

The Baby's Prayer.

She kneelt with her sweet hands folded; Her fair little hands clasped low; While dead vines tapped at the window, And the air was thick with snow.

A MAIDEN FAIR

A Scottish Love Story.

BY CHARLES OGDON.

She put her letter in her pocket. There was a new light on her face, making it look gentler and happier than it had ever done before.

When Dick reappeared from Cargill's cabin there was a peculiar smirk on his weathered face, and nodding to Annie complacently he muttered:

"Just as I thought, just as I thought. What is as you thought?" she inquired, eagerly.

"Give me a minute or two," he answered, seating himself before the joint of corned beef that had been placed before him. He took a dram first and then ate heartily.

"I'd want you to give you any false hopes, missy, but if I be a far wrong, Bob Ross will soon be put to the answer."

"You have found out how it was done?" "I jaloused it as soon as Bob let me ken what had happened. You see what comes o' reading the papers. I would have been like the lave o' you, maybe, if I hadna read that."

"He handed her the scrap of paper. It was the report of a common enough police case: a man enticed into a house, drugged, robbed, and turned out into the street in a state of apparent drunken stupefaction."

"This is what he has done!" she cried excitedly. "Bide a minute, missy. You have a heap to answer for; if it hadna been for you, the govk would never have thought o' sic a daft like thing. However, we want to clear Bob. You say nothing about this, no even to your father, and I'll satisfy him that he was mistaken. When do you start?"

"To-morrow morning." "Weel, as soon as I have told Jemms what his mother wants, I'll gang home again by train this day. But would like you to tell me one or two things first."

"The 'one or two things' included the whole of her conversation with Cargill about Ross, and the information she had gathered from the man apparently that not one had observed the slightest sign of anything being wrong with the pilot until they found him lying at the wheel."

"It's just wondrous! how you thought about seeking out a' that," said Dick admiringly; "but you were aye a clever lass, missy. I canna understand how the captain should be see ready to think ill o' Bob."

"Cargill made him believe that he had been drinking before."

"Aweel, that'll be set right afore lang. You and me maun keep a calm sang for a while. Just you keep on as you have been doing—keep your wits on you and maybe we'll get mair out o' him."

CHAPTER XII.

Captain Duncan rubbed his eyes and would have grown pale had his ruddy cheeks been capable of such a sign of emotion, when Annie and Dick Baxter explained to him and proved to him how Bob Ross had been betrayed.

"Preserve us," he gasped, "and me blessing him roguishly 'til he got home." "Gang ye him home," he cried, "but what for did he not speak out himself? I would have believed him."

"Oh, father, you would not be patient even with me, far less with him; and he was too much stupidified to be able to understand things himself until he got home."

"That'll no be ill to dae," said Dick, with one of his wise grins, "for he's just out o' his wits, and he's as good as dead."

Ross halted in the doorway, pale still, but firm on his feet again. The captain opened his mouth as if to speak, but for a little, was unable to do so. Then he took out his big red and white handkerchief, wiped his face with it, and next began to tug at his beard, as if it were a rope.

"I did you wrong, Ross. I beg your pardon, and there's my hand and there's Annie and the 'Mermaid'!"

"You may come, of course, Mr. Cargill; but you will not speak to me again until Mr. Ross is put right with his father."

"He was staggered, confused, muttered that he did not see what business it was of his; and with clumsy haste made his way out of the door."

"The 'Mermaid' still plods on its diligent course; but Ross is now the captain and owner, although Duncan Murray is always with him. And at times when there is a calm at sea, in the soft morning, he is seen to be heard crooning the old song, 'Weel may the keel row.'"

"What?" "Oh, yes; but that was only when you were angry," he answered lamely, "and I'm sure that he was angry enough for me to make out the will."

"What?" "Ye needna be feared. There was a frien' o' yours who after lang speakin gar't me put that paper in the fire."

"What?" "It was nae other than Bob Ross. Hae ye no rizzon to be grateful ta him?"

"The selfish nature of the man rendered him indifferent as soon as he knew himself to be safe."

"The woman's eyes set in that gaunt, salow face seemed to glitter as if a flame were reflected in them; and there was a weird solemnity in her voice."

"It'll be to put him right wi' his folk. Ye'll hae to tell how it cam' about that he fell down stupefied at the wheel."

"There was none o' Bell's customary passion in tone or in manner. She pronounced the sentence calmly, and there was a tremulous sadness somewhere which rendered her words the more impressive."

THE LADIES' COLUMN.

Dresses to be Worn During the Ensuing Season.

How Fashion Slavery Kills Women—New Household Hints.

Notes on Dress.

Lent is a capital time to plan and arrange one's spring clothes. Boasting over and arranging spring clothes is surely a good Lent mortification. Green is pronounced by the powers to be the color which will be most worn this spring, though almost every other conceivable shade will share its honors.

There were few folk in the town who did not miss Bell Cargill. When it became known that he was gone, as he had been for so long, there was a great deal of talk about the loss of a man who had been so long in the town.

"We have lost a good friend," said one wife to another, and that was Bell's epitaph; but the generous and the sharp tongue are at variance in the matter. Outside Anchor Cottage the truth about the narrow escape of the "Mermaid" is only known to Campbell, the sailor who retained his faith in Ross in spite of appearances, and Dick Baxter. The incident is frequently alluded to by the former, but Ross himself when questioned only laughs and says, "Oh, I had a dram, that's all."

Cargill gave instructions to the lawyers to set everything in the place, and has never been there since his mother went away for her confinement.

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