

ERICA'S SACRIFICE.

(CONTINUED FROM SIXTH PAGE.)

give me, and that, perhaps, is a legacy of wrong. Did you look for a sunny spot in your husband, Erica? I don't think I am all you fancied when I was your lover, am I?"

The girl lifted a startled look to his face, and flushed to her very brow, but she answered him steadily.

"I never fancied you other than you are, Philip. I understand you better; that is all the difference, if there is any difference."

She scarcely knew of any herself, that undefined feeling she had for him, mingling with, and perhaps shadowing, all her deep love for him, had not arisen since her marriage; it had always been in her heart.

"How should I have a sunny spirit?" Philip said, leaning his cheek on his hand, and speaking as if he were to her rather than to her. "How should I have a sunny spirit? I have only known what you, Erica, and thus I could scarcely school myself to think that you really loved me."

"Philip!" Erica stretched out her hands, her eyes full of wistful pleading. "You know it now, don't you? Why were you mistrustful of me?"

"Why, Erica? He had not noticed her movement, and he had not answered again to her question. "Because I had grown to think I was never meant for love. I had never told you anything of my boyhood—it is difficult to me to say these things to light, even to you; but the mood is on me now, I suppose, and I can speak it. I was the child of genius, you know enough of me, perhaps, to wonder that I am not a deity, rather than a man who can love; yet, I am the eldest, but I was always proud and punished for wrongs I had never done; rebuked for hesitations, reserve, what not, when my heart only yearned for love. My wishes were thwarted at every turn. Perhaps it was my fault in part. I know I am haughty and passionate of temper, that I am disdainful and impatient of inferiority, and I have a hundred other faults. At school and at college I made no friends, no one liked me, though everybody praised me; some, I think now, would have been my friends, had I not advanced, deeming them in my esteem mere sympathizers. There was only one being I loved, my brother Walter, though for him I was set aside, and that is because he is weak and clings to me as the ivy to the oak. Will his loveless, wonder, such as it is?"

"It is strange," he said, "how some seem marked out to take all the buffeting and stings Fate can lay on them. Why, my very dumb favorites died or failed me. The horse I rode was killed, the dog I loved scarce loved me; and the dog I loved above them all turned on me one day in some freak of temper, and wounded me in the hand. You can see the scar now. He glanced down with a bitter, half-compassionate smile to the white, nervous hand that lay on his knee. "I don't know why he did it; I was never harsh to him, but he whined and fawned on me a minute after. I spurned him away, and never touched him again, never gave caress or look, though he often came about me and looked at me with those dumb brown eyes."

He paused, and the dark eyes drooped all the long lashes hid them, and Erica shrank back and half-whispered: "Philip, how implacable you are."

"I am sorry now, perhaps I was too hard," he answered, lifting his head again; "but I was full of bitterness then. Don't you see, Erica, it was not the physical wound that hurt me, it was the repetition of the same injury that had ground me down through life. I don't know but what I should do the same now if I were touched nearly enough."

Never could the girl analyze the feeling that made her next words spring like lightning to her lips, and pass them as she had time to think.

"If I, Philip—if I failed you," she said, bending forward; "if I failed in love, in duty—"

But she shrank back, quailing at the sudden flash that leapt like lurid light into the brilliant eyes, at the stern passion that whitened his very lips.

"Philip, Philip," she uttered, "forgive me. I—I was but in jest—"

"Never jest on such a subject; that touches me very nearly, remember."

It was all he said, and then he took up the scroll again, and began pulling swiftly.

Afterwards in the long, long years that came, she could recollect that he had not answered her question.

A shadow fell on her spirit, a sort of gloom; his sternness had chilled her—it seemed to her as if she were alone, and she sat perfectly quiet, looking out over the sea, which somehow had grown grey and cheerless to her; yet the sun shone warm on her cheek, and the waves glinted under its yellow rays; the fault lay in herself.

She could not force herself to renew the conversation, to speak all her sympathy, the love she yearned to lay at his feet. Ah, did he comprehend how she loved him!

"I should like to take an ear, Philip," she said, presently, rousing herself with an effort. "I am cold."

He ran in his scull at once, and rose up to give her his hand as she stepped to the stroke seat, and as his hands clasped hers closely, he bent his head and kissed her forehead tenderly.

"Forgive, forgive my harshness, my child," he said, softly, regretfully; "bear with me a little, Erica."

innocent, and deep in debt, and so was seen Erica as far as Erica knew.

The bitter smile that poisoned all Erica's happiness was the knowledge that Arnold Murray was no honor to his name or hers. This was what she shrank from telling Philip. Philip, whose notion of honor was to be sternly and justly strict, who counted an infringement of honor the blackest sin, and made but little allowance, perhaps, for temptations; and who, if he knew Arnold's career, would have at once said to him, not sternly, but with a sternness in tone and look that Walter had understood, when the younger brother was going up to Ontario.

"You are very dear to me, Walter, but on the day that you forget that you are a gentleman and a St. John, I shall feel that I have a brother."

Now then could Erica fulfil the oath she had made that day marked out in her life as in letters of fire? Was she to give Arnold, to protect him? Had not already her duties claimed? To her the sacredness of that oath was absolute; she could conceive of nothing which should justify her in breaking it.

She thought of the letter she had written, and the secret she had revealed, and the chill September evening, dimly conscious of the monotonous matter of the scribbling of Philip's pen as it flew over the paper. He sat writing at the table, but not so absorbed in his work that he did not observe her silence and presence. Philip, she had bound her to, wedded to a man ten years older than herself, he thought—may, scarcely thought, for the vague suggestion of which he was simply conscious never framed itself to anything so tangible as thought.

He threw down the pen at last, and rose up, coming over to where she sat. "It is too dark to see," he said, "and I am but a dull companion for you, Erica. You are very silent and cold to-night."

"I started from her reverie, and coloring a little pushed her hands through the wavy hair that fell about her."

"I thought you were busy," she said, half-apologetically. "Shall I ring for light?"

"No, not just yet, unless you want them. It is pleasant resting thus," answered Philip, leaning against the window-frame. "That manuscript can go to-morrow morning; I can post it myself to-night. I am getting restless to go to bed to look at my work."

"You are a true Londoner," said Erica, laughing; "you cannot be happy long parted from beloved pavements and delightful dissipations."

"In which, I apprehend, my wild sallies will be going to join," Philip said with a smile.

"I shall be dreadfully unworthy, I am afraid, Philip," said Erica, sighing. "That is best. Our modern young ladies are so terribly wise and preternaturally wide-awake. There is the policeman; he will give us something to do."

"I am sorry to see you so thoughtful," she said, looking at the man—two or three for himself, and two for Erica.

"Walter's writing, one of mine," he said, giving his wife's letters into her hand, and she bent over them to make out the hand-writing by the fading light, and suddenly drew in her breath with almost a gasp.

"What is that, my child—has anything started you?" he said, gently, and pressed her hand to her forehead for a second before she answered him.

"Nothing—no, there is nothing—shall I ring for lights, Philip?" she rose up as she spoke, and laid her hand on the bell.

"You cannot see to read your letters."

She turned then and went out of the room, and Philip half sighed as the door closed on her. He seemed, after all to have but half her confidence. Yet it was nothing—nothing. He could not expect to know, to share, all that troubled her.

Alone in her dressing-room, Erica St. John read the letter, the writing of which had been ever a harbinger of sorrow and anxiety. And her lips grew white and her eyes burned as she read.

"So you've got to Gray's House," Arnold Murray wrote. "My poor Erica! You will be awfully dull there with only your husband for a companion. It makes me mad to think of it, Erica. Ah, why could you not have chosen differently? But I'll say no more. You will only be angry. I am coming down—perhaps, of course—and will hang about for a chance of seeing you to-morrow night."

"To-morrow! Oh, Heaven! To-morrow!" The girl hardly breathed, and looked back in feverish haste to the date. Yes, there was no mistake.

"Too expensive," said St. John; "and I scarcely know how to refuse him. I suppose I shall have to run up to town and look into it. Perhaps he does not tell me all."

"And you, my dear child," and St. John smiled half sadly, "you are so innocent. Do you think younger brothers always make father confessors of their elders?"

"But money spending or wasting," he added, after a pause, "does not trouble me. You can't make a grave man out of a bad twenty. If Walter keeps clear of anything unbecomingly, I shall not look too closely into his accounts."

"And what is your estimate of 'unbecomingly'?" Erica said, listening eagerly for the answer; she knew it could only mean her father's name.

"I don't know, but I don't think Walter would be tempted, for whatever his failings, he is a St. John. He speaks in his letter," Philip added, glancing at the letter. "of a young fellow he seems to be a good deal with. He says: 'I've really awfully nice, but awfully fast; not one of your sort, Philip—not that I accuse you of being anything so dreadful as straight-laced—but he bets and plays like 'one o'clock,' and goes ahead of me. He's got some money, but not enough for all he does, and the devil knows how he lives. But I tell you he goes the pace, and I don't know how it is, he gets drawn on with him. He's so contentedly jolly and winning, you know.'"

"His name—his doesn't say his name," said Erica, and all her control could not prevent her voice from trembling a little, for her heart seemed to be crying out but one name—a name she dreaded to hear.

"No, he does not mention his name; he says he has come down to Rington, where there are races coming off. Rington is not far from here, is it?"

"No, not far," the girl said, mechanically.

And then Philip turned again to his writing, glancing at her from under his long, dark eyelashes.

She puzzled him a little to-night; she was clearly not herself. Perhaps she was oppressed with the nervousness that came about her these first days at the old house of her childhood, or she was not well, or maybe—that dark cloud of thought would sweep up—she was beginning to find her life with him dull and dreary.

The minutes slipped by fast to him; slowly, each one laden with anxious thought to her; till at length he rose, having finished the work he had to do.

"Eleven o'clock," he said, looking at his watch. "I am going to take this up to the post-office. I shall be home being alone for a little time, Erica, will you?"

He half smiled as he said it, for she had a fearless spirit and was used to being alone.

She went out, and she heard his light step on the gravel-path, stood listening to the receding sound till it ceased altogether, and she knew he had passed out into the road that led down the cliff-side into the High-street. The post-office was quite at the other end of Gray's, and some twenty minutes must elapse before he could return.

Then Erica stood up, pale and anxious, yet resolved.

"For a moment she paused, and a sigh of utter despair and anguish escaped her."

"Shall I go," she murmured. The minutes slipped by fast to her; slowly, each one laden with anxious thought to her; till at length he rose, having finished the work he had to do.

"I must, I must," she whispered to herself, and she pressed her hand to her forehead, and she threw a light shawl over her shoulders and stepped out of the window into the soft chill air.

She hurried on with every sense on the alert to catch the faintest sound. She sped down the damp walks across the lawn, behind a belt of thick trees that shut out the view of the house, then stopped, her heart throbbing, wildly, heavily, at the little white gate that opened to an unfrequented road winding drearily over the hills inland, paused as a man's figure came to the gate, and swinging it open, stood before her and clasped her hands in steeled fingers.

She trembled as she felt the clasp that closed round her nervous fingers—trembled with a vague sense of fear she could not control.

CHAPTER IV. "FOR OUR MOTHER'S SAKE." "You are come, then," he said, in a low voice. "How good you are, Erica. How do you manage?"

STUCK BY LIGHTNING.—The lightning of a heavy but derelict which fell over Whitty's on Thursday evening, struck and killed Henry Scrymgeour's eldest son Wesley, who was in use of his farm outbuilding, which were all totally destroyed, with a new self-binding reaper and threshing machine, with the hay crop, and a set of two horses. The farm is in the fourth concession, and directly north of the town.

CANNINGTON. Mr. Jas. Morrison, of Mariposa, has fine thorough-bred Durham bull, two years old last April, which weighs 1700 lb., and for which he paid the handsome price of \$180. The farmers of that locality should encourage Mr. Morrison in his enterprising endeavor to improve the breed of stock.

Rainbow.—A large number from this place attended a raising bee on Mr. Jas. W. Umphrey's farm, Mariposa, Wednesday, there being about 100 present altogether. The bee is a frame one 60x100 feet, with stable and root house underneath, and when completed will be one of the finest in the township.

A Remarkable Escape. Mrs. Mary A. Dailey, of Tunkhannock, Pa., was afflicted for six years with asthma and bronchitis, during which time the best physicians could give no relief. Her life was despaired of, until in last October she procured a bottle of Dr. King's New Discovery, which immediately relieved her, and by continuing its use for a short time she was completely cured, gaining in flesh 50 lbs. in a few months. Free trial bottles of this certain cure of all throat and lung diseases at S. Ferrin drug store. Large bottles \$1.00.

Manitoba is rejoicing in the arrival of a new class of immigrants. These are none other than caterpillars, which, instead of destroying useful plants and vegetables, consume their attention to thistles, and subject is engaging the attention of inspectors of noxious weeds.

For any testimonials recommending Mc-Gregor's Speedy Cure for dyspepsia, indigestion, costiveness, headache, etc., that are not genuine; none of which are from persons in the States or thousands of miles away, but from persons in and around Hamilton, Ont. We give trial bottles free of cost, so that you cannot be deceived by purchasing a worthless article, but know its value before buying. Trial bottles and testimonials given free at A. Highbotham's drug store.

An advertisement of Lawrence Barrett occupies an entire page of the New York Herald, at a cost of a thousand dollars for one issue. Advertising pays an actor as well as a merchant.

Buckley's Arnica Salve. The best salve in the world for cuts, bruises, sores, ulcers, salt rheum, fever sores, tetter, chapped hands, chilblains, corns, and all skin eruptions, and positively cures piles, or no pay required. It is guaranteed to give perfect satisfaction, or money refunded. Price 25 cents per box. For sale by S. Ferrin.

PREJUDICED PEOPLE. Many people are prejudiced against patent medicines but all who try Burdock Blood Bitters are compelled to acknowledge it worthy a patent as a valuable discovery.

Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild Strawberry is the remedy for Cholera, Colic, Diarrhoea and Dysentery. No person is safe without it.

Work at home. \$5.00 outfit free. Pay absolutely sure. No risk. Capital not required. Reader, if you want business as well as pleasure in either sex, young or old, can make great pay all the time they work, with absolute certainty, write for particulars to H. HAZARD & Co. Fortunes Made—1897.

CATARRH.—A New Treatment whereby this hitherto incurable disease is permanently cured in from one to three applications, no matter whether standing for one year or forty years. Descriptive pamphlet sent free on receipt of stamp. A. H. DIXON & SON, 45 King-street west, Toronto, Canada.—18.

ROBT. BRYANS, Wholesale and Retail Dealer.

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D. SINCLAIR, General Blacksmith.

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REPAIRING done neatly and cheaply, and all work guaranteed to give general satisfaction.

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LATH AND SHINGLES OF ALL KINDS FROM 90 CTS. UPWARDS. Lime, Dry Wood of All Kinds, Stove and Blacksmith's Coal.

A PRIZE. Sold six cents for postage, and receive free a costly box of goods which will help you to manufacture more money right away than anything else in this world. All of either sex, second from first hour. The broad road to fortune opens before the workers, absolutely new. At once address, Tack & Co., Augusta, Maine.—1897.

WATERLINE. Just received, one car load of the only American Waterlime in the county. Will be sold at a figure to suit purchasers.

THE NEW VICTORY Coal Oil Stove. Breaks them all, with patented sliding top, has holes for wash boiler, oven and pots, and thus all the work of a family washing and ironing, roasting, boiling, baking and broiling, can be done as well as on an ordinary cooking stove.

Ask for the Victory, sold at E. Wood's Stove Depot.

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J. WETHERUP. Lindsay, April 24th 1884.

Burdock BLOOD BITTERS. Cures Dizziness, Loss of Appetite, Indigestion, Biliousness, Dyspepsia, Jaundice, Affections of the Liver and Kidneys, Pimples, Blotches, Boils, Humors, Salt Rheum, Scrofula, Erysipelas, and all diseases arising from Impure Blood, Deranged Stomach, or irregular action of the Bowels.

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Of the latest design and finish, wishes all people to understand that all work turned out at his new factory shall be first-class All, without machinery business, but really hand made and reliable in every respect.

The undersigned is aware that machine made work is advertised at a lower price, but it does not stand the test. I will guarantee a far superior article than can be turned out by machinery, either in stock, shape, finish, or ease of running, etc.

Notwithstanding what others say, it cannot be denied that wherever and whatever I have exhibited in my line the vehicles constructed by me have always carried the best prices obtainable. (See Price Lists.)

I have only to request from all residents of Victoria county to oblige me with a call and shall be most happy to show them over my new and commodious premises whether they buy or not.

L. O'CONNOR, Corner of Russell and William Sts., next to Carr's Hotel. N. E.—Repairs of all kinds done promptly and cheap. A stock of Hobby Horses, Child's Carriages, etc., always on hand. Lindsay, March 11th, 1884.

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