

POOR DOCUMENT

Groder's SYRUP will cure SICK HEADACHE

THE AMERICAN BARON.

(By James De Mille.)

By this time the ladies were both at the bottom of the stairs.

Come! said Toser, hurry up, folks. I'll take one lady and you take the other.

Do you know the woods?

Like a book.

So do I said Dacres.

He grasped Mrs. Willoughby's hand and started.

Oh, said Mrs. Willoughby, it's so good for all of us, said Dacres.

Mrs. Willoughby looked back as she was dragged on after Dacres, and saw Toser following them, holding Minnie's hand. This reassured her.

Dacres dragged her on to the foot of the stairs. Here she tried to keep up with him, but it was steep, and she could not.

Whereupon Dacres stopped, and with one sweep raised her in his arms as though she were a little child, and ran up the bank. He plunged into the woods. Then he ran on farther. Then he turned and continued.

Mrs. Willoughby begged him to put her down.

No, said he, they are behind us. You can't go fast enough. I should have to wait and defend you, and then we should both be lost.

But oh, we are losing Minnie.

No, we are not, cried Dacres; that man is ten times stronger than I am. He is a perfect elephant in strength. He dashed past us on the hill.

I'll see him.

Your face was turned the other way. He is ahead of us somewhere.

Oh, I wish we could get up to him.

At this Dacres rushed on faster. The effort was tremendous. He heaped over fallen timbers, he burst through undergrowth, and he was in the woods.

Oh, I'm sure you'll kill yourself if you go so fast, said Mrs. Willoughby. We can't catch up to him.

At this Dacres slackened his pace, and went on more carefully. She again begged him to put her down.

He said no. Upon this she felt perfectly helpless, and recalled in a vague way, Minnie's ridiculous question of how would you like to be run away with a great big gorilla, man Kitty darling?

Then she began to think he was insane and felt very anxious.

At last Dacres stopped. He was utterly exhausted. He was panting terribly. It had been a fearful journey. He had run along the bank up to the narrow valley where he had traversed the day before, and when he stopped it was on the top of that precipice where he had formerly rested, and where he had nestled such dark prayers against Mrs. Willoughby.

Mrs. Willoughby looked at him, full of dismay. He was utterly broken down by this last effort.

Oh, dear! she thought. Is he sane or insane? What am I to do? It is dreadful to have to go on and honor his queer fancies.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Minnie's LAST LIFE—PRELIMINARY.

When Toser started after Dacres he led Minnie by the hand for only a little distance. On reaching the activity he seized her in his arms, thus imitating Dacres's example, and rushed up, reaching the top before the other. Then he plunged into the woods, and soon became separated from his companion.

Once in the woods, he went along quite cheerfully, carrying Minnie without any difficulty, and occasionally addressing to her a soothing remark, assuring her that she was safe. Minnie, however, made no remark of any kind, good or bad, but remained quite silent, occupied with her own thoughts. At length Toser stopped and put her down. It was a place upon the edge of a cliff on the brow of the lake, and as much as a mile from the house. The cliff was almost fifty feet high, and was perpendicular. All around was the thick forest, and it was unlikely that such a place could be discovered.

Here, said he, we've got to stop here and it's about the right place. We couldn't get any where else, and the soldiers' what soldiers' asked Minnie.

Why, they're having a fight over there, the soldiers are attacking the brigades.

Well, I didn't know. Nobody told me. And did you come with the soldiers?

Well, not exactly. I came with the priest and the young lady.

But you were not at the house?

No. They wouldn't take me all the way. The priest said I couldn't be distinguished—but I don't see why not—so he left me in the woods till he came night the lake. Well, then I stole away, and when they made an attack the brigades all ran and I was there, and I watched till I saw the coast clear, and so I came, and here we are.

Minnie now was quite silent and preoccupied, and occasionally she glanced sadly at Toser with her large, pathetic, child-like eyes. It was very piteous to look full of the most tender anxiety. Toser occasionally glanced at her, and then, like her, he sat silent, involved in his own thoughts.

And so, said Minnie at last, you're the priest himself?

The priest?

Yes.

Well, no I didn't call myself a priest. I'm a minister of the Gospel.

Well, you're not a real priest, then. All men of my calling are real priests—yes, priests and kings. I yield to no

man in the estimate which I set upon my life and holy calling.

Oh, but I mean a Roman Catholic priest, said Minnie.

A Roman Catholic priest? Me? Why, what a question! Me? a Roman Catholic? Why, in our parts folks call me the Protestant Champion.

Oh, and so you're only a Protestant after all, said Minnie, in a disappointed tone.

Only a Protestant repeated Toser, severely—only a Protestant, why aren't you yourself?

Oh, yes, but I hoped you were the other priest, you know. I did so want to have a Roman Catholic priest this time.

Toser was silent. It struck him that this young lady was in danger. Her wish for a Roman Catholic priest boded no good. She had just come from Rome. No doubt she had been too poor with. Some ecclesiastic had caught her, and had tried to prostrate her. His soul swelled with indignation at the thought.

Oh, said Minnie again, I'm so sorry.

What's the matter? asked Toser in a sympathetic voice.

I'm so sorry.

Why, that you saved my life you know.

Sorry? sorry? that I saved your life? repeated Toser, in amazement.

Oh, well, you know I did so want to be saved by a Roman Catholic priest, you know.

To be saved by a Roman Catholic priest? repeated Toser, pondering these words in his mind as he slowly pronounced them. He could make nothing of them at first, but finally concluded that they concealed some half-sanguine tendency to Rome.

What's this?—I don't like this, I said solemnly.

What do you like?

It's dangerous. It looks bad, said Toser with increased solemnity.

What's dangerous? You look so solemn that you really make me feel quite nervous.

Why your words. I see in you I think a kind of leaning toward Rome.

It isn't Rome, said Minnie. I don't lean to Rome. I only lean a little toward a Roman Catholic priest.

Worse and worse, said Toser. Dear dear! dear! worse and worse. This was all. Young woman beware! But perhaps I don't understand you. You surely don't mean that your affections are engaged to any Roman Catholic priest. You can't mean that. Why they can't marry.

But that's what I like them so far, said Minnie, in a tone that denoted that she had no intention of being trifled with. I hate people that want to marry.

Toser turned this over in his mind, but could make nothing of it. At length he thought of a young woman named Kitty, who had been tampered with by Jesuits at Rome. He thought he saw in this a statement of her belief in the Roman Catholic doctrine of celibacy.

He shook his head more solemnly than ever.

It's not Gospel, said he. It's a mere human tradition. Why for centuries there was a married priesthood even in the Latin Church. Dunstan's chief minister was married. I don't know if the Eastern Church they have always had it.

Of course all this was quite beyond Minnie's grasp. She gave a little sigh and said nothing.

Now as to Rome, repeated Toser. Have you ever given a careful study to the Apostles?—not a hasty reading, as people generally do, but a serious, earnest and careful examination?

I'm sure I haven't any idea what in the world you're talking about, said Minnie. I wish you wouldn't talk so. I don't understand one single word of it.

Toser started and stared at this. It was a depth of ignorance that transcended that of the other lady with whom he had conversed. But he attributed it to Roman influences. They dread the Apocalypse, and had not allowed either of these young ladies to become acquainted with its tremendous pages. Moreover there was something else. There was a certain light and trifling tone which she used in referring to these things and which he felt very uneasy indeed.

Toser at length cleared his throat and fixed upon Minnie a very affectionate and tender look.

My dear young friend said he, have you ever reflected upon the way you are leaving?

At this Minnie gave him a frightened little look and her head fell.

You are young now, but you can't be young always, youth and beauty and loveliness all are yours, but they can't last; and now is the time for you to make your choice—now in life's gay morn. It had never occurred to her that she was leaving, but she felt that she was.

Oh, dear! said Minnie, I know it. But I can't—and I don't want to—and I think it's very unkind in you. I don't want to make any choice. I don't want to say of you. It's so horrid.

This was a dreadful snook to Toser; but he could not turn aside from this beautiful yet serious creature.

Oh, I entreat you—I implore you, my dear—

I do wish you wouldn't talk to me that way, and call me your dear. I don't like it; no, not even if you did save my life, though really I don't know there was any danger. But I'm not your dear.

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