

A LIFE FOR A LIFE.

BY MISS MULOCK. CHAPTER XXXVI. HIS STORY.

I did not see your father afterward. He quitted the court directly after sentence was given—three months' imprisonment—the judge making a long speech previously; but I heard not a syllable. I heard nothing but your father's words—saw no one except himself, sitting there below me, with his hands crossed on his stick, and a stream of sunshine falling across his white hairs—Theodora—Theodora—

I cannot write; it is impossible. Granton got admission to me for a minute after I was taken back to prison. He told me that the "hard labor" was remitted; that there had been application made for commutation of three months into one, but the judge declined. If I wished, a new application should be made to the Home Secretary.

No, my love, suffer him, not to do it. Let nothing more be done. I had rather abide my full term of punishment. It is only too easy.

Do not grieve for me. Trust me, my child, many a peer puts on his robes with a heavier heart than I put on this felon's dress, which shocked Granton so much that he is sure to tell you of it. Never mind it—my clothes are not me, are they, little lady? Who was the man that wrote

"Stone walls do not a prison make, Nor iron bars a cage; Minds innocent—"

Am I innocent? No; but I am forgiven, as I believe, before God and man. And are not all the glories of heaven preparing, not for sinners, but for pardoned souls?

Therefore I am at peace. The first night of my imprisonment is, for some things, as happy to me as that which I have often imagined to myself when I should bring you home for the first time to my own fireside.

No, even that thought, and the rush of thoughts that came with it, are notable to shake me out of this feeling of unutterable rest—so perfect that it seems strange to imagine I shall ever get out of this cell to begin afresh the turmoil of the world—as strange as that the dead should wish to return again to life and its cares. But this is as God wills.

My love good-night. Granton will give you any further particulars. Talk to him freely—it will be his good heart's best reward. His happy, busy life, which is now begun, may have been made all the brighter for the momentary cloud which taught him that Providence oftentimes blesses us in better ways than by giving us exactly the thing we desired. He told me when we parted, which was the only allusion he made to the past, that, though Mrs. Colin was "the dearest little woman in all the world," he should always adore, as "something between a saint and angel," Miss Dora.

Is she my saint and angel? Perhaps—if she were not likewise the woman of my love.

What is she doing now, I wonder? Probably vanishing, lamp in hand, as I have often watched her, up the stair into her own wee room, where she shuts the door and remembers me.

Yes, remember me, but not with pain. Believe me, that I am happy—that whatever now befalls me I shall always be happy.

Tell your father— No, tell him nothing. He surely knows all. Or he will know it, when this life having passed away like a vapor he and I stand together before the One God, who is also the Redeemer of sinners.

Write to me, but do not come and see me. Hitherto your name has been kept clear out of everything; it must be still, at any sacrifice to both of us. I count on this from you. You know, you once said, laughing, you had already taken in your heart the marriage vow of "obedience," if I chose to exact it.

I never did, but I do now. Unless I send for you—which I solemnly promise to do if illness or any other cause makes it necessary—obey me, your husband; do not come and see me.

Three months will pass quickly. Then? But let us not look forward. My love, good-night.

MAX URQUHART.

CHAPTER XXXVII. HER STORY.

Max says I am to write an end to my journal, tie it up with his letters and mine, fasten a stone to it, and drop it over the ship's bulwarks into this blue, blue sea. That is either he threatened me or I him, I forget which, with such a solemn termination; but I doubt if we shall ever have courage to do it. It would feel something like dropping a little child into this "wild and wandering grave," as a poor mother, on board had to do yesterday.

"But I shall see him again," she sobbed, as I was helping her to sew the little white body up in its hammock. "The good God will take care of him, and let me find it again, even out of the deep sea. I cannot lose him: I loved him so."

And thus, I believe, no perfect love, or the record of it, in heart, or in word, can ever be lost. So it is of small matter to Max and me whether this, our true love's history, sinks down into the bottom of the ocean, to sleep there—as we almost expected we should do yesterday, there was such a storm—or is sealed up and preserved for the benefit of—of our great-grandchildren.

Ah! that poor mother and her dead child! Max here crept down into the berth to look for me, and I returned with him and left him resting comfortably on the quarter-deck, promising not to stir for a whole hour. I have to take care of him still; but, as I told him, the sea winds are bringing some of its natural brownness back to his dear old face, and I shall not consider him "interesting" any more.

During the three months that Max was in prison I never saw him. Indeed, we never once met from the day we said good-by in my father's presence till the day that— But I will continue my story systematically.

All those three months Max was ill; not dangerously—for he said so, and I could believe him. It would have gone very hard with me if I could not have relied on him in this, as in everything. Nevertheless, it was a bitter time, and now I almost wonder how I bore it—now when I am ready and willing for everything, except the one thing, which, thank God, I shall never have to bear again—separation.

The day before he came out of prison Max wrote to me a long and serious letter. Hitherto both our letters had been filled with trivialities, such as might amuse him and cheer me. We deferred all plans till he was better. My private thoughts, if I had any, were not clear even to myself until Max's letter.

It was a very sad letter. Three months' confinement in one cell, with one hour's daily walk round a circle in a walled yard—prisoner's labor, for he took to making mats, saying it amused him—prisoner's rules and fare—no wonder that toward the end even his brave heart gave way.

He broke down utterly, otherwise he never would have written to me as he did—bidding me farewell—me! At first I was startled and shocked; then I laid down the letter and smiled—a very sad sort of smile, of course, but still it was a smile. The idea that Max and I could part, or desire to do so, under any human circumstances, seemed one of those amusingly impossible things that one would never stop to argue in the least, either with one's self or any other person. That we loved one another, and therefore some day should probably be married, but that anyhow we belonged to one another till death, were facts at once simple and natural, and immutable as that the sun stood in the heavens or that the grass was green.

I wrote back to Max that night. Not that I did it in any hurry, or impulse of sudden feeling. I took many hours to consider both what I should say and in what form I should put it. Also, I had doubts whether it would not be best for him, if he accepted the generous offer of Mr. Thorley's son-in-law, made with full knowledge of all circumstances to go first to America alone. But, think how I would, my thoughts all returned and settled in the same track, in which was written one clear truth; that, after God and the right—which means all claims of justice and conscience—the first duty of any two who love truly is toward one another.

I have thought since that if this truth were plainer seen and more firmly held by those whom it concerns, many false notions about honor, pride, self-respect, would slip off; many uneasy doubts and divided duties would be set at rest; there would be less fear of the world and more of God, the only righteous fear. People would believe more simply in His ordinance, instituted "from the beginning"—not the mere outward ceremony of a wedding, but the love which draws together man and woman until it makes them complete in one another, in the mystical marriage union, which, once perfect, should never be annulled. And if this union begins, as I think it does, from the very hour each feels certain of the other's love—surely as I said to Max—to talk about giving one another up, whether from poverty, delay, altered circumstances, or compulsion of friends, anything, in short, except changed love or lost honor—like poor Penelope and Francis—was about as foolish and wrong as attempting to annul a marriage. Indeed, I have seen many a marriage that might have been broken with far less unholliness than a real troth plight, such as was this of ours.

After a little more "preaching" (a bad habit that I fear is growing upon me, save that Max merely laughs at it, or when he does not laugh he actually listens?), I ended my letter by the earnest advice that he should go and settle in Canada, and go at once, but that he must remember he had to take with him one trifling acquiescence—me.

When the words were written, the deed done, I was a little startled at myself. It looked so exceedingly like my making him an offer of marriage! But there—good-by, foolish doubt! good-by

contemptible shame! Those few tears that burned my cheeks after the letter was gone were the only tears of the sort I ever shed—that Max will ever suffer me to shed. Max loves me!

His letter in reply I shall not give—not a line of it. It was only for me. So that being settled, the next thing to consider was how matters could be brought about without delay either; for, with Max's letter, I got one from his good friend Mrs. Ansell, at whose house in London he had gone to lodge. Her son had followed his two sisters—they were a consumptive family—leaving her a poor old childless widow now. She was very fond of my dear Max, which made her quick-sighted concerning him, and so she wrote as she did, delicately, but sufficiently plainly to me who she said he had told her was, in case of any sudden calamity, to be sent for as "his nearest friend."

My dear Max! Now we smile at these sad forebodings; we believe we shall both live to see a good old age. But if I had known that we should only be married a year, a month, a week—if I had been certain he would die in my arms the very same day, I should still have done exactly what I did.

In one sense his illness made my path easier. He had need of me—vital, instant need, and no one else had. Also, he was so weak that even his will had left him; he could neither reason nor resist. He just wrote, "You are my conscience; do as you will, only do right." And then, as Mrs. Ansell afterward told me, he lay for days, calm, patient—waiting, he says, for another angel than Theodora.

Well, we smile now at these days, as I said; thank God, we can smile; but it would not do to live them over again.

Max refused to let me come to see him at Mrs. Ansell's until my father had been informed of all our plans. But papa went on in his daily life, now so active and cheerful; he did not seem to remember anything concerning Dr. Urquhart and me. For two whole days did I follow him about, watching an opportunity but it never came. The first person who learned my secret was Penelope.

How many a time, in these strange summers to come, shall I call to mind that soft English summer night, under the honeysuckle bush—Penelope and I sitting at our work; she talked the while of Lisabel's new hope, and considering which of us two should best be spared to go and take care of her in her trial.

"Or, indeed, papa might almost be left alone for a week or two. He would hardly miss us, he is so well. I should not wonder if, like grandfather, whom you don't remember, Dora, he lived to be ninety years old."

"I hope he may—I hope he may!" And I burst out sobbing; then, hanging about my sister's neck, I told her all.

"Oh!" I cried, for my tongue seemed unloosed, and I was not afraid of speaking to her, nor even of hurting her—if now she could be hurt by the personal sorrows that mine recalled to her mind.

"Oh, Penelope, don't you think it would be right? Papa does not want me—nobody wants me. Or if they did—"

I stopped. Penelope said, meditatively, "A man shall leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife."

"And equally a woman ought to cleave unto her husband. I mean to ask my father's consent to my going with Max to Canada."

"Ah! that's sudden, child." And by her start of pain I felt how untruly I had spoken how keenly I must have wounded my sister in saying, "Nobody wanted me" at home.

Home, where I lived for nearly twenty-seven years, all of which now seem such happy years. "God do so unto me, and more also," as the old Hebrews used to say, if ever I forget Rockmont, my peaceful maiden home!

It looked so pretty that night, with the sunset coloring its old walls, and its terrace walk, where papa was walking to and fro, bareheaded, the rosy light falling like a glory upon his long white hair. To think of him thus pacing his garden, year after year, each year growing older and feeble, and I never seeing him, perhaps never hearing from him—either not coming back at all, or returning after a lapse of years to find nothing left to me but my father's grave!

The conflict was very terrible; nor would Max himself have wished it less. They do not love their own flesh and blood, with whom they have lived ever since they were born, how can they know what any love is!

We heard papa call us: "Come in, you girls! The sun is down, and the dew is falling."

Penelope put her hand softly on my head. "Hush, child, hush! Steal into your own room, and quiet yourself. I will go and explain things to your father."

I was sure she must have done it in the best and gentlest way; Penelope does everything so wisely and gently now; but when she came to look for me, I knew, before she said a word, that it had been done in vain.

man on this earth for whom it is worth forsaking a happy home and a good father."

And truly, if I had ever had the least doubt of Max, or of our love for one another; if I had not felt as it were already married to him, who had no tie in the whole wide world but me, I never could have nerved myself to say what I did say to my father. If, in the lightest word, it was unjust, unloving, or ungrateful, may God forgive me, for I never meant it! My heart was breaking almost; but I only wanted to hold fast to the right, as I saw it, and as, so seeing it; I could not but act.

"So I understand you wish to leave your father?"

"Papa! papa!"

"Do not argue the point. I thought that folly was all over now. It must be there. Be a good girl, and forget it. There!"

I suppose I must have turned very white, for I felt him take hold of me, and press me into a chair beside him. But it would not do to let my strength go.

"Papa, I want your consent to my marriage with Dr. Urquhart. He would come and ask you himself, but he is too ill. We have waited a long time, and suffered much. He is not young, and I feel old—quite old myself, sometimes. Do not part us any more."

This was as near as I can recollect, what I said—said very quietly and humbly, I know it was, for my father seemed neither surprised nor angry; but he sat there as hard as a stone, repeating only, "It must be so."

"Why?"

"He answered by one word: 'Harry.' 'No other reason?' 'None.'"

Then I dared to speak out plain, even to my father. "Papa, you said publicly you had forgiven him for the death of Harry."

"But I never said I should forget."

"Ay, there it is!" I cried out bitter. "People say they forgive, but they cannot forget. It would go hard with some of us if the just God dealt with us in like manner."

"You are profane."

"No; only I am not afraid to bring God's truth into all the circumstances of life, and to judge them by it. I believe, if Christ came into the world to forgive sinners, we ought to forgive them too."

Thus far I said, not thinking it just toward Max that I should plead merely for pity to be shown to him or to me who loved him, but because it was right and the truth, and as such, both for Max's honor and mine, I strove to put it clearly before my father. And then I gave way, pleading only as a daughter with her father, that he should blot out the past, and not, for the sake of one long dead and gone, break the heart of his living child.

"Harry would not wish it—I am sure he would not. If Harry has gone where he, too, may find mercy for his many sins, I know that he has long ago forgiven my dear Max."

My father, muttering something about "strange theology," sat thoughtfully. It was some time before he spoke again.

"There is one point of the subject you omit entirely. What will the world say? I, a clergyman, to sanction the marriage of my daughter with the man who took the life of my son? It is not possible."

Then I grew bold: "So it is not the law of God, or justice, or nature, that keeps us asunder, the world? Father, you have no right to part Max and me for fear of the world."

When it was said, I repented myself of this. But it was too late. All his former hardness returned as he said:

"I am aware that I have no legal right to forbid your marriage. You are of age; you may act, as you have all along acted, in defiance of your father."

Never in defiance, nor even in secret disobedience; and I reminded him how all things had been carried on—open and plain—from first to last; how patiently we had waited; and how, if Max were well and prosperous, I might still have said, "We will wait a little longer."

Now— "Well, and now?"

I went down on my very knees, and with tears and sobs besought my father to let me be Max's wife.

It was in vain.

"Good-night; go to your bed, Dora, and weary me no more."

I rose, certain now that the time was come when I must choose between two duties—between father and husband; the one to whom I owed existence, the other to whose influence I owed everything that had made me a girl worth living or worth loving. Such crises do come to poor souls! God guide them, for He only can.

"Good-night, father." My lips felt dry and stiff; it was scarcely my own voice that I heard. "I will wait; there are still a few days."

He turned suddenly upon me. "What are your plannings? Tell the truth."

to be married in three weeks, remain a week in England, and then sail.

"And what if I do not give my consent?"

I stopped a moment, and then strength came.

"I must be Max's wife still. God gave us to one another, and God only shall only put us asunder."

After that, I remember nothing till I found myself lying in my own bed, with Penelope beside me.

No words can tell how good my sister Penelope was to me in the three weeks that followed. She helped me in all my marriage preparations, few and small, for I had little or no money except what I might have asked papa for, and I would not have done that—not for worlds! Max's wife would have come to him almost as poor as Griseldis, had not Penelope one day taken me to those locked-up drawers of hers.

"Are you afraid of ill luck with these things? No! Then choose whatever you want, and may you have health and happiness to wear them, my dear."

And so, with a little more stitching—for I had a sort of superstition that I should like to be married in one new white gown, which my sister and I made between us—we finished and packed the small wardrobe which was all the marriage portion poor Theodora Johnston could bring to her husband.

[CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.]

How to Behave at a Party.

Remember that when I was quite young going to a party was as much of a trial to me as a pleasure. Being diffident, I dreaded entering the room, and encountering the eyes of the people already assembled there; and once fairly in, I was overshadowed all the evening by the dreadful necessity of by and by retiring. Besides, I felt a sense of responsibility which was very oppressive, and was so afraid of not doing or saying what was expected of me that I moved and acted awkwardly, and no doubt looked piteously miserable.

Perhaps some of you may have had experiences similar to mine. Now let me tell you that I have to laugh at my foolish shyness, and to be very sorry for boys and girls who suffer from the same thing. When you are invited to a company, the first thing in order is to reply to the invitation. This is polite, whether you accept or decline, and it is imperative if you decline. Send your answer as soon as possible, in some such simple phrase as this: "Harold," or "Florence, thanks Mrs. — for her kind invitation for Thursday evening, and accepts it with pleasure," or "declines it with real regret," as the case may be. Arrived at your friend's house, you will be directed to the proper place for the removal of your wraps and the arrangement of your toilet, and then you have only to proceed to the parlor where your hostess will relieve you from embarrassment by meeting you at once. She is, of course, the first person whom you are to greet. Having spoken to her, you are at liberty to find other friends. Do not think people are looking at you, or noticing your dress or your looks. They are doing nothing of the kind. Engage heartily in whatever amusement is provided for the occasion, but do not put yourself needlessly forward. If spoken to, reply modestly but intelligently, even though for a moment there should be a hush in the room. If you really wish to enjoy yourself, seek out somebody who seems more a stranger than yourself, and to do something for his or her pleasure. Forget you are not acquainted with everybody, and remember that it is your duty to help your hostess in making her party a success. Should your greatest enemy be present, you must, of course, be perfectly agreeable in your manner towards him, for in your friend's house you are under a flag of truce.

When you say goodnight to your entertainers, be sure to thank them for the pleasure you have had. Do not stay too late, but avoid being the first to go; or if you must leave early, do it as quietly as possible, lest your withdrawal should be the signal for others to leave, thus breaking the party too soon.

Josh Billings' Wisdom.

The man who gets bit twice by the same dog is better adapted for that kind of business than any other.

There is a great deal of religion in the world that is like a life preserver, only put on at the moment of danger, and then half the time put on hind side before.

Experience is a school where a man learns what a big fool he has been.

The man that doesn't believe in any hereafter has got a dreadfully mean opinion of himself and his chances.

There are two kinds of fools in this world—those who can't change their opinion, and those who won't.

A good doctor is a gentleman to whom we pay three dollars a visit for advising us to eat less and exercise more.

Out in the world men show us two sides to their characters; by the freestone only one.

The world is filling up with educated fools. Mankind read too much and learn too little.

Every man has his follies, and oftentimes they are the most interesting things he has got.

How to Carry an Umbrella.

Perhaps you don't know? If so, I'll tell you.

If you are in the country, where there is plenty of room, the knowledge will be of no benefit to you, and you had better not waste your time reading this article.

But if you are in the city you will find it practically to your advantage to study the rules laid down.

To begin at the beginning: Be sure and pull your hat well down over your eyes before you start out with your umbrella. Button up your coat. If it is cold weather tie on a muffler. If you chew tobacco take a fresh quid.

Slam the door when you go out of your house. It will give people inside a clear understanding of the fact that you are proprietor and have a right to slam your own door as much as you please.

After you step out on the crowded sidewalk, thrust your umbrella under your arm, and try and have the two points stick out equally, before and behind, at right angles with your body. It is always well when you are purchasing, to buy as long an umbrella as you can get. It will be likely to last longer, as well as to stick out further when you are carrying it.

Then walk as fast as you can! The faster the better. People in cities always go fast for fear time will overtake them.

Everybody who has the impudence to push up behind you will get punished for it by a poke from the umbrella you carry behind; and everybody you meet will get a poke from the umbrella you carry in front; for arranged in this way an umbrella acts on the principle of a double-ended, and like old Grandpa Lyman's gun, kills equally well at both ends.

If a small boy or two should be knocked over, no matter! It will learn small boys to stay at home and pick up chips for their mothers. No business out in the street, getting in the way of people's umbrellas!

If it rains, spread your umbrella and hold it well down in front of you. People who are coming the other way must keep their own lookout. Of course you will be going with your face to the storm. One always is. If you put anybody's eyes out, it won't be your fault—they should have got out of the way when they saw you coming!

If your umbrella becomes entangled in a lady's laces, or fringes, don't stop to disentangle it. Tear along. Serve her right for wearing such fooleries!

Make your way, no matter who sinks or swims, and most likely you will die rich, and all your relatives will be boiling over with joy at your death, and will find employment for a year, to come in fighting over the lucre you have left behind you.

Calling on the Sick.

1. Only call at the door, unless you are sure your friends is able to see you without harm.

2. Enter and leave the house, and move about the room quietly.

3. Carry a cheerful face, and speak cheerful words.

4. In order to cheer you need not tell lies.

5. If your friend is very sick, do not fall into gay and careless conversation in the attempt to be cheerful.

6. Don't ask questions, and thus oblige your friend to talk.

7. Talk about something outside, and not about the disease and circumstances of the patient.

8. Tell the news, but not the list of the sick and dying.

9. If possible carry something with you to please the eye and relieve the monotony of the sick room; a flower, or even a picture which you can loan for a few days.

10. If desirable some little delicacy to tempt will be best bestowed.

11. The perfume of some flowers is poisonous, and these should never be carried into the sick room. Especially is this true of the tuberose, heliotrope, hyacinth, orange, lilac, syringa and lilies.

12. Stay only a moment, or a few minutes at the longest, unless you can be of some help.

13. Speak a word for the Master.

"Let us play we were married," said little Edith, "and I'll bring my dolly and say 'See baby, papa.'" "Yes," replied Johnny, "and I will say, 'Don't bother me now. I want to look at the paper.'" Children have strange ideas of grown folks' ways, now, haven't they?

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