

SEPTEMBER 18, 1909.

enced, the smuggler agreed to let me and my friend go. As I was securing my gun, I covered them with my blanket came up close to me and I trembled with emotion, farewell, we may never meet again, do not let me see you again. Do not let me see you again. Do not let me see you again. Do not let me see you again.

men for whom the whole province has been searching." The mother threw up her hands with an exclamation of astonishment; the boys cast their arms about us, the father shook us by the hands. All of this good family appeared as happy over our deliverance as though we were their friends and neighbors. Never have I had a better breakfast than the one I had at the kind woman presently set before us. Never have I rested so peacefully as we did during all the first day that we were again really free.

TO BE CONTINUED.

WAS IT AN EXCEPTIONAL CASE?

A REMARKABLE STORY FOUNDED ON FACT.

Written for the Catholic Union and Times by Elsie A. Murphy.

The Pardows were Louisianians of French descent, and before the war lived in New Orleans, occasionally visiting their plantation on the Red River. But Anthony Pardow was killed in the battle of Vicksburg and after the surrender, Mrs. Pardow sold the Red River plantation for about half their value, placed her New Orleans property in the hands of a lawyer, gathered up some of her household stuff and with her daughter, Madeline and one old negro who had spent his life in the service of the Pardows, removed to Marietta, Ga.

From that day it was a clear case of strong mutual attraction. What though they had been differently trained and their opinions clashed on some points? They came out of words and quarrels firmer friends than ever. There was never-ending interest in their combats, and the lightest jest or banter held a fascination keen as the brightest wit. He called Madeline a narrow-minded illiberal provincial for holding such fierce prejudices against the colored people, and she retorted that she had become a sentiment to the North, and that if they the Yankees, would give some of their attention and pity to the poor white people crowding their large cities, the South would solve its own great problem. Sometimes they parted in anger; but it was short-lived, for love drew them with irresistible force, and if they disagreed on a few questions, how many hopes, thoughts and desires they had in common, what taste and sympathy.

Mrs. Pardow looked on, sighed and smiled, but waited in silence for Madeline's confidence. And one evening she came in, knelt at her mother's knees and put her arms around her and pressed her flushed, trembling, radiant face against her bosom. Mrs. Pardow flushed and trembled herself and gathered that proud young head closer to her heart.

"You have promised to marry him," she said in a whisper. "He asked me again this evening, I could not put him off," Madeline smiled happily. "You are glad, mamma; why are you so glad I'm to be married?" "I am longing to see you safe, my darling," dropping her teasing tone and speaking with sudden agitation.

"Am I not safe with you?" lifting her head and looking into the delicate face above her. "But I am not strong, dear, and I may be called suddenly from you some day, and it is not good for girls to be alone. It will be comforting to leave you in such hands. He is noble and good and will love you faithfully." Mrs. Pardow, then, laughed and kissed her. "Tell me all about it," she said softly. They talked until the hands of the clock pointed to twelve. "We have no secrets—no secrets from each other, have we, mamma?" said Madeline with a laugh.

"No secrets, sweet? No, no; there should be no secrets between mother and child," said the elder woman; but her eyes fell, a paleness swept over her face. It was a swift, subtle change unnoticed by the girl in the absorption of her thoughts.

That was a winter to be remembered by those lovers as long as they lived. Every one of the days that they lived seemed to have its own special joy and experience. When apart, they were long letters written out of the fullness of their hearts; when together, long talks or silence in which it seemed enough that they could be together.

Mrs. Pardow spent those winter days sewing on fine linen, cambric, sheer muslin and lace, stitching many loving thoughts into the dainty garments intended for Madeline's wardrobe. Imperceptibly, as it were, she had grown very fragile and the least excitement caused her to palpitate and tremble with flushed face and hand pressed upon her heart.

She had been a devout Catholic, and though distant from her church, she still attended Mass in Atlanta and went to confession. But as the winter passed her thoughts turned longingly to the near Father Vincent, her old father confessor, and one day in the spring she received a letter from him. He would in a short time pass through Marietta on his way to the North. Could he stop for a day with them? It seemed such a direct answer to her secret desire for his counsel that she joyfully hastened to reply telling him how she needed his advice and his blessing.

rabid abolitionists—at least she had read in the papers that they were rabid. He smiled, broke off a bit of laurel, pink and fragrant and offered it to her. "What do they say, Miss Pardow?" "That they are equal—that we should recognize them. Oh, I hardly know how to explain it," breaking off with a little laugh, not caring to tread too boldly on delicate ground for fear he should feel wounded.

"We respect them where they deserve it, just as we do all men," he said calmly. "Regardless of color?" "Yes, what has the color of a man's skin to do with the question of his worth?" "Everything, if he is a negro. Could you—I beg your pardon for asking the question—sit at a table with a negro, actually break bread with him as your equal?"

"If he were a gentleman, yes," firmly, his blue eyes meeting hers fearlessly. "Oh! how could you? I cannot understand it. I am fond of some negroes. I loved Uncle Sam, I like Aunt Dilsey, and I'm sorry for them as a race, but meet them on common ground I could not."

And then they drifted away from the dangerous topic. He walked with her and her mother to the train that evening, and Mrs. Pardow invited him warmly to call upon them when he came to Marietta again.

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"Yes; it concerns Madeline." "What of her? I thought her future had been settled. Is she not to be married in a short time?" "Yes; but, Father she is not my child, and I am growing doubtful of the honor of my course in regard to this marriage."

"Not your child?" exclaimed Father Vincent in surprise, for he thought he knew all the Pardow's secrets. "No, I would to God that she were," she said with deep emotion, "for I love her so well that I'd gladly give my life to know that pure unadorned blood flowed in her veins. His chair creaked as he drew it a little nearer hers; his voice sank to a low key.

"You do not mean—?" "Yes; her mother was a quadroon," in a trembling voice. "Did he hear that strange gasping sigh, as of a dumb creature struck by a mortal blow, that he so quickly and abruptly exclaimed: 'Where is she now?'"

"Out calling. I did not dare speak of this while she was in the house, for fear the very walls would betray the secret. She must never know it, never. It would ruin her life, kill her, my poor, proud child." Her voice broke in tears. "Tell me the whole story," said the priest gently, but with authority.

"Yes, yes; that I am longing to do, you remember my husband's brother, Lawrence Pardow?" "Well, very well; a handsome young fellow, but rather wild."

"And lovable with it all. He died while my husband and I were in France—we were there three years—and before his death he wrote to Anthony, begging him to look after the welfare of a child, a baby, and giving the history of his attachment to a beautiful quadroon in New Orleans. Her mother had been a slave, but this girl had been born free, received a very good education and grew up superior to her class."

"You should never know that she was not truly my own child. Her training, her education, became the absorbing interest of my life. After the close of the war I thought it best for her sake to leave New Orleans, to seek a new and more obscure home, away from old friends, old ties. If we remained, she might in some way learn the truth."

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been hurled down into a black abyss where she must grovel and suffer until death set her free. Presently the stunned feeling passed, and she rose to her feet again and walked about the room. On the bed and chairs were strewn the pretty things belonging to her wedding outfit. Half unconsciously she folded and put them away; she would not need them now. Once she went to the mirror and, leaning close to it, looked at herself, seeking for traces of that race she had been taught to regard as the lowest on earth. Did the soft fullness of her cheek, the clear wave in her hair, that volubly, opaque skin come from her mother? A momentary savage rage thrilled her. She struck the glass so fierce a blow with her closed hand that it cracked from bottom to top.

"Then her eyes fell on her lover's picture and she paled and shuddered. She did not touch it, though a hundred times it had been pressed to heart and lip, but gazed at it with that intense parting look we give the dead before they are hidden from us forever; then she leaned over the bureau, her head bowed upon her folded arms.

"The afternoon passed; twilight crept into the room. Faint sounds of life came up from the lower part of the house, the tea-bell rang at last, someone came slowly, heavily up the stairs, shuffled across the hall and knocked on her door.

"Miss Madeline!" She opened the door and found Aunt Dilsey standing there, a big coffee-colored mulatto woman, panting from the exertion of mounting the steps.

"Mrs. Agnese an' de priest man air waitin' fo' yo' to come down to supper, honey, an' Mrs. Agnese say hurry, de cakes 'sine git cold," she said in a full, rich voice; but Madeline only caught her by the shoulder and stared at her, half blind with tears, her coarse crinkled hair and protruding lips and broad figure.

"So her grandmother might have looked." "Fo' mercy sake, honey, what's de matta?" cried Aunt Dilsey in a frightened, anxious tone; but the girl only turned from her and laid upon the bed a gown of despair. She heard the old negro hurrying down stairs, and then her mother's light, swift steps, and tried to compose herself.

"My darling, what is the matter?" cried Mrs. Pardow, bending tenderly, anxiously over her. "It is out of my head," said Madeline, glad that the twilight hid her face from those loving, searching eyes.

"She stooped to arrange a pillow and to kiss her, and Madeline raised herself up and threw her arms around her. "My own good, sweet mamma, my dear, lovely one! she murmured, "You do everything for my comfort and happiness. You would not hurt me for the world, would you?" "Hurt you, sweet?"

"I know you would not. I—I like to tease you a little. Kiss me good night and go. Poor mamma!" she murmured under her breath, as they laid each other in a love no hand of flesh and blood could have made stronger.

"How can I tell her that I know? How can I?" Madeline moaned when again left alone.

But she did not have that cruel task, for sometime during that night, while she turned wakefully on her bed or paced softly about the room, Agnese Pardow long expected, the summons she had been so long awaiting, came to her. Madeline was strangely calm through all the excitement and confusion following and went herself to select a sunny open spot in the neglected little cemetery for her mother's grave.

"She loved the sunshine," she said to Everett, "and she wished to be buried here."

again, and she had sent off her wedding trousseau to a young girl in a distant town, and certain things belonging to her mother she had carefully collected and put together. So much Dilsey, the priest and a kind old lady who had proposed to stay with her a few days knew, but she offered no explanation and gave no clue to her plans for the future.

Father Vincent felt some curiosity, too, and went into the little room rather eagerly. She sat before her mother's desk with a lot of papers open before her. It came upon him with the force of surprise that she had changed greatly in a few days. Her features were sharpened, her eyes had purplish hollows under them and the dull black gown she wore only brought out the intense pallor of her face.

"My child, where did you get those papers? You must let me examine them. There are some your mother wished destroyed," said the priest hastily.

"I know, father; I know," she said in a dull tone. "Have you—?" "Read them? No; but I heard all that she told you that day."

"Ah," he exclaimed, understanding why she looked so changed, and his eyes rested pityingly upon her. A fiery blush burned her throat and face for a moment, leaving her paler than ever when it receded.

"Yes; I know," she said, and clasped her hands together on her lap. "Father, will you tell Mr. Everett?" "I cannot do it; help me, will you?"

"It was a piteous appeal and his heart melted at the sight of her anguished eyes. "You think he ought to know it?" "He must, of course," she said, and he felt satisfied that she had not, for a moment even, been tempted to keep the truth from him.

"He is in the parlor," she continued after a slight pause; "tell him all, spare nothing," her tensely drawn lips quivering, her hands tightly clenched. "My child, you take it too hard," laying his hand on her head. "I am grieved for you, but do not let it spoil your peace."

"How can I help it, father, with the training I have had? I cannot change my beliefs in a day. Oh, you know how my friends would shrink from me if they knew the truth, and I—I can not blame them. I should do the same."

"But hear your lover before you decide your future. He has a right to it, remember."

"Tell him! Father, tell him!" "He went away and, turning the light a little lower, she waited. He made the story short, for in a few minutes the door opened again and her lover entered. She rose to meet him, determined to be brave and self-possessed, but that new, better sense of shame again overpowered her. She seemed to shrink and shrivel under his tender eyes and sank down with bowed head. But he knelt by her chair with his arms around her and drew that proud averted face against him.

"Dearest, dearest," he whispered, the very tone of his voice carrying to her his sympathy, his unshaken love. "I thank God I learned the truth in time," she said faintly. "In time for what, Madeline?" "To save you."

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"That is what we do not know. She must have gone away on the early train this morning." "The blood came back to the young man's face, a fear filled his mind. "You do not think that—?" "No. A Pardow will never seek self-destruction. The women here think her mind unbalanced. It is well. Let all her friends think so, but we must find her, Mr. Everett."

"Yes, I will go at once." "Twenty years later Roger Everett turned aside from the tracks of the tourist in New Mexico to visit a school maintained by a few New England philanthropists for colored children exclusively. He lost his bearings in the narrow streets among the quaint old-fashioned houses and stopped to make inquiries at a small building. His failure to find Madeline Pardow had left traces upon his face; though years had elapsed since her disappearance, he had not ceased to look into every woman's face he met, he had not given up hope of finding her. A serene-eyed woman in nun's garb came to his knee, and he immediately recognized the dress of a religious order.

"Come in," she said in a gentle tone. "I beg your pardon. I merely wished to—"

"It will not be an intrusion; many have already come to see her, for you know many loved her. This way, please," and she led him into the center of a room, where stood a white draped casket.

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