

For the *Hearthstone*.
PARTED.

BY DR. NORMAN SMITH.

We have parted, ay, forever,
Broken is the magic tie,
Now I wander weary hearted,
North a distant foreign sky;
Yet there lingers, fondly lingers,
Mid the happy scenes of yore,
Thoughts that still are eager seeking
For the joys that bloom no more.

We have parted, but thine image,
Lovingly as the fairest flower,
In my heart I'll fondly treasure,
Till the closing of life's hour;
Where'er my footsteps wander,
In distant climes and lands afar,
Thou wilt be my guardian angel,
Still wilt be my guiding star.

We have parted, but entrancing
Close around thy cherished name,
Memory wreaths thy sweetest flowers,
In an endless chain;
Time may bear me swiftly onward
Over life's tempestuous sea,
Yet, amid its wild commotion,
Of I'll turn and think of thee.

BROOKDALE.

BY ERNEST BRENT.

Author of *Love's Redemption*, &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. GRANTLEY IS SUGGESTIVE.

The gentlemanly George Darrill went out when breakfast was over. It was his habit to take a constitutional between the morning meal, and what, in his airy way, he spoke of to his Dowd-street friends as a tiffin.

It was a great man still in his way amongst a certain professional set, with whom he drank bitter beer at the silent hours in the Strand vicinity, and restored his nervous system by sundry draughts of something stronger. There is scarcely a more pitiable object in this fair creation than a man about town in the early day, before the customary stimulants have done their work.

"I shall be better able to see Grantley after a stroll," he said, as he passed a silk handkerchief round his hat—an irrefragable hat being one of his gentlemanly points: "and if he should come before I return you will keep him here, and try to see what he wants."

"He will not come before you return," said Mrs. Darrill, quietly. "You must return before he comes, George, and without too much artificial nerve, mind."

George Darrill muttered something about not being dictated to, but there was an undercurrent of meekness in his tone when he said he would not be longer if he could help it. He liked to keep up a semblance of an authority he had long since resigned, and it deceived no one.

"I wonder he did not ask you for a little change," observed Theodore, before George Darrill was well out of hearing; "he generally does, unless it's Friday, and he knows we are cleared out till treasury time on Saturday."

"Speak of him with more respect, Theodore. You might do that, for my sake; I have suffered enough for both of you, heaven knows."

"I don't see what you suffered for me," said the youth, sulkily; "or, if you did suffer, it was no fault of mine; besides, you think I forget how he used to serve me before I was big enough and strong enough to take care of myself. And I tried to think he was my father," he added, bitterly. "Little thinking he had two hundred a year of my own which he was spending."

The actress turned from him with a sigh. It was part of her punishment, that the son of the man she had learned to love passionately was the worst trouble of her life. She could not defend her husband from the young man's sneers. George Darrill had lost the respect of all good men, and thrown away his own. He had decided so low as to borrow money of Theodore, and his general conduct was not such as to induce Theodore to treat him with consideration.

Ada was glad when the youth followed her husband's examples and went out. She was quite aware that he would be found the next few hours at the bar of a tavern, or in the midst of a knot of betting men, but he had grown beyond her control, and it was a relief at least to be rid of him, no matter where he went. She often asked herself, in the moments when she did reflect, who was responsible for the way the boyish reprobate had taken. She determined to set him a better example, and appeal to his affection; but when she attempted to do so, she found her patience required too great a change in the habit which had become necessary, and so the good resolutions made in the morning were forgotten till the next, then only remembered to be forgotten again.

But for Walter existence would have been very barren to the once popular and still beautiful actress. It was years since her heart had shaped a prayer, till he grew up and gave signs of a true and gentle nature, which she prayed might never change.

He was very quiet and studious. He was fond of books, and had picked up a knowledge of music without assistance, except such as came to him voluntarily from the ladies who visited Mrs. Darrill. The only desire she had left was to save for him, make a fortune for him, and keep him from following in the footsteps of his father.

"And there is not much I would not do," she thought, as she looked at him this morning, "to save you from George Darrill's wretched example. I often thank heaven you are not a girl, or with such a parent your fate might have been even worse than mine."

Mr. Grantley came in the afternoon. The gentlemanly George had returned with just sufficient artificial nerve to give his manner a defiant cringe. He never was entirely at his ease with the polished scoundrel, who was fifteen years his junior.

"I see you have received my letter," said Everard, putting his hat on his cane and his cane in a corner, against one of those heavy sideboards generally to be found in furnished apartments, where dining-room and drawing-room are combined in one. "I am glad to find you at home, Mr. George Darrill."

"You mentioned important business, Mr. Grantley, and expressed a wish to see me."

"Yes, I did. I want your help on very important and rather serious business—that is, if you are willing to serve a friend—at a price."

The gentlemanly George waved his hand, as if such a consideration as price were wide of the question.

"You remember," Everard went on, "that about two years ago, you, madame, wrote, at my suggestion, to Eugene Temple, of Brookdale, mentioning your relationship to him, asking a little temporary assistance, and omitting the trifling circumstance that, prior to your marriage to his uncle Clarence, you were married to the gentlemanly George."

"That was at your suggestion too," said Ada, quietly.

The stage world is so much like the real that her dramatic experience had given her a tolerable insight into character, and she had studied Everard Grantley to advantage.

"Yes, madam, you are right; and he left me to see to it, as he did to all things then; and being a liberal-minded young gentleman he instructed me to make you such an allowance as would meet the case justly."

"And you gave me a cheque for three hundred pounds," said Ada. "I was very grateful for it, Mr. Grantley. I hope you do not think I have forgotten how kind you were."

"I mention it, madam, because it leads up to the more serious topic. I had interested Eugene so deeply on your behalf that I have no doubt he would have done much more had he not been deterred by a scruple of conscience. He was not quite sure he was spending his own money."

Mr. George Darrill with uneasy visions of having to refund the three hundred advanced to Ada, waited with considerable anxiety to hear what was coming.

"We have heard," said Everard, addressing himself to the actress chiefly, and keeping his gaze fixed upon her, "that there may be another claimant for Brookdale. You, madam, are aware that Clarence Temple went abroad—how many years ago?"

"Two and twenty,"

"Thanks; and in some part of America—Philadelphia, I think—he married Miss Ellen Danvers."

Ada Darrill drew a deep breath as she said—

"Yes! I remember it well."

"Not, unfortunately, without cause. Well,

search, come in contact with the boy you would know him at once."

"How?"

"By the extraordinary resemblance which the Temples bear to each other—always taking the likeness from the father. Thus, Clarence Temple and his brother, the parent of Eugene, might have been taken for one and the same when apart. Again, Eugene, the present master of Brookdale, and Theodore, the son of Clarence Temple and George Darrill's wife, are singularly alike. This resemblance has run through the family for generations, and depend upon it, find the lawful son of Clarence Temple when and where you may he will be no extraordinary like our Theodore that he might be his twin brother."

"If he is," said Darrill, "it will be very strange."

"It will be more strange if he is not," said Everard, and I think, George Darrill, it would be as well for you to take Theodore with you. The voyage would do him no harm. It would take him away from bad company, give him new ideas, and make him what he really is in one sense, the son of a gentleman. There is not the slightest doubt of his paternity; every tenant on the Brookdale estate would recognise him as a Temple at once, where he by any chance to be seen down there."

"And he might have been," Ada said with a gloomy glance at her husband; "better men than George Darrill would have died a hundred times, but he lived to return."

"Fate, my dear madam, and it could not have taken a more gentlemanly shape. He is a little battered now, I admit, but a couple of

years' travelling and temperate living may restore our George to something of his pristine beauty."

"A couple of years?"

"You could not surely hope to get through your work in less time," said Grantley, in grave deprecation. "You have first to find the heir, then the proof of his identity—nothing must be left unfinished. I shall be well contented if you bring the air of Brookdale home in two years, with indisputable proof that he is the son of Clarence Temple and Ellen Danvers. You have the most particular point of all them. You must acquire every atom of information regarding that lady and her family as a ground-work to the whole."

"I think," said Darrill, slowly, "I begin to see what you require of me."

"There is no doubt you will before I have done. I provide you with everything needful for the journey, Theodore shall have a handsome outfit and some pocket-money."

"Suppose he should refuse to come?"

"He will not refuse. Let me have half an hour's conversation with him, and I think I shall be able to impress upon him the benefit to be derived from the trip. I will give you the rest of my instructions and the funds this evening, adding this one thing more: you must keep a diary from the time you set foot in America, and furnish me with the details of your search, even to the minutest details for a flaw would be fatal to the cause of the claimant you are going to discover."

"When are we to be ready to start?"

"On Thursday, the second day from this; and now, with your permission, I have something to say to Mr. Darrill."

The gentlemanly George took the hint and his lips together. He stopped to prefer a modest request for a trifling temporary favour—the favours he required were always trifling and always temporary. Everard reading the request in his eyes before a word was spoken folded a five-pound note and gave it him.

"And now, Mr. Grantley," said Ada, when her husband had gone, "what does this mean?"

Though they were alone, he gave the answer in a whisper, and her cheeks blanched. He filled a glass with brandy, and she drained it with a shudder; but whatever had struggled to her lips to urge against the words he whispered died away under the strong quietude of his hand, and the strange controlling power of his gaze.

"Remember," he said, "it is only what might have been after all."

"Yes; but the sin," she said. "Everard Grantley, it seems too terrible to think of."

He smiled between his teeth, and with his lips firmly closed. He was a handsome man, but his face had a curious and deadly expression when he smiled like that.

Everard Grantley had expected Theodore would offer a little opposition to the journey, but he was not prepared for the sturdy insouciance with which that young gentleman declined to go on any terms.

"Where are you, I should like to know, that you are going to send me a husband miles out of London, whether I like it or not?" he said, when Grantley told him what was desired.

"You have got some motive for being so kind and liberal towards me, I should think. Perhaps you want to get me out of the way?"

"On the contrary, my dear young friend, there is no one in whose welfare I am more keenly interested," Everard replied, with imperturbable good temper. "You have known

son of some nobleman at least. He did not care for the shame such an assertion attached to his mother."

He went with Grantley into the back-room, and they sat together for half an hour. There was a singular elation in his bearing when the interview ended, but he was as docile as a child to Everard. When the Thursday came, he was quite ready and eager to take his place on board the vessel for America.

Ada and Mr. Grantley went to the docks at the final hour.

The slavish love which had grown upon George Darrill for the woman he was leaving behind nearly unmanned him, and he was glad to end the painful scene. She thought how different this was to their separation in the years gone by, when he left her with a hurried and impatient kiss, angry at the tears she could not suppress. Retribution in that simple thing came now. There were no tears except those he wept for her.

Grantley's last words to him were somewhat singular spoken at such a moment, and in the presence of him they most concerned.

"Take care of Theodore," he said, "and if anything should happen to him, let me hear without loss of time."

The young man laughed.

"Nothing will happen to me," he answered, "unless the change of climate is fatal to my constitution. I don't think I ought to have started without medical advice, when you know how delicate I am."

Grantley waved an adieu to both. The dock, with its uncouth crowd of labouring men, and its busy traffic, was not a pleasant place for leave-taking. Not even the lovers of Mantua could have put any romance into their last impetuous farewell, and it had been fated to take place in the midst of hurrying passengers, calls of rope, and thick-voiced sailors, who made such noisy and malodorous accessories to the parting scene in the muddy end of the river near Tower-hill.

"You have not much to be proud of in your oldest-born, Mrs. Darrill," he said, as he led her out to the hired brougham in waiting. "Was it your wish to make him so thoroughly the son of his father?"

"Surely, Everard Grantley, you might find something harder to say at such a time as this."

"At such a time! Why, if neither ever returned, you would be the gainer. You have lost an ugly background in the gentlemanly George, and the Atlantic may save our ingenious Theodore from a worse fate."

"Still, he is my son," she said, with a tremor in her voice, "and I could almost pray for his safe return."

"My dear madam, if that will bring him back, pray by all means. Let his name be remembered in your orisons, whatever they may be. He is more than your son: he is the son of Clarence Temple, and I would not have him lost for all there is in the ship that is taking him from London. Ours is a very ancient family, and every member of it is valuable to me."

CHAPTER IX.

CLARENCE TEMPLE'S BOX.

Margaret's brother had been gone some time before Laurence Drayton could make up his mind to leave the quiet haunt where he was so profoundly happy. That fine old-fashioned house, in the midst of the most picturesque scenery on the southern coast, was such a change from the clubs and chambers of the town-bred man.

He had feared it would be monotonous at first; but as the tranquil days restored his wearied brain to its healthy tone, he saw how beautiful Brookdale was, with hill, and glen, and waterfall, landscape and sea.

There were the grand green heights on every side but one, and where the grand green heights were not, there was the ocean. Sweet as it must have been to see these things in self-communion—sweet as the repose was to one out of whom hard-worked years never could drive the poetry engrained in his nature—it was sweeter still to share communion and repose with one who had become, as he himself said—for Julia Temple was to him as fair and pure, as gentle and as sympathetic, as the *Agave* for whom *Ninus* pined.

"I shall be sorry when my story is finished," he said to Julia. She stole sometimes to his eyrie with a book; but the book was rarely read—it was more pleasant to watch the thoughtful face and rapid pen, and know that she alone of all the world had the privilege of penetrating the sacred precincts of the writing-room. "I shall be very sorry, Julia, and I am getting to the last chapter now."

Julia could scarcely understand his regret. To her, a story finished was something accomplished—another monument to the literary fame she was so proud of, and for which he cared so little.

"It will be associated with Brookdale always," he went on, as he laid his quill aside. "Do you know, little one, a story is more to its author than what it is to the outside world—a mere string of incidents and chapters, with a bit of character here and there."

"You mean that it must be read in the spirit in which it is written?"

"That were to hope for too much," he smiled. "It is something to be read at all in these days. Stories are read, and then men in general. They get either too much or too much blame. But this is not what I want. Every chapter I have written here is a record of some pleasant days spent in the dear old place. I shall think of Brookdale when I look it through."

Mr. Drayton turned his face from the tender, serious eyes, and was silent then. His holiday was nearly over, and he had not the moral courage to fix the date of his departure. The prospect of the return to his dingy London chambers had never seemed so uninviting.

"I have filled these few months away very sweetly," he said, after a pause. "The *delecta fine* mode has had more traction than I ever found it before. Certainly I never felt so much freed of the inevitable."

"What is the inevitable, Laurence?"

"The great metropolis, as the title serves all it. The city of toll and dust, heart-ache, brain-work, false good-fellowship, and petty idol worship—and these things are more palpable to a man without a home than to him who can forget them by the quiet of his fireside."

"Why do you not have a home then?"

"Have I the right to fulfil myself with my frailty and singularities, upon some poor bit, who might think me a mixture of her kind? Even and her kind? I am at once the most unpractical and most methodical of men. I like easy, indulgent, and luxury to a selfish extent. I have a rooted aversion to poverty, Julia. I have a vagrant disposition, and my work to me when the moon is on me is more than wife or friend could be; you can imagine what an odd kind of husband I should make."

"You have surely drawn a flattering description of yourself, Laurence," said Julia.

"I know the weak points of my nature, and speak of them as candidly as my dearest friend would. Marriage to me would be a serious and a curious undertaking. To begin with, I am poor."

"Not very poor."

"Poor, if I measure my income by my instincts. I don't suppose I shall ever make more than seven hundred a year, and that only for a fixed period. Literature is not like business. There is no profit attached to it. No matter how much a man may get for his books it is simply his price, and he never saves. A provident writer is as rare as a blue diamond or a white crow. When Providence gives him the power of turning paper into gold, fate makes a hole in his pocket, and keeps it always open. Some men are rich on seven hundred a year. Some men are rich on two; but these are not literary men. My butcher or my grocer saves money, because he pays wages. He has a business, makes profits, and puts so much away. By and by, he trains a juvenile butcher and grocer in the way he should go, and retires in peace to a drawing-room over the shop, or a cottage in the desolate region of Dulwich, and that man is happy. Life to him means an undisturbed table, with plenty of beer and grog, and a seat under a cherry tree in his own garden. His purpose is achieved. He is as he would say, and speak of them as candidly as my dearest friend would. Marriage to me would be a serious and a curious undertaking. To begin with, I am poor."

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