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HAWTHORNDEN

A STORY OF EVERY DAY LIFE

BY MRS. CLARA M. THOMPSON

CHAPTER XXX.—CONTINUED

Harry looked round in thought among their mutual friends and was shocked to own, even to himself, that he could not find one of which he was quite sure.

"You don't succeed, ha!" said Dr. Hartland, after waiting, as he thought, a reasonable time for reply; "I knew you would not. Well, let me tell you, what you call a true marriage is like the philosopher's stone—nowhere."

Rosine looked up, surprised and indignant. "Ah, my little Miss," continued the Doctor, "you don't believe me either, I see. Incredible youth!"

"No, Ned, I don't believe you; I can't believe you." She spoke very earnestly with tears in her eyes. "I know one at least." Knowing that she referred directly to her father and mother, the Doctor did not reply; he saw that the reproach indirectly cast on her was intended by his own and sweeping remark had wounded her feelings. Mr. Greenwood saw this also, and took up the cudgels rather out of gallantry and compassion for her, than because he knew the best thing to say.

"I'm not posted in these matters, Ned," he replied, kindly; "still I know that if your assertion even be true, matrimony is no less a sacrament, and designed for the happiness of us fallen mortals; perhaps the fault is in the people we know, and not in the thing itself. After all, I am of the opinion of a modern writer, who says that life (and I suppose it may apply to matrimonial life) with all its trials would be less hard, if, at the beginning we faced the fact, that it was to be medicine and not wine."

"Capital! a splendid get-off, Hal!" cried the Doctor, throwing down his knife and fork, and laughing heartily. "Bravo! you'll start fair, any way! Now I take up my phylactery!" "Harry is right," interrupted the Colonel, who had not before joined in the conversation. "You, Ned, were always looking for some Utopian state, where men will cease to be men, and women women. If people began life with more sober views of what life really is, we should see fewer mistakes. But tell us, Harry, about your tour abroad, and leave matrimony till your time comes."

Mr. Greenwood gladly changed the subject by narrating many of his adventures in a manner so charmingly simple and truthful, that he held the attention of his listeners till midnight.

"The Commodore ought to have been proud of such a boy," was Colonel Hartland's comment to his son the next day.

"He'd be a great man, if he wasn't so good," was the reply of Doctor Hartland.

Rosine did not fly to seek her sister upon her return; she dreaded the interview, and still the Colonel offered to accompany her. Dr. Hartland had used his eloquence to persuade her it was not her duty, but her conscience was better instructed. After the first embrace, the first real look at Marion, the first near knowledge of her condition and prospects, the great grief that had gaped between them was bridged by a tiny foot-bridge, over which Rosine's heart leaped fearlessly. Here was another object for her love and care; here was Aleck Hartland from dire despair, and had passed him over in a measure to her mother; now she would work for her disheartened sister, wearing a life-chain that fettered into her very heart. She persuaded Marion to do what she had promised Father Sheridan should be done, to go to Hawthornden and seek the forgiveness of her parents for her undutiful conduct. This was not a difficult task, for Marion, with the new development in her nature, was longing for her mother, and the visit was accomplished without Mr. Stapleton. Father Sheridan had been before her, and prepared her way to the hearts of her grieving parents. No accusing word was spoken, no reproach uttered, though three years had gone by in which she had not once had her father's blessing; now he looked at his child with a sad, grave, yet affectionate look, which said more to her heart than any words; his prophecy had been fulfilled so soon, so entirely, and with such dreadful bitterness; wedded to one whom she could neither love nor respect, every friendly face seemed to bring before her the criminal nature of her fault.

During her short stay at Hawthornden the "Atlantic News," the weekly paper of that famous town, came accidentally into her hands, and this paragraph met her eye: "It will be a matter of rejoicing to the friends of Hon. Horatio Leighton, late of this town, to learn that his seat in Congress is secured, his well-known honor and patriotism insure him permanent success as a public man." Marion sunk down into a seat as she read these words, and hid her face in her hands; all her young love revived, it poured over her in a whirling wave, leaving her a stranded wreck. Her mother found her thus, and with heaven-directed hand essayed to comfort, and bind up those gaping self-made wounds.

"Yes, dear daughter," she said, in reply to the outpourings of her sorrow, as she beamed happiness so wantonly wasted—"yes, I would gladly see you happy; but O, so much

more rejoiced am I to see you penitent, and resolved to do right. You must once and forever put away all these thoughts from your mind; if indulged, they will partake of the nature of sin; the past can be nothing to you now but a subject of contrition; in the present, the good God has given you the best gift He could grant, be satisfied with it, and bend all your energies and thoughts to the one desire, that your child may be all that it ought to be."

Marion went back to her husband with new impulses and new hopes; and well she needed them, for in her absence the demon of love of strong drink had seized him, and she found him in the midst of an attack of delirium. Rosine came to her assistance, resisting the stoutest efforts of Dr. Hartland to prevent her attendance on such a scene. In that chamber of devils she was taught an entirely new phase of life, returning to her home sadder and wiser. Ned did not sleep in those days or bend his eyes upon her, they stood near on an equality, rather he leaned upon her, she amused his solitary hours, cheered his moments of depression, read and studied with him; entered into the wants of his poor patients with a motherly heart, and became to him in truth, entirely a sister. Now and then it occurred to him that it was a somewhat lonely life Rosine led, almost without companions of her own age, but she was happy, quiet, and contented.

A ride to Hawthornden for a few days, a return of Aleck now and then to his father's roof, to consult his dear Rosa about the country home he was planning; an empty home, but for the dear helpful care of his second mother, Mrs. Benton; these, with calls from Harry Greenwood, unlike "angels visits," being neither "few nor far between," these varied the monotony of Rosine's life. After Christmas came Marion's baby, a lovely, delicate girl, one of those far-seeing infants like pictures of the Holy Innocents, or Raphael's St. John gazing into the face of the Infant Jesus; her look had in it something from a life beyond and above, as if her tiny thoughts were whispered to her dear guardian angel, ever at her side. Well has an author said, "A babe is a well-spring of joy in a house"; to Mrs. Stapleton it was like cold water to the parched and thirsty soul; she looked upon her treasure with a reverence she had never felt for anything earthly. Even Ned, baby later as he professed to be, could not but acknowledge that the little Lily was singularly beautiful; he was sure she could not live, she was so good, and essentially frightened the young mother by telling her his forebodings.

For awhile after the birth of his daughter the graceless father returned to his manhood, under the influence of those baby smiles; his wife's heart beat with hope; but as with the Scripture in the proverb, he went back to his debasing vices after the novelty wore away, and Marion sank to the old shame and sorrow. Two years glided thus over our friends, without great change; Mr. Greenwood rising to stand among the first in his profession, and to be honorably spoken of by masters in the art both at home and abroad; but in the affairs of his heart he still seemed to linger, to take no decided step forward. That he loved Rosine Benton with all the strength of his truest nature, he had not a shadow of doubt, and that the love was no passing fancy, but the deep growth of years of patient waiting; but a doubt of others had entered his mind, and had hindered his outward progress. Since his return from Europe he had seen, as never before, the devotion of Dr. Hartland to Rosine, and the fond affection with which she met all his wants; he knew that his sister Rosa, his first choice of his friend, was forever shut out from him, and what more natural than that his love should be transferred to Rosine? The young man perplexed himself day by day with these thoughts, and he sometimes worried himself into a state of scrupulousness as to his right to continue his intimate visits at Colonel Hartland's under these circumstances.

For a long time he had revolved the pros and cons of this question in his mind, the probabilities and improbabilities, putting the question fairly and squarely before his faithful conscience. Our Harry, with all his moral bravery, was modest in love, diffident of his success; and instead of assisting him in his dilemma, the Doctor, who saw it plainly, was constantly saying or doing something from his propensity to tease, that added to the young man's perplexities; he was at least in no haste to give Rosine into any other keeping than his own.

At length came an imperative call to Mr. Greenwood to be the architect of a Cathedral, and religious houses attached, in one of our growing western cities; if he accepted the offer, it would require frequent and protracted separation from the object of his dearest affections. He could not, and would not go away and work at a subject which required all his energies, leaving the destiny of his love undecided. He had already given his promise for a family gathering at Hawthornden, to which place he was a stranger; he determined that that occasion should fix his plans for the future. This visit was to be a surprise party, to inaugurate the introduction of the little Lily to her grandfather. Mr. Benton never left his home, and the ceaseless demands of her husband upon her time and strength had kept Marion a prisoner. The Colonel and

the Doctor, with Rosine, Marion and Dr. Hartland had urged Harry's presence, as all that was wanting to make the visit complete. We will not analyze Rosine's feelings, she certainly was in high glee at the thought of introducing her friend to dear Hawthornden, the dearest spot on earth to her heart.

A joyous welcome was given to our travellers in the hospitable mansion, and the Doctor immediately inquired if the old gray were still on his legs, he wished to engage him at once for Paradise. "Ah, it's a dear," he said, going out to the veranda, where she was already pointing out to Mr. Greenwood the charming scenery bathed in the mellow light of the setting sun. "Ah, if we can but bring back the thoughts and feelings of that first day in Paradise—we were young then," he added. "Love's young dream, eh, Rosine?"

"A dream that knows no waking," she replied, mischievously.

Harry was annoyed, he was working himself out of his usually placid state of mind in spite of his preparation; after a moment he drew from his pocket a small drawing-book and pencil, and went on with a plan for a rustic summer-house, for which Aleck had asked. Dr. Hartland remembered this never-failing resort of his friend when disquieted, and seeing the disturbance, continued to tease him with sweet words and tender amenities toward Rosine, till the young man suddenly threw down his pencil and went off across the lawn.

"There, I've roused the evil one in your saint, Rosa," said the Doctor, as he disappeared.

"Have you displeased Harry?" inquired Rosine, innocently. "I thought he left rather abruptly."

"Yes, I'm displeasing him all the time; I wonder if I must believe that you do not see it."

"See what?" replied Rosine, looking into his face inquiringly.

"Yes, I must believe it," said the Doctor, "there is at least ignorance in that look."

"I'm much obliged to you, Ned; I dare say I look very silly; but please tell me what you mean by displeasing Harry. Have you quarrelled? I thought you were always the best of friends."

"Ah, yes," said Ned, "the very best; but it is not in the nature of saintship in the flesh, nowadays at least, to bear every thing, and I really think I stand very much in the way of this young man."

"Do explain yourself, Ned. How can you possibly interfere in any way with Harry? You talk in mysteries. It is only your lonely life that makes it a mystery, and prevents your understanding what I mean; I warrant Marion will explain all before you've been together twenty-four hours."

"You talk in enigmas, Dr. Hartland," said Rosine, blushing crimson; "I don't think you understand yourself."

"Ah, you have it now," he replied, laughing; "I can read your blush. The thought came with the suggestion of Marion, very naturally."

Rosine arose to leave him. "Stay, sister," he said, taking her hand, "I will talk plainly, if you wish it."

"You have said all that I can hear," she replied, with dignity, "unless you change the subject."

"I'm sorry, Rosa," he said coaxingly. "Don't be offended; I was only comparing you in my mind with other women; I don't know of but one that approaches you."

"That will do, Ned," replied Rosine, chasing away the slight frown from her face by a sunny smile; "others don't agree with you in your kind opinion."

"I take a good deal of pride, you think," he said, gayly, "in my own training."

"Go, find Harry," was her gentle reply.

Dr. Hartland obeyed unhesitatingly, and came upon the young man in the furthest corner of the lawn, among a clump of old arbutus-vines which Aleck had trained into many fantastic shapes. He had thrown himself full length upon a mossy seat that had been planted in the midst of this principal group. The Doctor came upon him quite unexpectedly, and he sprang to his feet at once, as if he had been interrupted in some important matter.

"Don't hurry away again, Harry," said the Doctor, standing before him, and looking at him keenly; "I have come for you."

"Why should you trouble yourself about me?" was the cold reply, in a constrained voice.

"At her bidding," said the Doctor. "Don't make a fool of yourself, Harry, but go back to the piazza like a man, and finish up this business, which, unlike your usual prompt way of doing, has been left hanging by the eyelids too long."

"Ned," replied the young man, with a touch of sadness in his voice, "don't joke me there again. I cannot bear it. I ought not to have come here. I shall leave in the morning, for—I must go to work again."

"You talk like a crazy fellow, Hal! I really believe you are in love, and like all genuine lovers, take to talking nonsense! My advice to you is to make a clean breast of it."

"Don't talk so, Ned; you exasperate me," replied young Greenwood, in an excited tone. "I am in love, I'm not afraid of confessing to you; but do you think for a moment I would compete with you, or ask for what you are yourself seeking?"

"Now, by my troth, Hal, you are a jewel, and carry your principles of right farther than most lovers; but I can assure you, on my honor, that you need give yourself no

uneasiness about me. I am much obliged to you for your consideration; believe me, there is no ground for your suspicion." He added, looking into his eyes; "there, shake hands; now begone."

Greenwood needed no further stimulus. After an hour's wandering by the last rays of sunset and the light of the rising moon, Dr. Hartland returned to the house and found the family assembled, but Rosine and Mr. Greenwood were not come in. The evening had grown cool and damp, and various hopes and fears were expressed as to the sufficiency of Rosine's clothing for this late hour; the Colonel was restless, and was on the point of instituting a search with waterproofs and shawls on his arm, when the delicate couple entered the hall, Rosine running immediately to her room on the plea of wet feet. Harry was flushed, bright and eager in his look, and the Doctor argued success.

Rosine did not appear again during the evening, the little Lily was restless, and she excused herself, to watch with the mother. When the family were about to separate for the night, Mr. Greenwood waited in the hall. Ned whispered in his ear, "I see, hearts are trumps, and you have the ace."

"Ace and queen," retorted Harry, "and I am after the king," he added, turning again into the parlor, where the two old friends, Mr. Benton and Colonel Hartland, were still lingering.

TO BE CONTINUED

MARGIE HAS A MAN

Eric Peterson, his wife, Margie, and their five small children had taken refuge in the tower of the lighthouse.

"A bad blow, and for sure, Eric," said Margie as, with four of her little ones clinging about her and her baby held in her arms, she looked anxiously through the narrow lighthouse window.

Below, huddled against the storm, was the tiny trim house they had been forced to leave. Margie did not fear much for their own safety in the staunch tower, but it was a question whether their little house could withstand the frightful impact of the gale.

"A bad blow, yes," Eric agreed; "but here we are safe, and I am where I can light the light. The home, too, will be there when the storm is gone," he added reassuringly.

There was trouble in his deep-set grey eyes. He had been through too many storms not to have acquired respect for them.

They were standing on the second floor of the lighthouse, twenty feet from the ground. By turns the keeper of the light held his children up to the window to see the wild grandeur of the gale. During the few hours that they had been in their strong refuge, the fury of the hurricane had greatly increased.

There was little to see except rain driving madly by. It did not seem to fall; it shot past the window horizontally. Beneath the streaming veil the white house of the tower keeper gleamed pallidly. It stood now in the water; for the swiftly rising tide had submerged all the island. The myrtles, the only trees on the small island, were blurred and indistinct, though now and then, like drowning creatures, they tossed their dark wild arms despairingly.

The vast sea marshes, stretching away behind the island were under a dark and lost. Only the lighthouse stood firm and unshaken; it was an outpost that could escape the storm, and it had been built to stand against them all. Eric Peterson knew what he was saying when he told his wife that they would be safe in the tower.

"Mother, shall we have to swim?" little Margie asked. "To swim was as yet one of her unrealized ambitions, and the opportunity to achieve it now appeared to her to be good."

"I hope not," the mother replied and put her hand on the child's head.

At that moment, as if to shatter the hope thus expressed, the lighthouse trembled wildly. Then quickly followed a succession of shocks as if some tremendous ram were driving with insane malice against the structure.

"An earthquake, Eric?" Margie Peterson exclaimed. "There was one here before our time," she added.

The keeper did not answer. He ran over to the window on the seaward side of the tower and peered down through the blinding storm. His gaze was fixed for some moments and his wife joined him. Presently he drew her to the window and pointed.

"See it, Margie?" he cried. "'Tis no earthquake, but 'tis something to batter down our tower."

"I see a dark shape," the woman answered. "It is floating. It drives against the tower. O Eric, what is it? It looks like the big ocean whale we saw ten years ago in mid-ocean when we came over from Copenhagen."

"You remember the big cypress log I caught drifting—the flume timber that had come down to sea from the river back in the mainland?"

"Yes, and sure; it lay out on the beach in the sunshine. The children play on it."

"And when they slipped over its butt end they slipped six feet to the ground. 'Tis a monster of a log. I had it tied with a section of steel cable. The tide has lifted it out of the sand and has swung it round so

that its butt end now points landward. The cable is just about long enough to let the log reach us. Whenever the storm gets the monster lined right, it rams us. There it comes now, Margie."

"The solid tower shook."

"She was not built to stand that," the man said gravely. "I see a job for me."

"O Eric, what can you do? You will not go out into the storm? Sure, Eric, and the log will break loose and float away."

"I tied it just so a storm like this could not steal it away from me," the keeper replied.

"But you—what will you do?"

"I will go out and untie it," he answered quietly.

"You go Eric?" the woman said slowly, as if in a vision she had divined his fate. "But you will not come back. You will go and leave us."

"You got a duty, Eric. Kiss me, and go."

The keeper took a brief farewell of his wife and little ones.

"You can watch me," he said.

"Eric!" cried his wife suddenly. "A rope! I tie a rope to you and hold it here!"

The keeper, who was taking off his coat and shoes, paused to smile at his wife.

"You and I cleaned the tower last week, Margie," he reminded her. "All this old rope, Eric, it must be taken to the woodshed."

He quoted her, laughing and mimicking her tone, and made the children laugh. "Not a foot of rope in the tower," he went on. "Now, I go."

He drew his wife closer to the seaward window.

"I drop down," he explained; "the water's nine feet deep now; high tide and storm, too. I climb along the log. I loose the cable."

"I swim to the tower steps on the lee side," his voice was full of assurance; but in his eyes, which always spoke the truth, there was a doubt.

"Margie," he said to his little daughter, "somebody is going to swim."

The ready smile for the child died on his bronzed face as the huge ram snatched the tower a thunderous blow. From the great air shaft of the tower there came the tinkling sound of breaking glass.

"The light!" exclaimed Margie. "One mirror, maybe," her husband admitted. "But most likely the big shade. Stand back from the window."

While his wife and children took shelter against the curved wall of the tower, the man threw up the narrow sash. The hurricane rushed in, and he had to fight to make his way against it. He reached the sill, caught the wild wind screaming in his face, then, turning cautiously, he let himself down outside the tower.

There he hung by his hands. Behind him Margie closed the sash. He was alone in the storm.

It was an eleven-foot drop into the surging water below that charged against the tower, broke against it and rushed onward in furious vehemence. The keeper had not only to drop into that storm of water; he had to fall near enough to the log to catch it, yet in such a position that it would not crush him against the tower wall. Hanging for a moment in the gale, he waited his chance.

"I'll drop to the end of it the second after it strikes!" he muttered.

The wild rain drove fiercely against him; the wind tore at his clothes and sent his shock of auburn hair streaming over his eyes. The corded muscles of his arms bulged under the tension. He waited, watching.

The monstrous bulk of the log swung in the tide. It bumped the lighthouse shaft with little force. But its recoil withdrew it against a huge oncoming wave. The enormous rolling cylinder of water arrested the ram, poised it and drove it with massive strength against the tower.

Even above the incessant roar of the hurricane the keeper heard the dull grinding of stone and mortar; but as a moment later, he clung to the cypress upon which he had dropped, his half-blinded eyes were not prepared for what he saw: a great gaping hole driven clear through the wall of the lighthouse! Through this breach a storm of salt water was rushing in mad triumph; and as Peterson lay on the tree trunk, he felt the vast bulk withdrawing for another attack.

"Two more like that last one," he said, "and in goes the whole side of the tower. The wall is breached—if I'm too late—"

His face was grim as he turned on the rolling cypress, clinging with hands and feet to its slippery bulk. The cowering waves ran over it, plunged clear across it, sped with fearful haste along its length, lifted it high only to buffet it, and sank it as it drove in. At no time was its back wholly out of the water and its lone rider went under with it. Once Peterson glanced upward at the window above; but he could see nothing except a blur of spume against the glass. Yet Margie, gazing downward saw him and what he did.

With waves breaking over him, Eric Peterson fought his way along the perilous length of the log. Its

vast bulk wallowed, reeled, rolled, turned, sank and rose. The man clinging valiantly to it had two cares: to keep his hold and to advance. If he did not advance the relentless battering ram would complete its work of destruction; if he lost his hold, he would lose his game, and the game of life as well. Lying almost flat, he pulled himself painfully toward the place where the cable had been made fast in the log.

At last he came to the end of the steel hawser, pulled through the heavy galvanized ring that was held in place by a huge screw eye such as the lumbermen of the Southern rivers sometimes use. The keeper sat up on the log; grasping the eye of the screw with one hand, he worked with the other at the cable. When he had a month before, deftly fastened the cable to the great timber he little thought that in such a crisis as this he would be struggling to unloose it.

It was hard for Margie to see him, now that he was at the far end of the log. But she could discern him dimly and fitfully. A sudden great pride in her husband made her lift her children, one by one, to the streaming window. Whether they saw, she could not tell; but she made sure that they heard and understood what she said. To each one, as she pointed out into the storm, she said:

"To save us and to save his tower, your father is gone out there. For a father you got a man."

The last child had been lifted, Margie's anxious eyes were fixed on the huge storm-shrouded cypress. Suddenly she saw its monstrous bulk, which had poised itself for another heavy thrust at the tower, turn slowly away. It was swinging in the tide. It was rolling over and over. The waves at last had their will with it. It was at the mercy of the storm. But the figure of the man was no longer visible. Somewhere in that gray maelstrom of waters he must be struggling. The log passed from sight, hurrying off under the blind smother of the storm.

A minute passed, then another, Margie's heart beat sickly. The children were aware of her terror and clung to her. She knew not how to comfort them. Leaving them in a pathetic group, she went toward the tower stairs. Downward she looked, along the steel shaft. The bottom of the tower was full of water. The storm howled up at her insolently with brutal mockery.

Margie looked back at the children. Then she gazed downward again. Suddenly out of the surging water within the lower a form appeared; a voice called to her. Though her senses reeled, she saw and understood.

"Don't come down!" the voice warned her. "Deep water here. I come to you."

In another minute the keeper of the light was with his family.

"You are safe, Eric, you are safe," was all Margie could say.

"You lose sight of me," he answered. "I know. I had to swim under water to the tower. Not so stormy as on top," he added, trying to smile at his children. "I had to swim, little Margie."

A week later, when people from the mainland had begun to visit the lighthouse island to see the damage wrought by the storm, many of them spoke to Margie Peterson of her husband and of his deed. She, having a great heart but few and simple words, would say, happily smiling, "I got a man."

No words really would have mattered; for the light in her eyes was eloquent of love—Archibald Rutledge in the Youth's Companion.

PRAYER

The most perfect act man can offer to God is that of prayer. It is the acknowledgment that He is God and that we are His creatures, the more perfect it is, the greater is the union to Him; likewise the greater is this union, the more perfect is our prayer. St. Thomas describes prayer as a supplication whereby we try to persuade God to do what we desire. Hence it would be very useful for us to know by what form of prayer we can best attain this end, as well as the form of prayer that is the most pleasing to God. Indisputably we use the most intimate to God, thus giving us the greater power over His Heart. God in His infinite Wisdom and Goodness knowing to other means of union greater than that of food with the one who eat it, gave us Himself to be our food and to be united substantially and in an ineffable manner to us. This consideration shows that a powerful means of prayer we have in Communion! And when we know from Jesus' own lips that He desires us to come to Him in all our necessities, that He is more eager to give than we are to receive; that He invites and urges us to come to Him and to ask whatever we desire when He is in us by Holy Communion we must naturally conclude no more powerful form of prayer can be imagined than Holy Communion. Aye! God Himself through Wisdom Himself did not discover a greater.

Jesus desires therefore that we expose to Him our troubles and even go so far as to help us win our cause by becoming our advocate. So, when you come to Communion be careful not to ask less confidently than Jesus expects you to. You may imagine His disappointment did other sentiments than those of tenderness and confidence away your heart. Lay before Him simply as an artless child your troubles and your

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