

Eliot's works, a birthday present from Uncle Charles.

'Mother's always wanted to read George Eliot's other books since she read Adam Bede. Now, mother mine, you're going to have a chance.'

In a dainty workbasket she placed the stamped linen, and with it the bright colored silks. 'They will rest her,' she thought, eagerly.

On a little stand by the couch were laid the last numbers of three of the current magazines, and beside them a box of delicious chocolates, the contribution of Ralph and Eugene.

Mildred stepped back, flushed and happy, and viewed the room. 'There, I mustn't forget the pillow for the couch, and the hassock!'

Mildred was at the door when her father drove up. 'Just come right upstairs, mother,' she said, her voice slightly betraying her excitement, as soon as Mrs. Colton had laid aside her wraps.

'Is anything the matter or anybody here?' she asked, wearily.

'Nothing the matter, but I've a guest here,' and Mrs. Colton wonderingly followed Mildred up the front stairs.

'Oh!' was her little cry of delight, as she saw the evidences of comfort scattered about in the spare room. 'But where's your guest, Mildred?' she asked, looking round. 'Who is it?'

'There, where you're standing—the best little woman in all the world—you! You're just to stay here and be my guest, and rest, and read, and embroider, and have no particle of care until your long visit's over. Now I want you to take a nice refreshing nap, and when supper is ready I'll call you. I'll have to leave you for the present,' and she softly closed the door before her mother could recover from her surprise or make even the slightest remonstrance.

When Mildred went up, two hours later, to call her mother to supper she had just awakened from her nap, the first one she had taken in the daytime since she could remember.

'I feel refreshed already, Mildred,' she said.

'This is just the beginning of a long, long visit, mother mine,' replied Mildred, gladly; 'and the roses will be again in bloom,' touching her mother's cheek, tenderly, 'when the visit's over.'

Margaret's Dream.

(Elizabeth Wilson Smith, in 'Herald and Presbyter'.)

She threw herself on the couch and pressed her fingers over her burning, aching eyeballs. The tears trickled down her face unnoticed and fell on the pillow. A moan came from the room beyond. She started up suddenly, but lay down again. For days she had watched by her father's bedside, but to-night the doctor had sent her away to rest. The nurse could do all that was necessary. Besides, the father was unconscious, and now the children needed her more than the father did.

'Mother! mother!' she moaned, 'Why did you leave me? I need you so much, and now if father goes too—'

She could not pray; she could not even think. She could only murmur, 'Oh, Father in heaven, help, help!'

Throb, throb, through her temples the heartbeats sent the blood, like a mighty engine, and every throb seemed to say, 'Help! help! help!'

Suddenly a voice said, 'Come.' She opened her eyes to see the room filled with a strange, bright light. Beside her was the most beautiful creature she had ever seen. Unable to refuse, had she been so minded, she arose and went.

They passed out into the moonless starlight and then, up, up. She asked no questions, for she was afraid. They saw many creatures like the one who was leading her. Many were alone and they were all going down. Others were leading human creatures and they were taking the upward course. Many were carrying little children, who seemed perfectly happy and content.

Afar off was a light which multiplied into many and of various hues, as they journeyed on. Strains of sweetest music floated to them from time to time. As they drew nearer, buildings, beautiful and dazzling with brightness, could be seen. Beautiful streets and green trees, beautiful streams, clear as crystal, little children playing and flowers everywhere!

The guide stopped on the bank of the first stream and let others pass them while she gazed at the beautiful scene before her, spellbound.

'Is this heaven?' she whispered, 'and is my mother there?'

'Yes, beyond the second stream among those trees is your home. Your mother is there. Shall we go on?'

Oh, the joy of being so near the eternity of rest! No more pain, no more sorrow! Nothing but rest and peace! She recalled what her mother had said. She seemed to hear the words distinctly spoken:

'Margaret, my daughter, while I long for heaven I sorrow to leave my dear ones. I know you well enough to feel that I need not tell you to be true to your trust. I realize how many doubts and discouragements will come to you, darling, as the days go by and you try to be a companion to your father and a mother to your brothers and sisters. It will be only as you look up to your heavenly Father for strength that you will be able to fill mother's place.'

She had given up a college course, and for three years had bravely carried on the work intrusted to her. It was only under this last blow of her father's serious illness that she had staggered and had almost given up.

'Look!' said the guide, and she saw a figure coming toward them. It stopped on the other side of the stream. Then Margaret saw it was her mother.

'Oh, mother, mother,' she called, 'I am so tired. I want to come to you.' But the mother smiled and shook her head.

'Think,' said the guide, smiling sadly, 'of your father and the little children, left with no one to care for them. True, it may be years before release is again offered you. Will you willingly return to earth and take up your burdens, or will you cross the river and remain here? For if you once pass over you cannot return!'

She looked at her mother. A beautiful smile rested on her face, as though she trusted her daughter to do right. A deep peace fell on Margaret as she gazed at her mother's radiant countenance.

'Take me back,' she said to the guide. 'I cannot leave them to suffer alone.' So down—down—down, they came. Once she looked back. Her mother still stood there smiling, and then passed out of sight.

The first faint streaks of dawn were showing when she awoke. She arose and went into the sick-room. Her father lay peacefully sleeping.

'The doctor has just gone,' the nurse told her. 'The crisis is past, and your father will live.'

One day, weeks afterward, when he was almost well, and she was sitting beside him, he said: 'Margaret, my child, you are growing more like your mother every day. I do not see how you stood the strain through that trying time.'

It was then she told him her dream, and the strength she had gained from it. He stroked her bright hair and his eyes filled with tears as he said: 'It seems to me like prevision, my dear.'

Love is All.

(Henry Van Dyke.)

Self is the only prison that can ever bind the soul;
Love is the only angel that can bid the gates unroll;
And when he comes to call thee, arise and follow fast;
His way may lie through darkness, but it leads to light at last.

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