

SISTERS THREE

(Continued from Saturday)

This strange girl interested Gipsy, and the cave dwelling possessed distinct fascination for her. But on her visits there the old father—Ralph Gull, as he was called—had always been there, and, instead of talking to the daughter, Gipsy had found herself listening spell-bound to the stories of the old man. And although she had more than once used Morwenna as a companion when she went swimming in the bay, she had not yet achieved any intimacy with the strange, silent girl, albeit there was something about her very strangeness which drew Gipsy and made her curious to know more about her.

And now they met out here in the sunshine, with the soft aromatic air of the moorlands about them. Gipsy slipped from her saddle and unwound a long training rein, which she buckled into one ring of Viking's bit. Part of her educational process was to teach the young horse to remain within easy call and reach when she wished to dismount and occupy herself otherwise. Here was a good opportunity for a lesson, and, having fastened the other end of the long rein round a sturdy young sapling, she turned to Morwenna with her kindling smile and said—

"Isn't it a perfectly heavenly day? Do let's sit down on this delicious bank of thyme and heather and have a talk together! What are you doing here Morwenna? What have you got in that satchel you are carrying?"

"Herbs, roots, berries, leaves—all sorts of things which grow hereabouts. Some of them you can get any time of day, but some have to be gathered by moonlight—when it's full maybe or when it's young. And there's words you must speak over some of them, else they widden give you what you ask."

"How perfectly charming! So you are a herbalist as well as a fisher girl! What do you do with your concoctions when they are made?"

"Folks come and ask for them. We're got plenty that asks for them drinks what mother taught me to make, and her mother taught her. 'Tis only here and there as one can do it. It goes with the blood so they say."

"You mean that even from the same recipe different people can't get the same results? I've heard of that before. It's very interesting. So you are a sort of herb doctor, Morwenna, and can make concoctions to cure people and animals?"

"Ess fay!" answered the girl; and as she spoke Gipsy saw a curious light in her eyes. It was as though some slumbering fire within shot up

a tongue of flame, fierce, hot, and then slowly died down again.

"If ever I am ill, then, I shall send for you," said Gipsy, with a laugh, "for I believe in Mother Nature a lot more than in any doctors and their potions. And, as for animals, I'm sure you would be better than any vet. Don't you have about here what are called white witches, who cure animals by the herbs and things that they gather?"

"Ess fay!" answered the girl again, and after a moment she added, "There be black witches as well as white ones, so folks do say."

"And which are you, Morwenna?" But the girl did not answer. She seemed to be listening with all her ears. The setter also had his head cocked and plainly was alive to something approaching.

"Hist!" cried Morwenna. "Get the horse down hither in the hollow. He be on his way across the moor. I widden have us see me here! Get the horse down afore he comes!"

Gipsy drew her rein in, and Viking came stepping down into the hollow with dainty docility. He had not been much more than halfway up, before, cropping the sweet herbage as well as the bit in his mouth allowed him. Gipsy whistled softly to him as she drew in the rein. She meant to train him to come to her at the sound of that softly-tuneful whistle.

A few minutes later she too heard the thud of horse-hoofs galloping towards them across the elastic turf.

"Tis he!" hissed Morwenna between her set teeth; and Gipsy saw such a light of malice and hatred glow in her eyes and light up her face as was to her quite a revelation in possibilities of rage and anger. It almost made her shiver, though she had always called herself "a good hater."

Along the skyline above them they saw the horseman pass—pass without looking down at them, concealed as they were by the big gorse clumps and the fringe of saplings which grew on the edge of the hollow.

"Gaston Lebreton!" said Gipsy aloud, and then turned her glance again upon Morwenna.

The girl had leaped up. She sprang up the sides of the hollow like a chamois. At the top, outlined clear against the blue sky, she stood, a sly-like figure in her fluttering garments of dim blue with the red handkerchief about her dark, loosened locks.

She shook her clenched fist towards the vanishing horseman, and from her lips issued a wild, hoarse cry of words. Gipsy watched and listened, fascinated. It was all to her a wonder and an absorbing

interest. When Morwenna ceased to speak Gipsy came up to her quietly from behind in time to see the galloping horseman disappear over the next ridge.

"Why do you hate him so, Morwenna?" she asked. "What has he done?"

"He? Done? He is the son of the father who turned my mother out to die! He is the son of the man who sent my foster-brother to rot in jail."

"Your foster brother? General Kildare's son?"

"Yes, my foster-brother. We were born in the same hour, and when his poor mother was like to lose her life they brought the boy baby to my mother; and for months she lived upon the roof and was mother to the pair of us, and the Kildares never forgot. We love them and they love us. I and Jim Kildare played and swam and fished and sailed together. Though he was a splendid gentleman and I a poor fisher maid, he never forgot me; he was never too grand, too proud to call me sister and friend."

And he lies in jail, and the Lebretons have done it. Oh, they shall perish, root and branch! The White Lady has answered for one, and the other shall follow—the other shall follow!"

She flung her arms above her head and then sank exhausted to the ground. Gipsy stole quietly away with her horse and dog; she felt she had had enough of Morwenna's company for one day.

Chapter XV.

Gipsy rode home that day in a mood which Audrey could she have read her sister's thoughts, would have termed "chastened."

For the first time in her life Gipsy had been confronted with a display of elemental passion of anger and hatred, before which her own merry and mischievous gusts of hostility seemed to shrivel up and vanish into nothingness.

For the first time in her young life she had been brought face to face with that deep-lying and terrible power of vindictive fury, which hitherto had been but a name to her. She had been quick and keen enough to realize what she saw, and the sight had shaken the core of her being.

Gipsy had felt that Morwenna would willingly have compassed the death of Gaston Lebreton had such a thing been possible; and at the moment when she realized this thing she knew that if the wild girl had held in her hand a weapon, if she had had a gun to level at the retreating figure and had been about to pull the trigger, she, Gipsy, would instantly have sprung upon her, have struck up the gun that it might harmlessly explode—would have done anything rather than see—

And yet she had thought she hated Gaston Lebreton—she had delighted about a deathless feud!

It came to her almost with a sense of dismay what a small and feeble thing her own vaunted hatred was. It was like a child's toy battle with

little tin soldiers and dummy cannon as compared with the real red dogs of war.

And over and over again the picture recurred to her of that solitary horseman, so well mounted, sitting his horse in a fashion that made instant appeal to her, riding alone—always alone—over those wild empty spaces of down and moor. With no companions to share his pursuits or exchange greetings with, his must be a very solitary life.

Suddenly a wave of compassion, of which she was almost ashamed, swept over Gipsy. What would she do herself without the companionship of sisters? This man had neither sister nor brother; and his own neighborhood had turned its back upon him—more or less decidedly—on account of a thing which his father had done. Surely that was hard to strike her colours! She had enough against him to warrant her repudiating his acquaintance. How that path! And even now he might be meditating some fresh means of hindering their free passage through the plantation. She was not going to live so lonely a life, to have no companions and friends of his own age, to spend his time riding to and fro—doing the work of his big property to be sure, and doing it well, she heard, but without relaxation, without those friendly interludes which most men enjoyed. He always seemed to be alone—always alone.

And that wild girl Morwenna! Gipsy felt that her admiration for the handsome creature with the tragic face and air of a sibyl was suffering a partial eclipse. It was not Gaston Lebreton who had injured young Kildare. It was said that the lads had been friendly together, and distressed when he came back and heard the terrible thing which had happened. But what could be done? The prison doors had closed upon James Kildare. His own father lay dying, and he had entered into his heritage—a goodly heritage in many aspects, but one full of bitterness in other respects. A sudden pity rushed upon Gipsy with the realization of these things, and quick to her mind leaped the question, What could she do?

For Gipsy was always ready to take up the gauntlet in a forlorn cause.

Then suddenly the quantity of one thick struck her. She thought of the battle of Gaston Lebreton. How ridiculous! No; but that girl Morwenna—who had taken a liking for her, who had begun to tell her things with trust—could she not do something for her?

Gillian Vane was a girl of high ideals, firm, deep-rooted faith, and ardent desire to do something with her life beyond having a good time—which seemed to her to be too often

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the aim and object of those about her the days of her developing girlhood.

Here was this girl Morwenna, shut away with her strange old father in a cave-like dwelling, dividing her time betwixt the sea and the moor, holding little converse with her fellows, never appearing at church or coming under gentle influences—could she not do something for her? She had seen how fiercely she was obsessed by a hatred which was rightful in itself and possibly terrible in its outcome. To be sure, her wild words might be no more than an impotent gust of fury, spoken without real knowledge as to what they implied. But who could be sure? Certainly not Gipsy. So why should she not see what influence she could gain over this wild nature, win the girl's confidence, learn whether she really meditated any terrible or violent act, and make her understand something of the wrongfulness of her present frame of mind?

As she walked towards the house after seeing Viking safely stabled, she found herself saying musingly to herself—

(To be continued)

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NEWS NOTES OF ST. GEORGE

(From our own correspondent)
The marriage of W. J. Little, Blue Lake, and Miss Edith Lee, Paris, took place on Wednesday, September 20th. Miss Lee is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. D. M. Lee. The happy couple left for Cleveland, O., and on their return will begin house-keeping at the groom's farm at Blue Lake.
Mr. and Mrs. James McKenzie, Mrs. H. Sager and Mr. Gordon McKenzie, motored to Hawtre, to spend the week-end with friends.
Mrs. Harry Nelles, of Detroit, Mich., is visiting friends here.
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Herbert and Miss Sadie Herbert motored to

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