

LEAD TO SACRIFICE.

THE MAN WHO WANTS' ELEGANT FURNITURE.

"I don't think I can let her go," said Mr. Cleve, shaking his head over and over again, while his eldest daughter's letters lay in his lap and the spectacles yet poised judiciously on his nose.

The November wind was howling dimly through the branches of the huge old sycamore trees which overhung the farmhouse chimneys, and the first snow-flakes of the season were beginning to flutter mistily through the air, and Alice Cleve had just come from the postoffice with a letter from her married sister, Farmer Cleve's daughter, by her first wife, who had married a rich lawyer and gone to live in the city years ago, and who was nearly old enough to be the mother of the blue-eyed darling of the farmer's old age.

"Oh! let her go, father," said Mrs. Cleve the second, who stood in a sort of admiring awe of her wealthy and aristocratic step-daughter. "Only think of it, father, a winter in New York, and the child has never been out of Blue Hills all her days!"

Little Alice crept closer to her father's side, with blue eyes aglow, and lips wreathed into radiant smiles.

"Papa, may I go?"

"Do you want to go and leave your old father, pass?"

"Papa, I don't want to go," sobbed Alice, "I don't want to go!"

"Nonsense, nonsense!" cried the farmer, cheerily. "And what would become of the new blue silk dress, and the white kid gloves that were \$1.50 a pair?"

And Alice was laughing through her tears, as the car drove away through the winter twilight. Her tears, indeed! What were they to the scolding dressmaker, which stood on the porch of the farmhouse, as the car drove back, through the gray dusk, to the home which seemed little desolate now.

Mrs. Garfield was delighted with her little rustic blossom of a sister.

"My dear," she said, "I wish until I get you something decent to wear, and I shall have you the fashion at once!"

"But, Maria," said Alice, shyly, as she glanced around at the new unpacked garments scattered about her, "I have some beautiful things already."

"Poo," said Maria, "Garfield, elevating her aristocratic nose. "Keep those for the back woods. A country dressmaker, and good-looking as you are, you are too pretty, Alicia mia, not to be set off by the best advantages!"

"Yes; but Maria," and Alice blushed deeply. "I see that," said Mrs. Garfield, with smiling despotism. And Alice could only laugh and smile.

Little Alice Cleve was like a grown-up child in her elder sister, Maria. Garfield had robbed her in glistening silks, hung jewels on her throat and arms, wreathed chaplets of costly flowers in her hair, and thronged her eyes of love and beauty.

"Oh! Maria!" cried Alice, "this is like living in fairy land all the while. I am so happy. But it seems strange to me dancing in a crowded room with people about me at the time when I used to be fast asleep in bed and dreaming!"

"My dear, that's only because you are a country girl."

"And—mind Maria, I only ask because I am so ignorant and foolish—you are sure it is right for me to dance those round dances with a gentleman's arm so tight round my waist? I am afraid mamma would not like it."

"You little unsophisticated piece of simplicity, don't everybody else do so?" laughed Mrs. Garfield.

"Yes, but—"

"Then of course it's right. Get your hat and we'll drive up to the park, this bright afternoon. My goodness, child, what have you brought down that hideous worsted scarf for?"

"Mamma knit it for me, and I am too proud to wear it," said Alice, coloring scarlet.

Mrs. Garfield burst out laughing. "A pretty figure you would cut on Fifth Avenue with your head tied up like a New York boy!" she exclaimed. "No, my Alice, your little dress is too pretty to be obscured by any such monstrosities."

"But I shall take care."

"Nonsense, child. Nobody thinks of wearing such a thing."

And Alice yielded to Mrs. Garfield's superior experience.

She went to a store that same night, with her pearly shoulders bare, and for a week like covering of white tulle, and beautiful feet encased in rose-colored silk stockings of the finest lace, and the wintery storm that howled without.

"It's only running across the pavement, and you are safe in the carriage," said Mrs. Garfield. "Nobody thinks of wearing rubbers or thick stockings."

fashionable assemblies; night after night Mrs. Garfield excited in her young sister's success.

"Let me stay at home to-night, Maria," she pleaded. "I am so weary, and I long so to sleep!"

"My dear, what an idea, and Lent close at hand! You can rest then."

So Alice went, in pearl-colored silk, with floating trails of clematis in her golden hair, and pink spots on her cheeks, and Mrs. Garfield told her, with a proud like, that she never looked so pretty in her life.

Alice smiled. "I don't think I care so much for such things as I did," she said gravely. "I feel now-a-days as if I wanted to see papa and mamma and the dear old home."

"Homesick!" reproached her sister.

"Not homesick, Maria; but so tired!"

Mrs. Garfield paid but little heed to Alice's words then; but they came back to her like a pang that evening, when Alice was carried out, fainting, from the oppressive atmosphere of the ball-room. It was so like death—the cold eyes and the pallid cheeks! And her old father—how could she render up her trust to him, if Alice went back in the spring-time, pale and drooping?

Mrs. Garfield sent for the doctor next day. The man of medicine shook his head and talked gravely of "pulmonary predisposition," and "subcutaneous tenderness," and prescribed pills, port wine and beef tea. And the upshot of the interview was that Mrs. Garfield wrote to Farmer Cleve.

"Of course she is not seriously sick," his eldest daughter's epistle ran, "but just a little indisposed. If you choose to run up, toward the end of March, I dare say she will be well enough to return home with you. There is no cause for alarm; but our little Alice, the doctor says, has not a strong constitution naturally."

As if Mr. Cleve would have waited a day so long! He had not the time to spare. He packed his carpet-bag straightaway, and took the first New York bound train.

After traveling all night he reached the metropolis just as the early morning sun shone red and warm over the roofs of the shanty houses and, to his surprise, the Garfield household were up and stirring. Maria herself met him on the stairs.

"What's my girl?" the old man demanded, trying to speak cheerily.

"Oh! papa, I am so glad you are come!" cried Maria, hysterically. "We telegraphed for you last night."

"She's not worse?" gasped the old man.

"I don't know, at least—she is—she is—she is not seriously worse—only a sudden bad turn—that's all!"

Mrs. Garfield then open the door of the apartment which she had reserved for Alice among her pillows! She opened the door, and so on till all these middle-aged people were gathered in the room.

"Papa!" she murmured faintly. "I only wanted to see you just once."

"My child!" broke from Cleve's parched lips, as her arms were wreathed about his neck, and then fell back on her breast, "Alice!"

But she did not answer; the sweet, closed lips should never speak more.

"My dear sir," said Dr. Flake, solemnly, when they had forced the poor man away from the bed where only a low, steady moan remained, "there is nothing anybody can do. A little over-exertion—a slight cold, rendered obstinate by neglect; a delicate constitution—these have done it, my good friend, and He takes away!"

"It's all in!" thundered Mr. Cleve, turning with pointed finger and blazing eyes to the eldest daughter. "A diabolical lie! You have murdered her!"

And Mrs. Garfield, shrinking back, with conscious guilt, felt that the words of the friended old man were but too true. She had not meant aught but tenderness as she loved the young girl as dearly as her self, yet she knew that her hand had laid the fat victim unto death, like a Jew.

Truly, War hath killed his thousands and Pestilence his tens of thousands; but what are these to the victims that fall daily beneath the wheels of the great Juggernaut of Fashionable Life!

"I feel so well."

"I want to thank you for telling me of Dr. Pierce's 'Favorite Prescription,'" wrote a lady to her friend. "For a long time I was unfit to attend to the work of my household. I felt about, I had terrible headaches, and bearing-down sensations constantly every where, and I was unable to cross me, and was quite weak and discouraged. I sent and got some of the medicine after receiving your letter, and it has cured me. I hardly know myself, I feel so well."

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