

FOR LOVE AND BIRTHRIGHT

—OR—
PLOT VS. PRINCIPLE.

"No," Walter answered, flushing crimson. "I did beg my mother once, when we were so very poor, to write to them and ask them to give us a little help. But she would not."

"If they refused to recognize their own son because he married me," she said gently, but firmly—"if they did not care enough when I sent them word that he was dead to come and take a last look at him, they would not surely heed my feeble cry now for aid."

"I have thought," Walter resumed, after a thoughtful pause, "that she might, perhaps have relented, and asked them to care for me, after she was gone, if Mr. Carpenter had not come to our relief, but he promised that I should never want for anything, and I know that she did feel perfectly content about me. I have often wondered, though—"

"He was startled by the effects of his words, for the woman had grown white to her lips, and actually groaned aloud at his question. "Walter—Walter Richardson, don't be too hard on an old woman; do not condemn me utterly. I would that I could answer your questions in a way which should still make you respect and esteem me, but I cannot, for—I have done it myself all my life."

"But, madam," Walter stammered, in confusion, and wondering to see her so agitated, "that cannot be possible! You are noble and good. You have been very kind to the poor and helpless, also to me, who am but a poor young man struggling hard to work my own way up in the world."

"I did not," cried the woman, in a broken voice, while she leaned forward and laid her hand upon the young man's arm. "I owe you more than I can ever repay—more, I fear, than you will ever be willing to forgive me for. I was a poor girl, your father's mother, and your grandmother!"

CHAPTER XLIII.

Madame Howland's Story.

"Impossible!" burst from Walter's lips, while he regarded her with astonishment as if he thought she had suddenly lost her senses.

"I wish it had been impossible for me to have been so hard-hearted toward my own flesh and blood," returned Madame Howland, her voice trembling, as the tears streamed over her pale face. "It is too sadly true, however, and it would be but simple justice if you should turn with loathing from me, now that I have revealed my self to you. But listen, my boy, and let me tell you my story before you judge me in my younger days I was a Baltimore beauty and heiress. My father was a wealthy sugar-planter, owning two or three plantations and many slaves, and I inherited from him the pride of birth and station."

"When I was eighteen years of age I married Egbert Richardson. He was a poor, but honest, and industrious man, who was well respected in his position in society, and brought up as we had been, I do not know as it is strange that we should both consider poverty and labor as things to be despised and shunned. I had been taught to gauge a person by his position and possessions rather than to respect him for his intrinsic worth. We had one son, whose we named Walter, and you can, perhaps, imagine something of the pride, affection, and emotion, when, on the morning of my accident, you told me that your name was Walter Richardson. Something in your face had attracted me from the first, and when you told me that you were the son of my father, I was so strongly reminded of your father."

Walter remembered now that she had seemed a good deal agitated at the time, but he had attributed it to her suffering rather than to any mental disturbance.

"Your son," madam continued, "was very bright and promising, and we gave him every advantage, and built our fondest hopes upon him. Before he reached his eighteenth year his father died. Perhaps, if he had lived, I could never have found it in my heart to turn against him as I did later; but before he was twenty, I had married a Major Howland, a distinguished gentleman, a graduate of West Point, and a native of my own State. He was an excellent in the strongest sense of the word, and could tolerate nothing of plebeianism, as he termed everything that savored of labor or trade. He soon became very fond of my handsome son, showered innumerable favors upon him, and spared no expense or pains to make his education thorough and complete. You will perceive it was a great blow to our expectations when, after leaving college, Walter insisted upon perfecting himself in the profession, and directed his intention of being north for that purpose. We would have much preferred him to settle down as a 'gentleman' and assist his step-father in the care of his large estate, which would have been his at my husband's death, not to mention my own valuable property. But he was resolute, and we finally consented, reasoning that it could do him no harm to see something of the world, so we settled a handsome income upon him, and he left us for New York city, where his tastes led him to take up mechanical engineering."

"All went well until he wrote us that he had met a beautiful girl whose name he had learned to love, and asked us to be prepared to receive her as a daughter at no distant date. This news was like a thunderbolt to us both. We had never thought of such a contingency as his marrying a Northern girl—we had set our hopes upon the

daughter of a United States Senator, she was not a beautiful girl, but her position was irreproachable, and the union would have been a most desirable one. Major Howland immediately instituted inquiries about Walter's intended bride, and found, to our grief, a dismay, that he had already committed himself to a poor girl, who was a clerk in a store. The major was furiously angry at this discovery, and declared if Walter married her, he should never cross his threshold again."

Walter's lips opened, as if he would have spoken, while his eyes blazed and his whole face expressed the utmost scorn at this statement. He checked himself, however, and madam resumed, "You think that was very hard and unfeeling," she said, deprecatingly, "but remember that it was owing more to education than an ailing heart. I tried to temper with my husband, and to prevail upon him to go to New York and see this young girl—she might not be so unworthy as he imagined. But he would not, and forbade me to take any measures toward effecting a reconciliation, and I was forced to obey. Walter was warned of the consequences which would follow his marriage with one whom he believed would disgrace the family, and command him to return immediately to us in reply, he wrote a noble and manly letter, pleading his cause most eloquently, and enclosing a picture of his beautiful betrothed, which almost made me yearn to own her as a daughter. But the fact, sweet face, had no influence upon my husband, except to make him more obstinate, and he finally said so much that my own pride was touched, and my heart softened. I had just mentioned some opinions regarding politics in his letter, and madam Howland exceedingly angry. He had decided to return to me home while the country was so agitated, saying that if the worst came, his conscience would not allow him to take up arms against the Union, and it would thus be better for him to remain where he was. This was the last bitter drop. He was formally discharged, his income was stopped, and his name no longer mentioned in our house. War ensued, throwing the country into a state of turmoil, and I never heard from my son again. Major Howland put his affairs in order, settled the bulk of his fortune upon me, and saw me safely and comfortably provided for, and then gave himself, and what he had reserved of his property, to the cause of the south. I need not go into details, but he spent himself and his all in the struggle that ensued, and at the end of the war, came home only to die. After that I removed to Philadelphia, where I resided for several years, and then came to this suburban city, which has been my home ever since."

"Ah!" said Walter, looking up with a relieved expression, "that is the reason, probably, why you never received the news of my father's death. My mother must have addressed you at Baltimore."

Madame Howland smiled. "Thank you, my boy, for inferring that I did not receive that news. You do not believe me quite so bad as I have appeared. But I had 'got the letter. If I had I could not have ignored it. I must have gone to you. And once I did go to New York to search for my son, I had no heart for him after my husband's death. I had come to feel that I had been cold and cruel, and I longed to be reconciled to my only child. I was willing even to receive his bride, in spite of my poverty and toil, for I knew that their presence would be a comfort to me in my old age. I was rich. I could surround them with every luxury, and I resolved that I would atone for my former harshness and pride. But I could obtain no trace of either my son or his wife, and I feared, remembering the views that he had expressed regarding the Union, that I might have joined the Union army and perished in the war. But it seems from your account that he and your mother had died from overwork and exposure, and you had become the care of a stranger. I have had a lonely life since then, though I have tried to do some good with the wealth which I would so gladly have lavished upon my children. It has been no atonement, for there can be none for the mother who so coldly discards the offspring that God has given her, though, for my son's sake, I have done what I could for others. But the moment you uttered your name in my presence, I knew that you were my son's son."

Walter lifted his eyes, questioning eyes to his companion's face as she made this statement. She flushed slightly as she met his gaze.

"And now, my dear boy," the old lady said, in conclusion, as she laid her hand upon Walter's arm and looked forward to look more closely into his face, "can you forgive all the injury and injustice toward your parents of which I have been guilty? I have suffered for it in the lonely years that I have spent in my old age at home, and tenfold since I discovered that you are my grandson, and realized how much I have missed in not having had you to comfort and cheer me during these long years. Will you try to forget it all, Walter, and be to me in my old age what I know your father would have been—a kind and loving son, a staff and comfort?"

Her voice had grown husky and trembling; there were tears in her eyes and a wistful, appealing expression upon her aged face.

"She had been poor and suffering, and would have yielded to his Carpenter's hand on the morning when he was so suddenly summoned to his sister," she said, in a trembling tone, as she turned again to Mr. Ruggles.

"Then, heaven help us all!—something dreadful must have happened to her," returned Mr. Ruggles, greatly agitated.

Just then Edmund Carpenter arose and approaching them, shook hands with his uncle and Mrs. Gordon in a cordial manner; then asked, in a natural, off-hand way:

"Where is Miss Ruby?—she ought to be here to-day. Was she not able to come with you?" Mrs. Gordon's heart sank, for she argued at once that he could know nothing regarding her young sister's strange disappearance.

His question had entirely deceived her; but Mr. Ruggles regarded the young man keenly, while Mr. Conant, who had stood silently by during the above conversation, was very sure that the wily plotter knew much more than any one else of this mysterious matter.

He appeared greatly surprised, however, when the facts were stated to him, and related in turn that he had parted from Ruby soon after Mr. Ruggles had left, as he had urgent business in town; and that he had been somewhat surprised to learn from his coachman, upon his return, that she had changed her mind at the last moment and gone to Harrisburg.

"Who took the message to Mrs. Ruggles?" asked Mrs. Gordon.

"Thomas," answered Mrs. Ruggles. "What was her reason for changing her mind?" "That it seemed too bad to desert you when you were in trouble, and somewhat surprised to learn from his coachman, upon his return, that she had changed her mind at the last moment and gone to Harrisburg."

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Nature is always fighting against disease. The right kind of medicine is the kind that helps Nature by toning up the system and enabling it to resist disease. Such a tonic is only found in Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. By building up the blood and strengthening the nerves these pills reach the root of disease, restore health, and make people bright, active and strong.

Mrs. R. Boscoe, Gravelhurst, Ont., writes: "I believe that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills saved my life. When I began to feel so weak that I was scarcely able to be out of my bed, and showed every symptom of going into a decline, I was pale, emaciated, suffered from headaches and nerve exhaustion. I used Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for a couple of months, and they have completely restored me."

Sold by all dealers or post paid 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville.

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Winter is a trying time for most people—especially a time for delicate ones. Colds, la grippe and pneumonia find them easy victims.

Do you catch cold easily? It shows that your system is not in a condition to resist disease. You will be fortunate if you escape pneumonia.

The right kind of medicine is the kind that helps Nature by toning up the system and enabling it to resist disease. Such a tonic is only found in Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. By building up the blood and strengthening the nerves these pills reach the root of disease, restore health, and make people bright, active and strong.

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MAN WITH THE IRON FINGER.

An Extraordinary Trick of a German Acrobat.

A German acrobat is making a great success in Berlin by his clever work. The trick with which he never fails to bring down the house consists of his balancing his body aloft on one finger thrust through

his nostril. He draws near during the conversation; he was so anxious he could not wait patiently, and his face was absolutely colorless as he listened, while in his heart he was confident that Edmund Carpenter had been guilty of foul play in Ruby's disappearance.

"I believe you know the truth," he cried, turning upon him with blazing eyes; "but if any evil has befallen Miss Gordon you shall answer for it to me."

"To whom?" sneered the young man, with a malicious smile. "I do not doubt you would be glad to constitute yourself Miss Gordon's champion in the future, as you have tried to do in the past; but there is a possibility, I know, that you may not have the opportunity."

Walter quivered in every nerve at this cruel thrust, but he felt that it would be unwise to retort, and he turned away. He said, in a low, despairing tone, to Mr. Conant:

"What shall we do? This suspense is maddening, and I fully believe that this rascal is at the bottom of it all."

Mr. Conant linked his arm within the young man's, and led him away to a seat. He knew it would not do to have any confusion in the courtroom, for a case was being tried that had been out of our papers for some time, and ready the group that had gathered around Mrs. Gordon had attracted attention.

"I am pretty sure of that myself," said Mr. Conant, "but it will not do to make a scene here. We will, however, see what can be done as soon as this affair is settled."

Mr. Conant's face was very grave as he concluded. He did not appear very hopeful regarding his young friend's case. If it was a plot to ruin him, as both Walter and his counsel seemed to think, he feared that proof sufficient to convict him might be brought against him; he did not believe that man like Edmund Carpenter would go to work blindly, and he thought he must have felt pretty sure of his position in order to have caused his arrest.

As the hours went by, and they still sat there on the day before, Mrs. Gordon's anxiety increased, and her ready the group that had gathered around Mrs. Gordon had attracted attention.

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NETS TO STILL THE WAVES.

Said to be Superior to Oil in Its Results.

A series of experiments is about to begin at Havana with Baron d'Allessandro's invention of floating nets for use in storms for moderating the force of the waves. The invention is said to be superior in effects in oil. Trials were made at Quimper in 1891 and in 1892 at Cherbourg, which proved that floating nets would be of enormous value not only to vessels at sea in a storm, but also for protection at the entrance of ports, difficult passages in the neighborhood of lighthouses, or for hydraulic undertakings under construction, as well as for the defence of exposed coasts and fishing stations against heavy seas.

Baron d'Allessandro has improved his invention, and is now constructing the well buoyed and ballasted nets will withstand the most powerful currents and violent tempests.

New Way to Thread Needles.

An ingenious lady has suggested an improvement in the method of holding a needle for the purpose of threading it. It is to be held between the third and little fingers of the left hand and of the thumb and forefinger, palm uppermost. The advantage of this is that the thumb and first finger can be used to grip the smallest end of the thread as soon as it protrudes from the eye, a method preferable to that of letting go the thread and endeavoring to get hold of the end with the right hand. This prevents the weight of the cotton from dragging the end out of the eye again.—Pearson's.

No house is safe without a bottle of HIRSH'S PAIN EXTERMINATOR. It is a great Family Remedy.

The Table Mountain Ropeway.

The ropeway located at Table Mountain is an important example of a line 5,280 feet long. It consists of a single fixed rope on which one car is drawn to and fro with an endless hauling rope, the driving gear being of reversing motion so that the direction of travel of the car can be controlled. Commencing at sea level, and following the ground on posts spaced about 300 feet apart, the cable takes a span of 500 feet, rising to a projecting rock some 1,800 feet above the starting point. Resting on a support at this point, the cable again takes a span of 1,400 feet to an upper terminal 2,300 feet above the lower one. This ropeway has been used so satisfactorily that it is not only employed in the construction of a passenger, but is at times used for passengers.—A. J. S. B. Little, in The Engineering Magazine for January.

Are you not well? Are you pale, weakly, depressed in spirits, melancholy, tired, nervous, and irritable? Try Miller's Compound Iron Pills.

False and True Bravery. It is but a poor compliment to a soldier—or, rather, it is not a compliment at all—to say that he was absolutely ignorant of fear. It is the overcoming of fear, not the entire absence of it, which constitutes bravery. In other words, the man who has never experienced the sensation of fear—of a sudden, has never led—led in the King in relative judgment. He cannot reason from cause to effect far enough to see that if he does a certain thing he is sure to be killed. And such a mental disposition, so far from constituting greatness, is merely a sign of weak intellect.—Chicago Chronicle.

An Obliging Artist. Lady (sitting for portrait)—And make my mouth small, will you, ever so small? I know it is quite large, really, but make it quite tiny, will you?

Artist (politely)—Certainly, madam. If you prefer it I will leave it out altogether.

Five more bodies have been found in the Brazuel mine at Brownsville, Pa., making 20 dead in all. The beautiful young girl hesitated to marry the ugly old man. "They say you have a bad heart," she quivered. "Yes, I'm liable to fall dead any minute," he answered with apparent candor. Now at last gave she her consent, for in her announcement she believed him. More marriages are affairs of the heart than we sometimes think, perhaps. First Vestryman—It's remarkable how many clergyman seem to be run down and in need of vacations. Second Vestryman—Well, the Paris Exposition opens soon, you know.