

A LIFE FOR A LIFE.

BY MISS MULLOCK.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HER STORY.

You will understand all I mean by "our own." I am often very sad for you, Max; but never afraid of you, never in doubt about you, not for an instant. There is no sting even in my saddest thought, concerning you. I trust you; I feel certain that whatever you do you will do right—that all you have to endure will be borne nobly and bravely. Thus I may grieve over your griefs, but never over you. My love of you, like my faith in you, is above all grieving. Forgive this long digression; to-day is Sunday, the best day in the week, and my day for thinking most of you.

To return. Penelope and I were both merry as we started by the very earliest train in the soft May morning, we had so much business to get through. You can't understand, of course, so I omit it, only confiding to you our last crowning achievement—the dress. It is white, *noire antique*. Dr. Urquhart has not the slightest idea what that is, but no matter; and it has lace flounces half a yard deep, and it is altogether a most splendid affair. But the governor's lady—I beg my own garden—the governor's wife must be magnificent, you know.

It was the mantua-maker, a great West-end personage, employed by the grand-family to whom, by Francis's advice, Lydia Cartwright was sent some years ago (by-the-by, I met Mrs. Cartwright to-day, who asked after you, and sent her duty, and wished you would know that she had heard from Lydia)—this mantua-maker it was who recommended the lady's maid, Sarah Enfield, who had once been a workwoman of her own. We saw the person, who seemed a young woman, but delicate-looking, said her health was injured with the long hours of millinery-work, and that she should have died, she thought, if a friend of hers, a kind young woman, had not taken her in and helped her. She was lodging with this friend now.

On the whole, Sarah Enfield sufficiently pleased us to make my sister decide on engaging her, if only Francis could see her first. We sent a message to his lodgings, and were considerably surprised to have the answer that he was not at home, and had not been for three weeks; indeed, he hardly ever was at home. After some annoyance, Penelope resolved to make her decision without him.

Hardly ever at home! What a lively life Francis must lead! I wonder he does not grow weary of it. Once he half owned he was, but added, "that he must float with the stream—it was too late now—he could not stop himself." Penelope will, though.

As we drove through the Park to the address Sarah Enfield had given us—somewhere about Kensington—Penelope wishing to see the girl once again and engage her—my sister observed, in answer to my remark, that Francis must have many invitations.

"Of course he has. It shows how much he is liked and respected. It will be the same abroad. We shall gather round us the very best society in the island. Still he will find it a great change from London."

I wonder it she at all afraid of it, or suspects that he once was what she shrank from being thrown altogether upon his wife's society, like the Frenchman who declined marrying a lady he had long visited because "where should he spend his evenings?" Oh, me! what a heart-breaking thing to feel that one's husband needed somewhere to spend his evenings.

We drove past Holland Park; what a bonnie place it is (as you would say); how full the trees were of green leaves and birds. I don't know where we went next—I hardly know anything of London, thank goodness!—but it was a pretty, quiet neighborhood, where we had the greatest difficulty in finding the house we wanted, and, at last, had recourse to the Post-office.

The post-mistress—who was rather grim—"knew the place, that is, the name of the party as lived there, which was all she cared to know. She called herself Mrs. Chaytor, or Chaster, or something like it," which we decided must be Sarah Enfield's charitable friend and accordingly drove thither.

It was a small house, a mere cottage, set in a pleasant little garden, through the pallings of which I saw walking about a young woman with a child in her arms. She had on a straw hat with a deep lace fall that hid her face, but her figure was very graceful, and she was extremely well dressed. Nevertheless, she looked not exactly "the lady." Also, hearing the gate bell, she called out, "Arriet, in no lady's voice."

Penelope glanced at her and then sharply at me.

"I wonder"—she began, but stopped—told me to remain in the carriage while she went in, and she would fetch me if she wanted me.

But she did not. Indeed, she hardly staid two minutes. I saw the young woman run hastily in doors, leaving her child—such a pretty boy! screaming

after his "mammy"—and Penelope came back, her face the color of scarlet.

"What? Is it a mistake?" I asked.

"No—yes," and she gave the order to drive on.

Again I inquired if anything were the matter, and was answered, "Nothing—nothing that I could understand." After which she sat with her veil down, cogitating, till all of a sudden she sprang up as if some one had given her a stab at her heart. I was quite terrified, but she again told me it was nothing, and bade me "let her alone;" which as you know is the only thing one can do with my sister Penelope.

But at the railway station we met some people we knew, and she was forced to talk; so that by the time we reached Rockmount she seemed to have got over her annoyance, whatever it was concerning Sarah Enfield, and was herself again. That is, herself in one of those moods when, whether her ailment be mental or physical, the sole chance of its passing away is, as one says, "to leave her alone."

I do not say this is trying—doubly so new, when, just as she was leaving, I seem to understand my sister better and and love her more than ever I did in my life. But I have learned at last not to break my heart over the peculiarities of those I care for, but to try to bear with them as they must with mine, of which I have no lack, goodness knows!

I saw a letter to Francis in the post-bag this morning, so I hope she has relieved her mind by giving him the explanation which she refused to me. It must have been some deception practised on her by this Sarah Enfield, and Penelope never forgives the smallest deceit.

She was either too much tired or too much annoyed to appear again yesterday so papa and I spent the afternoon and evening alone. But she went to church with us as usual to-day, looking pale and tired, the ill mood—"the little black dog on her shoulder," as we used to call it—not having quite vanished.

Also, I noticed an absent expression in her eyes, and her voice in the responses was less regular than usual. Perhaps she was thinking this would almost be her last Sunday of sitting in the old pew and looking up to papa's white hair, and her heart being fuller, her lips were more silent than usual.

You will not mind my writing so much about my sister Penelope? You like me to talk to you of what is about me and uppermost in my thoughts, which is herself at present. She has been very good to me, and Max loves every one whom I love, and every one who loves me.

I shall have your letter to-morrow morning. Good-night!

THEODORA.

CHAPTER XXIX.

HIS STORY.

My Dear Theodora—This is a line extra, written on receipt of yours, which was most welcome. I feared something had gone wrong with my little methodical girl.

Do not keep strictly to your Dominical letter just now; write any day that you can. Tell me everything that is happening to you—you must, and ought. Nothing must occur to you or yours that I do not know. You are mine.

Your last letter I do not not answer in detail till the next shall come; not exactly from press of business—I would make time if I had it not—but from various other reasons, which you shall have by-and-by.

Give me, if you remember it, the address of the person with whom Sarah Enfield is lodging. I suspect she is a woman of whom, by the desire of her nearest relative, I have been in search for some time. But, should you have forgotten, do not trouble your sister about this. I will find all I wish to learn some other way. Never apologize or hesitate at writing to me about your family—all that is yours is mine. Keep your heart up about your sister Penelope; she is a good woman, and all that befalls her will be for her good. Love her, and be patient with her continually. All your love for her and the rest takes nothing from what is mine, but adds thereto.

Let me hear soon what is passing at Rockmount. I cannot come to you and help you—would I could! My love! my love!

MAX URQUHART.

CHAPTER XXX.

HER STORY.

My Dear Max—I write this in the middle of the night; there has been no chance for me during the day, nor, indeed, at all—until now. To-night, for the first time, Penelope has fallen asleep. I have taken the opportunity of stealing into the next room, to comfort—and you.

My dear Max! Oh, if you knew! If I could but come to you for one minute, rest, one minute's rest, one minute's love! There I will not cry any more. It is much to be able to write to you, and blessed, infinitely blessed to know you are—what you are.

Max, I have been weak, wicked of late; afraid of absence, which tries me so, because I am not strong, and cannot stand up by myself as I used to do; afraid

of death, which might tear you from me, or me from you, leaving the other to go hourning upon earth forever. Now I feel that absence is nothing, death itself nothing, compared to one loss—that which has befallen my sister Penelope.

You may have heard of it, even in these few days—ill news spreads fast. Tell me what you hear; for we wish to save my sister as much as we can. To our friends generally, I have merely written that, "from unforeseen differences," the marriage is broken off. Mr. Charteris may give what reasons he likes at Treherne Court. We will not try to injure him with his uncle.

I have just crept in to look at Penelope; she is asleep still, and has never stirred. She looks so old—like a woman of fifty almost. No wonder. Think—ten years—all her youth to be crushed out at once. I wonder, will it kill her? It would me.

I wanted to ask you—do you think, medically, there is any present danger in her state? She lies quiet enough; taking little notice of me or anybody—wishes her eyes shut during the daytime, and open, wide staring, all night long. What ought I to do with her? There is only me, you know. If you fear anything, send me a telegram at once. Do not wait to write.

But, that you may the better judge her state, I ought just to give you full particulars, beginning where my last letter ended.

That "little black dog on her shoulder," which I spoke of so lightly! God forgive me! also for leaving her the whole of that Sunday afternoon with her door locked, and the room as still as death; yet never once knocking to ask, "Penelope, how are you?"

On Sunday night, the curate came to supper, and papa sent me to summon her; she came down stairs, took her place at the table, and conversed, I did not notice her much, except that she moved about in a stupid stunned-like fashion, which caused papa to remark more than once, "Penelope, I think you are half-asleep." She never answered.

Another night, and the half of another day, she must have spent in the same manner. And I let her do it without inquiry. Shall I ever forgive myself!

In the afternoon of Monday, I was sitting at work, busy finishing her embroidered marriage handkerchief, alone in the sunshiny parlor, thinking of my letter, which you would have received at last; also thinking it was rather wicked of my happy sister to sulk for two whole days, because of a small disappointment about a servant—if such it were. I had almost determined to shake her out of her ridiculous reserve by asking boldly what was the matter, and giving her a thorough scolding if I dared; when the door opened, and in walked Francis Charteris.

Heartily glad to see him, in the hope his coming might set Penelope right again, I jumped up and shook hands, cordially. Not till afterward did I remember how much this seemed to surprise and relieve him.

"Oh, then, all is right!" said he. "I feared, from Penelope's letter, that she was a little annoyed with me. Nothing new that you know?"

"Something did annoy her I suspect," and I was about to blurt out as much as I knew or guessed of the foolish mystery about Sarah Enfield, but some instinct stopped me. "You and Penelope had better settle your own affairs," said I laughing. "I'll go and fetch her."

"Thank you." He threw himself down on the velvet arm-chair—his favorite lounge in our house for the last ten years. His handsome profile turned up against the light, his fingers lazily tapping the arm of the chair, a trick he had from his boyhood—this is my last impression of Francis—as our Francis Charteris.

I had to call outside Penelope's door three times, "Francis is here." "Francis is waiting." "Francis wants to speak to you," before she answered or appeared; and then, without taking the slightest notice of me, she walked slowly down stairs, holding by the wall as she went.

So, I thought, it is Francis who has vexed her after all, and determined to leave them to fight it out and make it up again—this, which would be the last of their many lovers' quarrels. Ah! it was.

Half an hour afterward, papa sent for me to the study, and there I saw Francis Charteris standing, exactly where you once stood—you see, I am not afraid of remembering it myself, or of reminding you. No, my Max! Our griefs are nothing, nothing!

Penelope was also present, standing by my father, who said, looking round at us with a troubled, bewildered air:

"Dora, what is all this? Your sister comes here and tells me she will not marry Francis. Francis rushes in after her, and says, I hardly can make out what. Children, why do you vex me so? Why cannot you leave an old man in peace?"

Penelope answered, "Father, you shall be left in peace, if you will only confirm what I have said to that gentleman, and send him out of my sight."

Francis laughed—"To be called back again presently. You know you will do

it, as soon as you have come to your right senses, Penelope. You will never disgrace us in the eyes of the world—set everybody gossiping about our affairs, for such a trifle."

My sister made him no answer. There was less even of anger than contempt—utter, measureless contempt—in the way she just lifted up her eyes and looked at him—looked him over from head to heel, and turned again to her father.

"Papa, make him understand—I cannot—that I wish all this ended; I wish never to see his face again."

"Why!" said papa, in great perplexity.

"He knows why."

Papa and I both turned to Francis, whose careless manner changed a little; he grew red and uncomfortable. "She may tell if she chooses; I lay no embargo of silence upon her. I have made all the explanations possible, and if she will not receive them, I cannot help it. The thing is done, and cannot be undone. I have begged her pardon—and made all sorts of promises for the future—no man can do more."

He said this sullenly, and yet as if he wished to make friends with her, but Penelope seemed scarcely to hear.

"Papa," she repeated, still in the same stony voice, "I wish you would end this scene; it is killing me. Tell him, will you, that I have burned all his letters, every one. Insist on his returning mine. His presents are all tied up in a parcel in my room, except this; will you give it back to him?"

She took off her ring, a small common turquoise which Francis had given her when he was young and poor, and laid it on the table. Francis snatched it up, handed it a minute, and then threw it violently into the fire.

"Bear witness, Mr. Johnston, and you too, Dora, that it is Penelope, not I, who breaks our engagement. I would have fulfilled it honorably—I would have married her."

"Would you?" cried Penelope, with flashing eyes, "no—not that last degradation—no!"

I would have married her," Francis continued, "and made her a good husband, too. Her reason for refusing me is puerile—perfectly puerile. No woman of sense, who knows anything of the world, would urge it for a moment. No man either, unless he was your favorite—who I believe is at the bottom of this, who, for all you know, may be doing exactly as I have done—Dr. Urquhart."

Papa started and said hastily, "Confine yourself to the subject on hand, Francis. Of what is this that my daughter accuses you? Tell me, and let me judge."

Francis hesitated, and then said, "Send away these girls, and you shall hear."

Suddenly it flashed upon me what it was. How the intuition came, how little things, before unnoticed, seemed to rise and put themselves together, including Saturday's story—and the shudder that ran through Penelope from head to foot, when on Sunday morning old Mrs. Cartwright courted to her at the church-door—all this I cannot account for, but seemed to know as well as if I had been told everything. I need not explain for evidently you know it also, and it is so dreadful, so unspcakably dreadful.

Oh, Max, for the first minute or so, I felt as if the whole world were crumbling from under my feet—as I could trust nobody—believe in nobody—until I remembered you. My dear Max, my own dear Max! Ah! wretched Penelope.

I took her hand as she stood, but she twisted it out of mine again. I listened mechanically to Francis, as he again began rapidly and eagerly to expulate himself to my father.

"She may tell you all, if she likes. I have done no worse than hundreds do in my position, and under my unfortunate circumstances, and the world forgives them, and women too. How could I help it? I was too poor to marry. And before I married I meant to do every one justice—I meant—"

Penelope covered her ears. Her face was so ghastly that papa himself said, "I think, Francis, explanations are idle. You had better defer them and go."

"I will take you at your word," he replied haughtily. "If you or she think better of it, or of me, I shall be at any time ready to fill my engagement—honorably, as a gentleman should. Good-by; will you shake hands with me, Penelope?"

He walked up to her, trying apparently to carry things off with a high air, but he was not strong enough, or hardened enough. At sight of my sister sitting there, for she had sunk down at last, with a face like a corpse, only it had not the peace of the dead, Francis trembled.

"Forgive me if I have done you any harm. It was all the result of circumstances. Perhaps, if you had been a little less rigid—had scolded me less and studied me more—But you could not help your nature, nor I mine. Good-by, Penelope."

She sat, impassive; even when, with a sort of involuntary tenderness, he seized and kissed her hand; but the instant he was gone—fairly gone—with the door shut upon him, and his horse

clattering down the road—I heard it plainly—Penelope started up with a cry of "Francis—Francis!" Oh the anguish of it! I can hear it now.

But it was not this Francis she called for—I was sure of that—I saw it in her eyes. It was the Francis of ten years ago—the Francis she had loved—now as utterly dead and buried as if she had seen the stone laid over him, and his body left to sleep in the grave.

Dead and buried—dead and buried. Do you know, I sometimes wish it were so; that she had been left, peacefully widowed—knowing his soul was safe with God. I thought, when papa and I—papa, who that night kissed me, for the first time since one night you know—sat by Penelope's bed, watching her—"If Francis had only died!"

After she was quiet, and I had persuaded papa to go to rest, he sent for me and desired me to read a psalm, as I used to do when he was ill—you remember? When it was ended, he asked me, had I any idea what Francis had done that Penelope could not pardon?

I told him, difficult as it was to do it, all I suspected—indeed, felt sure of. For was it not the truth? The only answer I could give. For the same reason I write of these things to you without any false delicacy—they are the truth, and they must be told.

Papa lay for some time, thinking deeply. At last he said:

"My dear, you are no longer a child, and I may speak to you plainly. I am an old man, and your mother is dead. I wish she were with us now—she might help us; for she was a good woman, Dora. Do you think—take time to consider the question—that your sister is acting right?"

"I said, 'Quite right.'"

"Yes, I thought you held the doctrine, 'the greater the sinner the greater the saint;' and believed every crime a man can commit may be repented, atoned, pardoned?"

"Yes, father; but Francis has never either repented or atoned."

No; and therefore I feel certain my sister is right. Ay, even putting aside the other fact, that the discovery of his long years of deception must have so withered up his love—and scorched it at the root, as with a stroke of lightning—that even if she pitied him, she must also despise. Fancy despising one's husband.

Besides, she is not the only one wronged. Sometimes, even sitting by my sister's bedside, I see the vision of that pretty young creature—she was so pretty and innocent when she first came to live at Rockmount—with her boy in her arms; and my heart feels like to burst with indignation and shame, and a kind of shuddering horror at the wickedness of the world—yet with a strange feeling of unutterable pity lying at the depth of all.

Max, tell me what you think—you who are so much the wiser of us two; but I think that, even if she wished it still, my sister ought not to marry Francis Charteris.

Ah, me! papa said truly I was no longer a child. I feel hardly even a girl, but quite an old woman—familiar with all sorts of sad and wicked things, as if the freshness and innocence had gone out of life, and were nowhere to be found. Except when I turn to you, and lean my poor sick heart against you, as I do now. Max comfort me!

You will, I know, write immediately you receive this. If you could have come—but that is impossible.

Augustus will probably see, if you have not done so already—for he already looks upon you as the friend of the family, though in no other light as yet; which is best. Papa wrote to Sir William, I believe; he said he considered some explanation a duty, on his daughter's account; further than this, he wishes the matter kept quiet. Not to disgrace Francis, I thought; but papa told me one-half the world would hardly consider it any disgrace at all. Can this be so? Is it indeed such a wicked, wicked world?

—Here my letter was stopped by hearing a sort of cry in Penelope's room. I ran in, and found her sitting up in her bed, her eyes staring, and every limb convulsed. Seeing me, she cried out:

"Bring a light; I was dreaming. But it's not true. Where is Francis?"

I made no reply, and she slowly sank down in her bed again. Recollection had come.

"I should not have gone asleep. Why did you let me? Or why cannot you put me to sleep forever, and ever, and ever, and ever?" repeating the word many times. "Dora," and my sister fixed her piteous eyes on my face. "I should be so glad to die. Why won't you kill me?"

I burst into tears.

Max, you will understand the total helplessness one feels in the presence of an irremediable grief like this; how consolation seems cruel, and reasoning vain. "Miserable comforters are ye all," said Job to his three friends; and a miserable comforter I felt to this my sister, whom it had pleased the Almighty to smite so sore, until I remembered that He who smites can heal.

I lay down outside the bed, and my

long time, not saying a single word—that is not with my lips. And since our weakness is our best strength, and when we wholly relinquish a thing, it is given back to us many a time in double measure, so, possibly, those helpless tears of mine did Penelope more good than the wisest of words.

She lay watching me—saying more than once:

"I did not know you cared so much for me, Dora."

It then came into my mind; that as wrecked people cling to the smallest spar, if, instead of her conviction that in losing Francis she had lost her all, I could by any means make Penelope feel that there were others to cling to, others who loved her dearly, and whom she ought to try and live for still—it might save her. So, acting on the impulse, I told my sister how good I thought her, and how wicked I myself had been for not long since discovering her goodness. How, when at last I learned to appreciate her, and to understand what a sorely-trying life hers had been, there came not only respect, but love. Thoroughly sisterly love, even as people do not necessarily feel even for their own flesh and blood, but never, I doubt, except to them. (Save that, in some inexplicable way, fondly reflected, I have something of the same sort of love for your brother Dallas.)

Afterward, she lying still and listening, I tried to make my sister understand what I had myself felt when she came to my bedside and comforted me that morning, months ago, when I was wretched; how no wretchedness of loss can be altogether unendurable, so long as it does not strike at the household peace, but leaves the sufferer a love to rest upon at home.

And at length I persuaded her to promise that, since it made both papa and me so very miserable to see her thus—and papa was an old man, too; we might not have him with us many years—she would, for our sakes, try to rouse herself, and see if life were not tolerable for a little longer.

"Yes," she answered, closing her heavy eyes, and folded her hands in a piteful kind of patience, very strange in our quick, irritable Penelope. "Yes—just a little longer. Still, I think I shall soon die. I believe it will kill me."

I did not contradict her, but I called to mind your words, that, Penelope being a good woman, all would happen to her for good. Also, it is usually not the good people who are killed by grief; while others take it as God's vengeance, or as the work of blind chance, they receive it humbly as God's chastisement, live on, and endure. I do not think my sister will die—whatever she may think or desire just now. Besides, we have only to deal with the present, for how can we look forward a single day? How little we expected all this only a week ago!

It seems strange that Francis could have deceived us for so long; years, it must have been; but we have lived so retired, and were such a simple family for many things. How far Penelope thinks we know—papa and I—I cannot guess; she is totally silent on the subject of Francis. Except in that one outcry, when she was still only half awake, she has never mentioned his name.

There was one thing more I wanted to tell you, Max; you know I tell you everything.

Just as I was leaving my sister, she noticing that I was not undressed, asked me if I had been sitting up all night, and reproached me for doing so.

I said "I was not weary—that I had been quietly occupying myself in the next room."

"Reading?"

"No."

"What were you doing?" with sharp suspicion.

I answered, without disguise:

"I was writing to Max."

"Max who? Oh, I had forgotten his name."

She turned from me, and lay with her face to the wall—then said:

"Do you believe in him?"

"Yes, I do."

"You had better not. You will live to repent it. Child, mark my words. There may be good women—one or two, perhaps—but there is not a single good man in the whole world."

My heart rose to my lips, but deeds speak louder than words. I did not attempt to defend you. Besides, no wonder she should think thus.

Again she said "Dora, tell Dr. Urquhart he was innocent comparatively, and that I say so. He only killed Harry's body, but those who deceive us are the death of one's soul. Nay," and by her expression I felt sure it was not herself and her own wrongs my sister was thinking of—"there are those who destroy both body and soul."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Burlock Blood Bitters cures Scrofula and all humors of the Blood, Liver, Kidneys and the Bowels at the same time, while it allays nervous irritation and tones up the debilitated system. It cures all humors from a pimple to the worst form of Scrofula. For sale by all

CANA

Tenders hav Baptist church cost will be \$ land. The di will be 110 by 1

Charles Wilk Belleville Pol months in the ing his wife.

Michael (d preferred libe \$5 and costs to questions of a unerator.

Mrs. Hugh I law of Sir C and identity of her residence, (

The Governo self appointed roundings. H Mills and the D

The Napane pushed forward tion to manufa the first of Sept

A Montreal b of incendiarian cause, as he said the penitentiary

The charges a the Rev. C. N. Forest Congres young lady of i investigated and fabrications.

A girl of \$1 the that of \$1 court yesterday had been force rriage and stric her thralldom.

Mr. L. D. Ed into a contract Light Company lighting of his premises by elc lights are to be

The contracts ples for the y awarded for the territories to the and for the sou G. Baker & Co. tana.

A resident of a glove fight v some lazy sort feather weight glove fights are i they appear to boxing glove wh who has ever en admit that as an But the gloves v are not stuffed; or less than kid on the streets. letter but not th

A frightful a 22nd. at Hul have been gered. A man wife, residing their three child ing the door.

They had not one hour when lower flat explo the whole in flames. The b and after a desp firemen made where the chil their bodies thi

Tro of them w one being torn third cannot sur

THE W

Mrs. Presiden Hayes, in that s the undressed ladies fancy a state occasions.

A new horse Chicago and vic the felloak, at When the disea the animal throa suit. Many of car companies, stables, and pri

Punshon labo committed to m his sermons, th small notes, th but they contain he intended to though a semi-p of great practi in business affai

Western wo value the privi At the Onal officers in Onta at the polls. If the interest the once the right given them, i any fuss over suffrage.

How to Cro crumple horn b eye another. I and short. A this indicates t See that she i between the e what stock met skin soft and le Deep from the very slim tall never falls to f farmer has a s sell her unles