

# HEART TO HEART; OR, LOVE'S UNERRING CHOICE.

## CHAPTER IX.

### A GOOD SAMARITAN.

It was some weeks after Hilda had been discovered lying half dead upon the steps of the hospital before her naturally strong constitution triumphed over the fever which had so nearly ended her young life. She opened her blue eyes once more upon the world she had so nearly quitted.

She gazed wearily around her upon the strange place in which she found herself. A long room, with a row of tiny white beds facing the large uncurtained windows through which was to be obtained a glimpse of the pale blue of the Spring sky, flecked here and there with tiny white clouds. Bare, whitewashed walls, a bare floor spotlessly clean, a small fire burning cheerfully in the large fireplace, near which Hilda's bed was placed. Near the fireplace a table, upon which stood a large bunch of sweet white and purple violets, whose exquisite fragrance perfumed the air—bonnie Spring flowers. From what lovely woodland dell had your scented blossoms been culled, to wither and die in the cheerless ward of a London hospital?

While Hilda was looking round her trying to recall her scattered memory, and vaguely wondering where she was, a pleasant-looking woman approached the bed and in subdued and kindly accents asked her if she was better.

"Have I been ill?" asked the girl.

"Where am I?"

"You are in St. James's Hospital," replied the nurse, "but you must not exert yourself by talking; drink this," offering the restorative that had been ordered by the doctors, and Hilda obeyed and suffered the attendant to rearrange her pillows and lay her weary head down again to seek the repose she so much needed.

But as the Spring days passed, on Hilda did not improve so quickly as could be wished, for truth to tell, with returning health the girl's spirits sank and greatly retarded the progress of her recovery. But at last there came a day when, being dressed for the first time, she was able to sit up for a little while, and then it was that Dr. Bridgeworth came, and sitting down by the lonely young girl, took her wasted hand in his and said kindly:

"And now, my dear, don't you think it is quite time that we wrote and told your friends of your recovery? I am afraid they must have suffered greatly on your account."

Hilda looked at the good old man through a mist of unshed tears as she replied:

"I have no friends, Dr. Bridgeworth, to care what becomes of me. I am quite alone in the world."

"Oh, that's all nonsense, my dear," returned the kind-hearted physician, cheerfully. "You must put all those moody thoughts on one side, or we shall never get you well. Come! give me the address of some friend to whom I can write for you, and the letter shall be sent off to-night."

"Indeed, doctor," said poor, Hilda in rather a pained tone, "I assure you I am speaking the truth. When this new year dawned I was rich in all that makes a woman's life worth living. A loving father, a bappy home, friends and fortune. In one short moment my father's sudden death left me of all, and in all this great city there is no mortal more friendless, more lonely than I am."

"My poor child!" exclaimed the old man, as Hilda broke down and sobbed bitterly. "Forgive me for tearing open half-healed wounds; but tell me what brought you to so sad a pass as you were the night when you were brought into the hospital."

"I will tell you all I can recall distinctly of that wretched night. I had left my old home, and had arrived in London, and was most unfortunately robbed of a bag containing my money and jewels. I was directed to some lodgings, but, bewildered by the snow and unused to London, I lost my way, and remember no more till I awoke from what seemed to me like a succession of dreadful dreams, to find myself here."

Dr. Bridgeworth looked keenly at Hilda as she spoke; in truth, the doctor did not believe her explanation of the circumstances which had brought her to such a wretched plight. But as long as she remained in the hospital he never abated his kindness toward her, offering her advice and assistance in her plans for the future; and though Hilda was grateful to the old physician for his goodness, she never reposed any confidence in him. She told him that she intended to try and obtain a situation as governess; also that should she fail in so doing, she could obtain from a distant relative a sum of money sufficient for her support. She did not say that, headstrong and willful as she was, she would starve sooner than touch one farthing of Reginald Deloraine's money. With this half confidence Dr. Bridgeworth was obliged to be satisfied. He scanned the daily papers eagerly each day to see if any advertisements appeared in the "agency" column that might refer to his lovely, unsatisfactory patient, but all to no purpose, and all he could do was to recommend her to some quiet lodgings, where she would be safe and comfortable while looking for a situation.

It was the middle of April when Hilda left the hospital and proceeded to Hackney, where, in the neighborhood of Victoria Park, resided the kindly, motherly woman to whose care her kind physician had confided her. But so great was Hilda's fear of being discovered and perhaps ruining the future of her beloved Roger, that in one short week she took her departure from the pleasant lodgings, and, after some trouble, succeeded in finding a room which she thought might suit her in one of the small streets branching off from the crowded Harrow-road, not very far from Paddington. Here in the

house of a tidy widow woman, Hilda established herself, and prepared to try and obtain the means of earning a respectable livelihood.

A bleak, dreary day in November was drawing to a close. The fog was thick, rendering the murky streets in the region of the Harrow-road murkier and gloomier than ever. In the small "two-pair back" of a shabby house in one of the above-named streets a young woman was sitting at a rickety, oak-stained table, which was drawn close to the window to catch the fast dying rays of daylight. The room was small and meanly furnished. An iron bedstead covered with a patchwork quilt, a tiny washstand, over which hung a glass about a foot square, a couple of chairs, the deal table, and a strip of carpet upon the floor constituted the whole of the furniture. Bitterly cold as it was, and keenly though the wind blew through the badly-fitting window frames, there was no fire in the small grate, and the door of a cupboard which stood open revealed a few common articles of crockery ware, together with a little kettle, but not a scrap of food was to be seen, and the tired, shivering woman who bent over her drawing at the little table had not broken her fast during the long November day. Is it possible that this can indeed be Hilda Deloraine—this anxious-eyed, weary woman, whose shabby black gown is a "world too wide" for her shrunken frame? It is a sad truth. The former heiress of Marham Abbey, who is anxiously bending over her drawing, as with cramped fingers and an aching head she sketches and colors the exquisite little pictures of dogs and horses, huntsmen and hounds, which she disposes of to a picture dealer in the west end for about a tenth of their value, and by the sale of which she just manages to pay the rent of her shabby room and buy herself a morsel of food.

"The Wolf" had been scared away from Hilda's door by the exercise of her talent for drawing, and she had fortunately found a purchaser for her clever sketches, though she could barely live upon the starvation prices paid to her by the fashionable picture dealer. She had been busy all day finishing the last of a series of hunting sketches which had been ordered, and now, as the daylight was fast fading from the gloomy sky, she put the finishing touches to her picture and leaning back in her chair contemplated it with bitter tears welling up in her sad, blue eyes. It was her father's favorite horse Tarquin, his head held by a tiny groom, while sitting on the steps, with eager eyes turned to the great hall door, was Roy, the pet setter of dead Mark Deloraine. "Ah, Roy, dear old Roy!" cried the poor lonely girl; "never any more, Roy!" and the fountains of her grief were unsealed by the sight of the pictured likeness of her dead father's favorites. But Hilda soon roused herself, and lighting a dip candle, which diffused a poor light in the little room, she put her drawings in a small portfolio, and wrapping herself into a thick coarse shawl, she put on her hat and left the room, to walk two miles through the foggy, muddy streets to dispose of her sketches, which she must do that night unless she wished to go supperless to bed.

As she descended the stairs the door of her landlady's little parlor stood ajar, and from it came the pleasant glow of a bright fire, accompanied by a most appetizing odor of tea and buttered toast. This recalled to our poor Hilda's mind the fact that she, too, was very hungry, and, with a sigh, she was hurrying quickly past when a voice within called out:

"Is that you, Miss O'Connor? Can't you come in a minute?"

"Certainly, Mrs. Davey," answered Hilda, and pushing open the door she entered the cosy little room.

"Wherever are you off to now?" asked the landlady, as Hilda drew near the fire.

"I never knew the like of girls for gadding about, I declare I should think a night like this you'd be a deal best at home."

"I have no coals, Mrs. Davey," replied Hilda, meekly, "and I am obliged to go to the shop with my pictures to-night before I can get any. I shall have your rent for you to-night, and am very much obliged to you for waiting for it," she added, nervously.

"Whoever said a word about the rent?" snapped the landlady, who had a short temper, though she was a good-hearted soul. "I'm not afraid to trust you with a fortnight's rent, though that's more than I would say to many girls. When did you get your tea, pray, if you've no fire?"

"I have not had any tea yet," faltered Hilda in reply.

"No, nor your dinner, neither, I'll be bound; just you draw up that chair and drink this 'ere cup of tea before you go out to-night, or I shall have you laid up on my hands. Here!" pushing the plate of toast to Hilda, "get your tea, you're welcome, I'm sure."

And cheered by the landlady's rough kindness, Hilda drank the hot tea and did ample justice to Mrs. Davey's buttered toast, and, refreshed and strengthened by her meal, she quitted the house, and as she threaded the busy streets her life did not wear altogether so forlorn an aspect as it had done when she sat in her lonely room.

But an adventure was to befall Hilda that night of which she little dreamed, and which was fated to alter the whole course of her future destiny.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE HIGHEST BIDDER.

When Hilda left her lodgings on the dreary November evening just referred to she walked quickly through the misty streets which were but dimly lighted by the street lamps. It was a raw, foggy night, and Hilda shivered through the warm chawl, which, purchased for five shillings at a pawnbroker's, replaced the sealskins and furs of old times. But a brave heart beat in the young girl's bosom, and she plodded steadily on until the West End picture dealer's was reached, and her sketches disposed of for less than a tenth of their value. Six o'clock was booming from a neighboring church tower as Hilda left the shop and prepared to retrace her steps toward her lodgings.

At the corner of the street a "baked potato merchant" had set up his stand, and

Hilda paused, intending to purchase a few potatoes, "all 'ot" for her frugal supper.

Upon what trifling causes hang our destinies! As the young girl stood waiting her turn to be served the soft, drawing tones of a voice fell upon her ear, and she looked curiously at the respectable-looking country woman who stood on the pavement by her side. Surely she knew that portly form, neatly dressed in mourning, and the bright, dark eyes unimpaired and clear, the healthy old cheek, ruddy as a Winter apple. These, too, are familiar to Hilda.

As the old woman moved aside to make room for the waiting girl she glanced at Hilda and exclaimed in the greatest surprise:

"Lawd's mercy! if it bain't Miss Hilda! Deary me, miss! whatever brings you here at this time o' night, and alone, too?"

None but those who have been living for months friendless and alone can tell how Hilda's heart leaped to hear the language of kindness from the lips even of so humble a friend as her old pensioner, Mrs. Grey, and she was soon warmly shaking hands with the old lady. A few hasty words soon put Mrs. Grey au fait with all the sad changes which had happened to the former heiress of Marham Abbey during the last twelve months, and while the worthy old dame is accompanying Hilda to her lodgings and listening with sympathy and sorrow to the tale of the sad changes which had befallen the once idolized girl, we cannot do better than briefly explain who Mrs. Grey was, and how she chanced to meet Hilda so opportunely.

When Hilda had been taken from London on her mother's death her health was very delicate, and many weary, sleepless nights and days of anxiety she caused to the loving old nurse—Mrs. Grey, the widow of a former coachman of the Squire's—who ruled over the heiress's nursery. Mrs. Grey remained at the Abbey till her charge was turned nineteen, when she left to share the home of a widowed daughter, who was a laundress in London. With this daughter she only remained a short time, the young woman took to herself. A situation offered itself to her as caretaker of a splendid mansion in Park Gardens, belonging to the Duke of Weymouth, but which was almost entirely unfurnished, and used merely as a receptacle for the various treasures of art, including rare pictures and sculpture, which the Duke was constantly purchasing, merely, as it seemed, to be shut from the light of day in the empty mansion, whose great windows looked over the lofty trees and lawns of Hyde Park. Here Mrs. Grey lived free, with a modest sum paid weekly to her for her care of the mansion and its contents.

"And now, my dear Miss Hilda," said the old woman, "the best thing you can do is to come and live with me till brighter days dawn for you; there's plenty of room in the old house, and Mr. Parker—that's the Duke's lawyer—says as how I might have some one to live along of me, if I liked. I'll not deny it's been lonesome enough, but I hate strangers, so you'll see after you, and you can draw your pretty pictures there as well as here; so now pack your things, and let's be off out of this place, which never was fit for the likes of you."

Hilda's packing was soon done, and with a kind farewell to her landlady the young girl turned her back forever upon the place where she had known so much sorrow and accompanied the friend whom Providence had surely raised up for her to her new home.

Here Hilda passed her time peacefully enough. The money she obtained for her sketches—badly as she was paid for them—was sufficient for all her simple wants, and Mrs. Grey petted and waited on her darling with as much loving pride as if she were still the heiress of Marham Abbey, instead of being a homeless and friendless wanderer upon the world's highways.

But while Hilda spent her tranquil days in the empty old house, employing herself with her pencil or in dusting the treasures contained in the deserted apartments, and while Roger Montacute, down in Berkshire, hunted and shot with a moose, determined energy than ever, in the pursuit of foxes and in the slaughter of offending birds to put away from him the memory of the lovely face of the woman he had lost, an hour was fast approaching which was fated to alter the whole course of events and make the rough place smooth and throw a gleam of light upon deeds which at present were veiled in deepest obscurity.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## TEMPERED IN LIVING FLESH.

### Gory Tale of the Manufacture of Genuine Damascus Blades.

It has been long believed that some, if not all, high-grade ancient tools of steel were tempered in human blood, and a recent discovery in a ruin of Syria substantiates the belief, says an exchange. In the remains of an armorer's smithy was found a parchment, written in Syriac characters, giving directions for making the famous "Damascus blades." The recipe reads as follows:

"Let the workman be furnished with a slave of fair frame, and let the Ethiopian be bound, shoulders upward, upon the block with his arms fastened underneath with thongs. His head and neck projecting over and beyond the edge of the block. Then let the master workman cold-hammer the blade to a thin, smooth edge. Next let it be thrust into a fire of cedar wood coals until the color of the blade be red like the rising sun. Then, with a quick motion, let him pass the blade six times from the hilt to the point thereof through the most fleshy portions of the slave's back and thighs, or a sufficient number of times to cool it until the color is purple. Then with one stroke it will sever the neck of the slave and not receive a nick, whereupon it may be cooled in the blood flowing from his body." Could high art be more horribly disgraced?

### Why He Did It.

Wife (snappishly)—Why do you smoke those horrid cigars?  
Husband—Because I can't afford to buy Paris bonnets and Havana cigars, too.

## SUMMER SMILES.

Little Girl—"What is tact papa?"  
Papa—"Something every woman has and exercises—until she gets married."

Timmy—"Paw, what is the board of education?"  
Mr. Figg—"In the days when I went to school it was a pine shingle."

He—"Is this the first time you've ever been in love, darling?"  
She—(thoughtlessly)—"Yes; but it's so nice that I hope it won't be the last!"

Guy, do be quiet," said mamma; "you are so noisy."  
"I'm obliged to make a noise, mamma; somebody might take me for a girl."

Now the druggist's face is beaming, as the nickles to him pass  
And he thinks there's fun in selling froth at half-a-dime a glass.

Clara Winterbloom—"There is only enough to about half fill this trunk. What shall I do, fill it with papers?"  
Mrs. Winterbloom—"No; let your father pack it."

"Who is the master of the house?" asked the agent of the man who answered his ring.  
"Well," was the curious response, "a resigned tone, 'I am the husband and father.'"

Cawker—"Barlow made a rash prediction just now."  
Cumso—"What did he say?"  
Cawker—"He said that the time would come when it would be respectable to be honest."

First little girl—"And isn't your cat afraid of mice?"  
Second little girl—"Oh, no, not a single bit."  
First little girl—"That's queer—And she's a lady cat, too, isn't she?"

Van Pelt—"Isn't \$4 a day rather high for a hotel in the mountains?"  
Landlord—"But, my dear sir, you should think of the scenery."  
Van Pelt—"How much do you charge for that?"

"What's the matter with that horse?" said the animal's owner at the race track.  
"He's fast asleep," replied the stable boy.  
"Well, leave him that way. It's the only time he is ever fast."

The lightning bug is most polite;  
He doth illuminate  
Enough to see, but not enough  
To spoil a tete a tete.

Cass—"But how do you know that was Benedict's wife that sat beside him in the train?"  
Bass—"Why didn't you notice that he addressed all of his conversation to the lady in the next seat?"

Fond father—"I hardly know what business to put my son in. I know practically nothing about his ability."  
Friend—"Take him for a sea voyage. That will show what there is in him."

"Do you believe the theory that character is determined to some extent by what we eat and drink?"  
"I do."  
"Then a person who drinks sage tea is likely to develop into a philosopher, I suppose."

Sue—"I'm afraid it's not me that your father, but that it is my money you want."  
He—"How foolish of you to say that. You know very well I can't get your money without first getting you."

"Some folks maintain," remarked Bass between puffs, "that in the next world we shall follow the same occupation as in this."  
"And in this world," said Mrs. B., "you are smoking incessantly."

"My mamma got ever so many falls when she was learning to ride the bicycle yesterday," explained the little girl to the caller, "and that's why she's so long coming down. She's got the blues all over her."

"Mamie is such a conscientious little goose," said one summer girl to another.  
"How's that?"  
"She thinks she must go to the trouble of breaking one engagement before contracting another."

Mrs. McSwat—"The reason I object to your spending so much time at that club of yours, Billiger, is that I am sure it is nothing but a resort for loafers."  
Mr. McSwat—"Great Scott, Maria! What's any club?"

"The thief who broke into my shop last night," said the false-hair merchant, "reminded me very much of a firecracker."  
"How was that?" asked his friend. "He went off with a bang," sighed the hair merchant.

Magistrate—"And why did you roam about in the streets during the night?"  
Defendant—"I was afraid to go home."  
Magistrate—"Are you married?"  
Defendant (joyfully)—"Oh, your worship, I suppose you know what it is too."

"The summer girl is only a little lower than the angels," remarked the young man in knickerbockers. "Wait until you pay for her ice cream, her boat rides, her merry-go-round trips, and you'll think she comes a good sight higher," replied the cynic.

"I can't have whistling at the table, Mr. Sloun," said the boarding-house keeper. "I thought you said yesterday, you liked to hear a man whistle at his work?"  
replied the boarder, as he made another ineffectual attempt at cutting his piece of beefsteak.

Edwin—"What do you think I have in this pocket, dearest? The postage stamp on your last letter. It has been touched by your lips. It often touches mine."  
Angelina—"Oh, Edwin, I'm so very sorry. I moistened that horrid postage stamp on Fido's dear, damp nose!"

"It's a great pity," said the convicted burglar to his lawyer, "that you couldn't have made that closing speech of yours at the opening of the case."  
"I don't see that it would have made any difference."  
"It would, though. Then the jury would have been asleep when the evidence came in and I'd have stood some show."

## Unwelcome.

Police Clerk—"Man out there wants to be locked up."  
Official—"What's he done?"  
Nothing. He says he has no home, no money to pay for a lodging, is tired walking the streets, and it is damp outdoors.

The fool! Comin' around here to be locked up when he hasn't robbed a store, or killed a man, or anything. Kick him out!

The child's mind can grasp with ease the delicate suggestions of flowers.—Chapin.

That chastened brightness only gathered by those who tread the path of sympathy and love.—Butler Lytton.

## SOME LUCKY JOKERS.

### THEY HAVE BEEN HANDSOMELY PAID FOR THEIR JOKES.

Both Professional and Amateur Have Done It—And Judged by the Quality of Their Jokes Wit Must Have Been Scarcer Than It Is Now.

Jokers, both professional and amateur, have occasionally had a remarkably good time, and have been very handsomely paid for their jokes.

Edmund Ironside bestowed upon his court jester, Hit-hard (so called from the force and punishment of his jests), the manor of Walworth as a reward for his happy wit. The fortunate jester bequeathed his estate to the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral, who are lords of the manor to this day.

William the Conqueror gave one of his court fools, Goilet, the lordship of three towns and five manors. Rahere, the minstrel and jester of Henry II., must have made a good thing out of his jokes, for he was able to found the monastery and hospital of St. Bartholomew's. King John granted his jester, William Picculph, extensive lands on condition that during his lifetime Picculph should "provide his Grace with as much merriment as could make him laugh."

### HOUSES FOR SCOGAN.

Edward IV. was so delighted with the jokes of his famous jester, John Scogan, that he presented him with a fine town house in Cheapside and a country mansion at Bury St. Edmunds; while to come to modern times, Abdul Bey, who for sixty years was professional jester to successive Sultans of Turkey, died in 1836 worth £150,000.

But, apart from these professional jokers, there have been amateurs who, by a single witticism, have made a lucky hit which has secured them a big prize. One of these was a clergyman named Mountaigne, who was private chaplain to James I., and was on very intimate terms with His Majesty.

The Bishopric of London fell vacant, and so equal were the conflicting claims of the various candidates that the King was puzzled whom to select. He confided his perplexity to his chaplain, who gave him this ready and witty advice: "Sire, the Scripture will tell you how to act, for both it not say, 'If ye have faith and shall say to this Mountaigne, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the See, it shall be done.'" The King was so pleased with this apt and arch suggestion that he acted upon it, and Mountaigne was made Bishop of London.

### HE GOT THE LIVING.

About ten years ago there died a witty clergyman who owed the rich living of which he was long incumbent to a lucky pun. He was tutor to the son of a nobleman, and had not long taken orders when he attended the funeral of the rector of the parish in which the nobleman's seat was situated. The father of his pupil was patron of the living, and was also present at the funeral of the deceased rector. There was a young clergyman in the church whose grief was so demonstrative that the noble patron was affected by the sight, and asked if it were the son of the late rector.

"Oh, dear no, my lord; no relation at all," said the tutor.

"No relation!" exclaimed the nobleman. "None my lord; he is the curate, and I think he is not weeping for the dead, but for the living."

His lordship, who was something of a wit and a cynic himself, was so delighted with the bon mot that he conferred the living on the ready punster.

### £3,000 FOR A VERSE.

One more instance, in which a single jeu d'esprit brought its author a very handsome recognition, we may record before we leave the subject. James Smith, the elder of the two famous authors of "Rejected Addresses," having one evening met at a dinner party Mr. Strahan, the King's printer, who was then much enfeebled by old age and gout, though his faculties were still unimpaired, was so charmed with the old gentleman's manners and conversation that the next morning he sent him the following lines:

Your lower limbs seemed far from stout  
When last I saw you walk:  
The cause I presently found out.  
When you began to talk.  
The power that props the body's length,  
In due proportion spread,  
In you mounts upward, and the strength  
All settles in the head.

Mr. Strahan showed his gratification and pleasure at the graceful and witty compliment by immediately executing a codicil to his will bequeathing the author £3,000.

### Incorrigible.

She—Yes, Reginald, I confess you have awakened in my heart tender throbbings of a first and only love.  
He—Dovey! I darling! O! onest only!  
Her Young Brother (peeping from behind the curtain)—Halloo! Caught yer! Look here! If you don't give me a tanner I'll split.  
She—Tommy, you little wretch, go away, and if you hold your tongue I'll give you a sixpence—to-morrow.  
Relentless Fiend—No fear, no more tick! You promised me a bob if I didn't tell ma about Sammy Spooner kissing you, and you've never brased up yet!

### The Wrong Party.

Foreign Count—I have called, sir, to ask permission to pay my addresses to your daughter.  
Old Man—Oh, that's all right, I don't object; but I don't know what the half-dozen other fellows she's engaged to will say about it.

### A Reasonable Theory.

Physician—Yes, sir; my opinion is that one-half the diseases that afflict humanity are due to over-eating.—It may be—may be. Now, I think of it, it is months since any one was sick at my boarding-house.