HER HUMBLE **LOVER**

CHAPTER I.

"Dear me, oh, dear me! This is very unfortunate—very. Just like Jack—poor Jack!" and the rector of Northwell heaves a sigh and shakes his sleek head complainingly at the ceiling.

The scene is the drawing-room of Northwell Rectory, a comfortable room, looking out toward the sea and the estuary of the Stor. The speaker is a middle-aged man, marked with the usual clerical hall mark—sleek, not to say fat, rather bald-headed, and with a coft healtating nervous manwith a soft, hesitating, nervous man ner which is apt to strike one uncomfortably at first sight, and to provoke a smile on better acquaintance. The person addressed is Mrs. Podswell, the rector's wife, a thin, insipid personage, with faint blue eyes, and hair of that color which a humorist has likened to a garden gravel path. The is reclining full length on a her favorite position, and she, too, heaves a sigh as if the enormities of the said "Jack" were indeed hard to be borne.

"What else does the letter say? she asks, in a thin, querulous voice.
"Really, I think it rather inconsider-

ate of Mr.—Mr.—"
"Mr. Brown, the executor," says the rector, glancing at a letter, which he has been reading in his fat hands. "Nothing else, my dear, excepting that the girl is coming on here at once. It appears that he has duly proved poor Jack's will, in which he directs that she shall be sent to us. He incloses a copy of the will and—"

"Did he die well off?" asks Mrs. Pcdswell, with a sudden interest. The rector shakes his head at the

The rector shakes his head at the ceiling again, and coughs behind his hand with an air of gentle reproach.
"I am afraid not, my dear, I am afraid not. From what I can make out there is just a pittance for the girl, a poor hundred a year or so."

Mrs. Podswell sighs. Podswell sighs.

Mrs. Podswell signs.
"That is better than nothing," suggests the rector, mildly; but Mrs.
Podswell shakes her head doubtfully.
"Well, of course, better than nothing in one way, certainly; but—it ing in one way, certainly; but-it makes it all the more awkward in

another. scarcely understand," murmurs the rector, rubbing his shining chin, and blinking inquiringly at the sharp face on the sofa cushion. In the matter of brains the Podswell gray mare is the better horse. "I scarcely understand, Amelia; surely it is better than if she were left penniless and a burden—I use the word in no uncharitable sense, I trust—a burden to

her friends. "She needn't have been a burden," cays Mrs. Podswell, sharply. "Penniless girls are not expected to hang about and live on their relatives. They go out as governesses or companions or something of that kind; and, of course, this girl could have done that, But if she has got a hundred a year, she will be too high for that, and we shall have to keep her at home, I sup-

The rectornods. 'I see, my dear; I see. No; I suo rose she wouldn't care to go out. being—so to speak—independent; and of course she couldn't live alone. I'm afraid, Amelia, she will have to reside

Mrs. Podswell groans softly. "One knows nothing about her, says, querulously. "How long is it since you saw your brother?"

"My half-brother, my dear," corrects Mr. Podswell. "How long?" and he rubs his chin reflectively—
"now long? Dear me! I forget. You
see, he disappeared, so to speak, after
that unfortunate marriage of his; and if I may say so-became, as it were, a kind of outcast. Poor Jack!"
Mrs. Podswell frowns.

"The woman he married was an actress, was she not?" she asks, with bated breath. The rector colors, and shakes his

head with mild horror.
"Something of that sort, my dear.
But—ahem!—as she has been dead so long, it will be better perhaps if we forget her antecedents.'

"I can never forget them," remarks
"Is an never forget them," remarks
Mrs. Podswell, severely. "I shall never
look at the girl without remembering
that her mother was scarcely a respectable woman."

suggests the rector, mildly, "that is rather too sweeping a term,

Spots on painted walls come

off - easily - when you use

d Dutch

Amelia; but we will not argue it. I have little doubt that Jack carefully concealed her mother's history from the child."

"It is to be hoped so," assents Mrs. Podswell. "It is also to be hoped that she has not inherited any of her mother's tastes and manners; though that, perhaps, is too much to be ex-pected. The daughter of a tight-rope

"Not, I think, so bad as that," mur-

"Not, I think, so bad as that," murmurs the rector, very deprecatingly. "I think an actress, my dear, an actress," "That's as bad," retorts the amiable lady, sharply. "I can draw no distinction. How your brother could have committed such a social crime I cannot understand."

"Jeek was always rather."

"Jack was always rather strange and eccentric; strongwilled and will as a boy. He took after his father, so I am told; while I take after mine;" and the rector beams on his boots with

pious self-gratulation.

There is silence for a moment and the rector coughs timidly.

"I suppose you have made all preparations for her reception, my dear?"

he asks, meekly.
"I have done all that is necessary," answers Mrs. Podswell. "I trust I know my duty; much as I could wish to have been spared this trial, I humbly hope that I shall not shrink from it, Joseph."

it, Joseph."

"No, no, certainly not," assents the rector, hurriedly. "Certainly not, my dear. I am quite sure that you will nerve yourself to do your duty. After all, she is my brother's child, and though I could have wished that the trust had not been placed with me, I will endeavor to carry it out to the best of my poor ability. This is a vale of tears—"

"If you are going to send to meet the train you had better do so a once," remarked Mrs. Podswell, cut-

once," remarked Mrs. Polswen, cut-ting the threatened sermon short.
"I've sent, my dear," he says, glanc-ing at the clock. "It is almost time they were here."
"Ring the bell, and tell Mary to bring in a cup of tea," murmurs Mrs.

bring in a cup of tea," murmurs sits
Podswell.

The rector obeys, and the summons
is answered by a demure domestic,
who walks with slow, noiseless steps,
and speaks in a muffled voice; and
the rector, having given the order, fidgets about the room, rubbing his fat
hands, and purring softly like a cat,
with the Redwall resumes her forwhile Mrs. Podswell resumes her for-mer attitude and stares with halfclosed eyes at vacancy.

It is scarcery necessary to set down in plain language that Northwell Rectory is not a lively place. Dull, grim respectability is the presiding genius in the house of the Podswells; everything is done by rule, life is made to measure with the dry accuracy of a two-foot rule; laughter is banished and proscribed as if it were a crime: the very voices of the inmates, are hushed, their very footsteps muffled. No. certainly not a lively place, but No, certainly not a lively place, but respectable—very.

The maid servant brings in the tea.

and Mrs. Podswell makes an effort and sits up to take it. As she does so the door opens, and a boy comes in.

Me is a pale-faced little fellow of

nine, with large brown eyes that, as he stands in the doorway, survey the room with a grave, precocious air of

speculation. "Is that you, Archie?" says his fa-

ther, with an unctuous smile. "Come in. What do you want?" in. What do you want?"
The child comes in slowly, but, instead of replying, walks to the table takes up a book, and, carrying it to the window-seat, bends over it with an air that almost instantly grows ab-

'Archibald, do not crush the tains!" says the thin voice from the sofa, presently.

The child looks up slowly, puts the

book down with an absent, bored expression, and slowly leaves the room.
"Mary, put that book in its place,"
says her mistress, "Tiresome boy! He

makes a litter wherever he goes.

The maid replaces the book of makes a litter wherever he goes."

The maid replaces the book on the table in the exact position it occupied before, sweeps a speck of imaginary dust from the cover, and returns to her mistress side to take the empty cup, just as if she were a machine wound up to execute a set task.

The clock strikes the hour, there is the sound of carriage wheels, and the rector, with a little preliminary cough, remarks: "There she is, my dear."

remarks: "There she is, my dear."
Mrs. Podswell means faintly.
"I do hope she will not make

scene- I cannot bear a scene.

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nerves are all unstrung as it is. What did you say her name was, Joseph?"

"Signa, my dear." "What?" ejaculat ejaculates Mrs. Podswell.

"What?" ejaculates Mrs. Podswell.
"How do you spell it?"
"S-i-g-n-a," replies the rector.
"What a fearfully heathenish
name," says the querulous voice. "I
never heard of it before."
"I believe," murmurs the rector,
apologetically, "that it was her moth-

Mrs. Podswell groans, and the groat

is scarcely off her lips when the door opens and a young girl enters. For a moment she stands with her hands clasped loosely before her, her nands chasped loosely before her, her face veiled, her slim, graceful figure up-right as a dart, in perfect repose, waiting to be received; and so smitten by surprise are the amiable pair that she is kept there while the clock ticks a minute. For, relied are also the there is a competing so veiled as she is, there is something so full of maidenly dignity, of indefinable grace and power in the dark-class figure, that, to put it vulgarly, the Reverend Joseph and his wife are taken aback. What they had expected they could scarcely have said so ed they could scarcely have said so in so many set words, but it was cer-tainly not this tall, graceful, distin-guished-looking lady that their meag-re imaginations had pictured. The rector is the first to recover

himself; with a little cough and the suave smile which men of his class find so useful he comes forward with fat hand extended.

"So you have come, my dear?" he This is so self-evident that it scarce-

ly admits of a reply, but the young girl says, "Yes," and puts her long, slim, gloved hand in the short, fat "Yes, you have come," repeats the

rector, rather feebly, "and—er—I am sure we are very glad to see you. This, my dear, is your—ahem—Aunt Amelia. Your aunt, I am sorry to say, is not so strong as we could wish; she is-

The thin figure raises itself up right on the sofa, and extends a clawlike hand. "I am a martyr to nerves," says the querulous voice. "Have you had a pleasant journey? Won't you sit

"Won't you sit down?" This, then, is all the welcome which the orphan girl is to receive. She is asked to "sit down" after a journey of some hundreds of miles, as if she had but

come to pay an afternoon call.

Signa sits down and raises her veil, and the two pairs of eyes watching her, each after their kind, blink with fresh surprise, for dust as the curtain screens Ruben's grand picture in the Antwerp Cathedral, so has the thick veil hidden a picture of even greater loveliness; the loveliness of a young

girl, fresh, unstained, and refined by a deep sorrow.

The rector, being a slow man, stares at the pale face, with its clear-cut features, its dark gray, weary eyes, and soft, dark, brown hair, in speechless amazement approaching awe; but his wife forces her admira-

back. "I dare say you would like to go up to your room at once," she says, in a business-like way. "Will you have

business-like way. a cup of tea?" 'Or a glass of wine?" puts in rector, weakly.

The girl shakes her head.
"No, thank you—I am only tired. I will wait-

"We dine in half an hour," said Mrs. Podswell.

The girl bows and rises, and a lean The girl bows and rises, and a lean hand is stretched out to ring the bell. "Show Miss Grenville her room, says the thin voice, and the martyr to nerves sinks back as if she had done her duty, and a little over.

"Ahem!" coughs the rector, as the door closes. "A—I think I may say

door closes. "A—I think I a remarkable girl, my dear."

a remarkable girl, my dear."

"Remarkable! In what way?" is the irritable retort. "Perhaps you mean extraordinary?"

"Well, yes," he admits, feebly; "that is as good a word. Extraordinary, yes. Dear me! I had no idea she was so beautiful."

"Beautiful!" cohoose Man Parket

"Beautiful!" echoes Mrs. Podswell, with a little enort. "Pray, Joseph, do not let us commence with an abdo not let us commence with an absurdity. I did not perceive her beauty. I don't like gray eyes. I may be wrong—I trust I am—but I have always been taught to connect gray eyes with a deceitful temperament. I trust it is not so in this case. But beautiful—oh, dear, no!" "Well, perhaps not," assents the rector, rubbing his chin timidly. "Not actly beautiful perhaps, but ex-exactly beautiful, perhaps, but ex-ex-

traordinary."
"Exactly: that is what I said. sincerely hope that it was merely fancy on my part, but it seemed to me that there was something cold and unnatural about her manner. In there is anything I dislike about a girl," adds the martyr, in the tone of an icicle, "it is lack of warmth and impulse. Some persons may admire impulse. this new-fashioned self-possession as

"She seemed very self-possessed,"
murmurs the rector, shaking his head
at the ceiling. "A perfect lady, evi-

The martyr snorts with a contemp-The martyr snorts with a contemptuous air of long suffering.
"Pray don't express such a decided opinion, Joseph. You really cannot know anything about it in five minutes; and if you are going to dress, you had better go; there is turbot today, and I don't want it spoiled."

"No, no, certainly not," assents the

And with a last shake of the head, and a deep sigh, as of the most pro-found resignation under a heavy trial, he glides out of the room.

Meanwhile, Signa has followed the maid-servant through a long, winding passage lined with time-stained oak ge that in the hands of an arta passage that in the hands of an artist might easily be transformed into a glorious, picturesque hall, but which at present is in settled harmony with the prevailing gloom—and into a hedroor.

into a bedroom. into a bedroom.

"There is your luggage, miss," says
the maid, pointing to an old and battered portmanteau seared with much
traveling, and still bearing fragments

traveling, and still bearing fragments of many-colored labels, English and foreign. "The dinner-bell will ring in half an hour. Is there anything I can do for you?"

The question is not unlikely put, for the girl has all a true woman's admiration for beauty, even in those of her own sex, and there is something in the lovely face, perhaps its pallor, or the subtle light that shines in the dark erry even that touches her. dark-grey eyes, that touches her.
"Nothing, thanks," says Signa, sinking on to the bed, and taking off her hat with a little weary gesture, and the maid, after lingering a moment,

goes away, and straight down to the kitchen, where she delivers her criti-cisms upon the new-comer. "A perfect lady, and as beautiful as a picture. Poor young thing!"
Signa sits for a few moments on the
side of the bed, her eyes fixed on the window with a gaze that assuredly sees nothing of the exquisite view of sea and river, meadows and hills, that

the lattice window frames. Then with a sigh and a smile—it is difficult to say which is the sadder of the two—she recalls her thoughts, that have been backward, and begins her tollet.

"Half an hour the girl said," she murmurs. "It will not do to be late. If I am not mistaken, unpunctuality is accounted one of the cardinal sins in this place. What a place it is!" and she shudders. "He used to describe and she sauders. The user to describe it as like this; but I never pictured it." "He" was the father gone to rest. "How can it be possible, in God's good world, for people to live in a house like this, to endure the gloom and darkness? But they don't endure it, they enjoy it! Oh, my poor darling, if you could see me now," and she closes here yes, not with tears, but with the same strange smile. "You, whose one aim and endeavor was to make life bright and sweet!"

She rubs here eyes with the towel for a longer time than is necessary to dry them, then she looks up suddenly and seizes the hair brushes, and lets down a flood of beautiful hair that has been, and will again be, hidden in the think coils that nestle so closely on the shapely head. "But I promised the shapely head. "But I promised him I would not fret and mourn, and will not! No! Even this dreary place and these poor, miserable ple, shall not make me break this promise! Perhaps they are not so bad as they look. Some people, he used to say, are always cold and un-

comfortable when they are embarrassed, and I fancy my uncle and aunt-I suppose they are my uncle and aunt
—were embarrassed and nervous.
They will improve on acquaintance,
no doubt, but." with a faint little
smile that gives a strange and subtle
charm to the beautiful face. "I wish he wouldn't rub his chin, and I wish she hadn't any nerves to speak of."

Clang, clang, as with a long toll like a knell, the dinner-bell sounds, and with a finishing sweep of the brush and that last touch to her neck, which every woman—Heaven knows why— bestows as she leaves the glass, Signa

goes downstairs. As she enters the drawing-room, the ector comes forward to meet her, as if she had kept them waiting for at

least a quarter of an hour.

"Your aunt," he says, blushing and rubbing his chin, "has gone in. She always goes in five minutes before the bell rings. Will you take my arm, my dear?

"Five minutes before," says Signa. "I will remember."

The rector coughs apologetically as the thought flashes or rather dawns upon him that the girl has a beautiful

-no, extraordinary-voice. "I didn't mean to insinuate that you should do so," he says. "But your aunt is—is singular in her habits, and —" they reach the door as he speaks, and he allows the sentence to remain

unfinished. It is not a bad dinner—Signa has often fared worse—but, like every-

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low many hairs has a Bear

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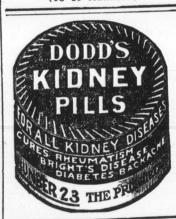
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uning else in the place, it wants light and life and laughter to make it enjoyable. The rector eats his fish joyable. The rector eats his hish-an excellent turbot, by the way—as if he were trying to look as if he didn't enjoy it; carves the fowl with an apologetic air, and sighs deeply as he inquires if he shall send her the wing or the leg. The maid hands her the vegetables as an undertaker hands the box of gloves round at a funeral, and asks: "Sherry, miss?" in a voice of

muffled solemnity. (To be continued.)



SOUR CREAM RECIPES.

There are almost indefinite uses There are almost indefinite uses for good sour cream. When it is but slightly soured, with a scant teaspoonful of soda as a corrective for each pint of cream; it makes delicious ice cream. Here follow some good sour cream recipes:

Chocolate cake—One cupful of sugar, one-quarter cupful of sour cream, one and one-half cupfuls of flour, one tablespoonful of butter, one

cream, one and one-nair cupfuls of flour ,oen tablespoonful of butter, one egg, one-half teaspoonful of soda, one teaspoonful of vanilla, one square of chocolate melted in one-half cupful of boiling water, one teaspoonful of bak-

ing powder.
Sour Cream Cookies—One-half cup ful of butter, two cupfuls of sugar, one and one-half cupfuls of sour cream, one rounding teaspoonful teaspoonful two eggs

anilla, flour to roll soft. Steamed Pudding-One cupful of molasses, one cupful of sour cream, two cupfuls of Graham flour, one teaspoonful of soda (rounding), one cupful of raisins, one teaspoonful of cin-namon, one half teaspoonful of cloves, one-half teaspoonful of salt.

three hours. Raisin Puffs—Two eggs, one-quarter Raisin Fulls—I we eggs, one-quarter cupful of butter, two cupfuls of flour, one cupful of sour cream, one cupful of raisins, seeded and chopped, one teaspoonful of soda. Steam in cups one hour and serve with any good pudding sauce.

Johnny Cake-One tablespoonful of butter, two tablespoonfuls of sugar, one-half teaspoonful of salt, one egg one-hair teaspoonting of sair, one cupful of sour cream, one cupful of cornmeal, one cupful of flour, one teaspoonful of soda.

Graham Muffins—One cupful of more cupful of cupful of

sour cream, one-half cupful of mo-lasses, two cupfuls of graham flour, two eggs, well beaten, one-quarter teaspoonful of salt, one teaspoonful of soda. Bake in quick oven.

You can't accomplish anything without effort. Even a new broom won't sweep clean unless you use it.



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Vagabonds.

In Japan I bought six vases, all alike, of cloisonne,

For I thought me of the weddings
back at home in U. S. A.

And the weary hunt for gifts to give

When I landed, old Tom Taylor was about to wed his Grace; packed me up two cloisonne and sent them on apace,

In the hope that they would fill some And when Jimmy married Helen I re-To be startled, at the function, when
I reached the gift-room door;
For I found that some one else had

sent two more. Six months later George and Vera got the last two of my stock; And I ambled to that wedding and an-

other painful shock
When I saw six odd-shaped vases in
a fleck. Time has passed, and Beth has trusted me enough to be my wife; And the honeymoon is over, and we

settle down to life In a snug apartment decked with pre sents rife. In our den we have six vases, all alike

of cloisonne— Sort of pals—they seem to know me and I want to see them stay,

my Beth received two wedding-

cards to-day.

—Charles Elkin, jun., in Life. "Love makes the word go round," quoted the Wise Guy. "No wonder there are so many dizzy girls," chuck-

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piness to some weak debilitated per-son. If you have not used this medicine yourself ask your neighbors and they will tell you of some sufferer who has been restored to health and strength through using Dr. Williams' pink Pills. One who has always a good word to say for Dr. Williems' Pink Pills is Mrs. Luther Smith, of West Hill, Ont., who writes: "I feel it a duty as well as a pleasure to tell you what Dr. Williams' Pink Pills have done for me I had an operation. have done for me. I had an operation for tumors. The operation in itself was quite successful, but I was so badly run down and anaemic that I did not gain strength, and the incision did not heal and kept discharging for nearly a year, until I weighed only eighty-six pounds and could scarcely walk across the floor. I had got so sick of doctors' medicine that I would vomit when I tried to take it. A good friend urged me to try Dr. Williams Pink Pills, so I bought a box. Before they were gone I thought I could feel a difference, and I got a further supnly. By the time I had taken five boxes the wound ceased discharging and commenced to heal. I took in all thirteen boxes and am to-day enjoy-ing the best health of my life and weigh 140 pounds. I sincerely hope anyone suffering as I did will give Williams' Pink Pills a fair trial, I feel sure they will not be disappointed.

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