

# ROSE ISLAND

By Lilian Leveridge

## CHAPTER XXI.

### "Underneath are the Everlasting Arms."

"Never a foolish little lamb  
Astray in the gloaming dim,  
But the tender Shepherd knoweth its name  
And calleth it home to Him.  
"Never a moon so wrapped in mist,  
Nor a hill so gray and dun,  
But the Shepherd counteth His lambskins there,  
And watcheth them one by one."  
—Margaret E. Sangster.

LIKE a thunder-bolt from a blue sky, into June's sunny, love-encircled life had fallen that sudden, unpremeditated punishment from Aunt Hilda's hand. Her sensitive spirit had never received a hurt like this. The law of love had been the invariable law of those who had hitherto guided her childish feet. A word of reproach, a look, the loving touch of a restraining hand had been enough to melt her naughtiest mood to tears. Now, like a sensitive plant, she wilted at this first rude touch, the bitterest, cruellest wound the years had ever brought her. As she lay face downward on the bed, quivering with convulsive sobs, she felt that she could never be happy again. For hours she was conscious of nothing but her own misery, till at last, exhausted in body and spirit, she found relief in sleep.

When she awoke the house was still, but the moon shone full upon her bed. Rising, she knelt by the open window and leaned her aching head upon the sill. She looked out across the lake to the dim, silent woods, and memory traced for her the little, white church amid the dark and stately firs. Was the moonlight falling, still and white, upon the beautiful new organ, and upon the seat in the chancel where to-morrow she was to sit and sing?

The night was very hot. Not so much as one little breeze came in to ease her aching head. Yet it looked cool and beautiful out there on the moonlit water. Suddenly, June was seized with a strong and over-powering desire to go out into the cool, quiet moonlight; and without considering, or even realizing the daring wilfulness of the act, she yielded at once to the impulse. Stealing softly downstairs, she opened the door and went out. The air was heavy and faint with the odour of roses, but she breathed a sigh of relief, and turned her steps toward the little Haven. How nice it would be on the lake to-night! It was almost as light as day, and there was not a breath of wind to ruffle the water. She had learned to paddle the canoe, and could manage it easily—why not?

With eager hands she loosed the canoe and stepped into it; and soon was gliding, smoothly and easily, over the calm, glassy surface of the water. Even in spite of her wound, which still rankled, her spirit thrilled with the beauty and solemnity of the summer night. She had been on the water before in the moonlight, but never alone. She was turning a new page of life's wonderbook, in which the bitter and the sweet seemed strangely mingled; and as the quiet moments passed, the bitterness melted quite away.

Occupied with her thoughts, she let the paddle rest, and the canoe drifted

## LOOKS CHEAP

A freckle or a blackhead looks very silly if it sees its mistress carrying home a bottle of CAMPANA'S ITALIAN BALM. It knows its day's work is done. All druggists keep it. E. G. West & Co., Wholesale Druggists, keep it.—E. G. WEST & CO., Wholesale Druggists, 80 George St. Toronto.

toward the farther shore. As its keel grated on the pebbles, a sudden wild thought visited her busy brain. A mystic beauty enveloped the quiet woods. How lovely it would be to walk amid their mysterious shadows, to visit the wild flowers and kiss them in their sleep! How sweet it would be to follow the beautiful moonlit road to the church! There was nothing to be afraid of; only babies were afraid of the dark. Hiawatha had loved the moonlight and the starlight better than the glow of the hearth fire. He had walked miles and miles through the woods at night alone, and nothing had ever hurt him.

With a little thrill in the daringness of this adventure, June sprang ashore and drew the canoe up out of the water. With fast-beating heart she followed the shore line toward the road, distant a little space. Through the woven lights and shadows that embroidered the woodland road she ran to the white church, standing silent amid the hemlocks. It was not far, just a little past the old gray school, and she had no fear. The church door was not locked. She opened it softly, and, with a feeling of awe, walked up the dim, shadowy aisle to her own seat in the chancel. The white moonlight was falling upon it, just as she had fancied; and for a moment she knelt there and whispered a word of prayer. Then she went to the organ. She knew the secret place where the key was kept, and soon was seated before the gleaming keys. Pulling out a few soft stops, she struck a trembling chord, then started back, half-frightened at the unexpected volume of sound that floated up through the echoing aisles. By-and-by, regaining courage, she played a verse of her favourite hymn, "Now the Day is Over," and finally sang it through.

Very strange and sweet and solemn sounded the music in that lonely place at that lonely hour of night; and had it not been for the natural fearlessness of the child and her firm faith in the truth of the words she sang, her heart might have failed her. As it was, the music touched her spirit with a soothing power; and as she ceased singing and played the strain over and over, the last lingering drop of bitterness melted away.

She saw it all clearly now. Aunt Hilda had been kind to her, wonderfully kind; and she had repaid that kindness with shameful ingratitude. She had been very much to blame. In the morning she would tell Aunt Hilda she was sorry, and ask to be forgiven. And she would wear the ugly dress, and try not to think about herself, but only of the sweetness and beauty of the music. Now she would go home.

Having reached this decision, June stopped playing, and at once became startlingly aware that it was growing very dark. The moon must have set. How careless of her not to have noticed that it was nearly down! At that moment the blackness was pierced by a flash of lightning, and there came a low, ominous rumble of thunder. Had it not been for the music she would have heard the thunder long ago.

"Oh, dear!" she thought, "there's a thunderstorm coming up. I must hurry home. Brownie may wake and be frightened; and Aunt Hilda will come to my room to see if the window is shut and find I'm gone."

By the aid of the lightning, which was now coming quite frequently, she made her way stumblingly to the door. Then her courage almost gave way. The storm was coming up rapidly with a rush of shrieking wind. How could she venture into that black darkness alone with nothing but the lightning to guide her? Had it not been for the thought of those on Rose Island, who might even now be terribly anxious about her, June would have preferred to remain in the safe shelter

of the church until morning. But that would never do. She *must* get home to-night somehow.

With a little, frightened sob quivering in her breast, June ventured out into the night and the storm. For a little way she managed to follow the road; but soon the rain came sweeping down in torrents, while the wind and the thunder together kept up a constant, deafening roar. In a panic of fear her stumbling feet missed the road, and every effort to regain it plunged her deeper and deeper into the wood. When she realized that she was actually lost, the loneliness of her situation bore down upon her spirit with an overwhelming power. She cried out in terror; but only the wild winds answered with maddening, mocking shrieks. On she plunged in the direction she thought the lake must be; but every step took her farther and farther away from friends and shelter. At last, drenched with the rain, bruised and baffled and beaten, she sank upon the ground, unable to take another step. For a long time she lay there, sobbing out her wretchedness, then from sheer exhaustion dropped into a troubled sleep.

When she awoke it was morning. Only the dripping leaves, upon which the sun flashed a thousand jewelled splendours, bore witness to the awful storm of the night. The sky gleamed through the treetops transparently blue. On every hand the wild birds jubilantly carolled their morning hymn.

June opened her eyes in wonderment and sprang to a sitting posture; but, stiffened and dizzy and very tired, she sank back again. The quick tears welled in her eyes as she remembered what had happened and realized her pitiable plight. She was chilled and shivering, but the brightness of the morning brought hope and courage to her naturally buoyant spirit. She could not be far from home. Robin would come to look for her—someone would surely find her before long.

Down in this valley she could not tell where she was; nothing seemed familiar; but up on the hilltop yonder she would surely be able to see the lake. With a determined effort she climbed the toilsome way. It was steeper and more difficult than she had thought, but when at last she reached the big gray rock that crowned the hill, and turned eagerly to search for some familiar landmark, she felt that she was, indeed, lost. A wide, green valley lay beneath her feet, stretching away in folded undulations, growing bluer and bluer in the distance, to the far horizon line. But not a spot in all that vast expanse had she ever seen before. Her lips quivered with a little sob as she realized her utter loneliness and desolation, and, trembling with weakness, she sank down in the grass beside the rock.

This was Sunday—the bright, glad Sunday to which she had looked forward so long. But, oh, how different from her anticipations was that lonely dawning! They would soon be gathering in the little, white church. The soft, rosy light from the chancel window would fall upon the keys of the beautiful new organ and upon Miss Cameron's hands 'and her pretty, white dress as she played, and upon the flowers on the altar; and they would all stand and sing those sweet hymns she loved—but one seat would be empty, and its occupant here upon the hilltop, alone, alone!

"I will not leave thee nor forsake thee."

"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

"As one who in his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you."  
"Fear not, for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name. Thou art mine."

"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

Like the whisper of an angel, these comforting words came to June unsought. Her heart grew calm with a deep, strong trust, and her spirit unafraid, as kneeling there in the sweet Sabbath stillness, she prayed for the protection and guidance of herself and those she loved. From that moment she felt no fear. Beautiful pictures she had seen of guardian angels protecting little children, beautiful hymns, and beautiful words from the Book of books seemed, without any conscious effort of her own, to float vividly before her mind, or sing themselves sweetly into her thoughts. The feeling that an unseen angel was beside her, one of God's own ministering spirits, came to her with such strength and certainty that she no longer felt alone. Not afraid now of the sound of her own voice, she broke into singing:—

"There's a Friend for little children  
Above the bright blue sky,  
A Friend Who never changes,  
Whose love will never die,  
Our earthly friends may fall us,  
Or change with changing years:  
This Friend is always worthy  
Of that dear Name He bears."

(To be continued.)

## My Limbs Would Twitch

### And Waken Me—Unable to Rest or Sleep, I Walked the Floor in Nervous State—When Specialists Failed I Found a Cure

Windsor, Ont., Jan. 3rd.—This is the kind of cure that has set Windsor people thinking and talking about Dr. Chase's Nerve Food. The action of this food cure is so radically different to the usual treatments for the nerves that everybody wants to try it. Gradually and certainly it nourishes the starved nerves back to health and vigor and the benefits obtained are both thorough and lasting.

Mrs. M. Smithson, 27 Arthur street, Windsor, Ont., writes: "I was suffering from nervous breakdown, which was caused by a shock when fire broke out in the adjoining house. My nerves were in such a state that, after going to bed I could not get my nerves quieted down sufficiently to go to sleep. I used to get up and walk around the room, or go downstairs. Even when I would be dropping off to sleep my limbs would twitch and waken me. I used to have cold, nervous, night sweats, sometimes would become unconscious and lie that way for quite a little while. I was always cold and it seemed impossible for me to get warm or keep warm. When on the street I would see two or three objects at once, and did not want any person to speak to me or bother me. Any little noise irritated and annoyed me very much. I had consulted specialists and tried many remedies during this time, but could not gain relief. At last I tried Dr. Chase's Nerve Food, and before long could see that this treatment was proving of benefit. I am now feeling so much better that I can go out on the street without any difficulty, can go across the river and go about the same as usual. I sleep well at night, and am feeling more like myself every day. I am pleased to be able to write you to tell you how much good the Nerve Food has done me. It has strengthened and built up my whole system. I am recommending it to everybody I find suffering from nervousness of any kind."

Dr. Chase's Nerve Food, 50 cents a box, a full treatment of 6 boxes for \$2.75, at all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Limited, Toronto. Do not be talked into accepting a substitute. Imitations only disappoint.