

She Promised Mr. Warde

"Gwendolen, is your knee in that chair? Why, my dear, one would think you were a child of five."

"My dear Gwendolen, do stop drumming on the window—such a lack of dignity."

Gwen stood up stiffly. "I suppose you mean that you don't like to see an old maid doing anything except old maidly things," she said as cuttingly as she dared.

Francesca and Harriet looked at her, at their mother and at each other. "Is there nothing you can do which would not be 'old maidly,' as you call it?" asked Harriet mildly.

"What shall I do?" demanded Gwen.

"Can't you read to aunt?"

"No, I can't," interrupted Gwen fiercely. "I'm as hoarse as a crow from screaming into aunt's ear-trumpet for an hour."

"Have you practiced this?" began Francesca.

"Practiced?" repeated her youngest sister, with still greater scorn.

"What for? Haven't I practiced fifteen years for nothing? Nobody wants to hear me play. It's a perfect farce, doing things just because other people do them. I shan't do it any longer though." And Gwen, her tall figure quivering with defiance, rushed out of the parlor and up to her room.

Poor Gwen! She was the youngest and had therefore never grown out of childhood in her sister's eyes.

Harriet and Francesca, aged respectively forty and forty-four, were so used to managing the housekeeping, their mother, the parish charitable work, the rector and sometimes the rector's assistant, who had only been there since Christmas, that they naturally expected to keep on managing their little sister too.

Gwen did not agree. She beat helplessly round in her cage, the great, gloomy house where her two energetic sisters were always criticizing, commanding and forbidding.

She threw herself on the bed and tried not to cry.

Harriet stood in the doorway, and Gwen had jumped to her feet.

"Gwendolen, Mr. Warde is down stairs, and he has asked for you."

"He probably wants me to go and visit old women," said Gwen. "I shan't. I hate old women."

But Harriet had gone down stairs again to talk to the young assistant.

Gwen followed slowly.

Francesca looked up first when Gwen opened the parlor door.

"Mr. Warde has come to ask us all to help with the services during Lent, Gwendolen," she said briskly.

"He wants us to sing in the volunteer choir. I told him you would like to very much."

Gwen bit her lip and looked straight ahead.

Mr. Warde waited politely until Francesca had finished, then he turned to Gwen. "You know I have charge of the Lenten services, and I want them to be as beautiful as we can make them," he said, his eyes on her steadily. "I want to get some one to play for us too. Can't you help me to find some one, Miss Gwen?"

"Oh, Mr. Warde, let me play!"

For a moment there was a stunned silence, while poor Gwen's words rang back to her shrilly.

But Mr. Warde was smiling. "It will be a great pleasure to have you take it," he said.

His answer broke the spell. Francesca and Harriet rose as one to protest. "Why, Gwendolen, what a thing to ask! Of course she couldn't, Mr. Warde."

"Why, certainly she can do it. Can't you, Miss Gwen?"

But her fine flare of courage was gone. "I don't know," she stammered.

"Nonsense, child! Of course you can't. She'll be very glad to sing with us, Mr. Warde." Harriet smiled for all of them, chiefly for Gwen, who had shrunk into herself again.

Mr. Warde looked at her keenly. Gwen changed color when he took her hand at parting. His eyes looked into her frightened ones as if he understood.

That helped Gwen to bear the criticism that followed with more composure than usual. She even smiled a little as she went down to the village after the evening mail.

But her eyes filled as she thought of the afternoon. She knew she could play on the big organ after a week's practice. She had done it before for the Sunday school. She would do it just because Mr. Warde had asked her. She gave a scared start. A black coated figure had stopped before her.

"May I turn back with you?" Mr. Warde's kind eyes pretended not to see the tears in Gwen's. "I want to ask you when you will come over to practice," he went on, quite as if it were a settled thing.

"I knew that you could play."

have heard you often as I passed the house," he explained when she looked at him bewildered. "You will not fail me, will you?" he asked, with an abrupt earnestness that sent the blood flying to Gwen's pale cheeks.

"Because," he said, "it would be a great, a very great, disappointment to me."

"No," answered Gwen, scarcely realizing what she said. "I promise to come."

She only half heard what Mr. Warde was talking about as he walked back with her. She was living in a dream. But at the gate, as he turned to leave her, she gasped.

"Please don't tell them that I have promised," and was gone.

But, though she did not see it, Mr. Warde looked after her as though he understood.

"Where are you going, Gwen?" asked Harriet cheerfully. Gwen started nervously and looked around. It was 8 o'clock Monday afternoon as the elder sister came suddenly into the hall and met Gwen, who was hurrying toward the front door in a suspiciously silent manner.

"I'm going down town answered Gwen.

"Well, wait and I will go with you."

Gwen took a great breath.

"I—I can't wait, Harriet. I've an engagement."

Harriet smiled. "An engagement, eh?" She was always good naturedly indulgent of her sister's "childish ways." "And it can't wait?"

"No, it can't. I've promised Mr. Warde that I'd be there at 4."

"Mr. Warde! You've promised him?" Harriet stared. What did this sudden independence mean?

Harriet came close to the door. She was large and fair and had a smiling determination. Gwen did not look up. She knew that one glance from those large, light blue eyes would defeat her bravest plans. Suddenly she flung up her head, her eyes sparkling. "I have promised to help him, and I am going now!"

And, flinging open the front door, she rushed into Mr. Warde's arms as he walked up the steps.

"Oh, Mr. Warde!" she began.

"Why, Miss Gwen, what is this?" he asked, with some alarm, for she was sobbing hysterically and clinging to his sleeve.

At that moment he saw Harriet. Instantly he turned and bent his head close to Gwen's, and, holding her hands firmly in his, he said softly: "Gwen, I had not meant to ask you yet, but—Gwen, will you marry me some day? Answer me, dear, before you look up, and then we will go in together."

And low as her answer was he smiled when he heard it.

"Yes," said Gwen, "if—if Harriet will let me."

AFFAIRS IN THE YUKON

As Reported in Toronto by G. H. Hees

Paid 25 Cents for Hard or Soft Drinks—Falling Off in Gold Output.

Some of the social and economical conditions in the Yukon are touched upon in a report made by Mr. Geo. H. Hees, chairman of the Commercial Intelligence Committee of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, and which appears in the current issue of Industrial Canada. Mr. Hees went to Dawson City early in June to investigate affairs in the Yukon in the interests of the association. Mr. Hees points out that the number of business houses in Dawson is on the decrease, there being now about 67, which include several large transportation and trading companies owning their own steamers and trading on a large scale. The buyers of these companies make semi-annual trips to the east, buy a whole season's supply of goods and have them ready to ship up the Yukon on the opening of navigation.

The fabulous prices that once ruled for all the necessities of life in the Yukon are now of the past, although many of the prices in Dawson even now seem to the easterner unnecessarily high. At one time, Mr. Hees states upon the authority of Governor Ross, a dollar in the east would buy as much as six dollars in Dawson, but the difference now is about one to four and a half. No coin less than 25 cents is used in the Klondike. The three daily papers—smaller than our one cent papers—sell at 25 cents each, \$4 a month, \$40 per year in advance. All drinks, hard or soft, 25 cents, but all mixed liquors 50 cents, poor cigars 25 cents, or three fair ones for \$1.

A leading barrister thought he had passed the period of being surprised at Dawson prices, but one morning when he was charged 25 cents for a pair of common shoe laces he thought the price rather steep. Rents are very high. An office that rents in Toronto for \$80 per month would bring \$130 in Dawson. Small shops rent from \$10 to \$20 a day in addition room girls get \$100 per month and house servants from \$75 to \$125 per month. Hotel charges are more reasonable. A small room \$2.50 per day, breakfast or lunch 75c and dinner \$1; the meals are better than might be expected under the circumstances. Sample rooms from \$5 to \$10 per day, hauling baggage \$1 per piece.

Dawson has two banks which charge interest at the rate of 18 per cent per annum. Mr. Hees makes this statement in his report.

"I quoted to Governor Ross the remarks recently made in Toronto by Mr. Wade in a lecture before the Canadian Club, which was afterwards published in pamphlet form and scattered broadcast throughout Canada. He said, 'When I tell you that only 50 miles had been worked and that there are 7,000 miles of creeks in the Yukon, almost all of which are unprospected, you can have some idea of the future which lies before that country.' Governor Ross said 'that statement is misleading and should not have been made.' Since 1897 hundreds and thousands of prospectors have been exploring and prospecting every creek and mountain in that country, and no new discoveries of importance have been made for more than a year.

"I have permission from Mr. Senker, Canadian Assistant Gold Commissioner, to use his name as saying 'The output of gold in the Klondike last year was over \$21,000,000. The production of the coming year, according to the government's estimates, will not exceed \$14,000,000—a falling off of nearly one-half. The reason for this very large decline is that the old creeks or 'finds' are being worked up, and no new discoveries have been made for more than a year.' The hope of the Klondike now is the discovery of gold-bearing quartz of sufficient richness to pay to work. So far no such quartz has been discovered."

Many of the mines on the creeks, Mr. Hees states, are being worked to their full capacity. Many are being half-worked. Many are working over their second or "tailings," and many of the mines have been worked out and are abandoned. It will take many years—some say ten to twenty years—to work out the mines already discovered. The mines are now in the hands of those who have capital to work them, and they are being worked for all they are worth. It only follows, unless new fields are discovered, that the yield will grow smaller and smaller year by year.

There is now in Dawson a great surplus of laborers, who are ready and eager to go to work. Mr. Hees was told that there are ten applicants for every job available, any yet boat load after boat load of adventurers are arriving almost daily to swell the crowd of idlers. Knowing these conditions and seeing in almost every issue of the Seattle, San Francisco and other papers the glowing accounts of the Klondike he cannot help feeling that the transportation companies are responsible for those alluring stories. Dawson is about 4,500 miles from Toronto. From St. Michael to Vancouver is about 2,800 miles and from St. Michael up the Yukon to Dawson is about 1,400 miles. The Yukon is navigable for light draught boats 1,760 miles. The cost of a two months' trip would be between \$500 and \$600.—Toronto Globe.

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man's body was brought to the surface. It was brought to this city and the coroner's office notified. The body was taken to Butterworth's, where it will be held pending arrangements for the funeral.

Addleman had charge of the steamer Gazelle by night, and although only 21 years old, had been engaged in lake navigations for three years. He was a member of the Ancient Order of United Workmen. He leaves a mother, two brothers and three sisters surviving. His father was a member of the ill-fated Loyal party, which left Seattle early in the spring of 1899 for Kotzebue sound, and which was lost at sea.

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