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GERTRUDE MANNERING

A TALE OF SACRIFICE

BY FRANCES NOBLE CHAPTER XVIII.

Stanley, before you go out, I want to speak to you—to say something. Can you come into the library for a few minutes?" And Gerty tried to smile brightly, to hide her agitation, as she made her request to Stanley as soon as breakfast was over next

He was going to ride with Sir Robert into the town, on business upon which he had often accompanied him before in his visits to Nethercotes, and upon which he had promised to accompany him again before Gerty had arrived. Gerty had arrived. baronet had now wished to excuse him, knowing that they should be detained all day, only to return in time for dinner; but Gerty had insisted that he must not lose Stanley's company and advice just

"I am not quite so selfish, Sir Robert," she had said, "and I am not going to fly away in Stanley's absence, you know." And she had so requested Stanley to go that, much as he now grudged every hour not spent in her company, he could not be selfish when she was so

generous. he and Sir Robert were to start about an hour after breakfast, and Gerty knew that she must get through her task before they left, if she wished her letter to her father to be ready for that day's had deepened to one of terrible pain the tone was of almost passionate remonstrance and entreaty. start about an hour after breakfast, it were profaned by being spoken and Gerty knew that she must get in those infidel ears.

you, Gerty? Do you think any-thing should prevent me, after that invitation?" And Stanley laughed with that gentle tenderness which so softened the beautiful features,

stern as they were.
Gerty led the way to the library, where she knelt in her favorite attitude on the hearthrug, gazing stood into the fire, while Stanley stood leaning against the mantlepiece, looking down at her, little guessing how the heart was beating in that

"Well, and what is it, Gerty? No very dreadful secret, I hope, my She looked up with a merry

"Are you afraid I am going to tell you I have committed a murder in my life, or done something else very dreadful, like a sensation payed?" Do you know Stepley it is Are you afraid I am going to dreadful, like a sensation ? Do you know, Stanley, it is messages for you, may I not, Stanley? I may tell papa you will take me ome, and get to know him and the dear old Grange

Nay, you must dear; for I mean to take you home, whether you ask me or not; you might be stolen on the way, otherwise, Gerty. And I am impatient to know your father, darling," he added earnestly.

"And how impatient he will be to know you, Stanley!" And Gerty rose from her lowly position and stood up by Stanley's side, placing one little hand gently on his arm. "Stanley," and her voice trembled audibly as her heart beat very fast, "it works and her work and her works and her works and her works are the stanley." 'it won't-annoy you, it will not be a trouble to you—to have—a—Catholic for—your wife, will it?"

She was looking into the fire again now, and so did not see the painful expression which contracted Stanley's features ere he replied, gently, taking both the little hands

into his strong grasp:

"Why should I let it trouble me,
Gerty? You cannot help it; you
were born a Catholic; you did not
become one of yourself."

The tone was gentle and tender,
but correcting in the words chilled

but something in the words chilled the beating heart strangely.

"Because, Stanley, I have—so much—to—ask you about it before —I write, you know, to papa; so—much to say to you." And as the sweet eyes looked up now with a half-frightened pleading, something made proud Stanley draw her still closer and hold the trembling hands still tighter in his own, though he

said nothing.
"First of all, Stanley (and it may seem a strange, unreasonable thing to you,) when we are to be married, I cannot go at all to—a Protestant church for—the ceremony; I can — only be married by a priest in our own; and it may seem unreasonable to ask you—to consent."

to ask you—to consent."
But Stanley only smiled.
"Don't look so frightened, my precious Gerty! There is no need. I think you know, my darling," he added seriously, "that I have pretty much the same opinion of all forms of religion, though naturally, perhaps, the most exacting—which is yours—is the most displeasing to me." And for the first time Gerty listened to for the first time Gerty listened to his sentiments openly expressed to herself. "I will not conceal from you, Gerty, that the less of religious ceremony there is the better I shall like it; but as merely a civil one would not satisfy you, then I would as soon be married according to work the included." would as soon be married according to your rite (it being legal now) as any other." And though the haughty lips curled slightly, perhaps unconsciously, and though the godless words shocked, without surprising, the religious heart of the trembling little listener at little listen haughty lips curled slightly, perhaps unconsciously, and though the godless words shocked, without surprising, the religious heart of the trembling little listener, still Stanley's gray eyes smiled kindly, and a sigh of relief escaped Gerty as he paused.

"My darling owe anything to—to a practice like that! Want me to believe that I could ever have known her and not loved her! You are what you are, Gerty, in spite of the same pattern belonged to her said Rory Daly sixteen years later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening have been as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to his mother, one August evening as they sat at dinner in the dining-room of "The Revels." "The later to

Was the dreaded task going to prove so easy, so much lighter than she had thought?

"And, Stanley," she continued, looking up again with her own sweet, earnest expression, "afterwards, when I am—your wife, you will always—let me be just as I am now, a strict Catholic? You will not try to prevent me from—press. now, a strict Catholic? For will not try to prevent me from—practising my religion, though—you—dislike it so, because you do not know and understand what it is, what faith is, Stanley?'

But even ere she paused, the pale face, as she looked at it, contracted with a strange expression, half stern, half painful, while the grasp which held her hands almost hurt them with its tightened pressure, though it helped her to stand firm

in her agitation.
"Gerty," he said, in a low tone,
"by practising your religion, tell me what you mean, what you

An unspoken prayer rose from the poor little heart ere she the poor answered:

"I mean, Stanley, that—before I become your wife, I shall have to ask you to promise me solemnly that you will never prevent me from going to Mass; never ask me to go to service in any church which is not a Catholic church; that you will never prevent me keeping the holy-days and fast-days; that you will always let me go, as I do now, to Confession and Communion." A she trembled even still more on that last sweet, sacred word, as though

sionate remonstrance and entreaty. "Thinking, feeling as I do, knowing as I do, the wretched system of superstition (forgive me, my darling, when I say to you now at last) which has implanted all these ideas in your heart, which would could I promise not to try to save you from it, to lead you by the gentlest influence to see it as I do? Gerty, could I see my wife, my one treasure, continue to frequent that —detested Confession, for instance, knowing each time I saw her go that she was seeking guidance and natural protector-from one who who would tell her that

novel? Do you know, Stanley, it is a good thing you are going out, or I should never get my letter written to papa, such a long one as it will be. I may invent all sorts of messages for you, may I not, Stanley? I may tell napa you will take me! strife and care, of daily, hourly en-durance, which might be her lot as a wife. That he, her heart's idol, would *persist* in refusing what she asked, she would not believe; and his word of honor once given, all she would have to fear then would be his occasional estrangement and displeasure; and this she was ready to bear for his love, hoping to win him one day by her patient example, not only to continue grudgingly to allow her to practise her religious but were to be in the second of t religion, but even to love it himself. But she tried to smile, as she looked into his face with that sweet

> "O Stanley, how little you know How terrible you are mistaken about it all — about God's holy Church altogether—to fancy that preparation, you know, Stanley, for receiving the still holier, greater Sacrament of—the—Holy Euchar-ist—to think that Confession could make a wife wish to alienate her-self from her husband, or that in it she could be told to defy him!
> The only thing upon which I should be interrogated, in regard to which I should be obliged to disobey you, Stanley, would be what I am asking you about now beforehand, if you should refuse to allow me to continue to practise my religion. In everything else I should be advised, nay, bound to defer to you; and though you might not know it, I should be a better wife to you. Stanley for going to Continue to you. to you, Stanley, for going to Con-fession; better a thousand times than if I gave it up to please you for the time, knowing as I do that I should be offending God and risking should be offending God and risking my soul by doing so. And I need never let it trouble or inconvenience you, my religion; I can practise it quietly, so that outwardly you shall hardly notice it. Why, Stanley," and she tried to smile playfully, "I have always been to Confession, all my life since I was seven years old, and it has not made me so years old, and it has not made me so very dreadful, you see. Perhaps, but for it, you might never have loved me, Stanley; I might not have been

Was the dreaded task going to mother of my children, perhaps, prac tising a form of religion which you would know to be hateful to me, and in which they could have no part?'

TO BE CONTINUED

ELLESORA

The great Italian circus had come to Dublin to gladden the hearts of young and old. The first time it had arrived, sixteen years ago, all the world was at peace, and hearts were gay and the majority of the Irish had adopted for their motto:

"Come day, go day, God send Sunday."

As every man, woman and child in Erin loves horses, dogs and nearly everything that walks on four legs, the excitement was great at the advent of the famous circus.
The traffic was held up, the
windows and balconies were filled
with admiring ladies, seated on the gaily caparisoned, curveting horses, stepping daintily past to the accompaniment of a fine band; for Signor Cheretti's circus was of world-wide fame. The first performance was wonderful. Hundreds had to be refused admission. Among the fortunate folk who got past the barriers in the front place near the

ring, a pretty young mother sat among a group of boys.

"Look! Mother, here are the wonderful dogs," exclaimed a dark faced lad, with a reckless, open counterpance and reven event bear countenance and raven curly hair. The lady nodded and fixed her attention. She was as youthful as

After the dogs their attention was fixed on lovely horses and the fair riders, waltzing, dancing, flying through rings of fire, and holding the audience spellbound by their

Last came a tiny little milk-white pony ridden by a cherubic girl of four. She stood on his back and danced with fairy-like grace. On enslave you still, glienating you the bills her name figured as "The from all independence and freedom, Marvellous Child Rider, Ellesora."

With a wild pirouette, she gracefully rode off blowing kisses. The circus was over. 'Come on boys," exclaimed Mrs.

Daly. "Mother, I'll buy a doll with the enthusiastically.
"Very well," observed his

mother So the next day he appeared at the hotel where the circus folk were located, armed with a lifesized doll, and asked to see Ellesora. Ushered into the presence of Signor Cheretti, Rory Daly, awed to silence, bashfully presented the doll. The Signor's eyes twinkled.

"Very kind of you. Is this bam-bin for Ellesora?" he inquired. holding it admiringly at arm's

Yes, sir," stammered Rory. The Signor rang the bell, and told the maid to send for the child. A few minutes afterwards, she entered the room at a gallop, followed by a brown-faced nurse. Her rapture was boundless, when she beheld the golden haired doll. She sprang into Rory's arms, pour-ing out her gratitude in fluent

if you would allow Ellesora to

"Certainly I shall conduct her to

had married her riding master. Thrown over by her family she had to take the roads of the world with her husband. He had eventually joined the celebrated circus, and he and his bride had not fared badly However he had been fatally injured riding, shortly after Ellesora's birth, and after his death. his wife pined away. She had written to her mother, a grim old lady, asking her to adopt Ellesora, as she was dying. No reply had been vouchsafed to her pathetic appeal, so the kind hearted and childless Signor and Signora Cheretti took the lovely little infant to their hearts and she had been

me tell you a story."

He opened an arched door, and Ellesora, and the mystified Rory followed him into the Priory reception room.

This belonged to the child's mother and, in accordance with her dying wish, her child wears it on her peek. wish, her child wears it on her neck. We are God-fearing folk, and she

me, Stanley; I might not have been as pleasing to you as I am; I might not have had even as much good about me as I do possess, if it had not been for its holy influence, though you may not understand it yet, Stanley."

Moved to the depths of his proud heart, but unyielding still, nay, more inflexible than ever in his hatred of the religion which shared his darling's heart with him, Stanley, still holding her hands in one of his, with the other drew her

Mrs. Daly looked up. Years had dealt lightly with her, and Rory at twenty-eight was the beau ideal of

young manhood.
"Is it possible?" she exclaimed. "I often wondered what had become of them. They wrote for a year or two and then somehow they dropped out of our lives. However, you will, I dare say, patronize the circus tonight and renew old sequaintance."

acquaintance."
"I mean to Mother. I want to see what sort of a girl Ellesora has grown into," he answered with a

Queues awaited for admission Queues awaited for admission, and while waiting Rory studied the posters. Yes surely there was Ellesora, fairylike and graceful as of yore, dancing on the back of her picture-steed. Later he beheld her in the flesh, poised literally in midair, as she lightly sprang from back to back on the lovely team of Arabian steeds, which seemed to live but for her. live but for her.

Then a magnificent coal-black steed came into the ring, ridden by a splendid type of young manhood.
"Avelardo, the World-famed Italian
Cavalryman." He and Ellesora performed wonderful feats horsemanship, the finale literally taking the audience's breath away.
As they flew round the enclosure
Ellesora stood on Avelardo's hand,
while riding at full gallop, and thus the marvelous performance was brought to a close amid rounds of

applause.
Mrs. Daly left cards at the hotel, and the next afternoon, as Rory entered his mother's drawing, room. he beheld beautiful Ellesora seated there, as charming as of old. The circus had gone round the world several time since they had met, she told them, and it was at her request, that they were now in

"I had a hazy remembrance of you all," she told them. "What about the dogs?" Rory asked her. "Those I saw last night surely were not the company

of our childhood.
"Oh, no!" le "Oh, no!" laughed the girl. Those are all dead." She had a sweet voice in keeping with her beautiful personality.

"I see you still wear your quaint rosary, Ellesora," Mrs. Daly said. "Oh, yes," she answered fingering lovingly. "Neverhave I neglected silver I have in my money-box, for that lovely little girl," said Rory to offer daily my crown of roses to the Madonna. But my grand-mother has never written and, although my mother tried to see her in Italy, she refused."

"Pray on dearest!" said Mrs. Daly encouragingly. "Your prayer will surely be answered." "While I am in Dublin, I must visit all our Lady's shrines," the girl continued. "This is such a delightful Catholic country; I feel quite at home here. I am rich, as Signor Cheretti has means. But nothing contents me. I often think, Signora, that I shall enter a convent. I would not delay only that I could not leave him alone."

Rory glanced at her glowing face in dismay. Ellesora had ever been his dream maiden.

"Shall I conduct you to the churches, Signora?" he inquired. "I have my favourite shrines," he went on, ingratiatingly, "and you may be sure, you will get your heart's desire in Dublin. Our Lady never refuses her clients.' She thanked him and next after-

spend this evening with us. It's Sunday and she won't be required at the circus, sir," Rory said diffidently to the Signor.

She thanked him and next afternoon sailed forth, under his escort. As she knell in a dim old church on the mosaic pavement, Rory watched the reput expression. The light her rapt expression. The from myraid lamps and candles shone on her lovely face. Forgetgratefully.

In less than no time, the delighted Ellesora was led dancing into the hall of "The Revels" the Daly domicile. Mrs Daly learned that Ellesora was an orphan. Her mother, an Italian of high birth, had married her riding master.

The course over by her family she had stood up and then followed her to

the porch.
"Pardon me, madam," he said,
"but might I ask you to tell me the history of that old-fashioned rosary of yours? I speak not out of idle curiosity as I am on a quest." Ellesora was surprised.

"This rosary was left me by my mother," she told him simply. "It was a family heirloom." She handed it to him. The priest examined it minutely. "Yes, it is the same," he mur-

"Come inside, my dear, and let me tell you a story.'

ing in the Castle of Varaduova, several miles from Pavia. Her beloved and only daughter had married against her wishes years ago, and news of her death had reached the Contessa. There was word that a baby girl had been left. All search for this child had proved useless; so the old lady concluded she was dead. She is filled with remorse for her harsh treatment of her daughter, and longs, hoping against hope, for

some news of the child.
This old lady possesses a pair
of beads, the exact counterpart of yours, and the only one of

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