

picked it up and involuntarily sought the society column. There was nothing in it relating to Edith but he found something else quite as interesting. It was a very short item, but it meant much:

The yachting season is at hand again. Mr. Phillip Hepstone's palatial "Meteor" sails to-morrow for a prolonged cruise in European waters. Mr. Hepstone and party expect to be away at least six months.

"That explains everything," reflected Tom. "I shouldn't wonder if he's thrown her over!"

* * * * *

"Wednesday is my hospital day, Edith dear. Wouldn't you like to go with me?"

"Indeed I should, auntie. Perhaps something like that may cheer me up a bit and make me forget my own misery."

"I'm sure it will," said Aunt Loo. "We always send flowers, you know, and you can help me with them. They should be at the distributing bureau not later than mid-day."

So Edith worked all morning, picking roses and arranging them deftly into dainty bouquets. One of these pleased her especially. LaFrance roses and double white stocks had always been a favorite combination of Edith's, and she spared no pains in making this one as beautiful as possible.

"It was Tom's favorite rose, too," she thought; "but I think he liked it best because I did. Poor Tom! I wonder if he has forgiven me? I hope so, though I don't deserve it of him."

Presently she found herself singing. Singing! Why, that was something she had not done for several months. It was an old love-song, too. The fact astonished her so much that she stopped suddenly and glanced at her aunt.

Mrs. Ventnor had been watching her niece with a satisfied smile on her lips. "Edith's improving," she thought.

"Why, auntie," exclaimed Edith, going quickly to her, "these flowers seem to tell me that I'm going to be happy again."

"Of course you are, dear," and Mrs. Ventnor stroked and patted, and did her best to console the fair young head that was laid convulsively on her bosom.

A few hours later she was passing through the convalescent ward of the

hospital. Edith Mowbray was with her. It was Mrs. Ventnor's custom to leave, undisturbed, patients who were asleep or appeared to be so. Tom Brace was aware of this, so he turned his face towards the wall and closed his eyes.

Some minutes previously the nurse had placed near his bedside a beautiful bouquet of roses and white phlox. He had regarded them complacently enough at first, but suddenly he remembered that LaFrance roses and white phlox were Edith's favorite flowers, and though he admired them greatly, the sight of them made him feel very unhappy.

"O, auntie," said Edith, quietly, "there's the very bouquet that I took so much pains with. Doesn't it look sweet?"

Tom Brace heard the voice, and, weak as he was, it thrilled him. "I must be dreaming," he thought, for he had not seen Edith. Then he opened his eyes, and gazed into a mirror which hung on the wall by his bedside. He had not been dreaming, for Edith was there. *His* Edith! Going about the ward with her aunt and apparently very much interested. A little paler than she was a year ago, a trifle more slender, perhaps, but beautiful as ever. And *she* had made up that bouquet.

Tom's first impulse was to dash the bouquet to the ground; his second to raise it tenderly to his lips. But he did neither.

Mrs. Ventnor and her niece passed out of the convalescent ward and into the next one. Then the nurse came in to attend to a patient and Tom beckoned to her.

"Take them away, please," he said, sadly, pointing to the flowers. "They're very beautiful, but I can't bear them."

And the nurse, wondering, took them away.

Shortly after this the visitors returned to the convalescent ward. They had not intended doing so, but Mrs. Ventnor had forgotten her parasol. Instinctively Edith turned for a last look at her special bouquet. It was gone! Then her gaze rested on the patient at whose bedside it had been. Edith started. "That peculiar shade of hair!" she thought; "where have I seen it before? And the shape of the head! If only he were facing this