

A WOLF IN THE FOLD.

A DOMESTIC STORY WITH A MORAL.

CHAPTER X.—(CONTINUED.)

At last, a policeman said gruffly, "You've passed me twice. You can't be roaming the streets at this hour of night. Why don't you go home?"

Standing before him wringing her hands, she moaned, "I have no home!"

"Where did you come from?"

"Oh! I can't tell you. Take me to any place where a woman will be safe."

"I can't take you to anyplace now but the station-house."

"But can I be alone there? I won't be put with anybody?"

"No, no, of course not. You'll be better off there. Come along. 'Tain't far."

She walked beside him without a word.

"You'd better tell me something of your story. Perhaps I can do more for you in the morning."

"I can't. I'm a stranger. I haven't any friends in town."

"Well, well, the sergeant will see what can be done in the morning. You've been up to some foolishness I suppose, and you'd better tell the whole story to the sergeant."

She soon entered the station-house and was locked up in a narrow cell. She heard the grating of the key in the lock with a sense of relief, feeling that she had at least found a place of temporary refuge and security. A hard board was the only couch it possessed, but the thought of sleep did not enter her mind. Sitting down she buried her face in her hands and rocked back and forth in agony and distraction until day dawned. At last, some one she felt she could not raise her eyes to his face—brought her some breakfast and coffee. She drank the latter, but left the food untasted. Finally, she was led to the sergeant's private room and told that she must give an account of herself. "If you can't or won't tell a clear story," the officer threatened, "you'll have to go before the justice in open court, and he may commit you to prison. If you'll tell the truth now, it may be that I can discharge you. You have no business to be wandering about the streets like a vagrant or worse; but if you were a stranger or lost and hadn't sense enough to go where you'd be cared for, I can let you go."

"Oh!" said Alida, again wringing her hands and looking at the officer with eyes so full of misery and fear that he began to soften. "I don't know where to go."

"Haven't you a friend or acquaintance in town?"

"Not one that I can go to!"

"Why don't you tell me your story? Then I'll know what to do, and perhaps can help you. You don't look like a depraved woman."

"I'm not. God knows I'm not."

"Well, my poor woman, I've got to act in view of what I know, not what God knows."

"If I tell my story will I have to give names?"

"No, not necessarily. It would be best though."

"I can't do that, but I'll tell you the truth. I will swear it on the Bible. I married one. A good minister married us. The man deceived me. He was already married, and last night his wife came to my happy home and proved before the man whom I thought my husband that I was no wife at all. He couldn't, didn't deny it. Oh! oh! oh!" and she again rocked back and forth in uncontrollable anguish. "That's all," she added brokenly. "I had no right to be near him or her any longer and I rushed out. I don't remember much more. My brain seemed on fire. I just walked and walked till I was brought here."

"Well, well," said the sergeant, sympathetically, "you have been treated badly, outrageously, but you are not to blame unless you married the man hastily and foolishly."

"That's what every one will think, but it don't seem to me that I did. It's a long story, and I can't tell it."

"But you ought to tell it, my poor woman. You ought to see the man for damages and send him to prison."

"No, no," cried Alida, passionately. "I don't want to see him again and I won't go to a court before people unless I am dragged there."

The sergeant looked up at the policeman who had arrested her and said, "This story is not contrary to anything you saw?"

"No, sir, she was wandering about and seemed half out of her mind."

"Well, then, I can let you go."

"But I don't know where to go," she replied, looking at him with hunted, hollow eyes. "I feel as if I were going to be sick. Please don't turn me into the streets. I'd rather go back to the cell."

"That won't answer. There's no place that I can send you to except the poor-house. Haven't you any money?"

"No, sir. I just rushed away and left everything when I learned the truth."

"Tom Watterly's hotel is the only place for her," said the policeman, with a nod.

"Oh, I can't go to a hotel."

"He means the almshouse," explained the sergeant. "What is your name?"

"Alida—that's all now. Yes, I'm a pauper and I can't work just yet. I'll be safe there, won't I?"

"Certainly, safe as in your mother's house."

"Oh, mother, mother; thank God, you are dead."

"Well, I am sorry for you," said the sergeant, kindly. "Tain't often we have so sad a case as yours. If you say so, I'll send for Tom Watterly, and he and his wife will take charge of you. After a few days, your mind will get quieter and clearer, and then you'll prosecute the man who wronged you."

"I'll go to the poor-house until I can do better," she replied wearily. "Now, if you please, I'll return to my cell, where I can be alone."

"Oh, we can give you a better room than that," said the sergeant. "Show her into the waiting room, Tim. If you prosecute, we can help you with our testimony. Good-by, and may you have better days!"

Watterly was telegraphed to come down with a conveyance, for the almshouse was in a suburb. In due time he appeared, and was briefly told Alida's story. He swore a little at the "mean cuss," the author of all the trouble, and then took the stricken woman to what all his acquaintances facetiously termed his "hotel."

CHAPTER XI.—BAPFLED.

In the general consciousness, nature is regarded as feminine, and even those who love her most will have to adopt Mrs. Mumpson's oft expressed opinion of the sex, and admit that she is sometimes a "peculiar female." During the month of March, in which our story opens, there was scarcely any limit to her varying moods. It would almost appear that she was taking a mysterious interest or not, one might be at a loss to decide. When she caught him away from home, she pelted him with the coldest of rain and made his house, with even Mrs. Mumpson and Jane abiding there, seem a refuge. In the morning after the day on which he had brought, or in a sense had carted Mrs. Wiggins to his domicile, Nature was evidently bent on instituting contrasts between herself and the rival phases of femininity with which the farmer was compelled to associate. It may have been that she had another motive and was determined to keep her humble worshipper at her feet, and to render it impossible for him to make the changes towards which he had felt himself driven.

Being an early riser, he was up with the sun rose so serenely and smiled so benignly that Holcroft's clouded brow cleared in spite of all that happened or could take place. The rain which had brought such discomfort the night before had settled the ground and made it comparatively firm to his tread. The southern breeze which fanned his cheek was so soft as the air of May. He remembered that it was Sunday and that beyond feeding his stock and milking he would have nothing to do. He exulted in the unusual mildness and thought, with an immense sense of relief, "I can stay out doors nearly all day." He resolved to let his help kindle the fire and get breakfast as best they could, and to keep out of their way. What ever changes the future might bring, he would have one more long day in rambling about his fields and thinking over the past, feeling that there need be no haste about anything, he leisurely inhaled the air, fragrant from springing grass, and listened with a vague, undefined pleasure to the ecstatic music of the bluebirds, song-sparrows, and robins. If anyone had asked him why he liked to hear them he would have replied, "I'm used to 'em. When they come I know that plowing and planting time is near."

It must be admitted that Holcroft's enjoyment of spring was not very far removed from that of the stock in his barnyard. All the animal creation rejoices in the returning sun and warmth. A subtle, powerful influence sets the blood in more rapid motion, kindles new desires and awakens a glad expectancy. All that is alive becomes more thoroughly alive and existence in itself is a pleasure. Spring had always brought to the farmer quickened pulses, renewed activity and hopefulness, and he was pleased to find that he was not so old and cast down that his former influence had spent itself. Indeed, it seemed that never before had his fields, his stock and out-door work—and these comprised Nature to him—been so attractive. They remained unchanged, amid the sad changes which had clouded his life, and his heart clung more tenaciously than ever to old scenes and occupations. They might not bring him happiness again, but he instinctively felt that they might insure a comfort and peace with which he could be content.

At last, he went to the barn and began his work, doing every thing slowly, and getting all the solace he could from the tasks. The horses whinnied their welcome and he rubbed their noses caressingly as he fed them. The cows came briskly to the rack in which he foddered them in pleasant weather, and when he scratched them between the horns they turned their mild, Juno-like eyes upon him with undisguised affection. The chickens, clamoring for their breakfast, followed so closely that he had to be careful where he stepped. Although he knew that all this good-will was based chiefly on the hope of food and the remembrance of it in the past, nevertheless it soothed and pleased him. He was in sympathy with this homely life; it belonged to him and was dependent on him; it made him honest returns for his care. Moreover, it was agreeably linked with the past. There were quiet cows which his wife had milked, clucking biddies which she had lifted from nests with their downy broods. He looked at them wistfully, and was wondering if they ever missed the presence that he regretted so deeply, when he became conscious that Jane's eyes were upon him. How long she had been watching him, he did not know, but she merely said, "Breakfast's ready," and disappeared.

With a sigh he went to his room to perform his ablutions, remembering with a slight pang how his wife always had a basin and towel ready for him in the kitchen. In the breaking up of just such homely customs, he was continually reminded of his loss.

On awakening to the light of this Sabbath morning, Mrs. Mumpson had thought deeply and reasoned everything over again. She felt that it must be an eventful day and there was much to be accomplished. In the first there was Mrs. Wiggins. She disapproved of her decidedly. "She isn't the sort of person that I would prefer to superintend," she remarked to Jane while making a toilet which she deemed befitting the day, "and the hour will assuredly come when Mr. Holcroft will look upon her in the light that I do. He will eventually realize that I cannot be brought in such close relationship with a pauper. Not that the relationship is exactly close, but then I shall have to speak to her—in brief, to superintend her. My eyes will be offended by her vast proportions and uncouth appearance. The floor creaks beneath her tread and affects my nerves seriously. Of course, while she is here, I shall zealously, as befits one in my responsible position, try to render useful such service as she can perform. But then, the fact that I disapproved of her must soon become evident. When it is discovered that I only tolerate her, there will be a change. I cannot show my disapproval very strongly to-day, for this is a day set apart for sacred things, and Mrs. Wiggins, as she called herself,—I cannot imagine a Mr. Wiggins, for no man in his senses could have married such a creature,—as I was saying, Mrs. Wiggins is not at all sacred and I must endeavor to abstract my mind from her till to-morrow, as far as possible. My first duty to-

day is to induce Mr. Holcroft to take us to church. It will give the people of Oakville such a pleasing impression to see us driving to church. Of course, I may fail. Mr. Holcroft is evidently a hardened man. All the influences of his life have been adverse to spiritual development, and it may require some weeks of my influence to soften him and awaken yearnings for what he has not yet known."

"He may be yearning for breakfast," Jane remarked, completing her toilet by tying her little pig-tail braid with something that had once been a bit of black ribbon, but was now a string. "You'd better come down soon and help."

"If Mrs. Wiggins cannot get breakfast, I would like to know what she is here for," continued Mrs. Mumpson, loftily and regardless of Jane's departure. "I shall decline to do menial work any longer, especially on this sacred day, and after I have made my toilet for church. Mr. Holcroft has had time to think. My disapproval was manifest last night and it has undoubtedly occurred to him that he has not conformed to the proprieties of life. Indeed, I almost fear I shall have to teach him what the proprieties of life are. He witnessed my emotion when he spoke as he should not have spoken to me. But I must make allowances for his unregenerate state. He was cold, and wet, and hungry last night and men are unreasonable at such times. I shall now heap coals of fire upon his head. I shall show that I am a meek, forgiving Christian woman, and he will relent, soften and become patient. Then will be my opportunity," and she descended to the arena which should witness her efforts.

During the period in which Mrs. Mumpson had indulged those lofty reflections and self-communings, Mrs. Wiggins had also arisen. I am not sure whether she had thought of anything in particular or not. She may have had some spiritual longings which were not becoming to any day of the week. Being a woman of deeds, rather than of thought, probably not much else occurred to her beyond the duty of kindling the fire and getting breakfast. Jane came down, and offered to assist, but was cleared out with no more scruple than if Mrs. Wiggins had been one of the much visited relatives.

"The hidee," she grumbled, "avin' s'ich a little trollop round under my feet!"

Jane therefore solaced herself by the "cheap girl" till her mother appeared.

Mrs. Mumpson sailed majestically in and took the rocking-chair, mentally thankful that it had survived the crushing weight imposed upon it the evening before. Mrs. Wiggins did not drop a courtesy. Indeed, not a sign of recognition past over vast, immobile face. Mrs. Mumpson was a little embarrassed. "I hardly know how to comfort myself towards that female," she thought. "She is utterly uncouth. Her manners are unmistakably those of a pauper. I think I will ignore her to-day. I do not wish my feelings ruffled or put out of harmony with the sacred duties and motives which actuate me."

Mrs. Mumpson therefore rocked gently, solemnly, and strange to say, silently, and Mrs. Wiggins also proceeded with her duties, but not in silence, for every thing in the room trembled and clattered at her tread. Suddenly, she turned on Jane and said, "'Kre, you little baggage, go and tell the master breakfast's ready."

Mrs. Mumpson sprung from her chair, and with a voice choked with indignation, gasped, "Do you dare address my offspring thus?"

"Ye're vat?"

"My child, my daughter, who is not a pauper, but the offspring of a most respectable woman and respectably connected. I'm amazed, I'm dumfounded, I'm—"

"Ye're a bit daft, h'm thinkin'." Then to Jane, "'Y don't ye go an' hearn ye're salt?"

"Jane, I forbid"—but it had not taken Jane half a minute to decide between the now jarring domestic powers; and henceforth she would be at Mrs. Wiggins's beck and call. "She can do somethin'," the child muttered as she stole upon Holcroft.

Mrs. Mumpson sunk back in her chair, but her mode of rocking betokened a perturbed spirit. "I will restrain myself till to-morrow and then"—She shook her head portentously and waited till the farmer appeared, feeling assured that Mrs. Wiggins would soon be taught to recognize her station. When breakfast was on the table she darted to her place behind the coffee-pot, for she felt that there was no telling what this awful Mrs. Wiggins might not assume during this day of sacred restraint. But the ex-pauper had no thought of presumption in her master's presence, and the rocking-chair again distracted Mrs. Mumpson's nerves as it creaked under an unwonted weight.

Holcroft took his seat in silence. The widow again bowed her head devoutly, and sighed deeply when observing that the farmer ignored her suggestion.

"I trust that you feel refreshed after your repose," she said benignly.

"I do."

"It is a lovely morning,—a morning, I may add, befitting the sacred day. Nature is at peace, and suggests that we and all should be at peace."

"There's nothing I like more, Mrs. Mumpson, unless it is quiet."

"I feel that way, myself. You don't know what restraint I have put upon myself that the sacred quiet of this day might not be disturbed. I have had strong provocation since I entered this apartment. I will forbear to speak of it till to-morrow, in order that there may be quietness and that our minds may be prepared for worship. I feel that it would be unseemly for us to enter a house of worship with thoughts of strife in our souls. At precisely what moment do you wish me to be ready for church?"

"I am not going to church, Mrs. Mumpson."

"Not going to church! I—I—scarcely understand. Worship is such a sacred duty!"

"You and Jane certainly have a right to go to church, and since it is your wish, I'll take you down to Lemuel Weeks's and you can go with them."

"I don't want to go to cousin Lemuel's, nor to church, nuther," Jane protested.

"Why, Mr. Holcroft," began the widow, sweetly, "after you've once harnessed up it will take but a little longer to keep on to the meeting-house. It would appear so seemly for us to drive thither, as a matter of course. It would be what the community expects of us. This is not our day, that we should spend it carnally. We should be spiritually minded. We should put away things of earth. Thoughts of business and

any unnecessary toil should be abhorrent. I have often thought that there was too much milking done on Sunday among farmers. I know they say it is essential, but they all seem so prone to forget that but one thing is needful. I feel it borne in upon my mind, Mr. Holcroft, that I should plead with you to attend divine worship and seek an uplifting of your thoughts. You have no idea how differently the day may end, or what emotions may be aroused if you place yourself under the droppings of the sanctuary."

"I'm like Jane, I don't wish to go," said Mr. Holcroft, nervously.

"But, my dear Mr. Holcroft,"—the farmer fidgeted under this address,—the very essence of true religion is to do what we don't wish to do. We are to mortify the flesh and thwart the carnal mind. The more thorny the path of self-denial is, the more certain it's the right path. I've already entered upon it," she continued, turning a momentary glare upon Mrs. Wiggins. "Never before was a respectable woman so harrowed and outraged; but I am calm; I am endeavoring to maintain a frame of mind suitable to worship, and I feel it my bounden duty to impress upon you that worship is a necessity to every human being. My conscience would not acquit me if I did not use all my influence!"

"Very well, Mrs. Mumpson, you and your conscience are quits. You have used all your influence. I will do as I said,—take you to Lemuel Weeks's and you can go to church with his family."

"But cousin Lemuel is also painfully blind to his spiritual interest!"

Holcroft did not stay to listen and was soon engaged in the morning milking. Jane flatly declared that she would not go to cousin Lemuel's or to church. "It don't do me no good, nor you, nuther," she sullenly declared to her mother.

Mrs. Mumpson now resolved upon a different line of tactics. Assuming a lofty, spiritual air, she commanded Jane to light a fire in the parlor, and retired thither with the rocking chair. The elder widow looked after her and ejaculated, "Vell, hif she hain't the craziest loon hi hever 'eard talk. Hif she was blind she might 'a' seen that the master didn't vant hany sich lecturin' clack."

Having kindled the fire, the child was about to leave the room when her mother interposed, and said solemnly, "Jane, sit down and keep Sunday."

"I'm goin' to help Mrs. Wiggins, if sh' ll let me."

"You will not so demean yourself. I wish you to have no relations whatever with that female in the kitchen. If you had proper self-respect you would never speak to her again."

"We ain't visitin' here. If I can't work in doors I'll tell him I'll work out doors."

"It's not proper for you to work to-day. I want you to sit in the corner and learn the Fifth Commandment."

"Ain't you goin' to cousin Lemuel's?"

"On mature reflection, I have decided to remain at home."

"I thought you would if you had any sense left. You know well enough we ain't wanted down there. I'll go tell him not to hitch up."

"Well, I will permit you to do so. Then return to your Sunday task."
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

FIVE MINUTES FOR FUN.

A CAR DRIVER'S FATE.

"You fellah," he exclaimed as he followed the street car down Queen Street and shook his fist at the driver.

"What ails you?" was the gruff query.

"Behold me! See this collar—this shirt-bosom—these pawnts!"

"I see. You have been splashed with mud."

"And you did it, sah—you are the fellah! I was crossing the street back heah and was about to meet a pwety gurl—a pwety gurl, sah, and she would have returned my bwow, sah—my bwow, when you came along with your old canary-colored vehicle and dashed this mud over me—over me, sah?"

"And you didn't get to bow to the gurl?"

"No, sah, of course not! How could I, ah, when I was made weliculous in her eyes? And it was you, sah—you are the fellah!"

"Well, what of that?"

"Nothing, sah—nothing except that I shall nevah, recognize you as a gentleman, sah—nevah, sah! I shall give you the cold cut—the direct cold cut, sah!"

HE COULD WRITE.

This is the way he told it at police headquarters the other day:

"Vhell, I vhas in mine place, you know, and a feller comes in and says: 'Mister Blank, I make a bet about you shust now.'"

"'Vhas dot so?"

"'Yes; I make a bet dot you can write your name.'"

"'Of course I can write my name! Does somebody take me for a fool!'"

"'Vhell, you put him down on dis piece of paper and I make life dollar.'"

"'Vhell, I write my name on his paper and he goes off und I doan' see him any more. Yesterday I get some notice from a bank dot a note for feefy dollar vhas due. I come down town and finds a note mit my name on der back. It vhas der paper on which I wrote my name.'"

"'Well?'"

"'Vhell, dot vhas all, except dot I vhas a fool, und if you catch him I gif one hooneer dollar to keep my name out of der papers.'"

A WORSE CONTINGENCY.

"The lies these confounded newspapers publish about me," said an angry politician, "are enough to make a man sick."

"You ought not to complain," was the reply.

"Not complain because they publish lies about me?"

"No; certainly not. What if they publish truths about you?"

AN IMPORTANT MATTER.

Little Dot—Mamma, Dick is kissing me. Mamma—I am glad he likes you so well dear.

"But it isn't wight."

"Oh, it don't matter, pet. What makes you think it isn't right?"

"Cause nurse told papa so."

TO MUCH FOR 'EM.

There are no less than a score of mind-readers galloping around the country just now, and yet not one of them can tell what a fat man thinks as he sits down on an icy corner. They simply try on something easy.

YOUNG FOLKS.

LORRY.

When we were having our vacation up among the Franconia Hills, my mother and I went out walking one day, and came to a pretty red farmhouse.

We stopped at it to get some water, because I was so thirsty, and a little bare-footed girl, in a clean blue dress, opened the door.

The moment that door opened, it seemed as if we were looking right at a picture, for I never saw such things before, except in pictures.

There was a rosy-faced woman spinning wool on a spinning-wheel, and behind her there were open shelves, full of bright tins and blue-edged dishes.

The woman let us come in and watch her spin.

She walked back and forth, holding the wool in one hand, while she turned the wheel with the other, and the wool kept spinning out a fine thread, and winding around a little iron point in a corn-shaped ball.

By-and-by the woman said, "Would you like to spin, little girl?"

I was delighted, for it looked so easy, and I longed to try; but don't you think, the minute I took the wool and began, it all ran up in great coarse bunches, and then it snapped off short. I felt so mortified, but the woman only laughed, and said "I guess you'd better go and play with Lorry, while your ma rests."

Lorry was the little girl, and she had a gentle face and light flaxen hair. We went out on a rock and cracked butternuts, then a man came up out of a field, and looked at me as if he wondered who I was.

"This is a little gal that's come to play with me, pop," said Lorry; so she said it was all right, and went into the barn.

I told her that I would come and see her again some day, and bring my brother Bert, for I knew he liked butternuts, and then she asked me a funny question:

"Does he play hash?" and she lifted her blue eyes to mine.

"Hash!" I said. "Is that a game?"

"No; I mean does he play hash? Some boys at our school play real hash, and I don't like them."

All of a sudden it came over me that she meant *hash*, and I told her no; Bert was a very good boy.

Then mamma called me, and we went away.

But the next day Bert and I took the walk all to ourselves, to visit little Lorry.

She was younger than we a good deal, not more than seven years old, but it was pleasant to go there to play with her, and to crack butternuts.

This time I carried her a very pretty picture-card, a sort of valentine, with a chubby little winged Cupid on it. I expected her to admire it, but instead of that, she said,—

"Oh shame! I'd go and dress me, wouldn't you?"

There was an old starch-factory in ruins, down by the brook behind Lorry's house, and we went there to play.

Bert stopped at a white birch tree, to strip off bark, but Lorry and I ran straight to the water.

It was a beautiful brook, not very wide but pretty deep in some places, and the stones and sand had a golden-red look under the water.

It looked like a very safe place to go sailing, because the banks were so close each side.

"Let's find something for a boat, Lorry," I said, "and then we can sail."

"Oh, I don't dast!" she exclaimed; but, finally, when I found an old barrel that I thought would do, she agreed to let me get into it, and said she would walk along the bank by me to see me sail.

The barrel floated and I did not tip much so I climbed carefully in while Lorry held it for me.

"Now let me go!" I said, all ready to paddle.

And don't you think, the minute she let go, the barrel pitched right over, and was half full of water before I could jump anywhere. I felt as if I was sinking, sinking away down, and the water splashed me and took my breath away.

Little Lorry leaned over toward me and caught one of my hands, holding it tight, and screaming,—

"Come, boy! come quick, boy! Nannie's in the water!"

Bert heard her and ran swiftly to us.

He pulled me out and I was dripping wet. The water went *chuck, chuck* in my shoes when I stepped.

I guess he was going to scold me, for Bert can scold, but I whispered to him not to, for Lorry would think he was "hash."

So they helped me up to the red-house, and Bert went back to tell mother; but Lorry's folks kept me till after dinner, and dried all my things. I was wrapped up in a shawl and had a beautiful visit.

They had a boiled dinner, and one thing is very odd, I think,—I never could eat turnips before, but I learned to like them that day.

I did not want to leave the turnip untasted on my plate when I was company, so I just made my mind up firm, and ate it all up. And now I like turnip very well.

In the afternoon, before I went home, Lorry's papa wanted her to sing a hymn for me, so she stood up by his knee and sang, in a sweet, clear, little voice:

"I think, when I read the sweet story of old, When Jesus was here among men, How He called little children as lambs to his fold, I should like to have been with them then."

I told mother all about it when I got back, and ever since then when we talk about the Franconia Hills, we wonder what little Lorry is doing.

Mamma says she loves to think of her, growing up in her innocent, quiet, old-fashioned way, and she wishes a great many more little girls were like Lorry.

Catarrh, Catarrhal Deafness and Hay Fever.