

Purified by Suffering

MARY J. HOLMES.

But Mark would not be pleased with her interference, she knew, and so the golden moment fled, and when she left the house, the misunderstanding between herself and Helen was just as wide as ever. Wearily after that the days passed with Helen, until all thoughts of herself were forgotten in the terrible fear that death was really brooding over the pillars where Katy lay, insensible to all that was passing around her. The lips were silent now, and Wilford had nothing to fear from the tongue hitherto so busy. What Wilford suffered none could guess. He did not ask that she might live, for if all were well hereafter, he knew it was better for her to die, for the young womanhood, than to live till the heart, now so sad and bleeding, had grown calloused with sorrow. And yet it was terrible to think of Katy dead; terrible to think of that face and form laid away beneath the turf of Greenwood where those who loved her best could seldom go to weep.

And as they sat there thus, the night shadows stole into the room, and the hours crept on till from a city tower a clock struck ten, and Morris, motioning to his side, bade her go with her mother to rest. "We do not need you here," he said; "your presence can do no good. Should a change occur, you should be told at once."

Thus importuned, Helen and her mother withdrew, and only Morris and Wilford remained to watch the heavy slumber, so nearly resembling death.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Gradually the noise in the streets died away; the tread of feet, the rumbling of wheels, and the tinkle of car bells ceased, and not a sound was heard, save as the distant fire bells pealed forth their warning voices, or some watchman went hurrying by. The great city was asleep, and to Morris the silence brooding over the countless throng was deeper, more solemn, than the silence of the country, where nature gives her own mysterious notes and lullabies for her sleeping children. Before his marriage, a jealous taint of Morris Grant had found a lodgment in Wilford's breast, but he had tried to drive it out, and fancied that he had succeeded, experiencing a sudden shock when he felt it lifting its green head, and poisoning his mind against the man who was doing for him only what a brother might do. He forgot that it was his own entreaties which kept Morris there away from his Silverton patients, who were missing him so much, and complaining of his absence. Jealous men never reason clearly, and in this case Wilford was not reason at all, but jumped readily at his conclusion, calling to his aid as proof all that he had ever seen pass between Katy and her cousin. That Morris Grant loved Katy was, after a few moments' reflection, as fixed a fact in his mind, as that she lay there between them, moaning feebly as if about to speak. Years before, jealousy had made Wilford almost a mad-man, and it now held him again in its powerful grasp, whispering suggestions he would have stung in a calm frame of mind. There was a clenching of his fist, a knitting of his brows, and a gathering blackness in his eyes, as he listened while Katy, rousing partially from her lethargy, talked of the days when she was a little girl, and Morris had built the play-house for her by the water, where the thorn-apples grew and the waters fell over the smooth white rocks.

"Take me back there," she said, "and let me lie on the grass again. I've suffered so much since then. Wilford seemed to be in a rage, he did not understand or know how I loved the country with its birds and flowers, and the grass by the well, where the shadows come and go. I used to wonder where they were going, and one day when I watched them I was waiting for Wilford and wondering if he would ever come again. Would it have been better if he never had?"

Wilford's body shook as he bent forward to listen, while Katy continued:

"Were there no Geneva, I should not think so, but there is, and yet Morris said that made no difference."

A BLESSING TO CHILDREN.

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when I telegraphed for him to come and take me away from here." Wilford asked, and Morris replied: "The look about the mouth and nose is like the look which so often precedes death."

And that was all they said until another hour went by when Morris's hand was laid upon the forehead and moved up under the golden hair where there were drops of perspiration. "She is saved! thank God, Katy is saved!" was his joyful exclamation, and burying his face in his hands, he wept for a moment like a child.

On Wilford's face there was no trace of tears. On the contrary, he seemed hardened into stone, and in his heart fierce passions were contending for the mastery. What did Katy mean by sending for Morris to take her away? Did she send for him, and was that the cause of his being there? If so, there was something between the cousins more than mere friendship. The thought was a maddening one. And, rising slowly at last, Wilford came round to Morris's side, and grasping his shoulder, said:

"Morris Grant, you love Katy Cameron."

Like the peal of a bell on the frosty air the words rang through the room, starting Morris from his bowed attitude, and for an instant curdling the blood in his veins, for he understood now the meaning of the look which had so puzzled him. In Morris's heart there was a moment's hesitancy to know just what to say—an ejaculatory prayer for guidance—and then lifting up his head, his calm blue eyes met the eyes of black unflinchingly as he replied:

"I have loved her always."

A blaze like sheet lightning shot from beneath Wilford's eyelashes, and his heart smelt the sulphur of his lip as he said:

"You, a saint, confessed to this?"

"Should my being what you call a saint prevent my confessing what I did?"

"No, not the confession, but the fact," Wilford answered, savagely. "I would do you reconcile your alleged love for Katy with the injunctions of the Bible whose doctrines you indorse?"

"A man cannot always control his feelings, but he can strive to overcome them and put them aside. One does not sin in being tempted, but in listening to the temptation."

"Then according to your reasoning you have sinned, for you not only have been tempted, but have yielded to temptation." Wilford retorted, with a sinister look of exultation in his black eyes.

"For a moment Morris was silent, while a struggle of some kind seemed going on in his mind, and then he said:

"I never thought to lay open to you a secret which, after myself, is, I believe, known only to one living being."

"And that one—is—Katy?" Wilford exclaimed, his voice hoarse with passion, and his eyes flashing with fire.

"No, not Katy. She has no suspicion of the pain which, since I saw her made another's, has eaten into my heart, making me grow old so fast, and blighting my early manhood."

Something in Morris's tone and manner made Wilford relax his grasp upon the arm, and sent him back to his chair, while Morris continued:

"Most men would shrink from talking to a husband of the love they love his wife, and an hour ago I should have shrunk from it too, but you have forced me to it, and now you must listen while I tell you of my love for Katy. It began longer ago than she can remember—began when she was my baby sister, and I hushed her in my arms to sleep, kneeling by her cradle and watching her with a feeling I have never been able to define. She was in all my thoughts, her face upon the printed page of every book I studied, and her voice in every strain of music I heard. Then when she grew older, I used to watch the frolicsome child by the hour, building castles of the future, when she would be a woman, and I a man, with a man's right to win her. I know that she shielded me from many a snare into which young men are apt to fall, for when the temptation was greatest, and I was at its verge, a thought of her was sufficient to lead me back to virtue. I carried her in my heart across the sea, and said when I go back I will ask her to be mine. I went back, but at my first meeting with Katy after her return from Canada, she told me of you, and I knew then that hope for me was gone. God grant that you may never experience what I experienced on that day which made her your wife, and I saw her go away. It seemed almost as if God had forgotten me as the night after the bridal I sat alone at home, and met that dark hour of sorrow. But God was very merciful and sent me work which took up all my time, and drove me away from my own pain to soothe the pain of others. When Katy came to us last fall, there was an hour of trial when faith in God grew weak, and I was tempted to question the justice of His dealing with me. But that too past, and in my love for your child I forgot the mother in part, looking upon her as a sister rather than the Katy I had loved so well."

Sick Headache—Lack of Appetite.

Its glorious to feel right in the morning—ready for work. But how seldom one does. Sick headache, lack of appetite, disagreeable taste in the mouth—these are the usual morning feelings of most people—even of careful liver. This morning illness shows that the organs of digestion are not working properly. They need a tonic. Take a teaspoonful of

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than the Katy I had loved so well. Morris paused a moment, while Wilford said: "She spoke of telegraphing for you. Why was that, and when?"

"Thus interrogated, Morris told of the message which had brought him to New York, and narrated as cautiously as possible the particulars of the interview which followed.

Morris's manner was that of a man who spoke with perfect sincerity, and who carried conviction to Wilford's heart, disarming him for a time of the fierce anger and resentment he had felt while listening to Morris's story. Acting upon the good impulse of the moment, he arose, and offering his hand to Morris, said:

"Forgive me that I ever doubted you. It was natural that you should come, but foolish in Katy to send or think Geneva is living. I have seen her grave myself. I know that she is dead. Did Katy name any one whom she believed to be Geneva?"

"No one," she merely said she had seen the original of the picture," Morris replied.

"A fancy—a mere whim," Wilford muttered to himself, as greatly disquieted and terribly humbled, he paced the room moodily, trying not to think hard thoughts either against his wife or Dr. Grant, who, feeling that it would be pleasant for Wilford if he were gone, suggested returning to Silverton at once, inasmuch as the crisis was past and Katy out of danger. There was a struggle in Wilford's mind as to the answer he should make to this suggestion, but at last he signified his willingness for the doctor to leave when he thought best.

"I have been sick," she asked in a whisper, and Wilford, bending over her, replied: "Yes, very sick for nearly two whole weeks—ever since I left home that morning, you know?"

"Yes," he knew, "but where is Morris? He was here the last I can remember."

Wilford's face grew dark at once, and stepping back as Morris came in, he said: "She asks for you." Then with a rising feeling of resentment he watched them, while Morris spoke to Katy, telling her she must not allow herself in any way to be excited.

"Have I been crazy? Have I talked much?" she asked, and when Morris replied in the affirmative, she said: "Of whom have I talked most?"

"Of Geneva," was the answer, and Katy continued: "Did I mention any one else?"

Morris guessed of whom she was thinking, and answered indifferently: "You speak of Miss Hazelton in connection with the baby, but that was all."

in her nature to assume. "Well, no. She had a good education, believe, and was very pretty; that, it makes trouble always where there is a great inequality between a man's family and that of his wife."

Poor Morris understood too much perfectly, but she was too much afraid of the tear rolled down her cheek as she wished she had back again the daughter whose family the Camerons despised. Of course Wilford chafed and fretted himself, so could not help making Helen at generally disagreeable than she. There just suggested returning home, but part was a faint remembrance of her debt, but Helen did not waver in a decision, and the next day was fixed upon for her departure.

"You don't know how I dread you going, or how wretched I shall be without you," Katy said, when for a few moments they were alone. "Everything which once made me happy has been removed or changed. Baby is dead, and Wilford, oh! Helen I sometimes wish I had not heard of Geneva, for I am afraid it can never be with us as it was once; I have not the same trust in him, and he seems so changed."

As well as she could, Helen comforted her sister, and commending her to One who would care for her far more than earthly friends could do, she bade her good-bye, and with her mother went back to Silverton.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Wilford was in a most unhappy frame of mind. He had been humbled to the very dust, and it was Katy whom his heart kept hating as he thought over all the past. What right had she to go to his mother's after having once declined; or, being there, what right had she to listen and thus learn the secret he would almost have died to keep; or, having learned it, why need she have been so much excited, and sent for Dr. Grant to tell her if she were really a wife, and if not to take her away?

That was the point which hurt him most, and it was the galling fact that Morris Grant loved his wife, and was undoubtedly more worthy of her than himself.

"She had no right to complain of me," he thought, forgetting the time when he had been guilty of a similar offence in a more aggravated form. He did not resent upon anything naturally, and matters grew daily worse, while Katy's face grew whiter and her voice sadder in its tone.

When the Lenten days came on, oh how Katy longed to be in Silverton—to kneel again in its quiet church, and offer up her penitential prayers with the loved ones who had departed. At last she ventured to ask Wilford if he might go, her spirits rising when he did not refuse her request at once, but asked:

"Whom do you wish to see the most?"

His black eyes seemed reading her through, and something in their expression brought to her face the blush he construed according to his jealousy, and when she answered: "I wish to see them all," he retorted: "Say, rather, you wish to see that doctor, who has loved you so long, and who but for your would have asked you to be his wife?"

"What doctor, Wilford? whom do you mean?" she asked, and Wilford replied:

"Dr. Grant, of course. Did you never suspect it?"

"Never," said Katy's face grew very white, while Wilford continued: "I had it from his own lips; he is sitting on one side of you and I upon the other. I so forgot myself as to charge him with loving you, and he did not deny it, but confessed as pretty a piece of romance as I ever read, except the one according to his story, it was a one-sided affair confined wholly to himself. You never dreamed of it, he said."

"Never, never," Katy said, panting for her breath, and remembering suddenly many things which convinced her she had heard of it.

"Poor Morris, how my thoughtlessness must have wounded him," she murmured, and then all the pent up passion in Wilford's heart burst out in an impetuous storm.

He did not charge his wife directly with returning Morris's love; but he said she was, and he would know it earlier, asking her pointedly if it were not so, and pressing her for an answer, until the bewildered creature cried out:

"You can go to your rest at Laurwood as soon as you like, and I will go my way," he whispered hoarsely, and believing himself the most injured man in existence, he left the house, and Katy heard his step, as it went furiously down the steps. For a time she sat stunned with what she had heard, and then there came stealing into her heart a glad feeling that Morris deemed her worthy of his love when she had so often feared the contrary.

"Poor Morris," she kept repeating, while little throbs of pleasure went dancing through her veins, and the world was not half so dreary for knowing he had loved her. Towards Wilford, too, her heart went out in a fresh gust of tenderness, for she knew how one of his jealous nature must have suffered.

Better to Wait.

"Lawyer—Madam, I was I who drew up your late husband's will, and it is particularly requested and I should not marry again, but you, dear Mr. Saunders, Widow—er, has quite overcome your kind of—'t it be more seemly me, but would the period of mourning wait until before we announce the engagement."

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