

## MADEMOISELLE ANGELIQUE.

AN ALMSHOUSE IDYL.

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"Mademoiselle, you must not let me die," he said to her when she came in. "I have changed my mind and do not want to die now."

"If monsieur could see himself he would not talk of dying," said Mademoiselle Angelique, looking at him with interest. "You are much better to-day. I am so much stronger myself that as soon as you are well enough not to need a nurse I am going to get some position, and then I can help you, monsieur, till you get perfectly strong and well so as to leave here."

"You mean that you will take your hard-earned money and spend it on me?" said Townley, with his eyes fixed on her strangely.

"Oh! it will be little things till you are well and can get around. Monsieur should have oranges and a little good wine when he is getting better."

"You are very good, and I thank you," said Townley simply.

The next day he was much better, and ate his food with relish, and wanted to sit up. Mademoiselle watched him as interestedly as a mother could have done. Her face brightened over the signs of his improvement, and she was as gay as a lark.

"Mademoiselle Angelique," he said, "I am going to get well very rapidly now. I feel it. Are you glad?"

"Need you ask that?" said the girl. "Am I not your nurse, and did I not tell you to get well?" She smiled joyously.

"As soon as I get well I am going to leave this vile place, and, mademoiselle, I hope to get married. I am going away to some European city, if I do, and live there."

"That is good, monsieur," she said brightly, though a shadow as light as a breath of air had darted across her face for a moment.

"Are you glad I am going to get married?" said Townley, looking her straight in the eyes.

"Certainly I am glad," said she, though her lip gave a little twitch. "Anything that is going to make you happier pleases me."

"Do you want to know the name of the girl I wish to marry?"

"If monsieur cares to tell me," she answered quietly.

"Her name is Angelique," said Townley.

"Angelique?" said mademoiselle. "It is a pretty name; I trust she will be a good wife to you."

"Angelique," continued the sick man slowly, "will you do something to please me?"

"Ah! monsieur, surely. Have I forgotten your goodness to me in Paris?"

"Then put your arms around my neck and kiss me."

The hot blood surged so into her cheeks, and such a look of pain crossed her face, that he almost relented.

"Do not ask me to do that, monsieur. You are jesting. It is not like you." She spoke calmly, though her bosom was heaving.

"But you kissed my hand the other day," said Townley. "Why did you do that when you will not kiss me now?"

"I did that because I feared you were going to die, and I—I felt sad at the thought of it," she answered, with her face aglow, but looking him steadily in the eyes with her calm firmness.

"Will you not kiss me when I tell you I love you?" said Townley.

"O hush! monsieur. Have you not just told me you love another and wish to marry her?" said she reproachfully.

"No, I did not say another. I said there was a young woman I wished to marry and that her name was Angelique. You are the one." And Townley reached his hands out and grasped hers tenderly.

"You love me!" said Mademoiselle Angelique. Her face seemed transformed in the sudden rosy glow of happiness that bathed it, and her beautiful form seemed to grow into firmer, more exquisite curves, as though some magic elixir

had been sent coursing through her veins. She stood motionless, radiant in her new joy, looking at him with such an eager simplicity.

"Yes, my dear little friend, I love you," said Townley quietly. He stretched forth his weak arms toward her with a pathetic tenderness in his eyes.

The girl burst into a flood of tears as she leaned forward and gently clasped his head in her hands. He folded his arms about her and held her close while his lips sealed the covenant of love on her sweet mouth. It was the keenest, most restful happiness to them both.

Then the girl raised herself, the tears glistening on her long lashes, and her lips parting in irrepressible smiles.

"Now you must get well in a hurry, and I shall work for you, and you shall have your oranges and your wine," she said playfully.

"Listen and I will tell you what we shall do. Just as soon as I am well enough we will leave this horrible place. Then we will get married and sail for France. We will go to your old village, if you like, and stay there for a while, and then we will wander about, living only in bright, cheerful places."

"I do not care where I live so long as I live with you," said Angelique. "But we will do whatever you wish, dear, as soon as we get money enough."

"Isn't three or four hundred thousand dollars enough to start on?" said Townley roguishly.

"Yes. When we have that we will go at once," said Mademoiselle Angelique cheerfully.

"We have got that now. We are the richest paupers in this Almshouse," said he, smiling.

"What do you mean?" said the young girl curiously, as she picked up the blue-checked apron from the floor.

"I mean that you read me of my uncle's death a few weeks ago in the paper. This man named Fowler, who died in Buffalo, and whose son had died a few days before him, was my uncle, Angelique, and his large fortune has come to me. I have seen a lawyer, and everything has been settled. So get me well as soon as you can, and we will go away, giving orders for the paupers to have a grand dinner in honour of our wedding. We will get married, and we will see if money and health and love cannot make us happy."

The girl had listened with such a grave, sweet smile, sitting with her hands clasped in his. But as he finished a soberer look came upon her, and with some hesitation she said, firmly and sorrowfully:

"Monsieur, are you sure that this is right? In Paris you were with the best people. Now that you are rich again, your place is there. Do you think I shall ever shame you as your wife?"

"Shame me? Yes, shame me that I am not good enough for you," said Townley, grasping her hands anew. "Friends! You are the only friend I have in the world! I would not have got this uncle's money could he have made a will. Are we not enough to each other to get along without any one else? Dear heart! you have the refinement that comes from a beautiful nature, the tact which is born of the most delicate goodness, the repose of a wonderful simplicity and modesty and dignity. Many a lady has not these, and one who has is a lady. I would not fear to have the proudest dame in the world meet you as my wife. Love will come to the aid of these sweet qualities in you. No; do not fear. I shall never be ashamed of you, Angelique." And he drew her willing head down till their lips met.

THE END.

The Parnell Commission, which will resume its sittings this month, is practically over, so far as the Nationalists are concerned. Mr. George Lewis has settled up all the accounts for Mr. Parnell. Sir Charles Russell received one thousand guineas with his brief, and fifty guineas a day for 110 days. Mr. Reid and Mr. Lockwood each received five hundred guineas with their briefs, and twenty-five guineas daily, during the same period, and the junior counsel in proportion. The whole outlay, including counsel, witnesses, Irish agents, shorthand writers, and so forth, are covered by the Indemnity Fund, which did not exceed £40,000. The *Times* expenditure will be largely in excess of this amount.