The Witch of Cragenstone

By ANITA CLAY MUNOZ, Author of "In Love and Truth"

For a time she looked out of doors, humming a gay tune lightly, then, leaving the room, ran up the stairs and, bursting into the chamber where Elsbeth was sitting mending linen, stood before her with flushed face and sparkling eyes.

frey, Elsbeth?"

"Sir Godfrey hath come?" The woman laid down her work and looked at Margaret in surprise, who answered petulantly: "Nay, dullard. How could he travel in such awful storms o'er mountain roads he knows not?"

She drew a piece of paper from her bosom, reading slowly, "'Tuesday I shall reach the inn at Hackvon, lay there one night and wilt be with thee on the morrow, Wednesday." She raised the paper to her lips.

"Thus reads his missive, Elsbeth. Thou'lt remember that the storm rose wild Wednesday, now six days gone by. An' so, ah, me," she sighed dismal- | would bestow upon the king were he ly, "poor Godfrey hath been imprisoned all these dreary hours in that foul tavern, the Puritan, where we were forced to rest when we journeyed hither." For a moment she was silent. "But the storm hath broken and set him free!" she cried triumphantly, lifting her radiant face to the sunlight. "And now, I promise thee, he rideth fast to Cragenstone!"

Suddenly she grew more serious and, seating herself on a little stool at Elsbeth's feet, rested her elbows on the woman's lap above the mending, covered her face with her hands and appeared to be in deep thought. "What thinkest thou, Elsbeth, of my

cousin Josiah?" she asked after a time. "He bath the appearance of an upright man and godly," the other replied



"Take time to think on the words I ha" just spoken."

thoughtfully, "but, I ween, hard and stern, even above his kind, who, with their long, sad faces, do dwell upon this mountain." "He asked this morning to wed with

me," Margaret observed quietly.

"What saidst thou?" Elsbeth exclaimed, indignation in her tone and glance. "The sour visaged churl, to want my bonny Margaret! Didst tell him of Sir Godfrey?

"Nay," blushing softly. "There are few to whom I care to say that name. I would have told Josiah, 'Nay, nay, nay!' and thrice more nay and sent him roundly to the right about on the instant for his presumption, but he would not take mine answer, and, forsooth, commanding me harshly to let thoughts of him dwell in my heart until his haughty lordship would speak with me on the subject again, he took his departure. It was this manner. Look. Elsbeth."

Rising to her feet, Margaret strode with stiff awkwardness toward the

"Ugh!" with a shudder. "I was forced to open the lattice to let the sunlight in after he left, the room had grown so damp and cold from his chilling presence! So thou'lt not give thy consent for thy Margaret's marriage with him, Elsbeth?" teasingly. Elsbeth shook her head in a know-

"Forsooth, pretty, I trow thou'lt wed thy lover that rideth here anon, that thy young heart is set on, with my consent or without it, but," she continued thoughtfully, "ever will it seem strange to me that such a hard man as thy cousin Josiah doth appear to be should have a desire for anything

so soft as the love of a woman." "Prithee, forget his gloomy face," Margaret interrupted crossly; then, coming and sitting at Elsbeth's knee again, said coaxingly: "Let's talk of-Godfrey! Oh, Elsbeth, such bonny times, such happy hours as we will have together!" she exclaimed, with clasped hands and quick drawn breath. "Sweet Godirey, to come so soon! He told me on the eve before I left-when we were both so sad; hath forgotten, stupid Elsbeth?—that he had business in London which would shortly bring him across the channel and that he would in probability visit me ere I were well settled on mine estate. Oh, Elsbeth, I could wring my hands with sorrow that the cruel storm rose and kept him from me six long days, and then again I could sing until I burst

my heart for very joy that I shall see him today ere nightfall." arms, cried earnestly: "Oh, warm face and forgetting it the next, or was of thy new pigs' trough!" winds, whispering winds, bring me he old and gray haired, with an eye to word that Godfrey now rideth safely up the mountain road-my Godfrey.

whom I love!" For answer the rough breeze tossed her hair about and blew the white points of her kerchief over her face. "Ah," she murmured softly, "I need not thy fickle confirmation, shifting winds! My beart, that is ever my best guidance, dotn give me assurance that

he'll come tonight! What frock shall

I wear, dull Elsbeth, with no thought

above thy mending? Shall I do him

Parisian lady in my silken gown of peachblow hue with feathers waving high above my head, or shall I let him take me to his heart as a simple mountain maiden with smooth hair, gray homespun frock and sober countenance? Whichever way, good Els-"What frock shall I wear for God- | beth, will Godfrey like me best?" Elebeth, enjoying the girl's happy

> mood, smiled indulgently. "An my opinion were worth the giving in such a case," she replied, "methinks Sir Godfrey will see only the

happy light in thy blue eyes and thy

red lips when first be cometh." "Elsbeth!" Margaret shook ber finge at her companion, laughing lightly "Thou hath surely had a lover, al though thou hast ever denied it, or else how knowest thou so well their ways Come, I'll wear my peachblow silk, be deck myself in the grandest fashion and receive my Gedfrey in the with

drawing room with all the honors to visit me. The king!" she exclaimed with a disdainful toss of her head "Forsooth, what is a king compared to Godfrey?" The sight of the complete adoration

of her charge for this man caused feeling of pain to strike the elder wom an's heart, and as she unfastened the lacing of Margaret's bodice she felt compelled to say: "Methinks 'twere not well, sweet, to

fasten thy heart so entirely on a mar not yet thy husband. An old woman with much experience of the world doth know that many men, especiall, worldly men of fashion as Sir Godfrey La Fabienne, woo a maid with mac hot love, then ride away, leaving her to cure a broken heart." "Elsbeth!" exclaimed Margaret sharp

ly. "Cease thine idle chatter and dar not cast thy vile insinuations against Sir Godfrey in my presence." Her face flushed, tears filled her

eyes, and she took the lacings out of Elsbeth's hands as though she no longer wished her aid, walking from her. "Forgive me, sweet Margaret." Elsbeth followed her anxiously, regret at her words showing in her countenance. 'Tis but my love for thee that gives me false anxiety, bonny, for thy happiness is my happiness, an' thy sorrow

more than my sorrow." For a time Margaret was silent; then she said with great seriousness: "Elsbeth, never again express doubt of Sir Godfrey. Doubt that the sun riseth to light the earth; doubt that night falls upon the day; doubt thy love for me, but never cherish such thoughts as thou didst give voice to a moment since against Sir Godfrey La Fabienne -a man," she continued in a low, passionate voice, "so much to me, so deeply rooted in my affections, that I could die for very joy of loving him. Were the earth to divide us, Elsbeth, we are one—one heart and one soul forever!"

Then, after a deep felt silence, she added in brighter tones, "But, prithee, come, the peachblow gown an' happy faces, for this is a joyful day, good Elsbeth!"

CHAPTER VII.

T the open door of the kitchen Mistress Taunston sat before her spinning wheel, busy with distaff and spindle, and at intervals as she paused in her work looked longingly toward the fertile lands of the Mayland farm. But her thoughts, never far from her son Josiah, soon strayed back to him.

"E'en now he is at his wooing," she said to herself with stern exultation, "an' I pray the good Lord who is ever watchful of the faithful to put persuasive and convincing words on my lad's lips and guide him to the most proper

For a time she seemed lost in thought until her distaff, falling from under her arm, came to the floor with a rattling noise that roused her. Then the remembrance of Hetty, who upon her arrival from her cousin's had been sent to the brook to fill the ewers, coming to her mind, she rose suddenly to look at the sun. Finding the hour to be later than she had at first supposed, her irritation and anger caused by her daughter's delay at the brook knew no bounds. She called the girl's name shrilly once, twice, muttering angrily as she got no response.

Just then Josiah rode in from his visit to the Mayland farm. "Cease thy shrewish screaming, mother," he commanded roughly. "Dost wish to rouse the village? Thy

voice can be heard half a mile be-The dame, angered at his rebuke, resumed her seat in sullen silence, and Josiah took his horse to the barn. In a short time he returned and, entering the kitchen, threw himself down heav-

ily on a chair near his mother, who

continued to spin busily without apparently heeding his presence. At last he broke the silence by saying with affected carelessness: "Thou didst not tell me-if my memory serves me well on so slight a matter-of what appearance the cavalier was that rode by Haggott's and mistook the Sterndorf road. Was he an unbearded gal-Rising suddenly, she went to the lant, fickle and changeable as the wind, finishing his days in comfort on the

> estate of his bride?" a moment or two a provoking silence. After what seemed to the impatient Josiah an interminable length of time she remarked with ill concealed eagerness, "Thou wert successful in thy wooing, Josiah, and ask now of thine enemy's appearance in order that thou mayst know the extent of thy

Simon, flushed and breathless, was evidently laboring under great mental honor and receive him as a stately | "As to that matter, nothing is excitement. "Prithee, do not speak,

definitely settled," he replied Impatiently. "I will explain our understanding later, mother, when the noon hour is not at hand and the animals be fed. Canst not find words to answer my question?" he cried out in harsh tones. "Didst thou see this Frenchman plainly? Of what appearance was he?"

With quiet deliberation, which was in direct contrast to her son's excited manner, she commenced her narra-

"Josiah, I ha' told thee of the gallant's sudden appearance at good Brother Haggott's door, of his loud knocking and of how from my place behind the lattice I observed him care-

"Aye, thou hast, but naught else," Josiah interposed with eagerness. "His age, mother? Of what age looked he?"

"Methought as I saw him that the knight was getting on to thirty summers, mayhap one or two more," she said. "He was large of stature and finely built, with gray eyes and brown pointed beard worn i' the French fashion. A round hat with sweeping feather covered his hair, long leathern riding boots reached to his hips, and his doublet was of ruby velvet, with black satin slashings. Good son Josiah"-she laid her hand on his arm with an expression of feeling unusual with her-"he presented such a dazzling picture to mine eyes that for the nonce-know- | Hetty?" ing that oft to silly women the sight of rich and tawdry dress doth weigh heavily against piety, honesty and worth of character-a feeling of insecurity, apprehension and alarm for thy prospects so filled my mind that I saw the man who would supplant thee ride bravely away in the wrong direction with exultation and a feeling of gratitude to God for his gracious protection of us, ever his righteous and faithful servants," she concluded in her most devout manner.

Springing to his feet, Taunston paced the room with nervous strides, occasionally pausing to look out of the window or to stand stern and gloomy before the chimney fize. Suddenly, as if unable to contain himself longer, he made a sharp exclamation and, going to his mother, who had resumed her spinning, cried desperately: "Mother, I ha' sworn that those lands shall be mine! An' the knowledge that there is an enemy approaching with intent to baffle my desire doth set me on the verge of frenzy!"

"Calmness," she replied in a voice of warning. "Cold calculation and a trust in God were ever better, my son, than hot words and hasty action. Already Abigail's misdirection hath sped thee six days on thy wooing and six days more before the Skollvent stream will be passable, not taking into consideration the knowledge of the pest of measles that spreads so thickly about the town of Sterndorf, where our travelers are resting safely there by now." She laughed in grim enjoyment

"Happen, lad, we may ne'er hear o' them again."

Josiah paused in his restless walking and leaned against the casing of the door, with a gleam of hope in his eyes.

"Ha, ha," his laughter rang out harsh and mirthless. "An our gallant courtier doth fall a victim to the pest 'twill be a long number o' days before he can recover strength to ride down you rocky mountain road. In that time, with perseverance and determination. much headway can be made!"

He opened his lips to continue, hesitated, then said: "Thou saidst I think that you cavalier's face was not one of much attractiveness, good mother? Not one a woman would remember

him the harsh words he had spoken as he rode up to the door, his mother made reply:

"'Twere a sin to speak words without truth, Josiah," she said piously, "so I fain must say that to the worldly minded the gallant's face was one of much manly beauty."

Her son did not reply, but strode hastily out of the doorway, and as he walked bitter hatred filled his heart and blinded his eyes so that for once he did not see the green lands of Margaret Mayland's estate spreading out in all their spring beauty before him. His sister Hetty, dawdling at the brook in the sunshine, filling the ewers, spoke to him as he passed, but he did not hear her or appear to know that she

Not so with round faced Simon Kempster, who came after him whistling merrily, a bunch of fagots on his shoulders and a happy light in his eyes as their gaze fell on Hetty, who, having filled the ewers, was now raising one to her shoulder preparatory to carrying it to the house.

Simon threw down his fagots. "A good morrow, Hetty. Shalt help

thee with thy water carrying?" "Nay, not so, good Simon, for mother, ever watchful from the doorway, would say that we did gossip in working hours," she replied soberly. "Once ere now this morning I ha' felt the severity

o' her displeasure." "Then, by my faith, thy sweet face showeth no sign that thou didst take her rebuke to heart sorely, for thy countenance is as bright-as bright"-Hetty raised her eyes in pleased an-

"As bright as a new brass kettle!" he cried, delighted in that he had found -so apt a comparison.

The smile on his companion's face grew quickly into a frown as she turned stiffly to walk away. "So I resemble a brass kettle this

morning!" she said sarcastically. "Next time thou growest sentimental thou wilt probably compare my graces to a hogshead, or mayhap," growing anopen window and, throwing out her one day mad in love with a pretty grier every minute, "I may remind thee She walked away swiftly.

"Nay, be not vexed with me, sweet Hetty," Simon exclaimed, running aft-His mother looked out through the er her in clumsy haste. "Wait, wait. I doorway, reflectively maintaining for have bethought me of a most beauteous verse about thee." Hetty halted, indecision in her man-

> ner, her nose held high in the air and a look of piqued vanity ornamenting her features. "Thou wert ever slow, Simon, I would be away to assist my mother."

"A good morrow, Hetty." Hetty, or I'll lose it!" he cried, wi great eagerness

> "I-I went to the brook, An' when I did look I saw a maid. And-and she no longer stayed.

"There, there! That's sentiment for

thee, Hetty." Her face softened a little, and she approached a step nearer, asking doubtfully, "Dost think so, Simon?" "Aye, marry, 'tis a fine verse and of wondrous sentiment!" he cried convincingly. "I warrant that Will Shakespeare, with all the talk about him,

could ne'er ha' done better. Didst ever

hear of such perfection in rhyming. "Perchance, 'tis well for a verse thought on the minute," she replied with an indifferent toss of her head. "Ab, welladay, 'tis ill dawdling at the brook i' the morning, with a day's work ahead of one, a-listening to foolish

mymesters." Simon watched her wistfully as she walked away from him, with the ewer of water gracefully poised on her shoulder. Nor did he take his glance from her until she had entered a woody stretch of country that lay between the brook and the Taunston farmhouse Then, throwing fear of her displeasure to the winds, he ran hastily and overtook her at the dell.

"Hetty," he whispered, panting slightly, "the sentiment in my verse did please thee, I trow, by the look of approval in thine eyes. Wilt kiss me, Hetty?"

"Nay, silly stupid!" She tossed her head indignantly. "Wast ever such effrontery heard on!"

Then, seeing him abashed and his bright face cloud with regret at his temerity, her eyes twinkled and she laughed a low, sweet, rippling laugh.

"There, there, good Simon, pout not so dolefully," she exclaimed. "Prithee, since thou hath grown clever and can make verses so aptly perchance thou shouldst have a reward. Thou"-a warm flush suffusing her countenance -"thou canst kiss the back of my hand if thou like," throwing it toward him indifferently. "There, lawk-a-mercy, man, do ha' done! I did not say my wrist an' arm, that I remember! Aye, mother," she cried bastily in answer to a shrill call from her mother in the doorway. "I'm on my way!"

CHAPTER VIII. TTYITH the slanting rays of the afternoon sun falling full upon her, Margaret Mayland rode up the mountain path that led to the Mayland farm. making with her crimson riding habit and yellow hair a brilliant speck of color against the dark background of the green trees and foliage. Her horse stepped slowly, the rein falling loose on its neck, and Margaret, pale faced and dejected, rode along listlessly. A lark calling his mate sent strong, sweet notes across the forest; a busy squirre! Still treasuring in her heart against disturbed by the advent of horse as tree, and the little spring brook by bled across the mountain road a splashed and sparkled in the sunlibut Margaret, lost in her sad rev . rode on unheeding with bowed figur and drooping head. Elsbeth, who for an hour past ha

been peering anxiously out of a will dow that overlooked the roadway, sp; ing her young charge at the gate threw open the door at her approacwith a great show of cheerful activity "Enter, pretty, an' rest thyself," si cried as Margaret alighted from the

horse and threw the reins to old Giles Then, lifting her eyes in mute despair to Elsbeth's face, Margaret can: toward the house. "Thy tea is brewed, and the hot

keeping warm for thee on the hearthstone." Elsbeth announced. Margaret entered languidly, carry ing her jeweled riding whip, her heavy

cakes that thou likest are covered

skirts trailing after her as she came. "I care not to eat," she said saily. Then, as if unable to conceal her dis-

appointment or to contain her suffering, she cried out brokenly: "Elsbeth, another day most gone and Godfrey hath not come. An' wander where I will I can get no word of him. Mine eves are strained with looking down the road that leads from London, and my heart aches near to bursting with loneliness and apprehension. Three weeks last Sunday since I received his

Her riding whip fell to the floor with a thud as she sank into a chair, covering up her white face with her hands. "Elsbeth," she said at last to the woman who stood before her in dumb sympathy, "hast ever thought that God-

raise her bead.

frey, reckless in his haste to see me. did attempt to ride up the mountain in that fearful storm and-God's pity on me!-was lost?" "Tut, tut, sweetheart!" Elsbeth's voice was gay and full of courage to reassure her. "Sir Godfrey's but detained in Lunnon. Thou must keep in aind what a great lord he is and that mayhap his business there is of vast importance. 'Tis often, I warrant thee,

that a man's heart is in one place and perforce his body in another. Ha' done grieving, Margaret, and eat a little sup to strengthen thee. He'll come anon." Her young mistress did not move or He'll come anon." "Every night since the storm broke," she lamented, "I have worn my finest gowns to welcome Godfrey-at first

despuir. Elsbeth," she cried, throwing up her head with a little tragic gesture, "I tell thee Godfrey is ill or dead, for so perfect is my knowledge of his unselfish love for me that I know, unless fever did render him delirious or death had stilled his tongue, he would not leave me pining here alone, suffering this frightful apprehension!" Weeping silently, she prepared to go

up the stairs. Elsbeth was at her side in a moment. "Tut, tut, my bonny maid! Let not such fearsome thought beset thee," she urged earnestly. "Take heart, Margaret. I promise thee-thine old Elsbeth who loves thee doth promise thee-that ere the sun goeth down on another day thy lover 'll hold thee in his arms."

Margaret smiled sadly. "An I could believe thine oft repeated promises, good Elsbeth, my heart would not now have lost its lightness,"

At the top of the staircase she paus-

"Oh, Elsbeth, 'tis easy for thee to be brave when 'tis not thy Godfrey who doth not come!" she said. "But could thou really know what 'tis to wait wearily night after night for the man who hast thine whole heart thou would "I ha' ever advised thee, Margaret."

the elder woman said, putting her arm about the girl comfortingly, "not to fasten too much affection on any man, else he prove not worthy of it and thy joy be turned to sorrow." Margaret raised her eyes, filled with

deep reproach, to Elsbeth's face. "Such true love as doth exist between Godfrey and me," she said soberly; "such faith, such trust, thou with was startled almost beyond hope of thine evil suspicions and grim fore- composure at this sudden voice. With What knoweth thou of men and lovers, fell against a tree and rested there. Elsbeth, that thou art always prating of their imperfections? 'Twere not kind of thee to tease me with thy maudlin talk when"-the tears in her eyes overflowed on her cheeks-"I am so beset on every side."

"Beset! Margaret, tell me. Who troubles thee?"

"I have told thee of my cousin Josiah's importunities, Elsbeth." she answered. "Thou knowest that cold, persistent wooing doth fret me. and lately his advances have been so open and determined that, i' truth, have fear of him." She drew a sharp, shuddering breath.

"Elsbeth, the sight of my cousin strikes a chill to my heart. I know inclined to be oratorical and having no that he is an upright man and godly. desire to remain in the forest listening but he tells me so plainly of his firm to words of censure and reproach that determination to win me at all hazards; there is something so cruel in his eyes and so relentless in his bearing, that he sets me all a-tremble. At night I have evil dreams of him, and my waking hours are filled with bad presentiments. Oh, Elsbeth" - she burst out crying bitterly—"pray God to send me Godfrey!" "There, there! Take off this riding

dress that hangs so heavily about thee"—Elsbeth stroked the bowed head gently-"and don thine azure muslin that Sir Godfrey loved to see thee wear. Dost remember, sweet, one night in Paris when I was brushing thy hair that thou told me that thy lover said thou wert like a dainty flow-And the next day he sent thee a bunch of the sweet flowers?"

"Ah, remind me not of those happy days!" she replied tearfully. "Ah lackaday, that I ever left mine aunt in Paris!"

Elsbeth, assisting her to remove her habit, said, with gentle sympathy. 'Tis no wonder thou art nerveless and pining, bonny, in this raw mountain climate that, I trow, doth not agree with thee, an' the sober ways of thy neighbors do pall upon thee."

"Although it doth appear to thee, Elsthe heaviest ills of life, such as separation, poor health, grim poverty, i' truth, starvation; but I admit that such agony as the knowledge of harm to Godfrey would be a grief such as would kill

"Fie, fie on such grim thoughts! Cheer thee, Margaret," urged her com-

For a moment the girl struggled with herself, then forcing a smile through the tears said more cheerfully, "The blue frock, Elsbeth, and my lace bertha. Who doth dare say that thou and I have lost hope of brave Godfrey?"

An hour later, just as the waning sunlight was hovering over the pine covered peaks of Cragenstone now distincky defined against the rose tinted horizon, the young mistress of the Mayland farm, wearing a blue evening gown made in the French fashion, with the bodice cut low, surmounted by a lace bertha, her fair neck and arms bare and ruffled skirts made full and sweeping, walked out of the house and standing before the door looked down the roadway pensively with an air of

The soft breeze stirred the leaves of the foliage and the monotonous call of the whippoorwill could be heard over the trees of the forest, but no other sounds, such as the galloping of horses' feet, fell on the ears of the waiting. lonely woman.

"Maybap, an thou'lt walk a little down the road behind the hill, thou'lt meet Sir Godfrey," Elsbeth called from the window. Margaret turned to her sadly.

"Elsbeth, an Godfrey comes not tonight I shall know that he is lying helpless, ill; hath met foul play-oror is dead. Tomorrow an he is not here I'll rouse the village, send messengers scurrying in all directions, for, prithee," with a little sob, "if the truth is what I suspect, I had better die of

"I do protest Sir Godfrey's not the man to be outdone by any villainy. And who hereabout would be his enemy?

"So thou hast said before," Margaret replied, turning away listlessly, "an' meanest well, for thou dost love me. While yet it is day I'll stroll through the woody forest path to the village. Some new arrival at the inn perchance hath brought some news. I'll go, good

I !sbeth." At about this time Josiah Taunston, with his broad brimmed hat pulled well down over his closely cropped hair, wearing his church going suit of black cloth and finely knit gray woolen stockings, came through the forest toward the Mayland farmhouse to make an evening call on its fair mistress. Unusual pallor shone on his stern countenance, and his eyes, cold and steely, looked almost wicked, so full were they of an expression of determination. Suddenly the sound of a light footstep feli on his ears and, raising his head, he discerned through the foliage a glimmer of blue that caused him to draw his breath hard and his heart to stand

Not seeing the approaching form on account of a turn in the path, Margaret advanced, her head, crowned by the wealth of hair wound high above it, held proudly, holding her long skirts well off the ground to avoid the briers in her way, disclosing as she walked the big buckles and red beels of her little black shoes. "I give thee good even', cousin." The

Margaret gave 2 wild shrick. Her heart and soul eager for the presence of her lover, every nerve strained with listening and waiting for him, expecting him at every angle of the road, she

voice was sudden and loud.

bodings could have no thought on, her hands over her heart, panting, she "I wot I frightened thee," he said, watching her furtively out of his small gray eyes.

> "What meanest thou," she cried angrily when she had recovered slightly, "that thou comest like a great panther stealing through the forest? Couldst not give a body warning?"

> "'Tis my fashion ever to walk easily, Margaret Mayland," he observed, "but I' truth I had no wish to frighten thee. Rather would I do that which would draw thee nearer to me so that thou would heed my counsel and listen to words that others far older and wiser than thou have given ear to and"-Margaret, seeing that her cousin was

motion stood erect before him, interrupting his harangue by saying in a quick, peremptory manner, "I have an errand in the village, Josiah, and would be on my way." He stood in her pathway immovable. "Margaret, hear me. I do but coun-

were distasteful to her, with a quick

sel thee for thy good." "Why should I heed thy counsel prithee, and give ear to thee? By what right do thou admonish me? Am I not mine own mistress?" she asked disdainfully.

"It is not part of my plan to anger thee, Margaret, else I would tell thee many things with unvarnished plainness for thy good and for the welfare er in that frock-a blue forgetmenot; of thy soul," he said in reply. "An' if e'er a maid needed the firm guidance of an honorable, God fearing man, thou'rt she, cousin," he continued sternly, "For in that wicked bedlam, the French city called Paris, thou didst learn many ways and acquire habits that if allowed to grow uncorrected would lose thee thy sou! for all eter-

Margaret, coming a step nearer, met his glance with open defiance.

"Speak plainer," she commanded. "What dost thou mean?" "One thing, thy way of dressing. beth, that I have lost my bravery and ask thee in all reason, cousin, doth it strength, I have still courage to bear become a modest, virtuous maid to expose her breast and arms to the gaze of men? I do assert 'tis most unseem-

> Margaret's eyes flashed dangerously, "But," he continued, seeing her displeasure and endeavoring to control his voice so that it would sound less harsh and discordant, "I know that these are errors of education learned from the godless in that devil's nest where thou in all innocence wast sent by thy father, and that with the firm and loving guidance of a pious husband, combined with constant prayer and repentance on thy part, thou wouldst overcome these ways tending to do thee evil. Margaret, canst thou not see what is for thy good? Give me mine answer tonight!"

He came toward her with outstretched hands. "Say, 'Josiah, I will wed

with thee." Margaret, who had grown very white. drew away from him hastily, as if in horror of him, opened her mouth to shrick out her refusal, then suddenly with a strong effort composed herself and, giving her shoulders a little shrug, leaned back against the tree, regarding her companion with a half smile of contempt and derision. "My good cousin," she commenced

calmly, "since my return among my kinsfolk, where of a truth I expected warm greetings and loving attentions, with the exception of sweet Hetty I have received naught but unpleasant correction, constant criticism, unkind fault finding and rude interference with my mode of dress and manner of living. I have borne it all with patience possibly indifference, attributing it to thine ignorance and the narrowness of thy living here. 'Tis true my ways are not thy ways. Forsooth, I would change them if they were, so insupportable are thine to me, for I have ever been taught by the good and loving aunt who raised me that kind words that at once than linger with this suf- and civil were much to be preferred to fering, this slow suspense that is kill- harsh criticism and cruel prejudice, and that fair words and good manners "What foolish megrims! Nay, cheer were what distinguished a gentleman thee, Margaret," Elsbeth cried in pro- from the boor. Again I say and in test at the dark views of her mistress. conclusion," she announced, with an air of finality, "If thou liketh not my ways, I hold thine in abhorrence." Josiah's thin lips worked.

"Mine answer, Margaret Mayland,"

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he interposed harshly, unable longer to endure the suspense; "cease thy woman's palayer and say me yea or nay." "Thine answer!" She laughed a light laugh of contempt. "Here it is, I say it plainly so that thou'lt understand it and so forever cease thine importunities. Josiah Taunston, I will not marry thee. Rather would I throw my body over the crag of yonder precipice and let the carrion feed on it. Now let me go my way!"

CHAPTER IX.

COLOR, ashen gray, spread over Taunston's face, white foam came on his lips, and removing his hat, he morred his forehead with his handkerchief. For the moment he was stunned with disappointment and anger, so much so that he did not appear to hear Margaret's second imperative command to give way to her, and stood looking at her dumbly. A woman to scorn him! Since Taunston's majority in all the counsels of the village his voice had ever been heard the loudest, carrying conviction with it. The people heeded him; he was a leader, and in his own family the women obeyed his sternest orders without question or even besitation. In consequence as he had commanded all about him for so many years he knew no other way of attaining his desires, so he thought new to conquer this woman, the first to rise in his path to block it, by his usual barsh

methods of procedure. "Before I leave this place tonight



Margaret laughed scornfully.

"Stay!" he exclaimed. force them from thee!" he said in & choked voice, endeavoring to suppress his passion.

"Force!" she exclaimed, lifting ber

skirts preparatory to moving away in the opposite direction. "Thou'st established a poor rule to win a woman, good cousin." She stood before him, maddening in ber fearlessness, her contempt of him and her beauty. With his heart full of baffled hope and despair at seeing fail-

ure close at hand, to control his desire

to spring upon her and by sheer physical strength compel her to promise to marry him he dug his nails this his clinched hands until he almost forced Not understanding his strong and passionate nature or indifferent to his suffering, Margaret continued lightly: "Thou'st ever been so generous with thine advice to me, Josiah, that before I go I'll give thee, forsooth, some small counsel in return. Learn, then, that,

while force may be successful in driv-

ing men and animals, fair words, a gal-

lant bearing and loving attentions are

shafts that soonest reach a woman's She moved away.

Josiah sprang toward her, laying a strong, detaining hand on her arm. "Stay!" he exclaimed. "I would speak further. Dost think I beed thy foolish counsel? "Tis time thou knew, cousin, that God made woman to serve man, to recognize his better judgment in thankfulness and to bow her bead

(Continued on page two)

with happy heart full of bright hope, To Cure a Cold in One Day then, after succeeding days of bitter Take I axative Bromo Quinine Tablets. 6 %. Liner on every box. 25c. Cures Crip disappointment, with less hope and some misgiving. But tonight"—shedrew a sharp breath and put her hand over her heart-"I go to dress sick with terror and broken hearted with

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