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Jocelin's Penance

Jocelin de Brakelenda, lady, and the Abbot commands that I bring back thy answer ere I tomorrow arise. Truly, ere sunrise, Brother Jocelin, 'Tis far to go alone and a darkness way by evening. Yea, I now betink me. Each forest hath its John Scarlet and Robin Hood these days, and by my Christendom, an unarm'd monk would little avail against such sturdy robbers. Alas, madam, methinks they would not care for the rough scurf of a monk's robe, and I have naught else, for poverty is the vow of the Benedictine; yet though I wear no mail, and carry no sword, I fear not. God protects His own—they need no steel. This decree was new to Robese; reared among men whose scie sin in life was war, who learn'd early the motto, "Mine honor and mine good sword," and she rather caviled at such sentiments, though she could but admire the upstart's look with which Jocelin voiced his faith. 'Tis sunset ere sunrise, Brother Jocelin," she said, "then must have food and rest; so let us offer thee fair water for thy toilet, and a cup of wine and posy for thy stomach's sake; whilst I read the will of the Abbot, and write me an answer to it. Nay, look not so wonderful that I should say 'write,' for I am not the only woman in the realm who can both read and write, and perhaps construe their bit of Latin, too." "By my troth," she murmured to her maids, as Jocelin followed Gilbert O'Dice from the tower, "but these Abbey lubbars are but green gossings—but half monk, and yet I would not dub ye dots by saying he was half man."

"Set away the broderie frame, girls, and leave me; save thou, Mary; bring parchment and inkhorn." Robese arose, and moving to a desk near the row of windows which lighted the tower, set there turning over in her hand the latter sealed with the oval seal, bearing the imprint of a steel (the Abbot's insinial), and tied with a purple cord, her thoughts strayed to the monk and his strange behavior, and she murmured, "Now, pardee! I wonder what his meaning is?"

"Perhaps it thou wouldst open it, madam, thou wouldst know." Mary said, smartly, as she placed the ink and parchment on the desk.

"Put, thou art port; get thee gone to thy mates, and see that thy tongue prove not the unruly member." The girl gone, Robese broke the seal and read in the Abbot's crabbed script:

"Greeting to Robese, Lady de Cokefeld. As thou art the daughter of my chief Milite, and of my cousin, the Lady of Framlingham, it behoves me now that thou art at marriageable age, to give thee in marriage as befitteeth thy rank and station. Because thou art come to me that I might know thy will concerning the wedding, Jocelin of Brakelond, who bears this missive, will convey thy answer. So I bid thee get a time to visit me at Bradford house. Our Lady's benison on thee. Given under my hand and seal at the Abbey of St. Edmundsbury."

"Samson, Abbas." Robese's face was scarlet ere she had finished, and when she had done

hath led his men to victory. 'Tis said that thy Abbot, Samson fought with my father on the field of Flemings."

"Aye, madam, so he did. But brute force and fighting valor are not all that is desirable in a man. Wisdom, learning, gentleness, to my mind, are more to be desired than fame in joust or journey. It will not be many years, Lady Robese, till every man of quality shall be learned in our lore, and no one shall be called 'gentleman' who hath not this knowledge."

"Poor monk," she thought. "He prates of what he knows not," and resenting Jocelin's superior air, she said rather haughtily, "we have been trained in different schools, sir. 'Dieu et mon droit' is, to my mind, the only fit motto for a gentleman; yet, 'God and my book' may serve thy turn as well. But a true to these crossed questions; my lord the Abbot commands my presence at Bradford house, and I will go to-morrow."

"I will bear thy message, madam," said Jocelin, bowing coldly, for she had vexed and wounded him by her open contempt.

"Yet stay, Brother Jocelin," she called, as he moved slowly toward the donjon entrance, reproaching herself for her lack of courtesy, and wishing to make amends for the turned, and she came up to him somewhat hurriedly, her cheeks flushed by her generous impulse.

"Forgive me if I were rude, and go not from De Cokefeld to-night. The way is long and darkness will overtake thee. I fear for thy safety in the forest. Delay for the morrow, and I will accompany thee. I will put out her hand and touched him on the arm. Jocelin was young, in love, the hand of the woman he loved lay—his white on his sleeve, sending a thrill through his veins. He looked deep into her eyes, with a smile like a caress on his delicate red lips; then he broke the first rule of his order—'obedience.'

"Lady, I will not go to-day. Do as thou wilt with me," and he hurried from the ballium.

"Grammery," murmured Robese, here, gazing after him half smiling. "Tis the strangest monk I ever saw; yet methinks he is a man after all."

CHAPTER VIII

The morning dawned bright and clear and Jocelin awoke upon a soft couch, as different from his own straw pallet as his thoughts and feelings differ from those of yesterday. Through his chamber window there came a great hullabaloo from the courtyard; a neighing of horses, barking of hounds, and the sergeant's shrill voice calling out orders. Within the castle all was bustle and preparation. Tittering maids paused in their skurry by his doorway to greet some saucy page on his way to unlash the dais.

Jocelin lay for a moment on his luxurious couch, contrasting the elegant arras-hung chamber with his bare cell in the abbey.

"There is like comparison to be made of the life of monk and knight," he muttered bitterly, as he donned his robe and sandals; "one all bareness, coldness and desuetude, the other all light, life and action, crowned by fame and love. Love! Bewshrew me! What hath a monk to do with love? He has taken the church to spouse, and 'tis a deadly sin for him to adulterate his conjugal thoughts. Yesterday I thought I knew what love meant—a calm, sweet regard, strong in affection and admiration; such an emotion as one feels for parents, or the abbot. But now, wretched wight that I am, love hath silt me unaware; too late hath he opened my blinded eyes and vouchsafed to me a dazzling vision of his joys. Tantalus' feast spread to mock my unable heart."

Love, life's fire with hope, fear, joy, sorrow, pleasure and pain, its components, hath wrapped me in longing and desire, and I—I am so weak that for a woman's smile I cast aside my good respect; break my vows and turn to a chitty-faced coward who trembles and dares not look his Lord in the face for fear his traitor's will beam from his eyes, and announce, 'Here is a monk foresworn—a renegade.' How say the Scriptures? 'Who-soever hath looked upon a woman—Aye, I am foresworn. This woman hath bewitched me. It is sorcery. O caru mea Jesu Nunc libera me!'

And Jocelin fell upon his knees to tell his rosary. But as the beads slipped through his fingers he seemed again to feel the slight, warm pressure of Robese's hand; and with every 'Ave' came the tones of her voice, or the tinkle of her coldly green lancet. The monk was betrayed by the natural man within him; and as he aged from his fruitless endeavor to pray, and passed from his chamber, he realized with shame and delight that his heart beat faster, his pulse throbb'd quicker, his eyes shone brighter, and his whole being seemed reanimated and enlarged, made stronger, more ready to do and dare, by this mysterious baptism of 'Heavenly fire which men have called love.'

When Jocelin had broken his fast in the great hall, he went out into the courtyard, where the retinue was already assembling, impatient to be gone; the dogs straining at their leashes, baying their delight at the prospect of a long scamper over hills and down; Raoul, his gorgeous dress half covered by a cloak of green and gold brocade, a feathered cap on his head, was on his horse with a hawk upon his wrist; and Mordred, the page, behind him on a pillion, holding his harp carefully wrapped in a samite covering. Gilbert O'Dice was mounting a gentle old mule, grunting and growling as he drew his furred cloak about his old limbs.

"Good morrow, Brother Jocelin," he said; "Zounds, but the air nips keenly, it benumbs the limbs."

"Nay, old shrew, not if there be blood in them," interposed Nicholas, the Master of Horse, from among his twenty old horsemen, who sat mounted with lances at rest, while behind them were half a score of foot soldiers, armed, some with bows, and some with gulsarnes; all grinned at this sally, for Gilbert O'Dice was no favorite in the household.

"Yea," said Raoul, in his clear, boyish treble, "we all well know that Master Gilbert hath sawdust for blood, and dull Sheffield whittens for brains." This had reference to the fact that Gilbert presided at the retainers' table, cutting the meat. The Seneschal moved uneasily in his saddle, and looked wrathfully from one tormentor to the other; but reinforcement now appeared in the person of Mistress Mary, who came forth in a long, luscious and rosy, in a dark kirtle and hood, bewitching the hearts of all beholders.

"At least, varlet," she said sharply to Raoul, as she superintended the strapping of a huge bundle upon a sumpter mule. "at least, Master Gilbert hath not two left legs and Judas-colored hair, as have some jack puddings we ken of."

This thrust went straight home, for Raoul was slightly lame and possessed that red hair accredited to the betrayer of our Lord. So the discomfited young minstrel sat biting his lip, with tears of rage and mortification in his eyes, while loud guffaws resounded through the courtyard at this sally, and Mistress Mary, well pleased with her retort, went forward with smiling face to greet from the doorway of the castle, wrapped in a pelisse of rabbit skin over a red gown of richly brocaded satin, Robese went up to her palfrey, which stood near by neighing with joy at sight of his lady. She laid her jeweled embroidered glove lovingly upon his mane, and as she turned proffered aid of her hand to Jocelin, who stood staring, awkward, not knowing what was expected of him.

"Mary's eyes!" exclaimed the impatient beauty, frowning haughtily. "Art, flesh and blood that thou standest there dumb and still as a stone? I tell thee, Sir Monk, belted ears have sued for such a privilege."

"Gosling," whispered Mary, giving him a dig in the side with her rounded little elbow, "lift her to the saddle." Jocelin, with blazing face, lifted the soft, fragrant burden in his arms with a contrite murmur. "I did not know, Madam, and as for one blissful moment its sensuous sweetness brushed his breast, he felt that heaven could give no greater joy. Robese, in the saddle, reined at as she saw his face and dimpling with smiles, extended her hand graciously.

"Well-a-day, of course thou didst not know, thou cell-bred fellow. I forgot me thou hast never been to court, nor learned aught of chivalry. Mount, Brother Jocelin, and ride beside me."

Jocelin, with a pang of humiliation at the lowliness of his steed, mounted his mouse-colored jennet; and Mary being swung up with right good will behind Master Nicholas, with a small protesting squeak against the pressure that burly squire brought to bear upon her waist, the train moved through the porticulis and down the path leading to the ancient Roman roadway, which wound through Suffolk, close by De Cokefeld castle, and led almost direct to St. Edmundsbury. At its head rode Robese and Jocelin, followed by Gilbert, Nicholas and Raoul. On either side the horsemen trotted, the foot soldiers bringing up the rear with several pages, who often broke away from the cavalcade into the copse to join their hounds' exciting chase after some skurrying hare, and Raoul, too, sometimes lagged behind to fly his hawk when prey was sighted.

The autumn sunlight fell athwart the roadway as they passed, glowing upon the motley hues of their dress, and gleaming upon gold, silver and steel, until silhouetted against the dark woodland, the gay company moved like some bright pageant illumined by a master hand upon a russet background. As they rode, Jocelin had much to do to keep his jennet by Robese's side, but she kindly restrained her palfrey; and falling behind the others, they moved slowly, deeply en-

MAGIC BAKING POWDER. MADE IN CANADA. READ THE LABEL. CONTAINS NO ALUM. An illustration of a tin of Magic Baking Powder with a woman's face on the label.

gaged in conversation. While ever and anon Mistress Mary, from her pillion behind Nicholas, looked backward with many an arch smile and nod at her lady, as if to say, "On to it, Madam; make him curse the day he took monly vows." But to do Robese justice, she did not think of conquest, and whatever coquetry she displayed toward Jocelin was but the inherent prizing and speaking all creatures of her sex naturally fall into, in the presence of the male of their species; and if her voice took on a softer tone, and her blushes came and went under the ardent glances of her companion, she was conscious of no desire to attract or enthrall one whom she could consider neither eligible nor desirable either as suitor or admirer; indeed, she felt for the young monk a kindly condescension; one feels towards a child, mingled with a touch of reverence for his calling.

Thus their intercourse was dangerously sweet, for Robese, throwing aside the hauteur of a dowered lady, and the jibes of a maid familiar with the extravagances of chivalry, fell into a simple, jovious mood, as seductive as it was insignificant. And poor Jocelin, with his own wit and evident knowledge of things he knew not the existence of, could but thrill at her warm tones and friendly glances, and fall more in love than ever.

St. Edmunds was but a day's journey from De Cokefeld castle, and the cavalcade, after a short noon rest, pressed briskly onward, until at sunset they found the downy chain of chalk hills which surround St. Edmunds; past several granges, skirting the village wall; and the forest behind the Abbey. As they passed beneath the prison tower, Robese asked: "What is yon grim turret?"

"The Abbey prison, Madam," Jocelin answered, and as the two rode by, its shadow lay across them in the fast gathering twilight. Robese shivered.

"Both its shadow not strike a chill to thy marrow?" she cried, urging her horse forward as she spoke.

"Yea, Madam, it would, were thou not beside me. Cold and darkness cannot abide where thou art."

CHAPTER IX.

The afterglow shone golden through the laced branches of the forest, and the Abbey walls a bell rang, mellowed by the distance. The monk and maid rode on in silence. Behind them, the cavalcade indulged in interchange of speech and song; but Mistress Mary leaned on Nicholas' broad shoulder fast asleep, and he, for fear of losing so pretty a burden, spoke not to his companion, the seneschal, who jogged on, numbed, cold and drowsy with his long ride in the keen air.

The glow of the sunset faded; shadows gathered about their pathway, faint stars shone in the gray-blue of the sky; and a hush seemed resting over all the world, as if each creature had sought its nest, its den, or home; and lay there close curled, or sat there by the cheery hearth fire basking in its domestic love and its homely joys. This thought was in Jocelin's mind as they rode so close in the narrow, dusky lane, as he watched the graceful, swaying figure beside him.

(To be Continued.)

ARTIFICIAL LIMBS. Perfection to Which the Mechanical Arm Has Been Brought. They are making artificial limbs with such perfection to-day that a technical observer who is also an enthusiastic baseball 'fan' declares that he would not be surprised to see in the not far distant future some wooden-armed pitcher making a good record. What is known as "glass arm" would be effectively superseded by "wooden arm." This is a daring leap of the imagination, which, however, need not worry the perfectly good armed pitchers of the big leagues, still some of the things that can be done with artificial arms are simply amazing. Here you see a man lighting a cigar and with a naturalness of action and pose which would deceive the casual observer. The mechanism is controlled by certain motions of the stump of the flesh and blood arm, and no little knack is necessary to the successful working of the artificial member, and yet withal it is not very difficult to acquire. It is said that the man who is lighting his big cigar can pick a pin from the floor without difficulty, but it is not on record that he can give the "pop" to a ball so that it will speed by the batter like a projectile from a high powered gun. As a matter of fact, he is thoroughly satisfied with the many very necessary things that can be done with the mechanical arm without venturing afar into the luxuries and excitement of outdoor sport—Buffalo News.

THE ONLY CURE FOR A WEAK STOMACH. Indigestion and Similar Troubles Must be Treated Through the Blood. Indigestion can be treated in many ways, but it can only be cured in one way—through the blood. Purgatives cannot cure indigestion. By main force they move on the food still indigested. That weakens the whole system, uses up the natural juices and leaves the stomach and bowels parched and sore. It is actually a cause of indigestion—not a cure. Others try pre-digested food and peptonized drugs. But drugs which digest the food for the stomach really weaken its power and makes the trouble chronic. The digestive organs can never do the work properly until they are strong enough to do it themselves. Nothing can give the stomach that power but the new, rich, red blood so abundantly supplied by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. So the reason for the success of this medicine is plain. Nothing can stimulate the glands and nothing can absorb the nourishment from the food but pure red blood. And Dr. Williams' Pink Pills surpass all other medicines in giving this rich blood. Miss E. E. Johnson, Hamford, N. S., says: "For months I was a great sufferer from indigestion; food of any kind was distasteful to me, and after eating I would suffer much. Naturally I grew weak and was but a shadow of my former self. I was taking a doctor's prescription, but it did not help me in the least. Then I read of a case similar to my own cured through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and I decided to try this medicine. By the time I had taken six boxes the trouble had entirely disappeared, and I could eat heartily of all kinds of food. More than this, I found my general health greatly improved through the use of the Pills. I can therefore strongly recommend Dr. Williams' Pink Pills as a cure for indigestion." You can get these Pills through any dealer in medicine or by mail, post paid, at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50 from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

Imitation Jewels. Nature is often copied with conspicuous success by those engaged in the imitation of precious jewels. Zircons are composed of silica and zirconia. Their lustre is deceptive, a means having been discovered of extracting the color, thus leaving them diamonds to all appearances, although their falseness promptly proclaims itself when put to a test. Precious stones are often dyed with such thoroughness and cleverness that it is asserted, the stone may be broken without discovery of the process; that is to say, by the uninitiated. In Oberstein, Germany, the sole industry is the manufacture of imitation jewelry and the dyeing of cheap jewelry and other stones. The onyx, carnelian, bloodstone and agate may be dyed in color by immersion in the dye. The stones are placed in vessels containing the coloring matter and are then subjected to great heat for periods varying from a few hours to a week or more. In the case of chalcedony, which shows bands of different degrees of intensity, certain of the bands take the color and others do not. The stones then receive a further staining in pots containing other dyes. Fluorspar is capable of great improvement in tint when subjected to a heating process and crucidolite is given a hue of blood red by a similar method. The emerald and the cat's paw are of all stones the most easily imitated. One family at Oberstein is said to possess the secret of converting crucidolite into cat's paw. Cat's paw also may be made of argentine, some of the hemblendes, and even of fibrous gypsum. Easily Arranged. "How did you come to get married?" asked a man of a very homely friend. "Well, you see," he replied, "after I'd vainly tried to win several girls that I wanted I finally turned my attention to one that wanted me, and then it didn't take long to arrange matters."—London Strand Magazine.