to anybody. If you won't promise, I can't."

"Of course I'll promise. Go on."

"Well, its this way. I'm awfully behind in arithmetic, as you know. You're bad enough, but I'm ten times worse. I know I should fail in the trial exam; it's very likely to be harder than the final. And I've got to pass. You don't understand, but I simply must. If I could only get through this I'd do my best to be ready for the final. It isn't altogether my fault that I'm behind. I've had to stay home so much, and lately I haven't felt a bit well; my head aches nearly all the time, and it is so hard to study. But I must hurry and tell you. Yesterday at the last recess when there was nobody in the school-room I got Miss Cameron's note book out of her desk—the one she has the examination papers in—and I copied the arithmetic paper."

"O Janie! What an awful thing to do! How could you?"

"I knew you'd be shocked, but I can't help it. I didn't have a chance to put the book back before she locked her desk, and it's in our desk now. It's got to be put back the first chance there is, for I'm scared of my life she'll find it out; but I'm so sick I can hardly stand up, and I'll have to go right home. If you'll only watch

for a chance and put it back, June, I'll be forever grateful. Do promise me you will." June was in great distress. This was a difficult problem to face, and it seemed hard to know what she ought to do. "Janie," she ventured at last timidly. "It's wicked for you to do such a thing. You ought to own up to Miss Cameron."

"Oh, please don't begin to preach, June. I can't think of such a thing. I'd die first. What ever is right or wrong for me, it can't be wrong for you to help me. I'm feeling worse every minute. Do please promise, and let me go home."

The girl certainly looked very ill, and with great reluctance June gave the promise.

"Oh, thank you, awfully!" Janie responded. "And now, you won't tell, will you? You'll promise on your word of honour that you'll try your best not to let anybody find it out."

"Yes, I promise on my word of honour."

"It's so good of you, June. I'll never forget it, never! I think you can manage it easily. And now I must go right home."

In a few minutes Janie had disappeared, having rolled her burden upon June, who felt almost as guilty as if she were an accomplice in a crime. Shortly afterwards the others began to arrive, and at five minutes to nine Miss Cameron came. There was no chance yet to accomplish the dreaded task.

June remained in her seat at recess, and at last the opportunity came. Miss Cameron had gone out, and she was alone in the school-room. With feverish haste and heart beating almost to suffocation, she seized the note book and hurried with it to the teacher's desk. Just as she was stepping on to the platform, Miss Cameron's well-known step sounded on the floor, and June was so startled that she dropped the book. She stooped hurriedly to pick it up, but her fingers trembled so that she dropped it a second time.

"Why June!" said Miss Cameron in a tone of great surprise, "What ever are you doing with that book?" June did not speak, but her appearance was as of one caught red-handed in a criminal act.

Ruth Cameron looked at her pupil in silent amazement, and then her own face went white. Robin and several others came in at that moment and stood gazing wonderingly at the scene upon the platform.

"June," said Ruth almost sternly, "tell me what this means."

June covered her face with her trembling hands, but did not answer.

Ruth laid her hand gently upon the girl's shoulder. "I don't understand, June," she said half pleadingly. "I can't believe you have been guilty of reading those papers. Tell me how you came to have my book."

Then June's drooping form shook with a sudden storm of sobs. Ruth told her to take her seat; and the work of the morning went on. The teacher did not say another word on the subject. Everyone knew what had happened, for those who had not seen had been told.

At noon Ruth detained June for a little while alone and tried to win her confidence, but in vain. Silence and tears were the only response she could obtain. Robin himself was equally unsuccessful.

As Ruth after her fruitless efforts was turning away she noticed a folded sheet of paper that had fallen from June's desk to the floor. She picked it up and unfolded it, and there met her eyes a copy of the arithmetic examination paper. The words were printed as if to ensure the writer against discovery.

"Is this your work?" Ruth asked after having carefully examined it.

"June's lips quivered again, but still she did not speak.

"June," Ruth said then with a stern sadness, "Only a positive and outspoken denial of this, with a satisfac-

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tory explanation of your conduct can save you now. Everything points to your guilt. I shall not mention this matter to you again to-day, and will give you only until to-morrow to confess or explain."

The unhappy girl still made no response, and so that long, bitter day wore away. On the way home June asked the boys not to mention what had happened. They promised, and kept their word. June's pale face and heavy eyes were explained by a headache. She retired early, and nothing was found out that night.

Mr. Sutherland and Hilda were greatly concerned about June's appearance next morning, and were afraid that her studies were proving too much for her. It would not do for her to be absent to-day; but they cautioned her to take as much rest as possible.

(To be continued.)

Bronze statues in Belgian cemeteries have been taken for war purposes by the Germans, according to official despatches here to-day. A semi-official estimate of the economic depredations of German invaders in Belgium places the damage at more than 8,000,000,000 francs, of which \$1,440,900,000 was in cash up to the end of last August.

Rheumatism Entirely Gone

After Twenty-seven Years of Suffering—Swelling and Puffiness Has Disappeared—Not a Pain or an Ache Left.

A most astonishing cure of rheumatism and eczema has been reported here, and Mrs. Ray is enthusiastic in telling her many friends how cure was effected.

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