

A girl's face, when the budding rose
 Of youthful beauty blooms and grows
 By nature's influence, sweet and good,
 And with the fragrance of the rose
 In there a light on earth so fair?
 Consider well the rev'end hair
 Which nature's wisdom has made white;
 The lovely eyes like stars of light,
 In whose clear hazel glance is seen
 The wisdom that is forth and true
 The ripe, bewitching lips, that part
 With smiles like sunshine of the heart
 And all the charms uncounted here,
 Which nature's hand has given a year.
 Time changes all. The fairest day
 Of short-lived summer fades away,
 And all the beauty of the green
 The petals of the rose are shed;
 Time steals the splendor from the hair
 Which nature's wisdom has made rare;
 But there are beauties of the soul
 That time and change may not control;
 The heart that's true and kind and true,
 To others' faults, and good and kind,
 And swift to help with blessed deeds
 A sister's or a brother's needs,
 And with the grace and truth of God,
 And now beauty to the face.

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"I shall have to confess, Everett," she said, "that I was the love of money. But, as I have said, with a sigh, although a slight smile played over her brilliant lips. "I had known what poverty was as a girl, and I had known what it had struggled during my youthful years for even the necessaries of life, for, as you know, my father was poor and an invalid. After I came into the possession of my share of Uncle Jabez's money I enjoyed every luxury and I had no more need of the family purse with comforts such as they had never known before. Do you think it would have been easy to have gone back to the hardship of my early life?"

"I suppose it would not have been easy."

"Your father was situated somewhat the same. He had been dependent upon Uncle Jabez's bounty ever since the death of his mother, and although it was as insignificant as I, at first, of my will, and vowed he would not submit to any such arbitrary conditions, yet, after years of luxurious living, when he began to feel the weight of the family burden, he was willing to revoke my early education and become his wife."

"But, mother, was there no one else in the world whom you would have preferred to marry—one whom you would have met and loved? Was there no romance in either of your lives that would have conflicted with such a proceeding?" Everett anxiously asked.

"There was no one whom I loved better—no one whom I would have been as willing, even, to marry."

"That seems very strange! How old were you at that time?"

"I was twenty, and I was the possessor of grace," replied Mrs. Mapleson, with little laugh.

"Have you never met any one since who has made you regret the step?"

"I have not," she answered, "and to much respect for myself, for my father to ever have yielded to any such sentiment. More than that, I have become deeply attached to my husband and my life, as you well know, has been a remarkably peaceful and uncheckered one."

"And father—?" the young man began and hesitated.

"He told me frankly when he asked me to marry him that he had no other attachment," interposed Mrs. Mapleson. "In fact we mutually confessed that, although we did not possess any romantic love for each other such as lovers usually do, we were contented with each other; else; that we did admire and esteem each other, and we believed that a marriage would, under the circumstances, be best for us both."

"The strongest union I ever heard of, and I believe it was a very dangerous thing to do."

"Dangerous? Why?"

"You might have met some one later on, and you might have learned to love him, and unhappiness might have resulted from it all parties."

"That was hardly probable for we had both been much in society and had seen a great deal of the world. At all events, I had no other attachments. Our early admiration and simple liking have ripened into a deep and lasting affection, and we have been as quiet and happy as most married people I believe."

"I am not sure," she continued, "curiously. It seemed very strange to him that such a beautiful woman as she was and must have been in her youth should have missed that sweetest of all experiences—love. He thought he was being deceived. She was just the person, though, to have inspired the most ardent passion in the heart of some strong, true-minded man; and just the woman who have such a man most fervently and completely."

"He almost wondered that his father had not fallen maddly in love with her the very outset, and yet he could understand how the spirit of antagonism he himself had felt toward her might not have been allowed to choose for themselves in a matter so vital to their interests and happiness."

"You say that this cousin, Robert Dale, was the one who asked her to marry after a few moments of thought."

"Yes; and he was every bit as eccentric as Uncle Jabez himself."

"Are you sure that he never married?"

"Somehow, what you have said is very strange," she said, "in my mind that this Geoffrey Dale Huntress, after all must be in some way connected with the Dales at home."

"Mrs. Mapleson gave vent to a slight smile of amusement at her son's question."

"I am very sure that Robert Dale was never married," she said. "I despised all women, even disliked to see them, and I never thought of marriage."

"How old was he when he died?"

"Forty, I should judge."

"Do you imagine he could have had a secret alliance with any one, and that this Geoffrey Dale is a descendant of him?"

"No, indeed!" Mrs. Mapleson turned, her face flaming all over at the suggestion. "If you could have seen him you would never ask such a question. He was a man who would not approach him; no woman would have lived with such a creature, or as he lived. He built himself a small stone house in the woods a few miles from Vus and lived there for years, and he was supplied and furnished with only what was actually necessary, and there he lived a kind of hermit's life, with an old negro servant, who was cook, housemaid, and everything else you may choose to term him."

"But during his earlier life he must have been different—he may have loved some one, and been secretly married—and then, disappointed, he might have hated her, and that might have bitten him and made him the woman-hater he is now," responded Everett, thoughtfully.

"No, I do not think that is possible, and even if it were, this young man could not be a son of his; he is not of his blood. I belong to the same generation as yourself."

"True, I did not think of that. How long did Robert Dale live after you were married?"

"Everett looked up quickly into his mother's face."

"Before your twenty-fifth birthday?"

"Yes."

"Were you sorry that you did not wait a little longer? You would have been free from the conditions of that will, and could have kept your money."

"Yes, Everett, I have never regretted my marriage," Mrs. Mapleson calmly replied. "I think I have been far happier than I should have been had I remained single."

"What became of Robert Dale?"

"That has been a mystery to every body, and one that has remained unsolved to this day. He was known to have given twenty thousand dollars to the hospital at Philadelphia. He died ten years previous to his death; but when he became of the remainder of his fortune, which must have been very large, he has been a question that has puzzled all who have heard of it. He has been known to have given away large sums at different times, and it was all distributed before he died, for no papers of any kind and no will were ever found."

"Was Miss Annie Dale a relative of this eccentric old bachelor?" Everett inquired.

"Yes; she was his niece, his only brother's child; but he never had any thing to do with her. There had been

me trouble between himself and his brother during their youth, he never forgot or forgave the grudge. Even after the girls father died he refused to have anything to do with either mother or daughter, although I have heard that they were at times very needy."

"Did you ever see the girl?"

"No"; my home, as you know, was in Richmond. I was not married, and did not go to V's de l'Eau until some three years or more after she disappeared."

"Do you know the name of the family to whom she went as governess?"

"No."

Mrs. Mapleson seemed to grow somewhat weary of the conversation.

"It is very strange what became of her," her son murmured reflectively.

"Do you imagine there was any foul play about her disappearance?"

"Oh, no, indeed. She probably met some clever young man who fell in love with her and married her. I do not know much about the matter anyway until that she was entirely alone in the world, and I do not know as there was anything so very remarkable about her going off and never coming back again. But, mercy! Everet, I do not care to sit here all day and talk about the Dalees even for the sake of making out your handsome orator to belong to the which is not at all probable. Come want to look about a little."

"Mrs. Mapleson arose as she spoke thus putting an end to their long talk of streets and whiskenesses. More essential than the ordinary kinds, and cannot be used in competition with the multitude of low cost light weight alums or phosphata powders, &c., sold by the BAKER POWERS CO., Wall Street, New York.

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