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MARCELLA GRACE.

BY ROSA MULHOLLAND.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A BREAK IN THE CLOUDS.

As Father Daly turned back when a few perches up the path, and saw her waving her hand to him, he remarked within himself that he had never seen her look so fair and sweet as on this particular morning. She wore a very dark blue dress, many shades darker than the heather, with something rimson in her hat, and the old man's thought was that she had improved turing the last few months, that Bryan nad never seen her look so well as this The idea of danger hovering round her had made him notice her more closely than usual. She was as dear to him as his own grandchild might have been. Nothing but the impossible

alternative of allowing a troubled soul to go into eternity unprepared and unshriven would have drawn him at that But as he moment from her side. turned away and lost sight of her he felt himself suddenly sharing her happy presentiment. "She is right," happy presentiment. "She is right," he thought. "Something will un-doubtedly take care of her!"

Marcella went on her way with no abatement of her unusually good spirits. The effort to reassure Father Daly had reacted upon herself and all realization of danger had left her. She walked quickly, but not as though she were nervous, or running out of anybody's way. At the next turn of the road she saw a car and horse stand ing, as if waiting for some one, and she noticed as she passed that she did not know the driver, who was standing by the roadside while the horse munched the grass, idly plucking at the tips of the lance-like leaves of the withering flag-lilies. At her approach he averted his face and almost turned his back upon her.

At this point her way left the road and struck out over a piece of vividly colored moorland skirted by black bog on the side where it swept across to the mountains. About half a mile along this level strip of land she could see the wooden walls of her hospital catch ing the gleam of the sun, but the in tervening space between her and them was lonely in the extreme. There was not a cabin, nor a living thing in So well known was it to Marcella that its loneliness did not strike her. It was simply an interesting bit of her daily walk in which the landscape always took a peculiarly pathetic expression. A little further on there was a wide, dark pool of irregular hape, with ragged edges, into which the high sailing clouds kept looking down as they passed, giving an air of mournful animation to the solitude.

Just before coming to this pool by the edge of which her path was to lead her, she suddenly stood still, fancying she saw a figure lurking behind one o Then she the short dark bushes. walked on a few paces, thinking she was after all more nervous than she had admitted to herself, since she was seeing mysterious figures in every bush in her path. Another moment and it was put beyond doubt that her fancy had played her no trick. A man was crouching on the ground behind that clump of thorn, and her eye had caught momentary sight of the muzzle

In an instant she remembered the vaiting car, the threats of her mid night visitor, and concluded that her daring had ruined her. With an un-uttered prayer in her heart she remained standing quite still. She was well within range of the assassin's gun, if assassin this should be, and to turn to fly or run about wildly would only be to provoke his anger and hurry his work. A few seconds passed during which she seemed to have lived a century. What was he waiting for a Why did he not fire? Her mind was becoming active again, recovering from the first shock. She looked and istened intently, and presently saw the crouching figure stir. It did no ry to rise, but stirred with a writhing novement, and in an instant it flashed upon her that this was not a person who could injure her, but one who was in need of her help. Getting to the other side of the bush she saw that the man half hidden there was lying on his face in an attitude of mortal pain, and that the gun she had perceived was not grasped in his hand, but was resting harmlessly against a sturdy stem of a stunted tree in the thicket.

Making up her mind, from several signs she had learned to know well, that this was a case of the fever, she hurried back to the point of the road where she had seen a car waiting. The driver was still standing where she had left him, but stared at her strangely as she approached. She ex plained quickly that a man was lying ill about fifty yards away and that she hoped he would convey him to the hos-

"I am engaged," he answered, "I am waiting for my fare. I cannot leave this spot.

"It will not keep you long," she eaded. "You may still be in time pleaded. for your fare."

He stared at her again still more strangely and gave a look up the road | cella fell on her knees and listened to by which she had come. stood a few moments irresolute, and finally took his horse by the head and ings. They were only the disjointed began leading it over the rough moor- utterance of an evil conscience, reland where there was no way for a car. only a footpath.

"The joltin' will ruin my springs," he grumbled, but still he followed her. When they came to the spot where

feared that he taken fright of the fever, and was going to run away.

I implore you, for God's sake," she said, "to do this act of charity. The man will die is he is neglected longer. He has been ill with the fever for many hours. And it is not so contag-

ous as you suppose-The man with the car swore a great oath which scorned the dread of contag ion, and ended in a muttering about this being an extraordinary business. Marcella admitted that truth in her heart, but she did not betray the fact that she had recognized the face, and still more the hands of the creature for whose life she was pleading. She saw him lifted and laid across the car, and then got up beside him and held him that he might not fall off; while the driver led the horse as before, till they stopped at the door of the hospital

It was a case of fever of the most virulent type. As soon as the patient was in bed and had been attended to for the moment, Marcella went to look for the driver of the car. He had dis appeared and no one had noticed in what direction he had gone. A careful messenger was sent to search for the gun, which was probably loaded and had been forgotten at the bush, but no such thing was anywhere to be

Nobody had any knowledge of the patient whom "Herself" had picked up on the roadside. His features were strange to every one. Patients, nurses, friends of the patients—all declared they had never beheld him be Only Marcella recognized him.

When, a few hours later, Father Daly had come to the hospital to look for er, to assure himself that she had not suffered from his necessary desertion of her in the morning, he looked at the sick man with pitying interest, and remarked that his face was entirely unknown to him. What opinion had he doctor given about him, he ques tioned. A poor, gaunt, frail looking reature, he seemed pretty sure to die. What a pity he had not fallen into helpful hands before delirium set in. It was sad to think that his friends could not be communicated with.

The doctor's opinion was a bad one Marcella walked up and down outside the hospital with Father Daly, and talked about this case which powerfully interested her. There was a strained ook of excitement in her eyes, but Father Daly was not observant enough to see it. She had been gay and hope-ful in the morning; he found her active and strong-hearted now. noticed no subtle change in her, did not guess that anything extraordinary had occured in the meantime, that any crisis in her life had arrived which she was taxing her energies to meet. While he talked she was asking her elf whether she would dare to tell him f her overwhelming discovery. eart was beating so fast that she drew her breath in long inspirations occasionally; her hands were trembling and it was only by walking about that she could hold the inclination to augh, to cry, to weep. No, she dared not tell Father Daly. He would bring the police about the place immediately and scare away this cowardly soul int he other world before she had had he chance to wait and watch for the saying word which her hope assured her ne could speak for her. She would not tell any one yet who was lying in that hospital bed, who it was that Providence had delivered into her hands.

"I am going to nurse this patient myself," she said. "It is an interesting case. The doctor says that nothing but the greatest care can save him. We are all good nurses here,

but they say I am the most-'

"Not at night," began the priest. "Yes, at night, till he is over the worst. Now, Father Daly, shall I not be safer here than anywhere else? Nobody would come to shoot me here. I know this is the best place for me at present, so please don't say it isn't.

From this resolution Father Daly ould not move her. It was the best place, the safest place in which she ould hide herself now - so she argued, and he was obliged to agree

The days were shortening, the Sepember evenings lengthening. When night came on she sent the other ourses to rest : even the man who was always in waiting in case of emergency was dismissed to have some sleep within call, and Marcella took her place alone as nightwatch. Father Daly had undertaken to write her letter to Bryan for her, in such a way as not to alarm him. She would not risk writing to him from beside a fever bed. Oh, what news might she not have to write to him before a month, a week, if heaven would only be on her side! She wrapped her shawl closely around her and tried to still the trembling of her body and soul as the vivid realization of this chance, this opportunity that had drifted to her feet, and might drift on past her, never to return, seized and shook her like the paroxysm of a

physical disorder. After midnight the patient opened his eyes and began to rave, and Mar-Then he every word as if life or death were to be decided by his delirious outpourvealing nothing except the confused images and memories of a darkened mind. Once she heard the name Kilmartin uttered with an oath, but no words of any meaning followed it.

appeared so bewildered that Marcella strong man always in attendance, to girls. There was a strange sweetness control physically the frenzy of the on her downcast cyclids, the after-patient which she was powerless to gleam of much prayer, the sign of a soothe; and fled out on the moor in faith that can live while waiting upon the breaking dawn to wrestle with her hope. So the patient saw her when he impatience, to cry aloud to heaven for first unclosed his eyes and looked a light to guide her in this cruel emergency.

If he should die in her hands without one sane word? Never had her faith and courage been so tried as now. How was she to remain quiet and trustful in God's Providence through all the hours that were to decide whether her new-sprung hope was a beacon light, or only a wan-dering fire that would flicker madden ingly and go out? By prayer alone, and if in her prayer she raved, why, heaven would have pity on her, would know all she had wanted to sav and forgive everything that she ought not to have said. The sight of sunrise seemed to give her new hope, and she went back with outward calm to take up her watch again at the stranger's bedside.

The people around began to wonder at her exceptional interest in this par icular case of the sickness. Seeing he surprise in their eyes she tried to account for it, saying that this was a tranger, that no one knew his friends that it would be especially sad were he o die without giving some clue to The doctor told her that she was coolish, was wearing herself out, that ne had never counselled her acting as night-nurse. He noticed a change in ner strength, and would not answer for the consequences if she were now to catch the fever which hitherto she and so wonderfully escaped.

Father Daly exhorted, commanded, narvelled. It seemed to him she had neglected her duties at home, her care of Mrs. Kilmartin, her own health, forotten even Bryan himself in her ex ravagant solicitude for the life of this ll-looking stranger whom chance had dropped into her hands. For al inswers to his entreaties she simply shook her head and kept her place Chere was something working within er which he failed to see or touch He began to think that her extraordin ary action was due to panic, that she had got a dead of her home, a fear of being attacked there, that in reality he felt safer at this bedside than any

And yet such sudden unreasoning error coming so quickly upon her ormer almost reckless daring perolexed him. A fear grew within him hat the long strain upon her was tellng terribly fast, and that her mind becoming a little astray.

This thought startled him cruelly one evening when she put her hand on his arm at parting and looked in his face and said : "You will not be out of the way

when the crisis is near? I am anxious about this man's confession."
"My dear," he said, gently, "am

not I, too, anxious always, for such poor souls? "Yes, yes, I know, I know; but

the doctor thinks this man may die without being able to speak." "If he does it will be sad, "he replied.

We must pray for him. "Yes, pray for him, and pray for me," she said, urgently. "The crisis s expected about an hour after midnight.

'Then I will be here."

She gave him a piteous look and wrung her hands together, as if his promise was powerless to give her omfort

"Oh, Father Daly, if I dared to tell vou!

"Yes, for heaven's sake tell me. What is troubling you?"
She swayed back and forward with

her hands pressing each other. Her whole body expressed at once her longing to speak and her effort to be silent. At last she conquered her agitation and looked him steadily in the face.

"No, I will not tell, so long as there is a hope for his life. Now go, Father Daly. But you will come back. You will be here?'

That night after midnight the crisis was past, and the patient lived. With the glimmer of a smile on her lips, a pale light on her brows, as if an angel's wing had passed across her face, she signed to Father Daly to depart and leave her alone with her work. Entirely baffled, he went home marvelling; while Marcella sat motion-Entirely baffled, he went home less at her post, scarcely daring to breathe as the hours went past and the patient lay wrapped in a life giving slumber.

The scourge had been abating for some time past, and all the other cases now in the hospital were convalescent The present patient had been put in a shed by himself, and his nurse was alone as she watched through that night by his bed. A small shaded lamp burned in a corner so that the light could not reach him, and Marcella sat in an arm-chair wrapped in a large rug, her wide open eyes fixed on the window beyond which a star was visible between the dividing folds of the curtain. She dared not let her thoughts run before the present moment; all her mind was concentrated When morning came in endurance. she stole away and took measures to endure the continuance of quiet, so that the long slumber of the sufferer might not be prematurely broken; then she lay down to rest in a spot close by, appropriated to her own use. Late in the afternoon he still slept, and a little seated herself, refreshed, by his bed as before.

A red gold beam from the sunset fell on her as she sat with some needlework the man lay they found him turned on Her strained ears were rewarded with in her hands. Her face was a little

around him. Before she chanced to glance up and towards him, he shut his eyes again, and pretended still to sleep while observing her.

After a while she was conscious that he was awake and watching her, but by no sign did she betray that she was aware of being so studied. Out of the corners of his narrow eyes he took note of the expressions flitting across her face, so pure and still under its snowwhite head-dress, the patient movement of her hands, the dainty touch with which she adjusted the niceties of her work with her fine finger-tips. admired her graceful figure with the square white apron smoothed across her breast. Accustomed to be watchful and suspicious, he saw nothing in the picture before him to suggest any but the most soothing thoughts. At first he did not know her, could not imagine where he was, but when she raised her eyes with their peculiar glance, then he recognized her.

Not until the next morning did he admit that he was conscious of what was going on around him, and in the meantime he watched, and took note of everything with the wariness of a detecti e.

A Marcella came and went, hover-

ing near with all that was needed for his comfort, bringing him nourishmen with her own hands, placing a few late lowers where his eyes could see them hading the light and hushing every ound that could disturb him, she was all the time nervously aware that she had been placed upon her trial, that she was undergoing a searching examination, and that presently, not by looks only, but by words, difficult perhaps to answer, would she be called upon to betray herself and to confes her recognition of the identity of this nemy who had been so strangely delivered into her hands. And thus to betray herself might frustrate the efforts she was making and had yet to

She controlled herself to meet with a pleasant smile of encouragement those reacherous eyes that had so sickened her with horror when she had first seen them in the witness-box, to place her bounties without shuddering in those cruel hands that had filled her with such fear. She tried to forget for the moment what he was, to be the nurse only, the almoner of heaven's mercy to win his gratitude by her services, t touch his conscience, if he had one, by her good-will.

On the third day of his slow convalescence he found himself strong enough to ask the questions which the cunning of his mind had been arrang ing even before his voice was able to articulate them.

"You are very good to me," he said, and I want to know why? I have been wondering how I came to be here.

She had just set down the vessel from which he had taken food, and was tanding with the light on her face so that he could observe her.

"You were found ill and unconcious on the moor .. You had caugh he fever. Of course we brought you

'Who found me?"

"I found you on the way here one norning. I saw that you were a stranger overtaken on your journey by the sickness. We have had a great deal of the sickness in this part of the country. You have had it very

He watched her parrowly all the time she was speaking, and when she had finished he drew a breath of re

"Yes, I am a stranger here," he said. "I was walking this part of the country, for my holiday. I am em ployed in Dublin as a clerk, and I do not often get a holiday. I had got a shooting license, and I had my gun. What has become of my gun?" I had got a

"I thought I saw one near you, but I was so busy with you that I did not mind it. I tried to save it for you afterwards, but when I sent to look for it nobody could find it. I am afraid it must have been stolen. I hope it was not a valuable gun.' "Well, it was worth a good deal to

me. Still, I am lucky to have got off with my life. I suppose this is the hos pital I heard about, put up by Mrs. Kilmartin for the fever. It was a capital idea. Only for it I'd be dead."

Presently he added: "Are you one of the nurses?"

Yes. "You are not the same as the others.

You look like a lady. "I am Mrs. Kilmartin."

"Nonsense. You're joking with me. Catch her putting herself in the way of Ladies don't do that when infection! they can help it."

He turned his head away impatient ly, as if annoyed at being joked with, and Marcella arranged his pillows without another word and went and sat down at a little distance with her She was afraid to look up, or work. fearful of betraying her satisfaction. Marcella having recovered her strength without fear of detection. Let her now encourage his feeling of security She must not for one moment relax the effort to hide the terror, disgust, and fortable walls that had sheltered him. impatience with which the sight of The man lay they found him turned on the pales subscription on The Dollars. We be the man lay they found him turned on the pales subscription on The Dollars. We be the man lay they found him turned on the pales sentence that could his back with his flushed face thrown not a single sentence that could pale, but fair and cheerful under her subdue and ignore those feelings so as supernatural change had been wrought under her to do the vork she had appointed to as she plaited the muslin frills of the break she was obliged to summon the break she was obliged to summon the latter try to pale, but fair and cheerful under her to do the vork she had appointed to do the vork she had appointed to do the vork she had appointed to him by the gentleness of this woman, as she plaited the muslin frills of the break she was obliged to summon the break she was obl

those that hate you," came to her for the first time with clearness and force in all its dimenstriving to forget

Meanwhile the enemy did not hate ner. He felt himself secure for the time, quite unknown to and unrecog-nized by her. After all, why should ne have been afraid of detection? In ner excitement and trouble during the trial she had probably not been observant; besides he had then been shaven and close cropped; now his hair was long, and his beard had grown, and in this place it was not ikely that any attempt would be made to interfere with either. On the night when he had gone to frighten her in her home his face had been disguised beyond all possibility of identification. It was evident at all events that she had no distrust of him. With all her pluck, and she was a brave one, she ould not have concealed some sign of such a feeling, had it existed in her mind; neither could she by any possibility have behaved as she was be saving. The police would have been at his bedside, the magistrates would have been watching him, but now it seemed nobody was taking any heed of him but herself. Was it only that she was consoling her sad heart with deeds of charity, as the people said of her? He had heard there were women in the world of that order, who, when their own hearts were broken, could only get along by serving, tending, saving others who were in pain. He was not altogether an ignerant

man, and only for certain misfortanes, ill taken, in his youth, might never have been a criminal; yet these thoughts surprised him, coming to him with each long, stealthy look at Marelle's face, as ideas come to a reader off the printed page of a book. He began to feel it a distinct pleasure to ee her sitting near him, a pleasure such as he had never felt since the days long ago, in another life perhaps, when he might have been, when he probably was, good. He was too calous to hate because he had done her harm, neither had he any fear of her because of a power she might possibly possess to harm him. He had run a risk of that, but it was over now. He would soon be strong enough to rise up at any moment he pleased and disap pear from this place. There was nothing to stay him but the resistance which might be made by those beautiful womanly hands, no one to oppose him but a creature whom he could in a moment fell with a blow; and it pleased him to think he would rather not injure her, that possibly he might never have to do so now.

No, he would not go away just yet. He would prolong the pleasure of geting well in such hands. Even for his own security and that of those who employed him, it was desirable that he should not move too soon. He asked her to read to him, for the luxury of nearing her voice. He would exact every attention that his sickness entitled him to receive. He could never in his life have such a chance again, and he would enjoy it now, to the ut most. He paid little heed to the sense of what she read, only lay seeing dim visions of what good men's lives might e who had women like this to love them and care for them.

Marcella, fulfilling her tasks and eeing him get stronger every day, egan to grow sick with fear of the our when he might be strong enough to defy her. Her dream of touching his heart and conscience began to fade. Could she expect a man like this to turn ound and denounce him the organization of which he was the tool, unless life were, in any case, over for him, nothing to be looked for but Was he really going to get death? completely well, and had the doctor been deceived? Should she have to entrap and betray him herself into the hands of justice, after saving, and serving and cherishing him? She began to suffer from an intolerable fear that she had been wrong from the first have declared her knowledge of his identity while he lay too ill to struggle, ought to have stationed the police at once round his sick bed. In that case he might, on recovering, have averged himself on her by still withholding the confession that would redeem Bryan, but at least her evidence of his attack upon herself would go far to prove that the secret society had really been Kilmartin's enemy, and that her husband was, as he had protested, the victim of a plot. If this was the utmost she could hope to obtain by his arrest now, how cruel she had been to herself, how needlessly she had aggravated her own sufferings in the matter. She began to watch him with a new anxiety. dread of his too speedy recovery, and to ask herself how soon she ought to call on Father Daly to share her secret and her responsibility, to give her his

countenance and advice. Yet the convalescent was certainly gaining less strength than might have been expected as a result of the abund-ant care that had been bestowed upon almost to breathe for some time after, him. He did not appear to have got fearful of betraying her satisfaction. cold; and yet he coughed incessantly. In this first encounter she knew she Of this, however, he did not himself had got the advantage. He believed take any heed, was quite satisfied with his own progress, felt that he should was as yet safe and unsuspected, and only too soon be able to rise up and demight remain where he was to get well part out of this place, in which thoughts had come to him which would have to be banished as soon as he had power to turn his back upon the com-

At last one night, a sort of scarce him inspired her, but rather try to came over him, a fear that some fatal

which he belonged save himself on the He got up in the self, easily took was his own, and of the place. As it of the place. maining in the hos way to recovery, t very strict, a that the man was ; dawned. Then M look to the needs the bed empty, an she ought to hav up to justice fled. The discovery the hospital, and passed unnoticed The ingre in thus disappea

other patients and All agreed that it change from the rounded him to of foot travel night, nobody o There was every such sudden ex cause of his in yes, they would "Herself" com but the ungrate nothing to dese such a fuss abou troublesome life Marcella had would be able and as she wer in the chill misty

she must have b madness during unhappy madn chance which co turn to her. I tion with which been idle, fant ought to have personal minist under the wat he would die in While her 1 perplexity and passiona thoughts were of a group

slowly out of drew nearer, a up in her. He returning, an was it merely patient, or wa at the last he He was broug laid again in hastily summo restored to broken a blood perhaps week who had foun upon the way self, my mar the patient

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"Look h all as it o I'm bound to say age or two littl straight. send me s portant co the public, thing fair can pick r Marcella

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