

A LIFE FOR A LIFE.

BY MISS MULLOCK. CHAPTER XV.—CONTINUED.

Mr. Treherne was silent. An awkward pause—good-naturedly began a disquisition on the play in question. He bore, for some time, the chief part in literary and critical conversation, of which I did not hear or follow much. Then the ladies took up the story in its moral and personal phase, and talked it over prettily well.

tached, never live to be married or not. I have all my life resolutely contemplated as a thing necessary to be done, either immediately before my death, or after it. Therefore, also, it is inevitable. That word—inevitable—always calms me. It is the will of God. If he has willed it, I must do it. He would have found out a way—perhaps by sending me some good woman to love me, as men are loved sometimes, but not such men as I. There is no fear—no hope, which shall I say?—of any one ever loving me.

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ways, like most afflictions, "a blessing disguised." It has drawn us all together, as nothing but trouble ever does, as I did not "think anything ever would so cheer a family as we. But we are improving. We do not now shut ourselves up in our rooms, hiding each in her hole like a selfish bear until feeding-time—we assemble in the parlor—we sit and talk round papa's study-chair. There, this morning after church, we held a convocation and confabulation before papa came down.

After a few minutes' silence, he continued—"This is a question I have thought over deeply. I have my own opinion concerning it, and I know that of most men, but I should like to hear a woman's—a Christian woman's. Tell me, do you believe the avenger of blood walks through the Christian world as through the land of Israel, requiring retribution; that for blood-shedding, as for all other crimes, there is in this world whatever, there may be in another, expiation, but no pardon? Think well, answer slowly, for it is a momentous question."

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CHAPTER XVI. HER STORY.

"Finished-to-morrow." What a lifetime seems to have elapsed since I wrote that line! A month and four days ago, I sat here waiting for papa and Penelope to come home from their dinner-party. Trying not to get bored, I was reading a book when I was so very tired that I fell asleep.

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