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THE TWO HOMES.

A TALE FOR WIVES.

[Concluded from our last.]

From that home Sir Francis became more estranged. His wife rarely saw him in the day, and midnight often found him absent. If she complained or questioned him whether he was going, or where he had been, his sole answer was silence or haughty reserve. In the early days of their marriage, Emily had often won her way, even against her husband's will, by tears and caresses. But the former were useless now; the latter she was too proud to try. Only the shadow of her old love lingered in the wife's heart, and in its stead had come distrust, and jealousy, and wounded pride.

One morning, day break saw Lady Lester returning from a ball alone, for her husband now seldom accompanied her. As she entered, her first inquiry of the heavy-eyed domestic was if his master had returned. He had not; and this was only one of many nights that Sir Francis had outstayed the daylight. Lady Lester compressed her lips in anger, and yet, but she had scarcely gained her room, ere Sir Francis entered.

You are out late? said Emily. He made no answer. Where have you been? she continued.

Nowhere of consequence, at least, not to you.

Sir Francis Lester, you are mistaken! answered Emily, trying to speak calmly, though she trembled, violently. I have a right to know where you go and what you do—the right of a wife.

Do you annoy yourself and me; I never interfere with your proceedings.

Because you know there is no evil in them. I have nothing to hide which you have.

How do you know that?

Because, if you were not doing wrong, why should you stay out night after night, as now—There must be a cause for this; and I shall tell you what I think—what the world thinks! That you gamble!

The world lies! cried Sir Francis, the words hissing through his white lips; but he became calm in a moment. I beg your pardon, Lady Lester; I will say good night.

Answer me, Francis, said his wife, much agitated. Where do you go, and why? Only tell me.

I will not, replied he. The curiosity of a wife who doubts her husband is not worthy satisfying. Good-night.

Emily pressed her throbbing forehead against the cushion of a sofa, and wept long in silence and solitude. Ere morning dawned upon her sleepless eyes, she had resolved what to do.

I will know mumbled the unhappy wife, as she thought over the plan on which she had determined. Come what may, I will know where he goes. He shall find I am equal to him.

Two days after, Sir Francis Lester, his wife and mother, were seated at the well lighted dinner-table. There was no other guest—a rare circumstance, for a visitor was ever welcome to break the dull tedium of a family *à-la-carte*. Alas, for those homes, in which such is the case. Silently and formally sat Lady Lester at the head of her husband's table. How cheerless it was in its cold grandeur! with the servants gliding stealthily about, and the three who owned this solemn state exchanging a few words of freezing civility, and then relapsing into silence. When the servants had retired, Sir Francis uttered a few remarks in his usual tone—perhaps a little kinder than ordinary—to his wife; but she made no effort to reply, and he turned to his mother. They talked awhile, and then the elder Lady Lester rose to retire.

Emily's pale cheek grew a shade whiter as she said—

Before we leave, I have a word to say to my husband.

Sir Francis lifted his eyes, and his mother observed sharply—

Perhaps I had better retire.

As you will, Lady Lester replied, with a sneering emphasis. Oh how different from sweet Emily Stratford of old! But it might be an unpleasant novelty to Sir Francis to hear his wife without his mother's presence! What is all this? coldly said the husband.

Merely, Sir Francis, that what you refused to tell me, I have learned. I know where, and how you pass the evenings in which your wife is not worthy to share your society; I know also where you spent last night. A noble thing for Sir Francis Lester to be squandering his own—ay, and his wife's fortune in a gaming house.

Sir Francis started from the table.

It is false! he said, while the blue veins rose like knots on his forehead.

I now see why Lady Lester gave yesterday and to-day two such long audiences to her father's old servant, and why she needed his assistance so much—to be a spy upon her husband!

Sir Francis, clenched his hands involuntarily, and looking fixedly at his wife, said, in a tone so low and suppressed that it became almost a whisper—

Emily Lester, is this true?

Such as Lady Lester had erred, she was not yet so far advanced in the ways of wrong as to veil that error by a falsehood, and she answered steadily, though a deep blush spread itself over her face and neck—Yes, it is.

Her husband, to Emily's great surprise, did not answer a syllable. His head was bent, and his features immovable. He offered no justification, uttered no reproaches, and his silence irritated her beyond all bounds.

Amidst violent bursts of sobbing, she poured out a torrent of reprimand; and all her forced calmness had departed, and she upbraided Sir Francis with the bitterness of an injured wife.

I have endured too long—I will endure no more she cried. You trust me not, and therefore you cannot love me! I will go to one who does both—my kind, dear father. I will leave you—we must part.

We will part? said Sir Francis in a tone of freezing coldness, that went like an ice bolt Emily's heart. Her husband rose up, walked slowly and firmly to the door, and when he reached it, he staggered, and fell about for the handle, like one who was blind. In another minute the hall door closed, and he was gone.

Emily sat as he had left her, but her tears flowed no longer; she was as still and white as a marble statue. The mother in her stormed, sneered, reviled, but she might as well have talked to the dead. At last she went away. When the servants entered to remove the dessert, they found their mistress in her seat, half leaning on the table, but perfectly insensible.

Emmie Wolferstan was roused from the contemplation of her own reverses to sooth the unfortunate Emily. For two days, during which her delirium lasted, no news of Sir Francis came to his wife. His supposed guilt became as nothing compared to the fear lest he should take her wild words in earnest, and that they should part. But this fear soon became an agonizing certainty. In a letter to Emily's father, Sir Francis declared his intention to return no more to the home his wife occupied; that all her own fortune, and a portion of his, should be settled upon her, but that henceforth they must be separated. In vain the poor old father, his natural anger subdued by witnessing the agony of his child, pleaded for her. Sir Francis was resolute. That his wife should have dared to discover what he chose to conceal, was a deep offence in his eyes; but that she should have set a servant to watch him—no power on earth would have made the haughty Sir Francis Lester forgive that.

The desolate wife prayed her cousin to try her power to soften his obstinate will, for Sir Francis had ever respected the high but gentle spirit of Emmie. She went strong in her woman's influence, her words touched even him, as she could see by the changing of his countenance. He bore more from her than from any one; for man will sometimes bow to the sway of a high-souled, pure-minded woman, when he will not listen to his brother man. Emmie pleaded Emily's sorrow—but Lucy; but all failed to move Sir Francis—Then she spoke of the child; and at the mention of his boy, she saw the very lips of Sir Francis quiver.

You will take him away from her? Poor Emily's heart will break to lose both husband and child.

Mrs. Wolferstan, I wish to be just to myself—not cruel to her. I would not take the child from his mother, though it is hard to part with my boy. And the father's voice trembled, until, crying as she thought him, Emmie felt compassion for the stern, unyielding, yet broken-hearted man.

Oh, she thought, had poor Emily only known how to guide this lofty spirit.

Sir Francis continued. When Lady Lester and I are parted, I could wish the world to know as little about the fact as possible. You can say incompatibility of temper was the cause, or anything you will; but let there be no shadow cast on her fair fame—or mine.

Emily need fear none, answered Emmie. And you—

Sir Francis drew up his tall figure proudly—Nor I, neither, Mrs. Wolferstan. To a wife who insults her husband, by mean suspicions, no explanations are due. But I owe it to myself to say, and I wish you to know also, that Emily was deceived; that I never stooped to a vice so detestable as gambling; and that the nights I spent in torture amidst scenes I loathe, were devoted in the attempt to save from ruin a friend whom I loved as a brother. Now judge me as you will.

Emmie could only mourn that the little cloud which had risen between the husband and wife had so darkened the vision of both. But it was past now; no peace-making could

restore the alienated love. Once only did Sir Francis and his wife meet: it was on the signing of the deed of settlement. A cold hand of salutation was all that passed between the two who had once loved so fondly.

Sir Francis preserved his cold reserve and calmness of manner; Emily strove to maintain equal composure, and the excitement of her mind gave her strength. Sir Francis placed his signature on the fatal parchment, and then his father led Emily to the table. She gave one wild imploring look at her husband—but his face seemed passionless; there was no hope. She took the pen, wrote her name; her fingers, her whole frame grew rigid, and without a sigh or moan, she fainted at his feet.

It was over; Sir Francis went abroad; and the young wife, widowed by her own deed, was left alone. But for the babe who remained to cling round her neck and look at her with eyes like those of the husband whom she had lost, Emily's reason would have left her. The magnificent house was closed; and she took up her abode in the home from which she had been taken a beautiful and happy bride. Thinner the loving care of Emmie followed her still; and Emily gradually became calmer, and wiser, and better, under the guidance of her cousin. Emmie's own path was far from smooth. In her first high-hearted fearlessness of poverty, her very ignorance had made her courageous. Now she came to experience how bitter are those trifling but gnawing cares that those who have known the comfort of easy circumstances feel so keenly; how wearing is the constant struggle to spin a sovereign into the longest thread of gold, where possible. The grim, grim, poverty, whom the brave heart of Emmie had at first repulsed so cheerfully and boldly, had his revenge by all sorts of sly assaults. But in time she bore them better, and felt them less; and it was a balm to all sorrow to know how much she was loved—aye, and revered too, as a good and virtuous wife, whose price is above rubies, ought to be—by her husband. And day by day were their hearts knitted together. She in loving obedience, yielded willingly and therefore most sweetly, bending her mind to his in all good things; and he guiding and protecting her, as the stronger should the weaker, in a union in which neither ought to strive for the pre-eminence unless it be the pre-eminence of love.

For two years only was Emmie fated to know the soreness of altered fortunes. Conscience overtook the brother whose sin had caused so much pain; he died, and restored all to the master whom he had defrauded. The master was a just man, and dealt equally well with Henry Wolferstan; so that fortune again smiled upon him. He left the small house where Emmie had learned the hard lessons of poverty, and returned to the same pleasant home where he had brought his bride.

There, after four years had passed over her head, let us look at Emmie, now in the summer of womanhood, wifehood, motherhood. It was high summer too on the earth; and through the French windows of the room where Emmie sat, came the perfume of roses from the garden. Bees hummed among the leaves of the mulberry tree, luring sweet Lily from her A B C to her favorite seat under its boughs. The child looked wistfully towards her little cousin, Sidney Lester, who was sporting among the flowers, and all the mother's words failed to attract her attention, until the lesson was happily broken in upon by a visitor, Lily scampered away—the announced guest entered—and Emmie looked upon the face of Sir Francis Lester.

She had never seen him since the day of the signing of the deed; and time, travel, it might be suffering, had changed him much. He looked now like a man whose prime was past; his hair was turning grey, and he had lost much of his stately carriage. When he spoke, too, there was a softness in his voice that it had not before; perhaps it was at the gentleness, even to tears, which Emmie evinced at seeing him so unexpectedly.

He said he had come on urgent business to England; he should soon return to Italy, and would not go without seeing Mrs. Wolferstan. After a while he asked after her boy; and then Emily's name was on her husband's lips. As he spoke, he turned his head away, and looked out of the window, but immediately started back, saying—

I understand—I heard that Lady Lester was in the country.

She and Sidney returned to-day, but I feared to tell you they were here.

Is that my boy? I must see him, and the father's eye eagerly returned to where Sidney stood on the garden seat, supporting himself by one rosy arm thrown around his mother's neck, as he pulled the mulberry leaves within his reach. Emily sat still—not the brilliant Emily of yore, but calm, thoughtful, subdued; even the light of a mother's love could not altogether remove the soft sadness from her face. How little she knew whose eyes were gazing upon her now! I must speak to my Sidney at last said Sir Francis, in changed and broken accents. Will you bring him to me?

They are coming now, Emmie answered. Then I will retire to the other room: I cannot, I will not see her. And Sir Francis, with his freezing manner of old, walked away just before Emily entered with the child.

Sidney, come with me, said Emmie, stooping over the boy, to hide her agitation; some one wants you to see you.

Who is it? asked Emily.

An old acquaintance; that is, a stranger, hurriedly said Mrs. Wolferstan, so new in the art of stratagem that Emily at once guessed the fact—She trembled violently, and sat down; but when Emmie took Sidney's hand to lead him away, the mother interposed.

Not so, Emmie; you cannot deceive me, she said, firmly. I see it all; and no one but myself shall take Sidney to his father and my husband. She lifted the boy in her arms, suffered Emmie to open the door, went in, and closed it after her.

For a whole half-hour, which seemed a day in length, did Emmie sit without, waiting for the result of that interview on which joy or misery, life or death, seemed to hang. She heard no sound! all was still. She hardly dared to hope; she could not even think; only her affectionate heart lifted up a wordly aspiration, too indistinct to be even a prayer.

At last the child's voice within called loudly and fearfully. "Aunt Emmie—Aunt Emmie, come!" Emmie went trembling. Emily had fainted; but she lay in her husband's arms; her colourless face rested on his shoulder, and heavy tears were falling on that poor pale face from the stern eyes of Sir Francis Lester.

They were reconciled! Love had triumphed over pride, wrath, obstinacy; and the husband and wife were again reunited with an affection passing that of even bride and bridegroom, for it had been tried in the furnace of suffering, and had come out pure gold of love—patient long-enduring love.

At the home to which Sir Francis once more brought his loving and now worthily beloved wife, there was no more coldness, no dull weariness, no estrangement. Perhaps it was a fortunate thing for the married pair that the mother of Sir Francis could no longer dissolve the bonds that closed again and forever; she slept beneath a marble monument, as frigid, and stately, and hollow as she herself in life had been.

Perfect bliss is never known in this world; yet if there can be a heaven upon earth, it is that of a happy home, where love—not girlhood's romantic ideal, but strong, deep, all-hallowing, household love—is the sunshine that pervades everything within its charmed circle of union. With this blessed sunshine resting upon them, let us take our last look at the Two Homes.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN A MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

MOTHER. Go to bed Lucy, and get up early in the morning, that you may make ready for you shall go to school to-morrow; you have lost several weeks already, and you must not lose any more time, you know Lucy that I must pay the master at the end of the quarter.

Lucy gets up early, dresses, washes and combs, and is rigged out like an Irish smuggler in first rate style, is ready for school.

Lucy. Ma ain't it time to go?—its eight o'clock, and the master says we must all be at nine.

Mo. Child you can't go to days—it rains so you'll be wet to the skin, besides you'll spoil your new gown; you had better stay at home to-day—one day ain't much here or there; go feed the chickens, look-up the gossings, and count them—but first, put on your homespun gown, being us in some chips, and you'll go to-morrow if it don't storm.

Lucy obeys, the calico gown gives place to the homespun, and the remainder of the day is spent in picking up chips, feeding chickens, counting gossings, rocking the cradle &c.

Tuesday Morning—Bright and clear; Lucy stands ready waiting ma's consent, to go to school.

Lucy—Mo. I'm going—its half past eight and the school opens at nine; ain't I going to go, to day Mo. May I go? I have got my books, and all, ready.

Mo.—Lucy you're time enough yet, needn't go too early; a few minutes, 'll take you there—rock here till I dress the butter. Lucy obeys, the baby cries. Mo. dresses the butter, and soon the clock strikes nine; Lucy jumps up.

Lucy—Mo. it is nine o'clock; can I go yet?—you said I might go as soon as you'd dress the butter.

Mo.—Better stay at home to-day Lucy, I want you—I've so much to do, and nobody to do a hands turn for me, I declare its too bad, you must help me Lucy; I can't stand it,—the dishes are not washed yet, I must make soup for dinner and the men will soon be home. Go fetch me some water from the spring, and don't stop a minute and after, you wash the dishes you must read a lesson 'till you should forget your learning. Lucy goes and soon returns, then washes the dishes.

but the baby is restless, and Lucy must nurse, so the day is spent without either reading or going to school.

Wednesday Morning—Mo.—Lucy you must get up and dress yourself as quick as possible. Your Pa' and I am going to town to-day and you must take care of the child. I'll send Betty Scott over to help you, tell Betty to cook some fish and pork for dinner, there's bread enough baked till I come home, now be a good girl and I'll bring something else from town, and you'll go to school to-morrow. Lucy's soliloquy I wonder what Mo. means, she won't let me go to school to learn to read, and write, Mo' can't write herself, and don't care whether I ever learn or not. He soon be big, and then not able to read a letter from my sweetheart nor write one to him; what will become of me! how awkward I'll be (the master said so) when visiting with other young folks—they'll say, look at Lucy!—she's a handsome young woman, what a pity she ain't a scholar she can read a little but write none. How I must blush in the midst of my charms and blooming loveliness, to hear those words whispered in a corner, perhaps to my intended. I'll go to school to-morrow—see if I don't—ma's a queer woman, she keeps me to work all the time.

Thursday Morning—Mo.—is tired after being to town, her head aches, she has to make the baby's frock, can't spare Lucy to-day, so much to be done and no help for ma'.

Friday Morning—All the chores are done up, chickens fed and water brought in—gossings counted &c—&c.

Lucy—I must go to-day, its a fine clear sunny morning and ha'n't been at school all this week, shall I go now, ma'?

Mo.—You may Lucy, and be a good girl, and learn fast, for I do declare its too bad, we're payin' and sinin' and payin' school-masters all the time and they goin' about doin' nothing; its too harassing.—When I was a gal goin' to school there was not half the fuss about 'tending it as there is now, and I do think there were better scholars then, and not half the time in them, and you must have so many books—yes first book, second book, third and fourth books—then a Dictionaries, an Arithmetic and Grammar, its all nonsense, the one half of this fuss about schooling and books. I know dictionaries as well I'm sure as any one hereabouts, and never saw one at school but an old one that the master used, when he wrote a letter to the minister, we just learned to read and spell out of the catechism—and that was the best school ever was since. But Lucy this is Friday, and Friday you know is an 'unlucky' day too, to-morrow will be Saturday, only half school!—not worth 'tending on, its the last of the week too, so stop till Monday and take the week by the end, and you must go steady all the quarter. Lucy acquiesces and thus the long week passes, and Lucy neither reads nor goes to school, but soliloquises on the probability of her growing up to woman's size and that too, in gross ignorance.

Wear a Smile.—Which will you do—smile, and make others happy, or be crabbed, and make every one around you miserable? The amount of happiness you can procure is incalculable, if you show a smiling face—a kind heart—and speak pleasant words. Wear a smiling countenance—let joy beam in your eyes, and love grow on your forehead. There is no joy like that which springs from a kind act of pleasant deed—and you may feel it all night when you rest, at morning when you rise and through the day, when about your business.

A smile; who will refuse a smile, the sorrowing breast to cheer! And turn to love the heart of guilt, and check the falling tear!

A pleasant smile for every face, O, tis a blessed thing! It will the lines, of care erase, And spots of beauty bring.

Embalming still Feasible.—A human body embalmed by Gezal, in Paris, in 1844, was recently exhumed at Pelela, Chaise, in the presence of several eminent physicians, and found to be in a perfect preservation, thus establishing the reputation of this recovery of a lost art.

A New Discovery by Schanbein.—Professor Schanbein, it is announced, has made a discovery which is making a great sensation in Germany. This distinguished Professor, invented Gun Cotton, has just discovered a method for immediately cauterizing wounds. This invention, in connection with that of insensibility produced by Ether, will effect a complete change in Surgery.

Heat without Fuel.—Hungarian Chemist has discovered a method of producing heat without fuel. He places in contact two iron plates and a copper cylinder, highly polished, turning in an axis at the end of a lever, with a balance weight at the other end to keep the plates in contact, when, by means of a simple apparatus and tridling exertion a glowing red heat may be produced in five minutes, and maintain with ease.