

WHEN A WOMAN LOVES.

BY BEATRICE MAREAN.

Author of "Tragedies of Oakhurst," "Won at Last," Etc., Etc.

Before the forenoon is half spent she stands by his side again, her own face pale and anxious, and tries to smile cheerfully, as she inquires how he has rested.

"There is a gentle, subdued look in the depths of the hollow eyes that look up at her, which she has never seen there before, as he answers:—

"Better, far better. I have just awoken from the most refreshing, the sweetest sleep that I have had since my illness," then suddenly, and with kindling animation, "Mrs. Evans, are the doors to my room locked?"

"No," she answers, wondering, with a vague fear at her heart that he was growing delirious.

"Then lock them quickly," he commands, in a stronger voice than she has heard him use since his illness:—

"Lock them! do you hear? Lock them!" he repeats, impatiently, as she looks at him in astonishment, "I have something which I wish you to do for me before Dr. Hamilton comes, and I want you to lock the doors so that you may not be interrupted."

Mechanically, she obeys him, and when she stands again beside his bed, he says:—

"Thank you. Now put your hand beneath my pillow, and take out the leather wallet that you will find there."

Silently she does as he bids. "Unclasp it," he says. The clasp flies back. He reaches and takes the wallet in his thin, white hand, takes two keys from it, and hands her the large one.

"Take this key," he says, "and unlock my escritoire," pointing towards it as he speaks. "You will see there a long, slender inlaid box; bring that to me."

In a moment she has placed the box beside him on the bed. He hands her the tiny key, and says, briefly, "Unlock it." With a hand trembling with excitement, the nurse turns the key in the lock and the lid springs open.

The dying man almost sits up in bed at this, and draws from the box a long folded paper.

"Take this," he says, handing it to her, "put it into the grate, and burn it here before my eyes." Had he been less excited, he must have noted how white the nurse has grown.

Silently she walks to the chimney place, puts the paper within the bars of the high polished grate and stooping applies a lighted match.

The tiny flame catches the folded parchment, and increases in volume as it writes and laps about it. In the bright light she sees the face of the nurse upon the paper's unscorched side. "The Last Will and Testament of Horace Lennard."

She stands with clasped hands, and silently watches the parchment, until it falls into the ash pan below, a mass of quivering, feathery cinders.

"Thank God!" the words come floating to her ears from the direction of the sick man's bed. She goes back to his side.

"Lock and replace the box, and bring paper and pencil," is all he says.

"She has brought the desired articles," writes a message as I shall dictate," he says briefly:—

"To Raphael St. Clair, M.D., San Francisco: Come to Deepdale by first train. Bring Lawyer Gilbert and General Dale with you.

(Signed) "Horace Lennard."

How the heart of the nurse swells and throbs with gratitude to God, as she writes that dictated message!

"Call the footman, and send this immediately to the telegraph office," he says, and lays back panting and exhausted upon his pillows.

When she comes back from her errand, she gives him wine, and stands chafing his pale cold hands. Over the face of the dying man has come a look of glorious heavenly peace, purifying and clearing it of all harassing doubts, like one who has finished the battle of life, and hears the welcoming songs of angels as he hears the "beautiful gates ajar."

CHAPTER XXIII—A TERRIBLE CONFESSION.

A low tap on the door of the sick room. It is only Doctor Hamilton who has come to make his daily visit to the master of Deepdale.

The doctor places his fingers upon the patient's wrist, and nods his head approvingly, and says:—

"That last remedy was the right one; your nerves have not been so quiet since your illness."

The patient does not reply; but looks into the nurse's placid face, and a smile, full of meaning, hovers an instant around his thin lips.

"Continue the last medicine, Mrs. Evans," says the doctor, rising to take his leave. "Give it as you gave it yesterday, and he will rest well to-night." He picks up his hat and medicine case, and bows himself out.

"Let him think that the sedative drops wrought the change," the sick man says feebly to his patient nurse when the doctor closes after the physician, "but you and I know differently. What drug or nostrum can relieve a mind diseased or a spirit tortured by the up-brailings of a remorseful conscience? None; but thank God, 'Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.'"

"Thank God," fervently responds the trembling lips of the nurse, as she stoops to arrange his pillows.

The early gloaming brings the three gentlemen from the city: General Dale, Mr. Gilbert, and Doctor St. Clair, and the latter is shown at once into the sick man's room.

"You may retire now until I send for you Mrs. Evans," says the suffering man, kindly.

As the nurse rises to obey, her eyes meet Doctor St. Clair's with a loving light in their brown depths; and the look is answered by his own in the mute telegraphy of love. She retires to the dressing room adjoining the sick one. In a few moments the door again opens, and Doctor St. Clair comes in under the pretext of some trivial errand, and had the old housekeeper, good Mrs. Hicks, have seen the meeting between the nurse so much admired and the doctor whom she still called her "young master," her

very cap-border, raised front and spectacles, would have fallen off in surprise and indignation.

"My own precious darling," whispers the doctor, pressing her close to his bosom, and then holds her at arm's length and looks into her face. He notes the face that has grown pale and thin, with deep shadows lying beneath the lovely eyes, and says, in deep self reproach:—

"You have worn yourself out, my love, and will be ill. I am ashamed of myself for ever having given my consent to your coming here under the circumstances."

"Hush, Raphael, hush-sh, sh-sh," she replies, placing her hand across his lips, as she speaks. "I am not ill," she whispers, "only a little tired. Go back before they miss you, darling," and she hurries him back into Captain Lennard's room.

"I have something that I must say to you before I die, Raphael St. Clair," says the sick man, reaching out an emaciated hand toward Raphael, who stands by his bed.

The young physician takes the pale cold hand within his own broad warm palm that is bounding with the pulses of youth and health; and his tender heart goes out in pity to this wreck of the noble looking man his mother had loved with such worshiping adoration, as he answers:—

"I am sorry to find you so ill, Captain."

"Yes, my time is short,"—then suddenly—"did Dale and Gilbert come with you?" he asks.

"They are in the library," Raphael answers; "but let me advise you as a physician to see no one else to-night. Your strength is not equal to it."

He lays silent a few moments, as though he is communing with himself, and then says:—

"I almost fear delay, but it may be better to do as you advise. You may make the appointment for me, and meet them by my bedside at ten o'clock to-morrow morning."

"Very well, it shall be as you wish," and Doctor St. Clair presses the hand of the sick man warmly, and leaves him alone with his valet.

The silvery tones of the elegant clock in the sick man's room, as it strikes ten the next morning, is still vibrating upon the air, when the door gently opens and General Dale, Mr. Gilbert and Raphael St. Clair enter the room, and group themselves around Captain Lennard's sick bed.

Old General Dale is much moved, and after greeting his old favorite with a voice which chokes with huskiness, turns and walks to the window, where he stands with his back to the others a few moments, vigorously polishing his eye-glasses upon his silk pocket handkerchief.

"I have sent for you, gentlemen," says the invalid, in a stronger voice than he had used on the evening previous, "to undo as far as lies in my power a terrible wrong I have done. To do this I must go back to my first meeting with my late wife, who was then Isabel St. Clair." He pauses for breath, and lies panting upon the pillows. The gentlemen have seated themselves around his bed, and Doctor St. Clair rises and pours out a small portion of wine from a cut-glass decanter that is upon the table, and comes back to the bed, puts his arm under the sick man's head, raises him tenderly, and places the wine-glass to his lips.

"Thank you," he says, gratefully, "that will strengthen me, but I must only be a momentary flash, and I must leave my narrative brief."

"When I first came to San Francisco and as the guest of General Dale, a professional gambler, and not a very successful one either. I was at that time enjoying an unusual streak of good luck which enabled me to pass in the eyes of respectable people for a wealthy gentleman living upon his income. I had come from England to the United States in search of adventure of some sort, by which I might realize more money by the time I had spent what I then possessed."

"At the residence of General Dale, where I was received as an honorable gentleman, I heard the rich St. Clair family freely discussed, and as Mrs. St. Clair, about that time, gave her first public reception after the death of her husband, I was invited to attend with the General's family."

"As soon as I learned that Mrs. St. Clair was rich and possessed her fortune in her own undoubted right, I determined to make her acquaintance, and if possible marry her and secure her fortune to myself."

"The moment that my eyes met those of Isabel St. Clair, on the night of the first reception, I knew that I should ultimately accomplish my designs, inasmuch as I recognized in her a person of that very negative and gentle cast of character upon whom it would be an easy matter for me to exercise my will power and the strong mesmeristic forces which I knew that I possessed."

"Besides, being naturally possessed of this power, I had made mesmeristic science a study for years, and knew that, had I the right kind of a subject upon which to operate, the one operated upon would soon know no will but my own. Long had I watched and hoped for an opportunity like this. Accordingly I commenced my work at our first moment of meeting, and followed it up with such success, that in a few months Mrs. St. Clair became my wife."

"Let me say here, however, that the marriage was not without love on my part, mercenary as my intentions had been in the outset. What man's heart could have been so dead in his bosom, or such a mad worshiper at Mammon's shrine, as not to have his nobler impulses stirred by the noble traits of character and loving, affectionate heart of Isabel St. Clair?"—Raphael pressed his pocket handkerchief to his eyes, and something like a sob falls upon the ears of the other listeners. The sick man pauses for breath, and General Dale goes to the table and brings more wine and gives it to him.

"Thank you, my dear old friend," he murmurs. After he has swallowed the

wine. "When you hear how I have suffered, as well as sinned, you will forgive me for the deception I willingly practiced upon you."

The General presses his hand for reply and resumes his chair, and the sick man continues:—

"The fact that my wife had made a will previous to our marriage giving nearly her entire fortune to her children was known to me, but did not alarm me in the least, for well I knew that if she survived a few months after our marriage the will would be changed in my favor."

"To illustrate how completely I had her under my mesmeric will I will relate a little instance."

"Shortly after my marriage, my funds grew alarmingly low. I had not been able to win much at the gambling table of late, and wished to give the nefarious business up, as it was always distasteful to my better nature, and now I feared exposure."

"I knew that my wife thought me a wealthy man, although I had never told her so, in as many words. Now my funds were exhausted, and I must have more. To get possession of some of her money in bank, I came into her presence wearing a dejected look, which I pretended to try to hide from her eyes. Not more sensitive is the aspen leaf to the gentle summer zephyr than was my wife's spirit to my unspoken will. Without my having said one word in regard to my wish, she questioned me closely, and I told her a miserable lie of my having just lost all of my ready cash by the failure of a bank in Liverpool."

"I pretended to make light of the affair and said that it would only cause me temporary annoyance. Without one moment's hesitation, she yielded to my unspoken will, and drew a check for fifty thousand dollars in my favor and pressed it upon me."

"In alarm I began to see that my wife's health was rapidly failing, and still the will in my favor was not made. I also remembered that if a subject was kept longer than a few months under this mesmeric control they would go into a decline and die, all the physical vitality of the weaker being absorbed by the stronger physical power of the operator."

"I loved her dearly when I had married her, and each day saw that love increase and grow stronger until it was becoming the great ruling passion of my being, and the thought of losing her a most dreary prospect."

"My plans now were to take her from home and her children, and get her to make a new will giving her fortune to myself, and then I intended to relax the magnetic influence by which I had held her subject to my will, and trust to the love we bore each other, to prevent my plans from being frustrated."

"Accordingly, I took her to Europe. Before going, I made arrangements with lawyer Mason, of San Francisco, who has since died, to come to us when I should summon him. According to agreement, he joined us in Italy, a few months after our departure from San Francisco. Of course my wife thought that our meeting him was purely accidental."

"Before anything had been done in regard to the will, my wife was attacked with hemorrhage of the lungs that brought her to the very verge of the grave, when I realized that there was imminent danger of my losing the being I loved with all the depth of my passionate nature, and that the fortune I had my Judge and appear before the loving presence of Him who knoweth the human heart in all its weakness and all its woes."

Again he is silent, and lies with folded hands, looking up at the ceiling of the room as though his spiritual eyes have penetrated the mists of earth, and are gazing with clear vision into the realms of the unseen world.

Mr. Gilbert draws his chair nearer the bed, and take paper and fountain-pen from his coat pocket, and prepares to do the dying man's bidding.

"You will find," resumes Captain Lennard, "that I have not much more than half spent the income of the estate which I now wish to make over to Raphael St. Clair and Beatrice Randal. I have only one simple request to make and that is, if he heirs do not object, I wish to make a bequest of five thousand dollars, from the remaining income, which has accumulated since I possessed the estate, to the nurse, Mrs. Evans, of whom I have already spoken."

Doctor St. Clair and the barrister exchange quick, significant glances.

"It shall be as you desire," Captain Lennard, says Raphael, quickly, with a voice which nearly breaks down with emotion.

The necessary writing, conveying the estate to the late Mrs. Lennard's children, is quickly done, and the bequest to the nurse is not forgotten.

The pen is placed in the feeble man's hand to attach his signature. They hold him in a sitting posture, and he signs his name in clear bold letters. He hands the pen back, and sinks back upon the pillows with a great sigh of relief, murmuring: "Thank God! Thank God!"

General Dale and the sick man's valet sign the document as witnesses, and Mr. Gilbert folds and places it within his coat pocket, takes a kind and tender leave of the dying man and turns his foot-boards back to his city home."

General Dale and Doctor St. Clair remain at Deepdale, and by and by the nurse comes in, and leans over the dying man.

She has put off her spectacles, and her tears fall unrestrained upon the cold, pale hands. He looks up into her face with eyes from which all anxiety and all unrest have fled.

"Do not weep," he says, gently. "Rather rejoice, that through your instrumentality a soul has been saved, and a great wrong has been righted."

"Would you like to see a minister?" she asks, trying to check her fast falling tears.

"No," he answers, quickly; "I want only comfort from you. If you will sleep, I shall sleep." He closes his eyes, and his cheek against the weary child.

General Dale and Raphael St. Clair creep softly from the room leaving her alone with the now rapidly sinking man.

"Rock of Ages, softly for me, Let me hide myself in thee,"

of the sweet hymn from the lips of the nurse, and she sleeps sweetly, tranquilly, like a tired babe upon its mother's bosom.

"Well, well, if this isn't the strangest story I ever heard," exclaims to young St. Clair, as their cigars in the library sit smoking.

"Nard was never cut out for a villain. It is possible that he exercised the same influence over your mother which he thinks he did, or

he may imagine this to be the case?" Dr. St. Clair sits for a few moments in deep thought and then replies:—

"I have never given the so-called science of mesmerism, and mesmeric control any particular attention, and have always been rather inclined to look upon it as one of the many humbugs of the age, rather than that of a true science, governed by natural and philosophical laws. As little as I know about it, however, I am almost convinced now that there must be some power in mesmeric or magnetic control, for upon no other hypothesis am I able to explain my mother's strange and unnatural conduct toward her children, after she became Lennard's wife, and her blind infatuation for this man, of whose antecedents she was wholly ignorant."

"Ever since I was old enough to understand, I have heard her say, that Deepdale must never go out of the possession of the St. Clair family, but must descend from father to son. This place had been her heart's pride, as it was her father's before her, and why at last she should have willed it to a stranger, was a mystery I could never solve. Had she willed Lennard all she possessed, except this place and its belongings, the action would not have been so incomprehensible; but to will her dearly beloved Deepdale away from her children—"

"Well, well," breaks in the old General, "for a truth, there are more things in heaven and earth, than are dreamed of in your philosophy, Horatio; but let me congratulate you, St. Clair, in getting back Deepdale and the balance of the inheritance of yourself and sister."

"Which we never should have done, nor my mother's memory been cleared from blame, but for my beloved wife," says the doctor, with much feeling.

"Egad! St. Clair, but you are a lucky fellow, to have such a woman as you have for your wife," replies General Dale, his eyes sparkling with enthusiasm over the admiration he feels for the character of his friend's wife. "A man will be pretty sure to steer clear of shoals and quicksands upon the voyage of life, with the love of such a woman for his beacon light."

All night long husband and wife sit by the dying bed of Captain Lennard. When the first faint gray tinge begins to tremble in the eastern sky, proclaiming the coming dawn of another day, the dying man, who has lain like one in a deep sleep for hours, suddenly starts up, a radiant light spreads over his face.

"I am ready, my beloved," they hear him murmur, his hands are extended a moment in joyful greeting, then fall by his side cold and pulseless, and the released soul of Horace Lennard has crossed the mystic tide of "the river of death."

Who shall say what his reception was in that land of souls where all wrongs are made right, and all heartaches healed and all tears wiped from flowing eyes, which may then see with clear vision, in the soft rays of God's effulgent love, why the paths of earth have been so thorny—why life such a turmoil!

The early morning train carries the nurse back to the city. Her work at Deepdale for the present has been accomplished. When next she crosses the threshold of that hallowed precinct it will be as its beloved mistress. As such may she long remain, dispensing hospitalities with her own queenly grace, binding up broken hearts that come to her for comfort and counsel—aiding with hazarded her life to try to obtain, also. I was well nigh driven to madness.

"People talked in amazement of my intense idolizing love for my sick wife, and said that if she was taken from me I would fill a suicide's grave or madman's cell."

"Slowly she crept back to life, and as soon as she was able to leave her bed, she with her own sweet lips proposed the very thing that was silently burning in my heart to do—to send for Mr. Mason and have a new will executed."

"My love," I answered, in well feigned tones of surprise, "have you not already a will in existence at home? Why then tax your strength to make another?"

"The tender dove-light eyes sought mine in a loving glance as she answered: 'I have a will already made, in the hands of my attorney, in San Francisco, but it does not please me, Horace. I must change it if I would be happy.'"

"I fell upon my knees, and begged her, in tones of agony, not to speak of dying unless she wished to drive me to madness."

"She passed her fair fingers through my hair, with a caressing touch, as she answered, 'If you will indulge me in this, my dear husband, and let me have the will changed to suit me, I shall say nothing more about dying, but try to live for your dear sake.'"

"Oh, what a wretch—hypocritical wretch! I felt myself to be then, and I was almost upon the point of confessing all to her, and begging her forgiveness; but 'no,' no," cried the demon in my heart, "his would be madness and result in the loss of the fortune for which you have planned and schemed; while this sudden unmasking would finish your work and result in the instant death of the woman you love, and have already so deeply wronged," prudently whispers my aroused conscience."

A violent fit of coughing stops his speech, and when it has passed away, he lies white and exhausted. Dr. St. Clair tenderly wipes the dying man's lips, and when he withdraws the white linen, deep stains of blood mark its fair surface.

CHAPTER XXIV—EXPIATION AND RESTITUTION.

Raphael St. Clair looks with pitying eyes upon the suffering, repentant man whose greed for gold has led him to commit this great wrong against the woman whose love for him had blinded her eyes to his every fault, and says, gently:—

"You'd better rest and sleep before attempting to speak further."

"No, no. I must not delay. The sands of life are running low, and I have but little more to tell," he answers.

They give him another small portion of wine, and after resting a few moments, he continues:—

"I arose from my knees, kissed and embraced my sick wife tenderly, and brought Mason. Before two hours had passed, the will was drawn, signed and witnessed, and placed in lawyer Mason's hands for safe keeping. The accomplishment of my scheme brought me no thrill of joy, when my darling, worn and exhausted from exerting herself beyond her strength, lay back in my arms, with the very look of death upon her white face; and, oh, believe me or not, I would gladly, at that moment, have given up all the will contained for me, as well as my hope of eternal life for my soul, if thereby I might have restored my idol to life and health."

"Too late! too late! my cruel, selfish

work had done its part too well; and oh God, the life of my loved one must pay the forfeit, leaving only the wealth that I had risked so much to gain, like dead sea fruit, in my hands, to curse me for my folly."

"I need not repeat the rest; you all know it—know how I brought her home to die, and of the consternation and astonishment produced by the reading of the new will."

"I wonder now, that you did not shoot me on the spot, Raphael St. Clair, for I deserved it; and thousands of times since I have wished that you had, for oh, what an unhappy wretch I became."

"I wandered from clime to clime, from kingdom to republic, from world to world seeking rest but finding none; always haunted by the thought that I had robbed my wife, the sweet creature who had trusted me with all, and deemed me true as heaven."

"I must say here, in justice to myself, few as the extenuating circumstances in my favor are, that upon the day of my wife's funeral, I begged Mason to suppress or destroy the will, which was placed in his hands and never let its existence come to life. He called me insane—utterly mad, and refused firmly to do anything of the kind; said that he had pledged his honor to my deceased wife, that he would see her wishes carried into effect, and I, too wretched and broken-hearted to contend against him, let him have his way."

"Then, bitter anger was kindled in my heart against you, Raphael St. Clair, by your hot, stinging words to me, after the reading of the last will, and it grew in my heart, until I learned to despise both your sister and yourself. Two years since I made a will giving the wealth I had inherited by will from your mother, but which was justly yours, to a charitable institution."

"When I was warned that I was suffering from an incurable ailment and advised to make all necessary arrangements to meet the fate that was not far in advance of me, a great longing took possession of my heart, to come to Deepdale to die."

"I came, but my return did not soothe my restless spirit, and I grew even more wretched, and in a few days was confined to my bed."

"I had all through my illness been stubborn and unyielding, refusing all consolation offered me, and cherished the most bitter and resentful feelings against God, my fate, and all mankind."

"Little more than one week ago, an angel of light came to my bedside in the person of a nurse from St. Luke's hospital, in San Francisco. No sister of mercy was she in name, but better, far better; she was one of God's ministering angels which are often found upon life's drear battle plain."

"She brought the healing waters to my soul, and led me gently into the glorious light of God's all-purifying love. God bless her, whoever she is!"

"Amen," faintly murmurs the trembling lips of Raphael St. Clair.

He lies for a few moments with closed eyes and clasped hands, his lips moving as if in prayer, and then unclosing his eyes, continues:—

"I have but one thing more to do, gentlemen, and in this I must have your assistance. It is to make over the estate, entire, of my deceased wife, to the rightful heirs. This being done, I shall be only too glad to obey the summons of her gentle hand many a wanderer back to the dear Shepherd's fold."

Captain Lennard sleeps beside his wife in the Deepdale church-yard.

When Helen St. Clair and her lovely children come in the first rosy flush of morning or at the sweet evening-tide to spread fragrant flowers or creamy ascension lilies upon the graves of "grandma and grandpa St. Clair," Captain Lennard's grave is not forgotten, and upon the marble shaft which marks his resting place these words are inscribed:—

"Earth has no sorrow that God cannot heal."

THE END.

THE HOME DOCTOR.

A tiny piece of lemon peel eaten just before taking medicine will do away with much of the nasty taste.

Cod liver oil is a simple tonic for children who take cold easily and have enlarged glands about the neck and throat. Given in lemon juice it is not unpleasant to take, and children get to like it.

Thick blood causes colds and countless other diseases. Keep the lungs active by deep breathing, the skin by baths and friction, the kidneys by free drafts of warm water, the bowels by correct eating, and the blood will be pure.

Not to His Taste.

Wiggs—Skinner has just returned a book he borrowed.

Jiggs—Didn't he like it?

Wiggs—Yes. Why do you ask?

Jiggs—You say he returned it.

Healthy Happy Girls

Healthy, happy girls often become languid and despondent, from no apparent cause, in the early days of their womanhood. They drag along, always tired, nervous, hungry, breathless and with palpitating hearts after slight exercise, so that to merely walk up stairs is exhausting. Sometimes short, dry cough leads to the fear that they are going into consumption. Doctors tell them they are anæmic—which means that they have too little blood. Are you like that?

More pale and anæmic people have been made bright, active and strong by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills than any other medicine.

Mrs. M. N. Jonas, Berthier, Que., writes:—"My daughter, aged fifteen, has been restored to good health through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. She was very feeble, her blood was poor and watery, and she was troubled with headaches, poor appetite, dizziness, and always felt tired. After using four bottles of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills she is enjoying as good health as any girl of her age, and we are glad to give the credit to your grand medicine. Mothers will make no mistake if they insist upon their young daughters taking Dr. Williams' Pink Pills."

Do not take anything that does not bear the full name "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People." It is an experiment and a hazardous one to use a substitute. Sold by all dealers or post paid at 50 cents a box, six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville.

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