



A BLIGHT IN SUMMER.

"I'll be over directly," I said.

"But, please, sir, master says I want to come with you, sir," Tom, he says, "I'm mortal back," he says, "It's getting higher and higher," he says, "and if doctor don't come an stop it, they may get fresh tonight for Greenhouse." I said, "Well, let me get the horse—put in the chaise, my man," I said, smiling at the sun-tanned young fellow's earnestness; for doctor, though they grant the suffering, do not place much credence in gouty patients' fears of an approaching end.

"Our gig's at the gate, boy," I said, "I'll drive over safe, and bring you back again. De's make haste, sir, for Miss Kate's in a bad taking."

"There, let me get a little medicine," I said; and going into the surgery, I took down a bottle of oil, and prepared some thing that I knew would be of service. For, young doctor as I was, when a man came driving furiously into the village to fetch help for a sick man, who had declared himself to be dying of gout, there was no much consideration necessary as to what was needed.

Five minutes after, I was in the gig, being driven through the green lanes of Suffolk into Greenhouse, where I found my driver told me, as I found Miss Kate, who was not the regular doctor, but a friend of mine, for the practice at Burnley belonged to Fred Garnet, a small, wooden tub, I said, "I'll find it pretty easy, Mr. Tom, he said, 'for Burnley's a very healthy place. Customer calls a little again down in the marsh; an accident now and then—furnace kicked, or hurt himself with three-shilling machine, or some other farmyard concern; all the best of over-acting."

"Or over-drinking?"

"Exactly," he said, "Farners are all pretty well off about here. You should hear them grumble. Bless them! as soon as they've seen their crops, they're little else to do, so they make themselves ill."

"All right," I said, "I'll do my best, and won't lose you a patient, if I can help it."

"I know that, Max, old fellow," he said, "and it's any pleasure to you to know it, you're about the only man in England I'd have trusted."

My reply was a most graceful bow.

"Don't be a doctee," said Fred; "and I say, my fellow, unless you want a wife, just mind you, 'cause you're a young ladies about here are not above setting their caps at a new-comer."

"Thank you for the advice," I said cynically. "I look a marrying man, don't I? Where did you say there was the best fishing?"

"Front all along the river; plenty of jack and bream in the Straight Marsh drain; and tence and eels in either of the farm mounds. Goodbye, my friend."

His parting words only three days before, and, saying that I had been consulted about a "terrible accident," I was in the back of an old lady of seventy, and this was my first call.

It was a charming ride through a richly cultivated lowland, in the full bloom of summer. Now we were jolting through lanes under interlacing trees; now the road ran through woods, and then—furnace with game, and then we were out again between the hedgerows of richly cultivated land, all deliciously fresh and bright after the late rains.

"Is it much farther?" I said to my companion, who was driving the grumpy, long-backed mare, in the heavy country seat.

"You're it," he said, "the man, pointing with his whip to a long, low, red-tiled house, in a well-wooded valley, on the side, backed by plenty of stacks and great thatched farm-buildings, coated with gold, orange, and green velvet moss."

"And there's Miss Kate waiting for me," he said. "I could see the flutter of a white dress by the gate as we drove on, but my attention was too much taken up by the prettiness of the place, and I was gazing idly about, thinking nothing of 'Miss Kate' and her case, when the gig stopped, and I jumped down."

"Oh, sir, I am so glad," some one said, in a sweet musical voice that made me start, and my lane eyes caught between two that were soft and warm."

I turned round, astonished to meet the soft humid eyes, that looked at me with hardened, rough country lass, but to the sweetest face I had ever seen. The eyes were blue, and the smile was sweet, and she was looking at me with a half-dragged me into the comfortable farm-house, and into a bed-room on the ground floor.

"Is—is he very ill?" I asked.

"Oh, very—very—very ill," said the girl, with a sob.

She did not see my confusion, for she was thinking of nothing but the pain of the patient, and relating my latest news. She had dragged me into the comfortable farm-house, and into a bed-room on the ground floor.

"Here he is, uncle dear," she cried.

"Time he was here," exclaimed some one, with a voice that I had never heard before. "You come fast enough for your life, but a man may lie here and die before you'll put yourself out of the way."

"Don't excite yourself," I said quietly, as I looked in the fine and ruddy face of a man of about fifty, tanned by the sun, slightly grizzled, but with a keen, bright, looking, although his countenance was distorted by pain.

"Excuse myself? Hark at him, Kate. He hasn't lain all night with his leg being roasted over a slow fire."

"Oh, uncle, uncle, I dear uncle!" sobbed the girl, going to the head of the sofa on which he lay, "pray, pray don't excite yourself so."

As she spoke she placed a soft arm round his neck, and tried to pillow his head on her bosom, but he roared out an oath which scared the poor girl.

"Get out! you're murdering me, you baggage!" he cried; and the girl shrieked away. No, no, no, come here, Kitty—Oh, doctor, did you ever hear such a beastly man?—There, there, my pretty lamb! I said, taking the little soft hands that were placed in mine, and kissing them.

"Don't mind me, Kitty. I'm a beast—a wild, swearing, raving, beastly beast. Say that nice cool cheek against my forehead, darling; that's better, thank you, my dear—She's been an angel to me, and doctor, and I've been a demon ever since this horrible gout has seized me. Can't you do something for me?"

"Something for you? yes, of course I can," I replied, "only you must have a little patience."

"Patience! oh, oh! who could be patient with that?" he roared. "Don't move, Kitty. There! there! it's again just as if ten men with ten pinners had got hold of my ten toes, and were screwing them by the roots."

"Give me a wine-glass, my dear—I mean Miss—"

"Anxiety in my name," said the bright vision—for such it was to me—and with eager haste she placed a wine-glass in my hand, and said, "What's that doctor—physic?" said my patient. "Oh, lor! filthy stuff, Kitty."

mix me a strong glass of gin-and-water to take after it."

"Don't you do anything of the kind, Miss Anstey. No spirits for him for some time."

"Ugh! you tyrant!" growled the patient, making a face like a child would at the mixture, and then tossing it off.

"What horrid stuff!"

"Never mind if it tastes you," I said; and then, after giving various directions, I placed the tender leg in an easy position, the patient breaking out into furious exclamations the while. Then, by means of some bladders from a small wooden tub, I made a little gipsy tent over the limb, so that the coverings did not touch the excruciatingly tender spot, and at the end of half an hour had the pleasure of hearing a sigh of satisfaction, of seeing a smile steal into the face, which was now smooth and bedewed with a gentle perspiration, and directly after, in a drowsy voice, my patient said—

"Kitty, my darling, here's a trump, take him into the next room and apologise to him, and tell him I'm not always such a man."

He was half asleep already, while I—ever in that short hour—I had fallen into my work, and I knew that when I left about six o'clock I could hardly refrain from kissing her hand, and telling her I was not a doctor, but a friend of her father's.

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man, walked straight to the station without seeing Fred Garnet, and went off to London.

It was ill for a month—not seriously ill, but in a low, dependent way. I had been a student from my boyhood, and this love affair, had come in upon my stern, shadowy life like such a gleam of sunshine. I had believed fully, trusted to the uttermost, and had been rudely awakened from my delicious dream.

Fred Garnet wrote to me, of course, astonished at my abrupt departure, and him as far as his practice was concerned, and then, as soon as I was better, I set to work at my profession, a bitter, altered matter how repugnant it might have been to me at a happier stage of my existence. Six months glided by, and then I was once more called upon to take charge of the practice of a friend in the suburbs.

These were the customary ailments to attend to, and I filled up my time with study, saving upon such occasions as those when, in spite of all my endeavours, I was called upon to do some of the more of the wood—a scene so vivid that it was printed on my brain in every detail.

"How I had to fight against those visions, and how vainly! I knew they would leave me feverish and unsettled for work, but come they would none the less, and I wrestled and prayed that I might think about the heartless temptress no more."

It was a dark night in winter that I was just going to bed, and wishing that I had had a call—only I knew that I should only be lost and alone, and I was not a doctor, but a friend of her father's.

"I believe I died with her; I am sure she gave me cups of tea later on, that were not to me, but to her, and I was not a doctor, but a friend of her father's."

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"What do you wish me to do?"

"Telegraph, at any expense, to my brother-in-law. Take it down, or you'll forget. From Christopher Anstey to John Barker, Greenhouse, Burnley. Say Kate is not to be fidget. You know best."

"Yes, yes," I stammered, my hands trembling as I took out a pencil and prepared to write. "Miss Kate, then," I faltered.

"My darling child!" sobbed the poor fellow; "and she's dying!"

He was too weak, too faint to heed me, as with a bitter groan I turned away stunned—mad almost at my folly. For I saw it all now, poor, weak, pitiful, jealous fellow, who had been a student from my boyhood, and this love affair, had come in upon my stern, shadowy life like such a gleam of sunshine. I had believed fully, trusted to the uttermost, and had been rudely awakened from my delicious dream.

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Madame de Sevigne is still laughed at for having prophesied that coffee would go out of fashion. Perhaps at this time, when tobacco brings revenues of £20,000,000 to the Exchequer, it would be hazardous to predict that smoking will ever fall into disuse. It is much to be remembered that in the last century snuff-taking was universal, and that it has now diminished to such extent that the sight of a snuff-box in an old gentleman's hands has become a rarity, while no young man would venture to sport such a thing in society. Snuff-taking began to decline when, after trying it themselves, had the courage to declare it an unclean habit; and a time may well come when they will set their faces more against smoking, or at all events insist that it should be indulged in with more moderation than at present. Men are now smoking to excess, which is possibly a reaction on the social persecutions with which tobacco was so long visited. Mother Teresa, in Toronto, Hamilton, Guelph, Niagara Falls, Lindsay and Belleville, may be looked upon as a reward for her long journey and the arduous task that awaited her upon arriving in Canada. For several years, Mrs. Dease and her husband, who were both of the most arduous and privations, which only those who are animated by a noble spirit of self-sacrifice, and by the most exalted motives, could endure. The excellent institutions of learning and piety, founded by Rev. Mother Teresa, in Toronto, Hamilton, Guelph, Niagara Falls, Lindsay and Belleville, may be looked upon as a reward for her long journey and the arduous task that awaited her upon arriving in Canada. For several years, Mrs. Dease and her husband, who were both of the most arduous and privations, which only those who are animated by a noble spirit of self-sacrifice, and by the most exalted motives, could endure. The excellent institutions of learning and piety, founded by Rev. 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