

## Choice Literature.

## One Life Only.

## CHAPTER XLV.

In the farm-house where Una Dysart now entered there had lived from the day of her birth, sixty years before, a poor old woman who had always been a hopelessly misshapen cripple. She had never known what it was to walk or stand, and had spent her whole life between her bed and the wooden seat, fixed in the deep old-fashioned window, where she lay curled up in a strange distorted attitude. Her hands were as useless as her feet, and the only occupation of which she was capable was that of reading, which she had happily been taught in her early youth by a charitable lady of the Northcote family. Her mother had died when she was born, and her father had supported and cared for her somewhat grudgingly till his death, and then the farm became the possession of her half-brother, a man very much younger than herself, who was married and had a large family. He had just sufficient pride, and respect for the good opinion of his neighbours, to prevent him sending poor helpless Lizzie to the workhouse, but neither he nor his wife made the smallest attempt to conceal from her that they considered her a most undesirable burden, which they would be heartily glad to be rid of, whenever death might remove her from their hands. In a word, the life of this hapless being had been, from first to last, as utterly devoid of hope or love or happiness of any kind as it is possible to conceive that a creature on this earth could be, yet Lizzie was without exception the most invariably cheerful contented person Una Dysart had ever known, and the secret of her joy and peace in the midst of pain and contumely and neglect was simply this, that from her Bible, the only book she possessed, she had won the knowledge of her Lord and Saviour, and, giving herself into His pitying care, she had found in His love all that her heart could desire for time or for eternity. "My beloved is mine, and I am His," these were the words that absorbed her whole being, and filled her with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Therefore it was that Una Dysart had come to her, on this the saddest day of her young life, that she might steep her soul in the faith and heavenly fortitude of this poor cripple, and learn from her that the absence of all earthly hope may yet leave brightest radiance on the life that is hid with Christ in God.

Lizzie greeted her visitor with delight, recognizing her step, though her distorted shape prevented her from turning her head; and Una knelt down by the chair in order to bring her face on a level with hers, throwing aside, at the same time, the heavy mantle which hid her dress; Lizzie gave a pleased exclamation of surprise when she saw her in her snowy flower-decked robes, for though Una often visited her, she had never of course seen her thus attired. "My pretty lady," she said, "how sweet you look to be sure! you are like the angels I see in my dreams, which are all in white with flowers in their hands, the flowers that never fade!"

"But I am not good or happy like the angels, Lizzie, and I have come to you to make me better."

"My dearie, what can a poor old creature such as I am do for one like you?"

"You can tell me about yourself, Lizzie. You are quite happy, are you not?"

"My sweet one, yes! how should I not be, when I have the dear Lord with me always?"

"But did you never want any happiness in this world? I know you never had any, but did you never wish for it?"

"Never, since I knew what it was to have the Lord for my portion, and my everlasting great reward, though I merit nothing at His hands."

"Lizzie, forgive me for asking you, but did you never wish to be loved—to be the dearest of all to one of your own fellow-creatures?"

"I might have wished it," she answered, simply, "if I had never known the tender pity and the sweetness of my crucified Redeemer; but oh, my dear young lady, who can love us as He does who died for us? Greater love hath no man than this, that he should lay down his life for his friends," and I give Him back my poor love truly—well, He knows it. Every day that passes is a joy to me, because it brings me nearer to the time when I shall see Him who is chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely."

"But, Lizzie, if you could go back to be young again, with all those years that you have lived before you still, would you not gladly begin your life once more, if you could have the chance of being happy and beloved?"

"No, my dear; not if it was to keep me back a single day from going to my Saviour. I'd rather be the poor cripple I am, on the brink of the grave, with the hope of seeing Him beyond it, than be young and beautiful like you, if it put me sixty years further off from Him."

Una sighed. "I will tell you how it is with me. I have had a great grief, and it has taken away all hope of my ever having any more love or happiness in my life; than you have had—at least I shall not have the only love I care for—and the future does look so sad and dreary, I don't know how I am to go through it to the end, even though there is the hope of heaven after it is past and gone. Do you think I shall be able to bear it?" added the poor child, looking wistfully into the old woman's withered face.

"Oh, my dear lamb, you do not know what the dear Lord can do to comfort those who love Him. He has made my life, long as it has been, seem like one day because of the joy I have had in His hidden presence, which is always with me, and if you come to long for Him as I do, the years you may have to live will be to you but as rushing wings bearing you onward to His feet."

"Thank you, dear Lizzie," said Una, stroking the old woman's cheek with her gentle hand; "you have comforted me very much, for I know that what you say is true. I will ask our Lord to make me brave and good like you, and then I shall

be able to take courage and go forward patiently as you have done."

She remained a little longer, singing hymns in her low sweet voice, which she knew gave the poor cripple special pleasure, and then she went away, braced and strengthened by her visit, though still the thought lay heavy at her heart, that in one day more Humphrey Atherstone would have left the neighbourhood again, and that it was very likely he might not return till after she had once more gone abroad with her aunt.

It was the Tuesday evening after the wedding, and from Dr. Burton's statement Una knew that Monday had been fixed for Atherstone's departure, she therefore felt sure that there was no risk of her encountering him if she took her solitary walk, after her aunt had retired, in the direction of the Eagles' Nest. She had a great desire to go to that spot once again, where first she had learnt that Atherstone loved her, and it was much more accessible now than it had been then; for in the happy days when Humphrey believed that Una would have her home at the Abbey, he had taken a pleasure in having a safe and easy path excavated in the steep side of the cliff, in order that she might go without fatigue or difficulty to the ruin which had so pleased her fancy. Broad and smooth as the path was now, however, Una ascended it that evening with slow and weary feet, as if it were almost too much for her strength; but it was the weight of memory on her heart, not physical weakness, that retarded her lingering steps, and bowed her young head as with a load of years.

There was not a greater contrast between the fresh sunny morning on which she had first ascended to the Eagles' Nest, and the shades of the grey still evening that lay around her at this hour, than there was between the bright hopefulness of her spirit at that time, and the deep immovable sadness which enveloped it now; and she felt the change with all that unappeasable longing for the happy vanished past, which is one of the sorest trials of those who know too surely that they must walk through gloom and shadows to their final rest.

At length Una reached the ruin; she glanced into the dark chamber where the penitent's grave lay at the foot of the cross, and where once she had seen the tall form of his descendant emerging slowly from the gloom, and then she turned, and resting her arms on the rough stone parapet outside the building, she looked down with a long earnest gaze on the wide-spreading landscape below, of which Atherstone Abbey, with its fine woods and its massive keep, was the most prominent. As she stood there, a breath from the fresh evening breeze passing across her face, touched some link in the chain of association, and carried her back with a vivid remembrance to the day when, on her homeward voyage, she leant over the side of the vessel, and heard her father's voice arousing her from the thoughts that were engrossing her, to bid her tell him what they were; she recollected how she told him of the warning she had received, that she had one life only given her, and how in the proud self-confidence of her untried youth she had written out a record of what she meant that life to be, wherewith she might test the constancy of her resolution when the term of her existence drew to its close.

She was very young still, but she felt as if the hour at which she had now arrived, might have been a fitting one wherein to read the record of her "vaunting ambition," as her father had called it, and compare it with her real actions in the years that had elapsed since then; for it seemed to her that life, as she had understood it in those early days, was over for her in actual fact—the life of hope and enjoyment and proud aspiration—and all that remained to her while still she breathed, was a patient schooling of her soul to make it fit for entrance to a happier world.

"Blameless and noble," that was the stamp she had affirmed she would give to her career on earth; but she could see now, as she looked back to that time of arrogance and inexperience, that her ambition had not been to live for the glory of God, but to glorify herself, and that, trusting in her own strength only, she had started on the course she had meant to be so bright and fair. Therefore had she failed; at the first touch of an earthly love, which had lured her with the hope of nothing higher than mere personal happiness, she had cast her great aspirations to the winds, and had forgotten all but the impulse to obey her heart's overweening affection, till she had not feared to sacrifice to it even honour and truth; that love and the hopes it inspired had indeed been taken from her, but she had made no voluntary surrender of it for conscience' sake, and if of late she had striven to walk with purer aims and heaven-directed eyes, it was not her own merit, but because of the afterglow shed on her path by the light of a pure life that had set in glory.

She bent her head down over her clasped hands, as she acknowledged to herself, in all humility, the total failure of her high ambition, and breathed an earnest prayer that she might be able, for the time that still remained to her on earth, to serve her God in meekness and self-distrust, striving with tender charity to bring to her fellow-creatures some of the happiness she no longer hoped to win for herself. And even as Una Dysart thus resigned herself to look no more for enjoyment or even hope in her mortal life, there came the sound of a footfall on her startled ear.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

Humphrey Atherstone had been obliged to postpone his journey for two days, on account of some business which affected the interests of one of his tenants; but he had now arranged to leave home the next morning for a considerable time; and on that same Tuesday evening he was pacing moodily to and fro on the terrace at the back of the Abbey, when he happened accidentally to cast a glance towards the path that led to the Eagles' Nest. Although at some distance, it was easy from the point where he stood to trace the zig-zag line the whole way to the ruin; and midway up the steep ascent he caught sight of the form that was ever before his eyes, in visions of

"It may perhaps interest our readers to know that 'Lizzie' represents a real character."

the night and thoughts by day. His Una! his no more, but Una, to whom, faithless as she was, his heart clung with the passionate love that death alone could quench! And she was alone—not, as he had dreaded again to meet her, by the side of the man who was to be her husband, but alone as she had been that blissful morning in the irrevocable past, when he had met her by his ancestor's grave, and had not scrupled to let her see how she had won the love he then never meant to give to any upon earth.

The very next day he was to leave home for the purpose of avoiding her; but, with the inconsistency of human nature, he became possessed by an uncontrollable impulse to seize this unexpected opportunity of looking on her face once more, and hearing again the soft low voice whose tones had echoed in his heart unceasingly since last they fell upon his ear. The thought of that morning, when he had seen her at the Eagles' Nest with her sympathetic eyes, and tremulous lips faltering over their words of sweet compassion, brought back to him a flood of tender memories, which seemed to quench all the bitterness of spirit her desertion had caused him; and the wish rose up strong within him that they might part—since part they must—at least in peace and amity, and that she might know there would be none amongst those who might wish her happiness who would so intensely desire it as he from whom she had taken away all hope of it for himself so long as his life should last.

Atherstone could not have resisted the power of the impulse which goaded him to seek her now, even if he had wished it; but he did not so much as attempt it, for his mind was at once made up that he would see her then and there, where none could witness his anguish of farewell; and when he had told her how he should bless her to the end for the joys, sweet as they were brief, she once had given him, then he would turn away, peaceful and forgiving, to see her no more for ever.

Scarce was the decision made before Atherstone had leapt from the terrace where he stood, and was bounding over the fields that intervened between him and the cliff, at a pace which soon set his feet on the rocky path leading upwards to the ruin. The ascent that seemed so toilsome to Una's feeble frame was swiftly scaled by his quick firm steps, and in a very short space of time he was standing within a few paces of her, behind a tree. She did not see him; she was bending down on the rough parapet, her pretty head laid on her hands, and her soft brown hair escaping from beneath her hat and waving in the evening breeze. His heart seemed to leap out to her with passionate emotion; how could he ever bear to part with her? how was he to give her up to another man? He advanced a few steps. She heard him, started, lifted her head, and then her sweet face was turned towards him, with the brown eyes wild and startled as those of a frightened deer, and the parted lips, scarce consciously, uttering his name in accents of dismay. Sensitive and big-hearted maiden as she was, the first thought that rose in Una's mind was the fear that he might think she had come there to seek him—she whom he had discarded; and the idea forced from her the words, ungracious indeed, after their long separation, with which she greeted him instantly.

"Mr. Atherstone! I thought you were gone to London."

"And wished it, no doubt," he answered, with a sad smile. "Do not be afraid, Miss Dysart, I shall be gone to-morrow, and then I shall vex the sight of your eyes no more; only, for the sake of that which has been between us, do not grudge me these last few minutes—the last for ever; I shall not misuse them, you may trust me so far."

She could not speak; it almost broke her heart to look upon that face, so beloved and so familiar, and to know she must meet him as a stranger, and that they were parted, she knew not wherefore, for she had never severed one moment from her faithfulness to him. She stood before him trembling and bewildered, and he thought it was the consciousness of her inconstancy that made her droop like a culprit beneath his eyes.

His voice was very gentle when he spoke. "Miss Dysart, do not think I have come to make any complaint. I have no right to do so; I never was worthy of you, that I well know, even though you now understand all the difficulties of my former position, and the temptation to which I succumbed. Still, towards you I think I have not erred, for I loved you with all the strength of my being—so much so that for your sake I compromised my honour; and when you let me see that your heart had turned against me, justly perhaps, I only thought that I might try by all fair means to regain it. It was in that one hope I came home, and the first tidings that reached me on my own hearth-stone, were those which told me you had given your love and sought your happiness elsewhere. You were free to do so; I could claim no spoken promise from you, and now I do not come in bitterness, only to solace my agony by one last look—only to wish that you may have, with him whom you have preferred to me, all the joy, the peace, the brightness of existence I would have striven so hard to give you."

She had listened to all that he had said with a growing look of amazement, and almost of horror, on her face; and when at last he ceased and turned his head aside to conceal his agitation, she clasped her hands, half in entreaty, half in pain, and said in broken accents, "Mr. Atherstone, what do you mean? I do not understand. Of whom do you speak? What is it you believe me to have done?"

"You cannot misunderstand me, Miss Dysart," he said, almost haughtily; "you may not have announced your engagement to the world in general, perhaps, but I think it is due to me at least, that you should openly avow yourself to be Mr. Trafford's future wife."

"Mr. Trafford's wife!" she exclaimed, with such a look of innocent surprise and bewilderment that Atherstone could not for a moment doubt its reality; "what can ever have made you imagine anything so impossible as that?"

"Is it conceivable then that it is not true, Una?" he could hardly articulate in his agitation.

"True! no, certainly not! neither he

nor I ever thought of such a thing for a moment! he has been more like a father to me than anything else."

"But I was assured of it on all sides, and he himself as good as told me it was so."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Una, "you must have misunderstood him."

"He told me he was going to change his position, and that one person only shared the secret of his plans, and when I guessed your name he owned that it was you."

A smile broke over Una's face like the dawn of a new day of life, for the clouds were dispersing now from her horizon, that had so long been veiled in gloom.

"I can see how that mistake arose," she said, "and it's scarce a secret now. I am sure that I may tell you the truth. Mr. Trafford has accepted a colonial bishopric, and I know that the offer of it had been made to him from Mr. Oncliff's, whose large property lies in his future diocese, and who had reasons for not wishing the matter known for a time, and so he begged me not to mention it, and wished Mr. Trafford also to keep it secret."

"And you are not going with him as his wife?" said Atherstone, almost unable still to realize the truth.

"Oh no, he never dreamt of it, I am sure, and if he had, I could not—" she paused and faltered, but Atherstone's eyes implored her to go on, and in a scarce audible whisper she added, "I could not have given him my love."

"Oh, Una, was it—is it because your love was mine? Let there be no more concealments; no more mistakes between us; my whole life hangs upon your words; this is no moment for half truths or timid hesitations—speak—answer me plainly! Is your love mine?"

Then, clearly but very softly, the sweet voice answered, "Yours only and always," and she let her hands fall into his clinging grasp, while it seemed to them both as if in that moment the gates of some earthly Eden had opened wide to welcome them, and they had entered in.

After a little time of happiness, too great for words, Atherstone looked down on the face which was as bright now as it was sweet, with a loving smile.

"My Una, I know now that you are mine, and that might well be enough for me without seeking to disturb the ashes of a miserable dead past, but I want to understand my happiness; I cannot endure that even the shadow of a former doubt should linger with me. Tell me, when you sent me Miss Amherst's letter so coldly, without a word, was it not because you understood from its contents that I had wilfully wronged my cousin, and you felt constrained in consequence to separate your life from mine?"

"Oh no!" exclaimed Una, clinging closer to his hand; "so far from that, I had for your sake wronged your cousin no less than you did, for I kept back that letter many months, when I knew I ought to send it to you, because I could not bear that you should have the pain of learning the secret it contained, which I believed you did not know. It was only when Lillian Orichon's blessed death taught me that for a child of Christ it is happier far to die than to connive at evil or wrong of any kind, that I gathered courage to pierce my own heart by sending you such bitter tidings."

"But why did you do it in such cruel fashion, darling, without one word of sympathy or kindness?"

"Because you had left me without a word," she answered, softly, "and I thought perhaps you had left off loving me."

"As if that were possible!" he answered, fondly stroking her pretty hair.

"And I thought it still more," she whispered, "when you came back from Australia with all the perplexities and mysteries cleared up, having done justice to your uncle's son and won the world's esteem for your self-sacrifice, and still you never set foot within my home, and passed me like a stranger that miserable day when I saw you near the village, nor even so much as spoke to me when we met at the wedding."

"Because I believed you to be Trafford's future wife," he said, "and I was cruelly wounded, Una, wounded to the very soul, for I had retained a lingering hope that I might regain you, although when I left England I did not feel that it would be honourable to ask any promise from you in my uncertain position. I meant partially to have explained this to you, but you know how I was repelled from your house."

"Oh yes; I shall never forget the misery of those days!" said Una, shivering at the recollection.

"Well, it is all at an end now, thank Heaven!" said Atherstone; "and if we have both somewhat to repent of, my Una, we must try to make our future as fair and pure as I hope it will be bright."

"Just when you came up," she said, pressing closer to him, "I was remembering how poor Miss Amherst told me to take warning by her fate, and ever to remember I had only one life to make either a blessing or a curse, and that I must take care I did not mar or waste it. At the time when she spoke to me thus, I was so self-confident, that I was resolved to make my whole existence blameless and useful, but I have failed, and fallen far even from my own undoubted standard of duty. Will you help me now, dear Humphrey, to spend the rest of my life in following steadily, so far as I can, in our Master's steps—the shining steps which the Light of the World left in their brightness to guide us still? For I have proved myself so weak that I must trust to you to lead me on aright."

"We will help each other, darling," he answered, drawing her closer to him; "for I must tell you that I too have resolved to make my future existence very different from the past. As I stood by my cousin's death-bed I determined that the rule of my own life henceforward should be only to 'do justice, and love mercy, and walk humbly with my God,' and I think that we have both of us learnt this great lesson, which we shall remember all our lives, that no combination of circumstances, however plausible, can justify for a single moment the smallest deviation from rectitude or from truth."

## THE END.

If we were at peace within, external things would have but little power to hurt us.

## Scientific and Useful.

## HOW TO WASH BLACK CALICOES.

Put the calicoes in a boiler with enough cold water to cover them well, and let them come to a boil. Then take out into clean water, and soap and rub any part of the white (if there is any) which still looks soiled, after which rinse, wring as dry as possible, and dry quickly. Salt thrown into the water will set the color of black calico.

## SPICED FRUIT.

Among the delicacies of the table are spiced currants, eaten instead of currant jelly, with meats. Any other acid fruit, as apples and peaches, are very nice put up in this manner. To seven pounds of fruit add three pounds of sugar, one pint of vinegar, and a tablespoonful of every kind of spice,—cloves, cinnamon, allspice, and nutmeg.

## JULIENNE SOUP.

Put a piece of butter, the size of an egg, into a soup kettle; stir until melted; cut three young onions small, fry them a nice brown; add three quarts of good, clear beef stock; a little mace, pepper and salt; let it boil one hour; add three young carrots and three turnips cut small, a stalk of celery cut fine, a pint of string beans, a pint of green peas. Let this boil two hours; if not a bright, clear colour, add a spoonful of soy.

## LETTUCE SALAD.

Pick and wash the lettuce in clear cold water; drain and toss in a clean, soft towel, lest the water clinging to the leaves should make the salad watery; then shred up fine and pour over it good canned tomato, to the taste; add a slight flavor of onion, or cress if desired; let it stand half an hour and serve. Those who prefer sweet salads can use sweetened juice of stewed rhubarb or strawberries and make delightful salads.

## WATERPROOF BLACKING.

Dissolve an ounce of borax in water, and in this dissolve gum shellac until it is the consistency of thin paste; add lamp-black to colour. This makes a cheap and excellent blacking for boots, giving them the polish of new leather. The shellac makes the boots or shoes almost entirely water-proof. Camphor dissolved in alcohol added to the blacking makes the leather more pliable and keeps it from cracking. This is sold at fifty cents for a small bottle. By making it yourself, a dollar will buy materials for a gallon.—*Canada Farmer*.

## VEAL LOAF.

Three and a-half pounds of rag log of veal, chopped fine, raw; one heaping teaspoonful of salt, same quantity of black pepper; eight heaping teaspoonfuls of crushed butter-crackers; three tablespoonfuls of milk; a piece of lard the size of an egg; two nutmegs, or allspice; thyme or sage, if desired, though some prefer to omit the herbs. Form the whole into a loaf the same as you would bread; place in a dripping-pan with a little water, and sprinkle over it bits of butter with crumbs of cracker added. Bake two hours and eat cold. Baste often while cooking, so as to avoid a hard crust.

## SAFETY FROM RATS AND MICE.

A. J. Willard, of San Mateo county, California, gives a very simple, and, in his experience, a very effective safeguard against rats and mice. He takes two round pieces of tin, like the bottom of a fruit can, punches a hole in the centre of each piece, and strings them on a strong wire, one near each end. Then he stretches the wire from side to side of the room and fastens each end firmly. Anything which is hung upon the wire between the plates of tin is safe from the rats, for if they walk out upon the wire, every time they try to mount the tin it revolves and they cannot pass over it. Mr. Willard has found the simple contrivance very useful in saving meat, grain, etc., and advises all farmers to try it.

## CRUELTY TO CHILDREN.

There is a system of oppression and cowering practised on some children at home which makes them feel worse than dogs at meals. Why should a child be compelled to observe strict silence? Why should the inquisitive old saw be so often uttered—"Children should be seen and not heard?" To many a child meal-time is a terror. The natural desire in the heart of a child, prompted by the natural craving of the stomach for something edible, overcomes this terror sufficiently to produce a ready response to the dinner bell. But the "Sit up there now, sir, and just eat your dinner, and don't let me hear a word from you," with which too many meals are spiced, is enough to make the poor child want to run from the table, and gnaw, in some secret corner, the poorest bone or the stalest crust he could find.

## SOUL MILK JEWELRY.

The very pretty jewelry, known as celluloid coral, is said to be manufactured from sour milk, which Yankee ingenuity has succeeded in thus wonderfully transforming. A firm in Mansfield, Mass., is engaged in the work, and is doing a thriving business. The milk, comes in the shape of curd from the butter and cheese making counties of New York, and looks, upon arrival, a great deal like popped corn, but before it leaves their shop it undergoes a wonderful change, and receives the name of American coral. The secret in making it up is carefully guarded, but it is certain that it has to be heated very hot, during which coloring matter is introduced, followed by a very heavy pressure. Some of it is colored black, and called jet, while some appears as celluloid. It makes very handsome jewelry, and is made into all kinds and styles known to the trade.

SLAVERY has already almost disappeared from the Nyassa district in Africa, occupied by the Free Church Livingstonia Mission.

An old lady has recently died in England aged one hundred years, whose grandson has himself a grandson.

Rev. Mr. DUNLOP, of the U. P. Church, Motherwell, considers there is not brain enough among the U.P.'s to revise the Confession, and advises the profane critics of the Confession to go to Jericho till their beards be grown.