







LITERARY.

SORROW.

In my chamber said the dreary, I sat listening to the wind. It was midnight; I was weary; Yet no rest my soul could find,—

I was sad, by hope forsaken; Desolate I stood alone; For the angels bright had taken, Taken to their distant home.

Long I watch'd her, fearing, trembling, Yet unwilling to despair; Hope, fond hope, the truth dissembling,

It was midnight; she was sleeping; Loud without the tempest din Raged in fury. I was keeping,

A Life's Experience. Or Marring a Dead Lover.

Continued.

'Ask his name, Susan,' I said, wondering much who could be asking for me. 'It must be for you,' I said to Mrs. Burton.

'We shall soon see, my dear,' she replied, and presently Susan re-entered, bearing a card. 'Alfred Lee!' I read in amazement.

'You know him! said my relative, in delighted amazement. 'I am so glad I have often thought how much I should like to see him. Susan snatched him in.'

'I would faint have remonstrated; I had a strange dread of meeting him again, but I could offer no reasonable excuse for refusing to see him, and I assented. In another minute he was in the room; the same graceful form and handsome face I so well remembered;

er would praise him, and say how happy he ought to be in possessing me; and so time sped on; he, the tutor, doing his work and being paid for it; and I, the pupil, becoming unconsciously more and more under his influence.

One evening he came at an unusual hour, with a grave face, and was ushered into the drawing-room, where I sat alone, dreamily playing over some of Willie's favourite airs. I rose hastily to greet him.

'Sit down, Hester,' he said, (he always called me Hester,) 'I have something to tell you.' 'To tell me?' I said.

'Yes,' he replied; 'have you heard from Mr. Thornton lately?' 'From Willie! Then his news was about him. My heart beat to suffocation as I answered, 'No, not for some time.'

He bent his eyes upon me with a peculiar glance; I remembered it long afterwards. He meant them to express pity, but it was triumph that blazed from their dark depths as he gazed upon me. I saw nothing, felt nothing, at the time, but that he was going to speak of Willie.

'What is it?' I gasped. 'Something has happened,' he said. 'I fear so,' said I; 'but when, and how?'

'It may not be true, my poor child,' he replied; 'but I feared you might hear it too suddenly from some one else.' He drew a paper, damp from the press, from his pocket, and unfolded it. 'Willie is dead!' I shrieked.

'I hope not,' he answered. I snatched the paper from his hand and read, 'Total loss of H. M. S. Trident with all hands,' in large letters, and fainted.

When I came to myself I was lying on the sofa, and Mrs. Burton bending over me. 'Poor child! she murmured, 'what a blow for her!'

'A terrible blow, indeed,' replied the voice of Alfred Lee. 'I will try and obtain further particulars, and call again to-morrow.'

The news proved too true; the Trident had been lost, and soon Willie's name appeared in the list of the drowned. Hope had buoyed me up till then; while there was the slightest chance of his being saved I had not given way; now I sank under my terrible bereavement, and for many weeks my life was despaired of.

Brain fever set in with violence, and when I awoke from a delirium of long duration it was to find myself once more without a protector—Mrs. Burton had died suddenly of disease of the heart. I was in a strange lodging, but Susan was at my side.

'Where am I?' I asked. 'By degrees I learnt what had transpired during my illness. 'The gentleman has managed everything,' said Susan.

'The gentleman?' I said. 'Yes, him as taught you singing miss!' she replied. Alfred Lee, Had he been my friend in all those dark hours of suffering, when there was, as it seemed, none else to help me? It was very kind, and yet I shuddered at the thought of being indebted to him for anything.

'And does he come here?' I asked. 'Oh, yes, miss, every day, and he'll be so glad to see you better, miss.' I gained strength rapidly, and the first day I left my room I saw him. Then he spoke to me of his love, spoke with burning passionate words such as I had never heard from Willie's lips, and besought me to be his wife. I could not consent; I feared him more than I loved him; I could not speak the consent he implored.

'I can wait,' he said, at length and I will wait, Hester; I shall win you some day, if only by my patience.' I remained where I was, with Susan for my servant, and as my strength increased he began to urge me to let my voice be heard in public. He represented the large fortunes made by public singers, and the enjoyable life that most of them led, till I began to waver. 'But I don't like the idea of it,' I said to him one day.

'I don't ask you to go on the stage, Hester,' he replied; 'but it is a life like mine I offer you—a share of mine, if you will only say the word.' 'No, nor that,' I said.

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