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WILL SHAKESPEARE'S LITTLE LAD

CHAPTER XIX

But only hope.

Measure For Measure.

Do you not know I am a woman? when I think I must speak.

As You Like It. Judith raised the latch of Mistress Hathaway's cottage-door and slipped quickly into the house, letting the door slam to back of her with such force that If the casements rattled as violently as the North wind had descended upon

them in its fury.

"Grandam." she shouted, "Grandam."
She paused for a moment to listen.
There was no one in the living-room, but from the buttery beyond there came the sound of voices, and thither she directed her steps, calling as she ran.

"Oh! ay, ay," her grandmother replied, testily, being in a peevish humor that morning, "au thou'dst give a body time to speak I'd answer thee. La, I do detest, thou'rt more unmannerly than

time to speak I'd answer thee. La, I do detest, thou'rt more unmannerly than any boy, 'tis a mercy an my door be left on 's hinge. But come thou hither, thy face is steaming like a yule-tide pudding and as tarnation as neighbor Stringer's nose. When wilt give o'er thy madcap behaviours?"

"In truth (did but run the whole way

In truth I did but run the whole way bither, for that I must," the little lass said, breathlessly, "there be sore coil home."
Nay then I respected it—I respected

"Nay then I respected it—I respected it," Mistress Hathaway interrupted, with a triumphant ring in her voice, "my left eye itched all morn, and that thou know'st bodeth weeping, and yestreen, toward sunset or belike a little later, as we were i' the garden a magpie came flying toward us. There was but the later is the later as the second of the later as the later is the later of the one, though I looked and looked to another; and quoth Gillian, 'There be sorrow comin,' and I said, 'Ay, 'tis on the way, but, Tilly-vally, we be all immoral, so there should be no lamentations. 'Tis as the Lord reposeth!' But thy grandfather now—La! he was a goodly man, though full o' confirmities, and so he's gone—"

goodly man, thought and so he's gone—"
"Naught aileth my grandfather,"
"Naught aileth my grandfather," Judith cried, "'tis Hamnet that is sick.'
"How! Hamnet? Nay, why saidst
thou not that soone? Why didst keep
me in dispense? A good lad and a
senseless, too, and like his father! Sick,
saidst thou? Now what of? Thou'st
put me into such tirrits and frights wi'
thy news. Come, out wi't! Feel, Gillian, how I shake an 'twere a very aspen

"Od's heartlings that do 'ee, Missis. "Od's heartlings that do 'ee, Missis."
"Ay, that I do like a whole forest full
o' leaves when the wind is up. Thou
must tell thy grandam and the rest at
home, Jude, how I was infected at the
mere suspicion o' the news. I've a
tender heart, but there! canst not say
what aileth the lad? Looketh he palely,
doth his nuisidees beat extraordinarily. doth his pulsidges beat extraordinarily, Hast no tongue that thou canst not use Hast no tongue that thou caust not use it? Hamnet sick! Hamnet, my little, doting lad! On! lackaday, lackaday, we've fullen on parlous times. But dry thine eyes, Gillian wench, and leave off weeping, mouse. Oh! he's dead—he's dead. O' Sunday night there was a triedling short!' the gardle-may then Gillian, thou wast by and saw it."

"E'en so, Missis, e'en so, an' thou saidst to I—"

Hamnet is not dead," Judith protested. "Ye be cruel to say so. He's only sick, and my Grandam Shakespeare

saith he will get well."
"We be i' the hands o' the Lord," Mistress Hathaway returned piously, taking down her apron from her eyes and shaking her head from side to side,

wit. Nay, sirrah, I'd have said, thou'lt not forth this even, thou'lt stay here while the rain lasteth an 'tis the flood come again. And what wi' possets and kickshaws I'd ha' made the time pass tediously enow withal—he'd not exchanged it an he could. But he came

not hither, and that's the long and short o'it."

"Ay, truly, we know that now; only then, just to think o' his being here out o' the wind and wet—for 'twas a grievous storm—made the house pleasant to us again and we could e'en sleep sweet, but—" Judith's voice broke and she went on with a sob, "but in the morning betimes, before ever the bidding-bell had sounded or we were ready for church, he came creeping ready for church, he came creeping home. Oh! thou'dst scarce have known home. Oh! thou'dst scarce have known him, his face was so white and little, and all drawn wi' pain, and his clothes were torn and wet and he had no shirt on 's poor back. At first methought 'twas some beggar lad—I was e'en spying forth to see if Hamnet would come—but when he got closer I saw who it was, and out I ran. 'Twas raining some but settly, too, and when I

The lad's past cure—that the incertainty o'it! And 'twere good to bring that home to them that think they know more than the Lord above."

"Alack! Grandam, I came hither for hee to help us, and thou frightest messo must éen go back."

"Shame upon thee now for that word! do not fright a living soul—tis thou ast frighted me wi' thy delays. Thou'st o'told me yet what hath befell the lad but! I must éen be patient. Am I not is grandam as well as Mistress Shake-eare? And yet, she knoweth, marry, hether he had caught the inspection, di if the Lord's token been on him, or if hath a 'tidian fever. Speak, lass, usst not tell a straight story in few wids and truly?"

"Oh! Grandam, an thou'dst only site of the content of the co "Ah, poor heart! Now as swound—
ing eye—nay, they mean no good thing.
The lad's past cure—that the incertainty o'it! And 'twere good to bring that home to them that think they know more than the Lord above."

"Alack! Grandam, I came hither for thee to help usland thou frightest me so I must e'en go back."

"Shame upon thee now for that word! I'd not fright a living soul—'tis then' beast and tended him as best he could

spare him.' So then we knew, and my grandfather was exceeding wroth, and he went out wi' a big stick in 's hand, but it came to naught-Diccon Hobday

method may be a part of the pa

Across the grassy valley of the Stour, stretching away to the south, past Ship-

"And all the while my mother and grandam sat above wi' Hamnet, and anon he fell into a deep sleep. They would not let me in that day, but the next morn I peeped in the room, and—nay, I never saw Hamnet fairer—his cheeks were as red as any rose, and his eyes so bright—verily they were like the stars. But though they looked at me, 'twas as if they did not see me. So I just stopped without and watched. My grandam was there at the side of the bed, and ever and anon she'd sop his face wi' some cool, sweet-smelling water—"

"Ay, ay, of course, the woman hath some inward touch o' sense! Belike and gright of the bed, and ever and anon she'd sop his face wi' some inward touch o' sense! Belike 'talled of life went on.

Out of the south, in the chill of an august dawn, a horseman spurred bottly 'twas a diffusion o' chamomile flowers."

"Ay, ay, of course, the woman hath some inward touch o' sense! Belike 'twas a diffusion o' chamomile flowers."

"And all the while my mother and grandam sat above wi' Hamnet, and anon he lell into a deep sleep. They had travelled and would travel—now God his own home garden: he urged his is own home garden: he urged his it was abroad there be shad three be alouse! All the was abroad there be cause I hated kissings so, as all hones at othe white, whith a sudden delight, like a cown his production in the kitchen wench. What was that low be to be seen yet) and the sweetest flowers of spring.

She gave me no encouragement, as my one the production in the kitchen wench. What was that low be to be a seen yet on

billings, bell had smalled or we were
book on the following same to be any any the same to be any the same to be any any the same to be a

tenderly, and the more when her blushes turned into tears, and her tears to long, low sobs.

Lane's hedge looked, and what a fine showing his garden made! There was the Quiney's house close by, and this was Master George Badger's, while just around in Henley Lane rose the tall elms that shaded the dwelling-place of good Nicholas Page—now Heaven bless him a thousand thousand times! Back tenderly, and the more when her blushes turned into tears, and her tears to long, low sobs.

"Don't cry," I said, "whatever you all my fish, Lorna, and catch some more for mother; only don't be angry with me."

She flung her little soft arms up in the passion of her tears, and looked at the more when her blushes turned into tears, and her tears to long, low sobs.

Crouching in that hollow nest, as dozen fierce men come only to the water, not bearing any fire-arms, but looking lax and jovial, as if they were come from iding and a dinner taken hungrily.

She flung her little soft arms up in the passion of her tears, and looked at l

that day, I think of her, through all the rough storms of my life, when I see an early primrose. Perhaps she liked my countenance, and indeed I know she did, because she said so afterward; although at the time she was too young to know what made her take to me. Not that I

of spring.

She gave me no encouragement, as my mother in her place would have done; nay, she even wiped her lips (which methought was rather rude of her), and drew away, and smoothed her dress, as if I had used a freedom. Then I felt my cheeks grow burning red, and I gazed at my legs and was sorry. For although she was not at all a proud child (at any rate in her countenance), yet I knew that she was by birth a thousand years in front of me. They might have taken and trained me, or (which would be more to the purpose) my sisters, until it was time for us to die, and then have trained our children alter us, for many genera our children after us, for many genera tions; yet never could we have gotten that look upon our faces which Lorna Doone had naturally, as if she had been born to it.

Here was I, a veoman's boy, a v Here was I, a yeoman's boy, a yeoman every inch of me, even where I was naked; and there was she, a lady born, and thoroughly aware of it, and dressed by people of rank and taste, who took pride in her beauty and set it to advantage. For though her hair was fallen down by reason of her wildness, and some of her frock was touched with wet where she had tended me so behold her. where she had tended me so, behold her where she had tended me so, below here dress was pretty enough for the queen of all the angels! The colors were bright and rich indeed, and the substance very sumptuous, yet simple and free from tinsel stuff, and matching most harmoniously. All from her waist to her neck was white plainted in class like a curtain. was white, plaited in close like a curtain, and the dark soft weeping of her hair, and the dark soft weeping of her hair, and the shadowy light of her eyes (like a wood rayed through with sunset), made it seem yet whiter, as if it were done on purpose. As for the rest she knew what it was a great deal better than I did; for I never could look far away from her eyes when they were opened upon me.

me. Now, seeing how I heeded her, and Now, seeing now I needed her, and feeling that I had kissed her, although she was such a little girl, eight years old or thereabouts, she turned to the stream in bashful manner, and began to watch the water, and rubbed one leg are included.

havior to me, took up all my things to go, and made a fuss about it, to let her know I was made. go, and made a fuss about it, to let her know I was going. But she did not call me back at all, as I had made sure she would do; moreover, I knew that to try the descent was almost certain death to me, and it looked as dark as pitch; and so at the mouth I turned round again, and came back to her and said, "Lorna."

"Oh, I thought you were gone," she "Coh, I thought you were gone," she is the silken length of her hair fetched out, like a cloud by the wind.

"Oh, I thought you were gone," she answered; "why did you ever come here? Do you know what they would do to us, if they found you here with the water, and must have been spied by

and the water often tells me that I must come to that."

"But what should they kill me for?"

"Because you have found the way up here, and they never could believe it. Now, please to go; oh please to go. They will kill us both in a moment. Yes, I like you very much"—for I was teasing her to say it—"very much indeed, and I will call you John Ridd, if you like; only please to go, John. And I will call you John Ridd, if you like; only please to go, John. And I will call you John Ridd, if you like; only please to go, John. And I will call you John Ridd, if you like; only please to go, John. And I will call you John Ridd, if

you, to see me; and I will bring you such lots of things—there are apples still, and a thrush I caught with only one leg broken, and our dog has just had pupples——"
"On dear! they won't let me have a dog.

at the time she was too young to know what made her take to me. Not that I had any heauty, or even pretended to have any, only a solid healthy face, which many girls have laughed at.

Thereupon I sat upright, with my little trident still in one hand, and was much afraid to speak to her, being conscious of my country-brogue, lest she sh uld cease to like me. Butshe elapped her hands, and made a trilling dance was altered from pleasant play to terror.

sooner than I could tell her; and there was no time to lose.
"Now mind you never come again,"

"Now mind you never come again, she whispered over her shoulder, as she crept away with a childish twist, hiding her white front from me; "only I shall come sometimes—oh, here they are, Madonna!"

Desire scarce to neep, I crept into the

Daring scarce to peep, I crept into the water, and lay down bodily in it, with my head between two blocks of stone and some flood drift combining over me and some flood drift combining over me. The dusk was deepening between the hills, and a white mist lay on the river; but I, being in the channel of it, could see every ripple, and twig, and rush and glazing of twilight above it, as bright as in a picture; so that to my ignorance there seemed no chance at all but what the mea must find me. For all this time the men must find me. For all this time they were shouting, and swearing, and keeping such a hullabaloo, that the rocks all round the valley rung, and my heart quaked, so (what with this and the cold) that the water began to gurgle round me, and to lay upon the pebbles. Neither, in truth, did I try to stop it,

being now so desperate, between the being fear and wretchedness, till I caught a fear and wretchedness, till I caught a glimpse of the little maid, whose beauty and whose kindliness had made me yearn to be with her. And then I knew that for her sake I was bound to be brave and hide myself. She was lying beneath a rock, thirty or forty yards from me, feigning to be fast asleep, with her dress spread beautifully, and her hair drawn over her.

Presently one of the great rough men came round a corner upon her; and there he stopped and gazed a while at her fairness and her innocence. Then he caught her up in his arms, and kissed her so that I heard him; and if I had only 'rought my gun, I would have tried to shoot him.

stream in bashful manner, and began to watch the water, and rubbed one leg against the other.

I, for my part, being vexed at her behavior to me, took up all my things to go, and made a fuss about it, to let her to her, and no one goes shall be a first be her, and no one goes shall be a first to her and no one goes shall be a first to her and no one goes shall be a first to her and no one goes shall be a first to her and no one goes shall be a first to her and no one goes shall be a first to her and no one goes shall be a first to her and no one goes shall be a first to her and no one goes shall be a first to her and no one goes shall be a first to her and no one goes her and no one goes her and no one goes to her and no one claim to her; and no one else shall touch the child. Back to the bottle, all

fetched out, like a cloud by the wind, behind her. This way of her going me?"

"Beat us, I dare say, very hard, or me hands were full of young grass and mold, and a little girl kneeling at my side was rubbing my forehead tenderly with a dock-leaf and a handkerchief.

"Oh, I am so glad!" she whispered come to that."

"Beat us, I dare say, very hard, or me at least. They could never beat you."

"No. They would kill us both outright, and bury us here by the water; and must have been spired by wine-bottle. Of their little queen they took small notice, being in this urgency—although they had thought to find her drowned—but trooped away after one another with kindly challenge to gamble."

deed, and I will call you John Ridd, if you like; only please to go, John. And when your feet are well, you know, you can come and tell me how they are."

"But I tell you, Lorna; I like you very much indeed, nearly as much as Annie, and a great deal more than Lizzie. And I never saw any one like you; and I must live you hack again to-morrow, and so must come hack again to-morrow, and so must

per.
I crept into a bush for warmth, and Terept into a bush for warmin, and rubbed my shivering legs on bark, and longed for mother's faget. Then, as daylight sunk below the forget-me-not of stars, with a sorrow to be quit, I knew that now must be my time to get away,

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