

MARGARITA.

I take this wreath of song and gently place it on the deep, dark grave wherein my gentle Margarita lies asleep. In the old grave yard at Nelson, where they laid her years ago 'Mid a father's sighs of sorrow and a mother's tears of woe.

Ere three brief but happy summers had passed o'er her golden head, Like a lovely faded flower she was laid among the dead. In that city of the silent lies her little grave unknown. All forgotten, all forsaken and unmarked by any stone.

But her parents' hearts were buried in that little new-made grave, And time alone could heal the wound that bitter parting gave. And though they mourned as those may mourn who lose their dearest one, They murmured in their sorrow: "Heaven's holy will be done."

All through life they never forgot her, 'Tis a sweet vision pale and fair, With the lovely form and features and the wealth of golden hair. And their hearts were drawn to Heaven by their darling gone before, And their spirits held communion with that bright celestial shore.

Oh the holy griefed parents who have loved a loved one dead, 'Tis a sorrow ever and a sorrow that is never dead. For they know their darling's happy in the mansions of the blest, And wears a crown of glory in the holy place of rest.

Remembering that words of one who was taught in a school, "Permit the little children, one and all, to come to Me." For surely He needs no long train to lead Him to His own, And unless you love as I do, you may not understand.

— MARGARITA WHITE, N.B., September, 1892.

AFTER WEARY YEARS.

By MRS. R. CORNELIUS O'BRIEN, D.D., Author of "The Heart's Home."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Not a ways, signor. There are some fine natures which must be won by a persevering endeavor, as was the case of my uncle's courtship of Lucia Spada."

"Let us hear that wonderful story then."

"Well, my uncle, as I said, was young and handsome, but unassuming. He first met his future wife in a stage-coach and fell in love with her at once. It has often puzzled me to understand why, or how this sort of thing happens, but it does happen, it does," said Peppi, shaking his head.

"My uncle soon obtained an introduction to his innamorata and quickly made proposals of marriage. They were not accepted; still every one thought that Lucia Benvenuti loved my uncle. Ruggiero Spada, she was not a coquette, she had no favored admirer, still she refused. My uncle, who thought that her answer would have been as prompt as his offer, if she had really loved him, was disconsolate. He lost his gaiety and shunned company. He faced death on the field of battle, but death fled from him. A friend who knew his secret advised him to persevere in his suit, to prove that he was in earnest and that his affection was not a mere momentary sentiment. Lucia, he said, was of a gentle and loyal disposition, and sought to discover earnestness in her lover."

"My uncle persevered his suit and followed her to Switzerland, where the family were passing the summer. He told her how his passion had developed, that if she did not consent to become his wife he would rush headlong into the thickest of the battle and invite death to put an end to his torments."

"What did Lucia reply to this Ruggiero?"

"What could she reply, but that as he had proved the depth and earnestness of his love by following her so far it was her duty to accept it. My uncle's friend was right; it only required perseverance to win the prize. My uncle always said that when a young man had been rejected all he had to do was to carry on a regular siege with patience and the citadel would eventually capitulate. His conclusion is my own—viz., that most women will, after a while, if you are indifferent to their attractions, and a few can only be won by perseverance."

"When Peppi was right or wrong in this conclusion our lady readers will decide. He had a double object in lengthening out this family incident, the one was to induce his master to follow Eleanor to Canada, and the other to amuse Lorenzo until it should be time to visit old Ezra."

"They now arose and walked quickly up the rocky slope. Lorenzo was to await the return of Peppi at a neighboring *Belvedere*."

"Be sure you procure the document at any price," was his last injunction to his faithful servant.

"Per Bacco! if I don't get it for nothing I'm a Turk," was Peppi's reply.

Lightly springing up a flight of steps out of the tulle rock, which led to a narrow street parallel to the one on which he left his master. Peppi sped on his way. The crazy old houses appeared to grow out of the hillside in a horizontal line. The door opens on the brink of a precipice, or midway down a flight of treacherous steps. A stranger would be puzzled to know how children ever reached the age of maturity with so many pitfalls around. Their feet must be, one is half inclined to believe, endowed with an apparatus similar to that which enables flies to walk up a wall.

Peppi ascended almost three hundred feet above the level of the lower street, and came to an unshapen mass of volcanic rock which stands at the upper extremity of the town. At its base a door stood open and Peppi unceremoniously entered. It was a small, dingy apartment, musty and cold. It had been cut out of the rock for a wine vault by a man possessed of more money than brains. No doubt it would be a safe and cool place in which to store wine, but how could a cask ever be brought thither from the vineyards below? The idea of the vault was defective on one side, as it does often are; hence the collapse of the scheme. However, the excavation was not altogether useless; it was rented as a dwelling.

Peppi looked around this hovel, and at first saw nothing but heaps of old rags and fragments of paper. Then, as he peered about, he discovered an old man sitting by a rickety table. Dirty, shriveled, yellow, and greasy as yore sat old Ezra. His puckered mouth and

closed eyes showed that he had fallen asleep over his work. On the table were piles of rags and bundles of paper. Casting his eye over these latter Peppi recognized on the outside of one the handwriting of Giovanni Aldini. Instinctively he picked it up and saw that it was the stolen document. Old Ezra always carried it with him, and probably had been assorting the contents of a shrunken valise which lay near by when he had been overpowered by sleep.

"You old culture," said Peppi, shaking his finger at him. "I have brought you down at last. I might go away now and you be none the wiser, but that would not do; I'll wake you. Ho! Sor Ezra, wake up. Can I sell you some nice lettuce for supper?"

With a frightened spring the old Jew bounded to his feet, and glaring at Peppi, squeaked,

"Who the devil are you and how did you enter?"

"By the door, Sor Ezra; but are you all alone here?"

"What business is it of yours, go away!"

"I must be an honest thief to wake you up, but come, don't you remember me? You told me about a paper written by Giovanni Aldini when you and I were in the city."

"If a man will give for it?"

"That's good, where's the money?" A thousand and only a thousand scudi, after the manner of a Jew, the papers with his initials on them.

"But a million scudi?"

"Is gone, you see, it's gone. I have your life of it. And Ezra made a clutch of the smiling Peppi."

Stopping to the door Peppi displayed the paper and said,

"What? I could hang you for what you did, but I am satisfied to have got what I want. Date before me and I will hand you over to the police. Now go away."

The miser sunk back on his chair as Peppi quickly turned back to find Lorenzo. The excitement of the latter on seeing the document was intense. Wildly he tore it open and read, trembling, the words. Peppi watched him as he sunk into a chair.

"On my mother, my poor desolate mother."

CHAPTER XXIX.

Many days had come and gone since Mrs. Barton commenced to keep her sad anniversary. Sands, immemorial had tickled noiselessly from Time's hour-glass, golden sands for some, but grimy ones, alas, for very many. Noble resolutions by the thousand had been taken, and yet but had been broken. Careers of usefulness and honor had begun, and yet but had been broken. Careers of usefulness and honor had begun, and yet but had been broken.

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of November. The ground was hard and bare, a crisp frost covered the withered grass, and delicately adorned with a hoary fringe the leafless boughs. The face of the great river was dark and scowling; its peaceful murmuring of a month ago, was exchanged for a hoarse and fretful roar. The last ships of the season were hurrying down its course, fearful of being caught in the icy fetters of winter. A spirit of unrest was in the air and a gloom was over the land. Wild masses of clouds would hurtle through the sky, and quickly disappearing would be succeeded by evanescent beams of sunshine. Snow, rain, hard frost, or a warm sunlight, each was liable to ensue within an hour, and to last a day or ten minutes. An atmospheric crisis was at hand, and its result uncertain.

The short day was drawing to a close as Eleanor Leary and George Marchbank walked slowly along the course of the darkening river. The young artist was not now unknown to him. At the exhibition of fine arts held at Rome during the sitting of the Vatican Council, his works had attracted the favorable notice of persons whose taste was unimpaired. He was pronounced a "rising name," and to be was designated by leading artistic critics, as to be placed at only one remove from a risen one. His sketch of the opening of the Council was justly admired. It would take time, perhaps years to complete it, but the scene had been so vividly impressed on his mind, for as a witness, he had viewed it in the light of faith which had flashed over his heart at the opening of the Council, that he was sure it would be a masterpiece.

In the morning after some unfruitful attempts, we can say, and as we are well informed, that we have been informed for a long time, that this work is a masterpiece. At the same time, the fame and glory of this work cannot satisfy our longings; our capacity for enjoyment may, indeed, be satisfied in some respects, yet it is of an indefinite power that nothing can ever fill it. The immortal spirit refuses to be satisfied with mortal pleasures; it instinctively asserts its nobility of origin and end even in its degradation. It ever proclaims the truth of St. Augustine's words: "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are unquiet until they rest in Thee."

George Marchbank had returned to his Canadian home for a short time. He had hoped that Eleanor would now accept his love, and all the blank which he experienced in his life. But what ever hopes he had cherished on this head were destroyed on this cold November evening.

With the delicacy and earnest gentleness of her noble nature, Eleanor had spoken to him, and poured a balm on his wounds, even as she was inflicting them. He felt it could not be as he had wished, and although he suffered keenly, there was no rankling sting left behind. Eleanor's gentle hand had plucked it out, and her true womanly sympathy had assuaged half of his pain. Her words of encouragement, to pursue manfully a career of usefulness and honor, had strengthened his purpose, and her future less dark than he had thought it could be. Hearts are made of such elastic material that they seldom, or never, break.

The setting sun emerged from an angry cloud, a flood of ruby light bathed its flowing robes and beautified its jagged outlines.

A cold breeze swept over the face of the river, and softly moaned as it died away amidst the leafless boughs of a neighboring grove.

The shrill whistle of an engine was borne on the frosty air, and brought a strange joy to Eleanor's heart.

In the short twilight, George Marchbank and Eleanor reached the home of the latter, and parted as friends are they had arrived at the door. He went to his native village, and she entered her home. Morgan was there and appeared excited over something. In reply to his sister's inquiries he informed her that Lorenzo Aldini was on his way to Canada, and would be at the station in five minutes.

"I must now go to meet him; I only received his letter an hour ago. We will be here in twenty minutes."

Saying this Morgan leaped into a carriage and drove rapidly away.

A thousand wild emotions filled the soul of Eleanor, but she ever took the lead. It is true that her best friend should not renew his suit occasionally started up, but the fact of his coming surely proved the groundlessness of its nature. No need to question her own heart; it told its tale in its quickened pulsations, and by the warm glow which it diffused over her countenance. Endeavoring to compose her feelings she waited with strained anxiety her brother's return. He was not back so speedily as he had promised; but he came at length, and Lorenzo was with him.

When Lorenzo and Eleanor met, each saw in the first swift glance the other's love, and knew better than words can tell the depths of their mutual affection. Ere an hour had passed they had plighted their troth, with full approbation of Mrs. Leary and Morgan.

Eleanor who was ever mindful of Mrs. Barton, did not forget her in the days of her new-born happiness. She proposed that they should go and see her at once, and Lorenzo and Morgan consented with evident alacrity, and in a few minutes they were in her quiet home. The state of affairs was soon made known and she warmly congratulated them.

"You will have, Lorenzo, the best wife that Canada can give, and although I ever fondly hoped that she might one day be my daughter, I am truly glad tonight. I have not raised her hopes of happiness after all."

"We will love you as dearly as if we were your children," said Lorenzo with deep feeling.

"Mrs. Barton," began Morgan, "did you ever see any resemblance in Lorenzo to any one you ever knew? Did you ever observe him attentively? Look into his eyes now and tell me what you think."

"In the full light Mrs. Barton gazed intently at Lorenzo, and an unaccustomed tremor shook her every limb. In the trusting, loving look of his dreamy eyes she saw the image of her fair child lost long ago, and in the swelling of her

maternal heart she knew that he was found. No need for Lorenzo to clasp her in his strong arms and to murmur, "Mother, dearest mother, I am your long-lost son."

She knew the words were spoken, and as she strained him to her heart she sobbed.

"O God, I thank Thee, that After Weary Years of lonely waiting and hoping Thou hast heard my prayer."

Morgan, who had learned the truth from Lorenzo on their way from the station, took Eleanor aside and calmed her excitement, as mother and son wept sweet tears of joy.

Mrs. Barton, however, soon subdued her feelings, and calling Eleanor to her side, laid a hand on her head and the other on that of her son, and invoked God's blessing on their betrothal.

(To be continued.)

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