

Then lifting his hat, he walked away with an oscillating gait ludicrous in the extreme.

"He is some crazy man," said Mabel, merrily, as she stepped into the boat. "I wonder how he knew my name."

"I haven't the slightest idea, neither do I care?" replied Eleanor, coldly.

"You don't say so," laughed Mabel. "Be careful now, or the weight of your dignity will tip the boat over. Sit still, while I cast off. There, my sovereign, does that suit you? It's real jolly to be in the Royal Navy."

And with a sweet carol Mabel dropped into her seat, bent to her oars with grace and skill, and sent the delicate craft flying over the waters like a swan. Every moment some mirthful or witty remark left her lips, and at last Eleanor was forced to laugh, in spite of herself.

Ah! how differently they would have felt could they have known how their mother's heart was oppressed.

Arriving at length opposite a mansion somewhat similar to their own, they disembarked, moored the boat, and hurried up to the house. Here they were met by a bevy of young girls, all chattering like magpies, and laughing between every word.

"Lou's is here, Belle," whispered one in Mabel's ear.

"Is he?" said the maiden, a crimson flush mantling each cheek.

The next instant Louis Marston came out upon the verandah, and the girls began making mysterious signs to each other as he advanced and greeted Mabel. He was a tall, lithe, muscular fellow, with a frank, honest face, a piercing gray eye, and curly brown hair.

Everybody liked him. Somehow he and Mabel became separated from the group, and wandered down by the river; strangely enough neither had much to say, though there were volumes of unspoken words in their eyes.

"You find me excellent company to-day, don't you, Mabel?" he said, at last.

"Oh, as good as usual," she replied, sarcastically.

"Thank you." He paused suddenly and drew a long breath. "It is useless for me to exist in this way, it is dangerous for one's happiness to trust too much to hope. Mabel, I love you."

His gray eyes were full of tender supplication, his white face and quivering lips showed the depth of his emotion.

A thrill went through the girl's heart, her very being responded to those earnest, simple words. She dared not look up; it seemed as if he knew her feelings, and the thought sent wave after wave of carmine from her white throat to her golden hair. Anon he took her hand and held it gently within his own, speaking again, in a low, intense voice:

"My darling, can you love me?"

"Yes, Louis," came the soft whisper, and her hand in his trembled.

Simultaneously they raised their eyes, and soul spoke to soul from out their glowing windows. The silence was intoxicating—their hearts beat with ecstasy—all nature seemed beautiful and glorified. The sweet moment passed, as all must, and a thought of the obstacles in their path flew in upon Mabel's mind.

"What troubles you, dearest?"

"I was thinking of mother's opposition to our union," she answered sighing.

"We shall find some way to overcome that. I will go home with you and see her."

They returned to the house, and shortly afterwards embarked in the skiff, Louis handling the oars, and Mabel taking the tiller-ropes, while Eleanor, icily indifferent, sat in the bows. Reaching the Chesley mansion, they moored the boat, and at once entered the house. They found Mrs. Chesley looking pale and troubled. Courteously Louis made known the object of his visit.

"Are you willing to incur the risk of disgrace, Mr. Marston?" was Mrs. Chesley's strange reply.

"Nothing can lessen my love for Mabel," he answered. "I do not understand you, but I know that no act or thought of hers can ever bring a blush to her cheek or mine. If she has trouble, I am willing to share it with her, and protect—"

"Then take her!" And Mrs. Chesley burst into tears, and worked her hands nervously together.

Mabel gazed upon her mother in mingled sadness and astonishment. What meant this singular manner? What cause had she to weep? Just then a thought of the stranger they had seen on the landing crossed Mabel's mind, and she repeated his message to her mother.

"So he is coming again," said Mrs. Chesley, in a heavy, listless way, "coming to torture me with the consequences of a crime that I am not guilty of! Oh, my husband! my husband! how could you deceive me so?" She passed her hands across her brow, a wild light shone from her eyes. "He didn't do it—he didn't! It's false! I won't sell Eleanor—"

"Oh, Heaven! what is this? Mother, tell me, tell Louis! We will help you!"

Mrs. Chesley had dwelt on the harrowing topic until her nerves were terribly overstrained. But the word "help" coming from Mabel's lips gave her a gleam of hope, and turning quickly to Louis, she said, with childish eagerness:

"You are a lawyer. You will help me, won't you?"

"Will all my heart, dear mother," rejoined Louis.

Mr. Philémon Peck, elated at the idea of obtaining a magnificent fee, called upon Mrs. Chesley on Thursday, and stated in his grandilo-

quent way that after urging his client to milder terms, she had consented to accept five thousand pounds in liquidation of her claims. Mrs. Chesley seemed greatly troubled, and begged a few days for consideration. Mr. Peck would postpone the matter no longer. If the lady wished to settle, it must be settled virtually now. After a few moments' thought, Mrs. Chesley said that if Mr. Peck and his client would call on Monday forenoon, she would give the lady a cheque for the amount. Mr. Philémon Peck complimented Mrs. Chesley on her wisdom in choosing the lesser evil, and left her in high spirits.

Monday came promptly as usual, and at ten o'clock Mr. Philémon Peck and his client—a rather short stout woman arrived. The cheque was signed and handed over, and Mr. Peck and his client were about to depart when Mr. Marston stepped forward and proposed to give his version of the affair.

"I object to anything of the kind," interposed Mr. Peck, excitedly. "The affair is all settled, and to the best advantage. It is none of your business, at all, sir."

"We shall see," replied Louis, quietly. "You are right in saying that Archibald Chesley married Sarah Upson at Epping on the fifteenth of September, 1835; you are right as to the fact of his leaving her, too, in 1837; but instead of his going to London he went to Africa, and lived in Cape Town until 1813, when he was killed by being crushed under a log. The men who were working with him at the time, the man who dug his grave and lowered him into it are in this house. There happened to be two Archibald Chesleys in the world, Mr. Philémon Peck, and your game is up."

Philémon turned all colors, gasped for breath, and made a rush for the door, where he was caught by a constable and securely held. The false Mrs. Chesley darted for the window, jumped out with remarkable agility, and landed in the arms of an officer, who was stationed there to meet just such a contingency as this.

"You have done a noble week's work, my dear Louis," said Mrs. Chesley, grasping his hand. "Had it not been for your efforts I should have been robbed, for I could not visit my own solicitors. I am proud of you."

Need it be told that Mabel and Louis are all in all to each other in their double life? Philémon and his client were thoroughly frightened and then release, as Mrs. Chesley did not wish to appear in a criminal court as prosecutor.

"TAKE THE OTHER HAND."

We cannot too much admire the beauty and truth of that philosophy which determines to make the best of it, however difficult and tiresome duty may be. Such a spirit in children is attractive indeed, and a powerful lesson to many who are older.

On a lovely day in the commencement of spring, a young lady, who had been anxiously watching for some weeks by the bedside of her mother, went out to take a little exercise and enjoy the fresh air, for her heart was full of anxiety and sorrow. After strolling some distance she came to a ropewalk, and, being familiar to the place, she entered. At the end of the building she saw a little boy turning a large wheel. Thinking this too laborious employment for such a mere child, she said to him as she approached:

"Who sent you to this place?"

"No body, ma'am; I came myself."

"Do you get paid for your labor?"

"Indeed I do; I get nine pence a day."

"What do you do with the money?"

"Oh, mother gets it all."

"You give nothing to father, then?"

"I have no father, ma'am."

"Do you like this kind of work?"

"Oh, well enough; but if I did not like it I should still do it, that I might get the money for mother."

"How long do you work in the day?"

"From nine to twelve in the morning, and from two till five in the afternoon."

"How old are you?"

"Fourteen."

"Do you get tired of turning this great wheel?"

"Yes, sometimes, ma'am."

"And what do you do then?"

"Why, I take the other hand."

The lady gave him a piece of money.

"Is this for mother?" asked the well-pleased urchin.

"No, no; it is for yourself, because you are a good little boy."

"Thank you kindly, ma'am," returned the boy smiling; "mother will be glad."

The young lady departed, and returned home, strengthened in her devotion to duty, and instructed in true practical philosophy by the words and example of a mere child.

"The next time duty seems hard to me," she said to herself, "I will imitate this little boy, and take the other hand."

TOO MUCH FOR THE RAILWAY CLERK.—A worthy pastor from a Swiss canton, when about to take his return ticket after a visit to Geneva, asked if any deduction was made to gentlemen of his profession. Some doubt being expressed as to his being a clergyman, he offered to read the official one of his sermons. The offer was declined.

HAUNTED.

A sweet face follows me where'er I go,
And will not be put by—
A face with heavenly beauty so aglow,
I cannot wonder why—
Not I, my heart, not I!

It makes for me the heaviest burdens light.
When griefs beset my breast,
It comes to me and will not take its flight,
But soothes me into rest,
This vision bright and blest.

It goes with me through all the thorny ways
Wherein my footsteps wend,
It brings me sunlight in the darkest days,
And will unto the end
Be an all-helpful friend.

It haunts me in the city's careless crowd;
With peace its eyes are rife;
It calls to me above the tumult loud—
Above the petty strife
Of this poor life.

Its white hands beckon me by night and day,
Fain would I follow on;
But wedded is my soul to its dull clay,
And I am weak and worn—
A bruised reed forlorn.

A FATAL PICTURE.

Mrs. Ellerton was a beautiful woman. It was not vanity, however, but poverty, induced her to offer for sale a full-sized portrait of herself.

The picture was a work of art, executed in the highest style by her own hand, in times of ease and luxury. She had painted one of her husband also; but he was dead and his likeness still kept its place over the mantel-piece in her unpretending little studio.

Mrs. Ellerton, was married at seventeen; had three children—Vane, Ronald, and Ethelinda. The latter was twelve months old when her father died, an event which occurred three years previous to the opening of my story.

In consequence of this untoward event, the widow and orphans had to quit their happy country home to rent a small house in the metropolis.

Here Mrs. Ellerton enjoyed a comfortable subsistence, principally by the exercise of her talents, and she found a panacea for sorrow in the employment of her mind, and in the consciousness that she was working for her little ones. At present, she wanted money. So she took her picture from its place beside her husband's, and entrusted it to a respectable shopkeeper, with whom she dealt. He hung it in his window, ticketing it for sale.

Many bidders came; but the price was high, and they went away disappointed. Two gentlemen sauntered up the street, and halted to look at the picture.

"I say, Saunders," said the taller, "have you ever seen a more bewitchingly beautiful face?"

"Can't say I have, my lord. But portraits, as a rule, are always overdrawn. Nature is not so lavish of her gifts, even to those she most favors."

"You may be wrong. Perhaps this is the portrait of some unknown nymph."

"Scarcely, as, if it be true to nature, it represents a belle of the last century. No such beauty exists in this generation."

"Nonsense! The costume is of the present day. Let us settle all doubts on the subject, and inquire from the shopkeeper."

"Excuse me, my lord: I have an appointment at five."

"Certainly! *Au revoir!*"

Lord Huntly was a handsome young nobleman, proud of his title, his riches, and himself. Whether he had just cause for the latter conceit, those who knew him intimately might consider an open question. He was courted in society, and flattered by his dependants. The homage gratified him, and he felt himself indispensable to the world in general.

Parting with his companion without regret, he entered the shop, and was pleased to find his surmises correct.

He learnt from the shopkeeper that the picture which had so deeply interested him possessed an original.

"It is an admirable painting! The subject is beautiful!" suggested his lordship.

"Your lordship does not exaggerate the merits of either the subject or the artist," replied the seller.

"Do you know the address of the artist, and the name of the lady?"

"Yes; Mrs. Ellerton. It is a lady's portrait of herself."

"Indeed! Then, to mark my sense of its worth, I will give one hundred and fifty guineas for the picture. Have it sent home at once."

"My lord, you are far too generous," the astonished vendor said, surprised at the liberality of Lord Huntly; the price offered is much beyond my expectation, and will give great satisfaction to Mrs. Ellerton."

"Mrs. Ellerton is too diffident; she does not set a proper value on her work. But, by the way, Dingle, does she give sittings?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Favor me with her address; my friends would willingly avail themselves of her talent as an artist. She deserves patronage."

With alacrity the address was written down,

and the tradesman, bowing obsequiously, presented it to the young nobleman, congratulating himself upon his *finesse* in having secured so large a sum, and such distinguished patronage for the lady.

With a request that his name should not be mentioned as a purchaser, Lord Huntly left the picture-dealer, resolved to lose no time before seeing the beautiful face which had thus fascinated him.

"A gentleman to see you, ma'am, in the drawing-room," murmured the servant, handing her mistress a card.

Maud Ellerton was giving a few touches to a landscape, and did not immediately heed the announcement. Her thoughts were absorbed in her work. The time for its completion was nigh; and she was always punctual in the fulfilment of her promise.

The servant repeated her message.

"I told you, Margaret, I can see no visitors to-day."

"That's what I said, ma'am; an' he made answer that you'd be sure an' see him when you'd know who he was."

Maud glanced at the card. "Lord Huntly! I don't know him! Tell his lordship I am particularly engaged."

Margaret retired, did as she was bidden, and returned to press the request.

"Plaze, ma'am, he said, if you'll do him the favor, I think the word is, he won't keep you five minutes."

A look of annoyance crossed the lady's face; but she laid aside the brushes, and prepared to ascend to the little drawing-room. In the judgment of Lord Huntly, Mrs. Ellerton had failed to do justice to her own majestic loveliness. True, her portrait was a good representation of the faultless figure and face; but the ever-varying expression of joy and sadness flitting over the features could not be transferred to canvas.

Mrs. Ellerton had no idea that the nobleman before her was the purchaser of her portrait. All she knew was that the sum so easily acquired had relieved her from pecuniary embarrassment. Lord Huntly was personally unknown to her, though she had heard of him; and not suspecting that admiration for herself had prompted his visit, Maud received him with her usual easy dignity.

Though slightly confused, Lord Huntly was too much a man of the world to betray what he felt. Advancing towards her, he courteously apologized for his unreasonable visit; said he had heard of her artistic talents; was confident her time was fully occupied; but she would greatly oblige him if she could spare some of it, to enlarge and paint a picture from a crayon drawing of Swiss scenery, which he would send her.

"I shall not be at liberty to do so for a few days," Maud replied. "And as your lordship is doubtless in a hurry for it, that may be too late."

"Not at all; I can wait your convenience, madam." Then, remembering how urgently he had begged an interview, he added, "I am leaving town this evening, and the drawing being at Huntly Castle, where I am going, I had a wish to see you, to know whether I might have it forwarded. It is immaterial when you do it; in six months, or by the end of the year."

"I could commence it next week, my lord, and judge of the time it will take when I see it."

"Will you give me permission to call, and occasionally inspect its progress?"

"Certainly, my lord."

Nothing more remained to be said; so Lord Huntly reluctantly took his leave, passionately in love with Maud Ellerton.

"Mamma, me look for 'ou in the pictures, not find 'ou," lisped a little angel in white, wearing blue boots. She was a miniature counterpart of her mother. She was running out of the studio, which she called "picture."

"Was my darling looking for me?" said the lady, raising her daughter in her arms.

"Me mamma's pet," prattled she, nestling closely in her mother's embrace.

"Yes, darling; Linda is her mother's own pet."

"Mamma not be lost, and doo'way from Linda?"

"No, love; mamma will never, never leave Linda. Here is a book of pretty pictures; won't Linda amuse herself, and let mamma work?"

The child settled herself near a window, and obediently did as she was told; while her mother, after raining kisses on her daughter's neck and brow, took up her brushes and resumed her task.

The drawing from Huntly Castle duly arrived; and scarcely a day elapsed without the presence of its owner in the studio, ostensibly because his interest in the work was great; in reality, because his love for Maud had reached such a pitch, when he felt he could not exist away from her.

His lordship had often fallen in love before, had tired of its object, and extricated himself from the dilemma as suddenly as he got into it. But this young widow, although so indifferent to his fascinations, enthralled him by her exceeding grace and beauty, and he could not shake off the chains with which he was bound.

Maud was neither ambitious nor very susceptible, or she would sooner have become aware of his object in seeking her society. She might have formed an affection for him, but the mild glance of her husband, as she had seen it in the heyday of their married life, looked down from the portrait over the mantel-piece, and forbade her to forget, and retarded the growth of any feeling, save friendship, for Lord Huntly. But