

WHEN THE FLOODS ARE OUT.

CHAPTER I.

It was not often that anything of importance occurred at North Abbot, a picturesque village...

He visited the court at rare intervals, and the last time he came was about five years back.

Before the news of the Lord of the Manor's return was a fortnight old, another shock went through the inhabitants of North Abbot.

It was a Government appointment, and that she was sent over to her aunt because she could not live in the cold climate of the Dominion.

All in the village knew, when, one evening in July, Miss Durnford drove away from the station, which was at Moorston.

The carriage passed through the high iron gates, swept up the drive, and stopped before the deep arched doorway of an old brick house.

At the top of the broad low flight of steps leading to the door stood a rather singular-looking woman of perhaps fifty-five or sixty.

Out of the laundress, before the footman could jump down to open the door, sprang a girl, graceful as a fawn and attired in a traveling dress.

"Dear auntie," said a sweet young voice, "how good of you to come to the door to receive me!"

"Good of me!" echoed Miss Durnford, putting her arms about the girl, who was taller than herself.

"You would have me receive my sister's child?" kissing the girl fondly as she spoke.

"Neither the one nor the other," was the merry response. "Oh, this dear old house! I hope I shall not turn you topsy-turvy, auntie!"

"You would never grow selfish, auntie," said Miss Costello, scanning her relative's face with a steady but by no means impatient gaze.

"Come to your room," she said, "and I will ring for Mary, the parlor maid, to wait on you."

"I don't need her, auntie, thanks. I don't trouble a maid much at home."

"Oh, yes, auntie! I have been out there only five years. I was seven when we went to Vienna; and we were there till Uncle got this appointment in Canada."

"Do you remember Europe so well?" asked Miss Durnford as the girl threw off her hat and jacket.

"Oh, yes, auntie! I have been out there only five years. I was seven when we went to Vienna; and we were there till Uncle got this appointment in Canada."

"Are they all they-checked?" asked Ilma. "Are you coming Sabine?"

"I am I?" said Ilma, shaking her head. "But I am really strong, auntie; only lately I seemed to be a little weak."

"You shall see them all this evening," said Miss Durnford. "I promised to take you over. Mrs. Sabine is an invalid. She is very kind and gentle; you will be sure to like her. Then there is Roland; he is twenty-five, a clever young fellow. He is very fond of hunting and fishing and all sports."

"I hope I shall like them," observed Ilma, as they rose from the table.

"I hope so too, dear. Now put on your hat, and we will go to the Larches; it is not three minutes' walk from here."

Ilma hastened away for her hat, remarking as she went, "So nice to be able to go without gloves."

"The people here," she said, "will stare you out of countenance. Your arrival has been quite an event, and your dress they will think foreign; but I suppose it is the fashion."

"Yes," returned Ilma, opening her large brown eyes. "I always had my dresses from Paris. Do I look odd?"

"Odd, my child. You look charming. I see you don't know much about country places."

"No, I have never lived in the country. I think I should like it for a time, and certainly Miss Costello was started at it as if she had been a visitor from another sphere; while remarks upon her appearance and attire were made with delightful frankness in a dialect however which effectually concealed their purport from the Canadian."

"The Larches was a fine old Elizabethan mansion, surrounded by ample grounds laid out in excellent taste, and a broad terrace occupied a considerable stretch of the frontage."

"I'm so glad to see you, cousin!"—clasping Ilma's white hand in an ample brown palm, "I am sure we shall get on beautifully. I am Rose."

"And I am Rose," said the Canadian, inspecting her cousin in turn, but with a gaze which was both observant and not exactly admiring, though giving no indication of opinion.

"Mamma and Janie are in the drawing-room, and I am sure you will like them. I am sure you will like them. I am sure you will like them."

"I don't need her, auntie, thanks. I don't trouble a maid much at home."

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to other people would think of carrying that through generations, Job is as glad as he can be that Sir Philip is the last of the Darrells.

"Why, the curse said—"

"When the floods are out, take heed!"

"It never has been yet," answered Rose mysteriously. "I remember hearing grandmamma say once that Amelia Darrell, a grand aunt of Sir Philip, you know, would not cross the river one when the floods were out, though she had to take an important journey South; but nothing happened. The bridge she would have had to cross remained still. Generally the Darrells have been reckless about that warning; and not one of them has come to grief at the time of the floods."

"How glorious!" cried Ilma, flushing with excitement and clasping her hands. "Oh, Rose, a man who could do such a deed of heroism! It is a man's duty to do such a deed."

"He believes in the curse," she said, gravely. "He does it all; and I am afraid it will be fully worked out with his life. I should feel easier if he left this place before the river rises. Why, it is in his mind to be married; and such a man as he is never need be bogging for a wife. He ought to marry, for the sake of the old house, whether he falls in love or not. No one of course ventures to ask him any questions; but he is hardly ever at the Court, and when he is it is only for a week or two. I am sure he will do something to begeth him."

"So you seem," said Ilma, laughing; "but you tempt me to try him. What fun! Do you really think that he has made up his mind to get married?"

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"I should know you were a stranger by both your looks and speech," said Sir Philip, smiling; and Ilma felt as she smiled a smile of amused surprise, even were the face it illumined less strikingly handsome than that of the Lord of Manor.

"I am delighted to have the further honor of meeting the lady who has the honor of holding out a slight hand as white as Ilma's own; and Ilma gave him her little hand with a bright laugh."

"What fun!" she exclaimed. "I like to be unconventional. It's ever so much nicer to be introduced to some one by having a warning about than by a formal introduction. Don't you think so?"

"I should if I were the warned and you were the warmer, Miss Costello; but it was not with any very enviable feelings that I saw you perched like a fay upon such treacherous ground." He shuddered slightly.

"But I should not like to see you whirling down to the water," said Ilma. "As it happens, there is no harm done. Oh, you dear old fellow!"

"The last words were not addressed to Sir Philip, but to his horse, which had walked forward sedately to join his master. Ilma caressed the noble animal with all a girl's lavish fondness, laying her soft cheek against his mane, and smiling at the sound of his snuffing and snoring, and talking to him as if he were a Christian."

"I've seen lots of beautiful horses," remarked Ilma, "but never such beauty as yours. How long have you had him?"

"Four years. I bought him in Alexandria." "I know you had not had him when you were last here," said Ilma, laughing; "for last evening Zeph Heston said you had ridden by on a black horse, and my cousins were quite interested."

"You will find that you cannot cross a road in this place without every one knowing it, and knowing why, or making a reason. All the village will be discussing you over breakfast this morning, and they talked about you all last evening. My coming here was a tremendous event, and in a country place as stupid as this, it is a great thing."

"I know that. No one would ever take you for a provincial, Miss Costello. As for me, I have not passed seven years of my life in my own country, or that she admitted his ring."

"I know that," said Ilma, nodding. "They call me 'foreigner' here."

"South country is foreign to Cumberland; and you don't speak like a home-bred English girl. You have been more used to foreign languages than your own—that is the real reason."

"That is how you speak," said Ilma. "I am no judge in my own case; but you speak your words crisply as Italians do, and the inflections of your voice are not English."

"Darrell laughed. This Transatlantic girl's frankness was bewitching; he would not have been at all surprised if she had told him that she had become blind, or that she admitted his ring."

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TO BE CONTINUED.

ST. ELMO'S FIRE.

The Mystic Flame that Burned and Shooked a Young Midshipman.

The following account of an electrical phenomenon which was witnessed on the British ship John O' Gaunt appeared in the San Francisco Bulletin on January 13 over the signature of H. Flood Clark, the ship's physician:

"During the evening of November 23, 1880, the atmosphere had been disturbed and had presented to our gaze five wonderful spots, one of great size and volume. After the excitement consequent on watching the waterspout was over, I retired, and had just made myself ready for the night when the chief officer came to call me to the poop. On my arrival there I perceived a bright globe of light at the royal mizen mast, of a clear yellow tint, burning steadily, and unaffected either by the motion of the ship or by the wind, the globe being about the size of a large tumbler. I recognized it as the magic fire of St. Elmo. I observed it carefully for some time, and was wishing that I could climb the mast and bring a piece of it down to the deck. Another midshipman was sent forward and volunteered to ascend. Here, then, was my chance of making an experiment through a medium which I believe has never before been attempted, and in what way aiding the knowledge of my fellowmen. Having distinctly intrusted the duty to me, I went up, and noticed everything, however trifling it might appear to him, and knowing he could be relied on for data, he began bisecting. On his arrival at the point where the flame appeared he was heard to cry out, 'Oh! it is hot, and all was silence. After waiting a few seconds he was heard to say, 'The globe is very hot, and it is coming down, but no answer could be got. Another midshipman was sent. In a short time both were safely on deck and our minds relieved."

"On arrival on deck the young man appeared dazed and complained of having burned his thumb, and I at once took him to my cabin, where he was attended by the surgeon. On examination I found the pulse of his eyes very much dilated and unaffected by light, the thumb of the left hand drawn and very painful and the whole of the arm distinctly numb. The pulse (taken on the affected side) was 110, temperature 103 degrees, 16 minutes after the time of the electric phenomenon the flame assumed a distinctly bluish color and was apparently attached to the mast in much the same way as the flame to the wick of a candle. On touching it with his left hand (his right meanwhile holding on to the mast), he received a distinct electric shock, and he was unable to breathe. Cardiac disturbance took place and spasmodic respiration, combined with entire loss of power, with numbness of hand and arm, also temporary deafness, shown by his not having heard us call to him from the deck—the night being a good one for transmission of sound."

"The numbness of the arm passed off in about an hour, but the thumb continued painful till next morning, when he seemed all right again, and returned to his duty. After the experiment I ordered him to his bunk, giving him a stiff glass of rum and allowing him to smoke."

"My young officer in this most interesting experiment is a clear-headed young man, aged 20, son of a general in the British army, and a capital subject to work out the case. He was at the time of the experiment in perfect health."

"About fifty seconds after it was touched the flame disappeared and did not again appear."

A FABLE.

The Wolf and the Hare.

One day as a Hare was pursuing her way through the forest she was overtaken by a Wolf, who had no sooner come in sight than he called out:

"By what right do you walk in this path?" "I thought it was a public highway," humbly replied the Hare.

"You are nothing but a Hare, while I am a Wolf. It is your business to follow on behind me, if you want to go my way. How it looks to see a big, strong Wolf following a weak and cowardly Hare like you."

"Very well," answered the Hare, who dared not dispute for fear of being still worse vexed.

"The Wolf was in no hurry. Indeed, he did not care to travel that way at all, except to humiliate his weaker neighbor. As he passed along at a slow gait, he looked back over his shoulder and observed:

"Don't keep so near me. If we meet anybody else, I shall have them think we are traveling in company. It is only an act of condescension that I allow you to travel this path at all."

"The Hare felt back a few feet further, feeling that any dispute would result to the advantage of the Wolf. They had not proceeded far when the Wolf suddenly uttered a howl of surprise, and as the Hare came up he was rolling over the ground with his fore feet fast in a trap.

"Help! help!" shouted the Wolf. "But I am nothing but a Hare," replied the other. "How it would look to see a weak and cowardly Hare rushing to the assistance of a big, strong Wolf!"

"If you had permitted me to go on my way in peace I should have been first at the trap," answered the Hare.

"I'd be glad to, small as you are, if I am not if anybody should come along I don't care to have them think we are traveling in company. I tell you, Mr. Wolf!"

"There is never a safe time to put on airs. The man you kick to day, may drive a grocer's delivery wagon to-morrow."—Duffess Free Press.

—Up to the beginning of this month the Rev. Dr. Todd's church in the city of New Haven, professed in its Manual to believe in "the condemnation of the wicked to everlasting punishment." It has now disavowed this position, and has the pleasure of meeting itself to breakfast with you this morning; but, if I presume—

"Oh, Sir Philip," cried the old lady, "you have such a lot of foreign palaver! I wonder you don't forget how to speak English. You cannot utter a sentence of good old Cumberland, I know. Ilma, run round and tell

"Sir Philip Darrell" exclaimed Miss Durnford, "happily descending the steps of the terrace at the back of the house—for Jennie had fled precipitately to inform her of the distinguished visitor who was approaching with Miss Ilma—this is a most unexpected, most welcome pleasure!"

"She held out her hand, her face and anxious expression, her cordial words, and her most friendly, hearty, abundant, and kind hearted hand."

"How kind of you," he said, "to be so glad to see me. Five years have not changed you, Miss Durnford; I wish I could believe that had wrought as little change in me. Your niece, who had the pleasure of meeting me, had been looking for me for some time; but I presume—"

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