

Aunt Diana

The Sunshine of the Family

CHAPTER VII.

"How beautiful the first chapter of Alison's fallure," whispered Alison, in a tiny little voice, as she encountered Roger on her way downstairs on Monday morning, and she laughed merrily as she should have been weeping.

"How ever did you get possession of that thing?" he exclaimed. "Do you know, Alie, my dear, that shabby little brown basket has been a bone of contention between Miss Leigh and Missie for the last month. Miss Leigh clings to it as her sole hope, and refuses to give it up. It has ended by Missie's nearly abstracting it at night. She has done it three or four times."

"Yes, I know. Poppie told me all about it. Well, in an amused tone, 'I have only paid Missie in her own coin. Thanks to my good habits, I was dressed before she thought of waking, so I stole in, got my key basket, and wished Missie good morning at the same time. I am afraid she will come down dreadfully cross."

"As though that were anything new," returned Roger, contemptuously, as he took up the paper and retired with it to the window, while Alison buried herself with the coffee pot. Shortly afterward there was an unaccounted sound on the stairs.

"If it were not perfectly incredible, I should say that was Rudel's footstep," Roger observed, in a doubtful tone. "Oh, yes, it is Rudel," returned Alison, brightly. "I woke him, and made him promise to get up. Miss Leigh says he has got into bad ways. Good boy," as Rudel entered, looking very much pleased at himself, and he bore without making a very bad example in this, no one thinks of such a thing except Mr. Roger, and he is always very thoughtful."

"What is that for?" she asked, with a child's innocent curiosity, but in much surprise, as Alison kissed her warmly, and said, "Good morning, Poppie, dear."

Alison was soon too busy to remember Missie's existence. Miss Leigh, who was desirous of resigning her household duties into Alison's hands, keeping herself in the background and only acting as an aide-camp, was soon explaining to the bewildered girl all her little pet theories with regard to kitchen and store room.

"When Miss Leigh and Poppie went back to the school room, Alison settled herself and her painting apparatus in the furthest window, and tried to forget all her perplexities in hard work, but while Poppie dined over her lessons, Alison's thoughts would stray to a far different scene—to a shady room full of sweet flower scents, with a tall figure standing before an easel. 'Oh, Aunt D, if I were only painting beside you now,'" she thought, with a sharp, involuntary pain.

"Oh, how beautiful! If I could only paint like that," the words were spoken, with a slight gasp, and her eyes were staring; she had been dreaming indeed; the midday sun was streaming into the room. Poppie had put away her lesson books, and had run off, and Miss Leigh's place was empty, and standing just behind Alison's chair was a young lady dressed very simply in a gray linen dress and a broad-brimmed hat. At Alison's obvious start the young lady blushed and seemed confused.

"What is that for?" she asked, with a child's innocent curiosity, but in much surprise, as Alison kissed her warmly, and said, "Good morning, Poppie, dear."

"Poppie means that we are not accustomed to these little civilities," put in Roger, as Alison looked perplexed for a moment, "nobody says good morning to anybody else at The Holms except Miss Leigh and I; we always do, don't we?" shaking hands with her as he spoke.

"I am afraid you are very much shocked, Alison," observed Miss Leigh, mournfully. "Mabel acts Rudel and Poppie such a bad example in this, no one thinks of such a thing except Mr. Roger, and he is always very thoughtful."

"When Mr. Merle came into the room a few minutes later he seemed quite surprised at the unaccounted cheerfulness. He nodded to Alison, and then took up his letters, but she was not satisfied.

"How delicious of your sister! I really would hug her for this. What a pity we never thought of this before, dear, and then Tony might have joined us!" When Roger returned from his work, an hour earlier than he expected, he stood quite transfixed on the gravel walk; for certainly such a pleasant little picture had never been seen before in the garden of The Holms.

"You may have my chair by Miss Leigh," exclaimed Poppie, eagerly. "Oh, the cakes are so nice, Roger, and there are two left."

"I must make you some fresh tea, you poor tired day laborer," observed Alison, as Roger threw himself into the wicker chair and removed his hat.

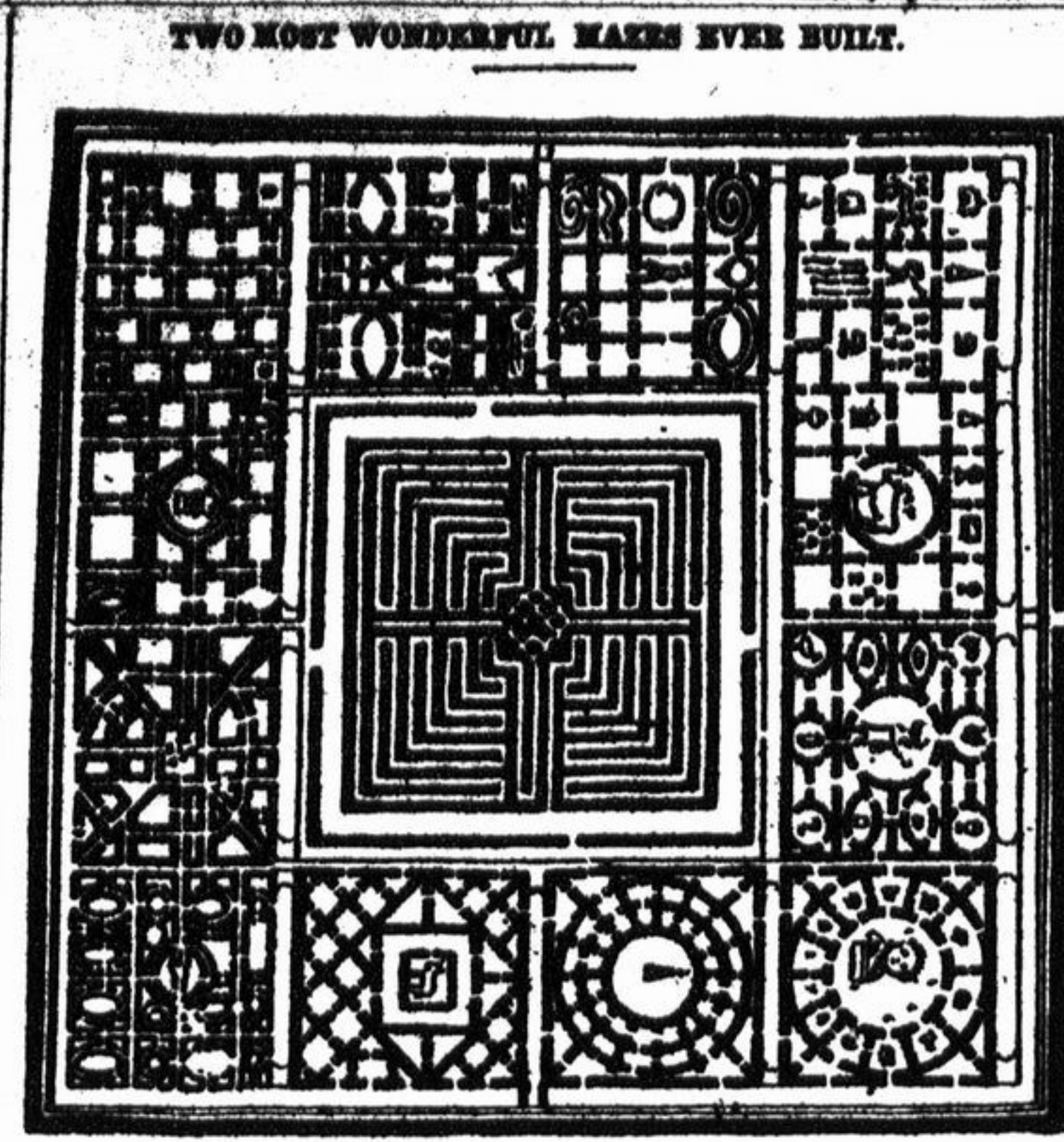
"Oh, let me do it!" exclaimed Anna, eagerly. "I know the way to the kitchen quite well."

"Yes, and I will go, too," added Poppie. "There are some more strawberries, I know."

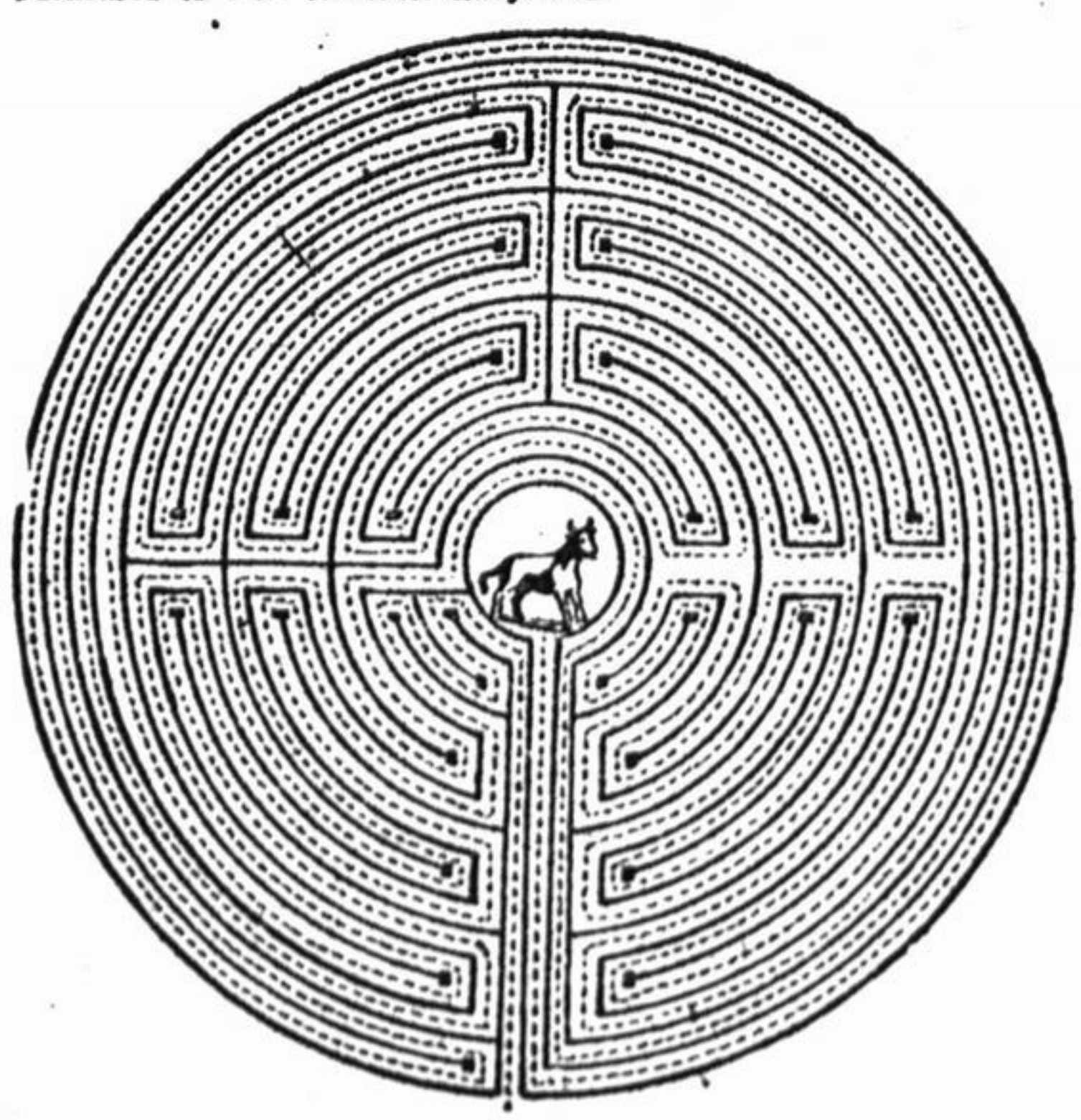
"Bring me a big plateful," called out Roger, as Poppie stalked away; but he looked after her both rather curiously. His little friend looked different, somehow, he thought. Was it Alison, he wondered, who had put those coquettish looking roses into the little gray gown?

"Anna's face looked dimpled and smiling. Her blue eyes quite shone when she came back. She and Alison and Roger had a long talk, while Miss Leigh listened and knitted industriously. Missie and Eva had wandered away again—most likely to avoid Roger. He had addressed Miss Hardwick with studied politeness, but she had tossed her head and hardly answered him. She would make no terms with the enemy who had wounded her vanity so grievously.

"We will take one more turn, darling, and then we must really go," she said to Missie; and in a few more minutes they heard her calling for Anna.



The Top Illustration Shows the Moeris Labyrinth of Ancient Egypt, Built of Solid Marble and Containing 3,000 Buildings—No Key Is Furnished to This Intricate Labyrinth.



The Dotted Line Shown on the Famous Knossos Labyrinth, in Crete, Will Serve as a Key to the Maze.

The labyrinth or maze is a popular attraction at every exposition. Coney Island has several of them, all exceedingly simple in construction, but very difficult to find your way out of once you are fairly inside.

Coney Island's maze, and even the more famous and ingenious ones at Hampton Court, at Versailles and Scheveningen, are mere toys compared with the two most famous labyrinths of ancient times, the plans of which are shown herewith. These are the Moeris labyrinth, in Egypt, and the Knossos labyrinth, in Crete.

The Moeris labyrinth was square and built entirely of marble. It was 3,000 buildings arranged in groups of twelve palaces. The outer wall was decorated with lines of statues; within are the twelve groups of palaces and in the center are the gardens, the walks of which constitute a maze within a maze.

The Cretan labyrinth was formed by Daedalus for Minos as a prison for the minotaur to which twelve Athenian youths and maidens were offered every year. According to classical mythology, Theseus, coming to Crete with a band of victims, resolved the clue to the labyrinth.

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WHEN HAITI WAS AN EMPIRE.

An Account of a Rather Funny Incident in History of the Republic. The little republic of Hayti, which now and then chooses to cultivate her domestic and foreign affairs with a so-called revolution, can boast of a rather tonny period of her history, says Harper's Weekly. In 1811 the negro general, Christophe, proclaimed himself emperor and, in spite of the smallness of his empire, surrounded himself with a pompous official household like the grand monarchs of Europe. He ended in 1820 by suicide and up to 1840 the little state could again enjoy its party fights and revolutions as a republic. In the latter year another negro, Gen. Faustin Soulouque, seized the government, and on Aug. 20 took possession of the state as its proclaimed emperor, calling himself Faustin I.

He established his government upon the pattern of Napoleon's. That he, who was born as a slave, had some difficulty in reading and writing did not bother him. For his coronation he ordered exact reproductions of the crown and the coronation robe of the emperor of the French; to pay for them, of course, he deemed unnecessary, and the "purveyors to his majesty" were glad to receive some part payments by and by. The civil list of the emperor was fixed at 150,000 gourdes (1 gourde equal to 96 2/3 cents); that of the empress, black as her spouse, at 50,000 gourdes. Her court attendants included two ladies of honor, fifty ladies of the court and twenty-two waiting maids.

The court had a grand almoner, a manager of the imperial theater, a governor of the imperial palaces, etc. The emperor founded two orders of knighthood; the order of St. Faustin of military merit and the order of the legion of honor. His division generals and vice admirals he made princes and dukes, and the brigadier generals counts; every superior customs officer became a baron. All at once Hayti with its not quite 10,000 square miles and its population of about 900,000, had fifty-nine dukes, 100 counts, 336 barons and 340 knights.

The names of the brand-new aristocracy were taken from farms and fantastic feudal estates which Faustin had created by mere word and given ridiculous and burlesque names. John Joseph, the emperor's brother, was named duke of Port-de-Paix (Port-au-Prince); Charles Albert, great-bread-champ, was Duke des Cachots (I. e., of the prisons); de Mare, Duke de la Limonade; Linding, Duke de Marmelade. The most humorous names were those of some of the counts.

A MEDICATED SOUP.

One often reads of the tremblings and anxieties which accompany the first dinner parties of the young wife and housekeeper. Gerald Gordon, in "Life in the Muffin," gives a bit of experience which shows that a youthful bachelor makes his debut as an entertainer with similar feelings of trepidation. Feeling almost as nervous as a girl for the success of his initial social enterprise in India, he entered the dining room with his guests.

The table looked very well. In the center was a large citron mason, with the thick rind cut into ornamental shapes. The flowers were prettily arranged. When I viewed the dining room before the arrival of the guests I felt well contented.

CHECKING A BUNDLE.

The Way the Tired Man saved Himself Labor and Trouble. One day a man went into a very big store. He had a heavy package with him.

"Not in the sense you mean, smarties, but in the real sense." He had to go two blocks farther down the street and didn't want to carry the package. So he decided that he would leave it in the check room.

Hardly any man is clever enough to know how important he isn't.