# A WOLF IN THE FOLD.

### A DOMESTIC STORY WITH A MORAL.

#### CHAPTER XXVII.

FARM AND FARMER BEWITCHED.

The day grew warm, and having finished her tasks indoors and cared for the poultry, Alida brought a chair out in the porch. Her eyes were dreamy with a vague, undehappiness. The landscape in itself fi led was cause for exquisite pleasure, for it was an ideal day of the apple blossoming period. The old orchard back of the barn looked as if pink and white clouds had settled upon it, and scattered trees near and far were exhal-ing their fragrance. The light breeze which fanned her cheek and bent the growing rye in an adjacent field was perfumed beyond the skill of art. Not only were her favorite meadow larks calling to each other, but the thrushes had come and she felt that she nad never heard such hymns as they were sing-A burst of song from the lilac bush ing. under the parlor window drew her eyes thither, and there was the paternal redbreast pouring out the very soul of ecstasy. From the nest beneath him rose the black head and yellow beak of his brooding mate. "How contented and happy she looks !" Alida murmured, "how happy they both are ! and the secret of it is, home. And to think that I, who was a friendless waif, am the head and the secret of the back shows and the the secret of the se at home, also ! At home with Eden-like beauty and peace before my eyes. But if it hadn't been for him, and if he were not brave, kind and true to all he says"-and she shuddered at a contrast that rose before her fancy. She could now scarcely satisfy herself that

it was only gratitude which filled her heart with a strange, happy tumult. She had never been conscious of such exaltation be-It is true, she had learned to cherish fore. a strong affection for the man whom she had believed to be her husband, but chiefly because he had seemed kind and she had an affectionate disposition. Until within the last few hours, her nature had never been touched and awakened in its profoundest depths. She had never known before nor had she idealized the manhood capable of evoking the feelings which now lightened her eyes and gave to her face the supreme charm and beauty of womanhood. In truth, it was a fitting day and time for the birth of a love like hers, simple, all absorbing and grateful. It contained no element not in harmony with that May Sunday morning.

Holcroft came and sat on the steps below her. She kept her eyes on the landscape, for she was consciously enough on her guard now. "I rather guess you think, Alida, that you are looking at a better picture than any artist tellow could paint?" he remarked. "Yes," she replied, hesitatingly, "and the

picture seems all the more lovely and full of light because the background is so very dark. I've been thinking of what happened here last night and what might have hap-pened, and how I felt then."

"You feel better-different now, don't ou? You certainly look so." you? You certainly look so."
"Yes, you made me very happy by yielding to Mrs. Weeks."
"Oh, I didn't yield to her at all."
"Very well, have it your own way then."
"I think you had it your way."
"Are you sorry?"
"Do I look so? How did you know I'd be happier if I gave in ?" you ?

be happier if I gave in ?" "Because, as you say, I'm getting better acquainted with you. You couldn't help being happier for a generous act."

"I wouldn't have done it, though, if it hadn't been for you." "I'm not so sure about that."

"I am. You're coming to make me feel confoundedly uncomfortable in my heathenish life.'

'I wish I could."

"I never had such a sermon in my life as you gave me this morning. A Christian act, like yours, is worth a year of religious talk."

She looked at him wistfully for a moment and the asked, a little abruptly, "Mr. Hol-croft, have you truly forgiven that Weeks family?"

the feeling that you had been a Christian once, but was not one now. Being sure that there is no need of your continuing to feel so, what sort of return would I be making for all your kindness if I did not try to show

you what is as clear to me as this sunshine?" "You are a good woman, Alida. Believing as you do, you have done right to speak to me, an 1 I never believed most 1 lips could speak so to the purpose. I shall think of what you have said, for you have put things in a new light. But, say, Alida, what on earth possesses you to call me " Mr."? You said James casy enough after the skimelton was over and when old lady Weeks was begging Tim off. You don't need to be scared half to death every time to call me by my first name, do you ?"

"Scared? Oh, no." She was a trifle confused, he thought, but then her tone was completely re-assuring.

The day was one long remembered by both. As in nature about them, the condi-tions of development and rapid change now existed. She did not read aloud very much and long silences fell between them. They were reaching a higher plane of companion ship, in which words are not always essen tial. Both had much to think about, and their thoughts were like roots which pre pare for blossom and fruit.

With Monday, busy life was resumed The farmer began planting his corn and Alida her flower seeds. Almost every day now added to the brood of little chicks un-der her care. The cows went out to pasture, Holcroft brought in an increasing number of overflowing pails of milk, and if the labors of the dairy grew more exacting, they also grew more profitable. The tide had turned; income was larger than outgo, and it truly seemed to the long-harassed man that an era of peace and set in.

To a superficial observer things might have appeared to be going on much as be-fore, but there were influences at work which Holcroft did not clearly comprehend. As Alida had promised herself, she spent all the money which the eggs brought in, but Holcroft found pretty muslin cur-tains at the parlor windows, and shades in, but notice windows, and shades tains at the parlor windows, and shades which excluded the glare from the kitchen. Better china took the place of that which was cracked and unsightly. In brief, a subtile and refining touch was apparent all over the house. "How fine we are getting!" he remarked "thow fine we are getting to the term of ter

I've only made a beginning," she replied, ling defiantly at him. "The chickens nodding defiantly at him. "The chicken will paint the house before the year is over. "Phew ! when do the silk dresses come in?"

"When your broadcloth does." "Well, if this goes on, I shall certainly

have to wear purple and fine linen to keep pace. "Fine linen certainly. When you take

the next lot of eggs to town I shall tell you just the number of yards I need to make half a dozen extra fine shirts. Those you have are getting past mending." "Do you think I'll let you spend your

money in that way ?" "You'll let me spend my money just as I please—in the way that will do me the most

good !" Good 1"
What a saucy little woman you are becoming 1" he said, looking at her so fondly that she quickly averted her eyes.
"It's a way people fall into when humored," she answered.

"See here, Alida, you're up to somemagic. It seems but the other day I brought you here, a pale ghost of a woman. As old Jonathan Johnson said, you were 'enj'yin' poor health.' Do you know what he said when I took him off so he wouldn't put you through the catechism?" "No," she replied, with a deprecating smile and rising color.

"He said he was 'afeared I'd been taken

in the said he was cheared in doen taken in the said he was cheared in doen taken in, you were such a sickly lookin' critter. Ha ! ha! Wish he might see you now, with that flushed face of yours. I never believed in magic, but I'll have to come to it. You into a pretty young girl right under my eyes; the house is bewitched, and is growing pretty, too, and pleasanter all the time. The cherry and apple trees are bewitched, for they never bloosomed so before ; the hense and are bewitched, they lay as if possessed ; the "Oh, stop, or I shall think that you're bewitched yourself." "I truly begin to think I am."

#### smooth, swift tide to the same haven in which she was anchored.

One unusually warm morning for the sea-son, rain set in after breakfast. Holcroft did not fret in the least that he could not go to the fields, nor did he, as had been his custom at first, find rainy-day work at the

barn. The cows, in cropping the lush grass, had so increased their yield of milk that it was necessary to churn every other day, and Alida was busy in the dairy. This place had become inviting by reason of its coolness, and she had rendered it more so by making it perfectly clean and sweet. Strange to say, it contained another chair beside the one she usually occupied. The apartment was large and stone flagged. Along one side were shelves filled with rows of shining milk pans. In one corner stood the simple machinery which the old dog put in motion when tied upon his movable walk, and the churn was near. An iron pipe, buried deep in the ground, brought cool spring water from the brook above. This pipe emptied its contents with a low gurgle into a shallow, oblong receptacle sunk in the floor, and was wide and deep enough for two stone crocks of ample size to stand abreast up to their brims in the water. The cream was skimmed into these stone jars until they were full, then Holcroft emptied them into the churn. He had charged Alida never to attempt this part of the work, and indeed it was beyond her strength. After breakfast on churning days, he prepared everything and set the dog at work. Then he emptied the churn of the butter

milk when he came in to dinner. All the associations of the place were leasant to Alida. It was here that her husband had shown patience as well as kindness in teaching her how to supplement his work until her own experience and judgment gave her a better skill than he pos Many pleasant, laughing words had sessed. passed hetween them in this cool, shadowy place, and on a former rainy morning he ad brought a chair down that he might keep her company. She had not carried it back, nor was she very greatly surprised to see him saunter in and occupy it on the present occasion. She stood by the churn, her figure outlined clearly in the light from the open door, as she poured in cold water from time to time to hasten and harden the gathering butter. Her right sleeve was rolled well back, revealing a white arm that was becoming beautifully plump and round. An artist would have said that her attitude and

"You promise ?

"I don't mean there shall be any if I can help it," she answered with a light ripple of laughter, "Please go and put on your coat." "How you humbugged me! It's too

hot." "Oh, you've got to do it; you promised. You can't stay here unless you do."

"So you are going to take care of me as if I were a small boy ?"

"You need care—sometimes." He soon came back anl asked, "Now may I stay?" "Yes. Please untie the dog. Butter's

come." "I should think it would, or any thing

else at your coaxing." "Oh-h, what a speech! Hasn't that a pretty golden hue?" she asked, holding up a mass of the butter she was ladling from

the churn into a wooden tray. "Yes, you are making the gilt-edge arti-cle now. I don't have to sell it to Tom

Watterly any more." "I'd like to give him some, though."

He was silent, and something like sudden rage burned in his heart that Mrs. Watterly w u l not permit the gift. That any cn should frown on his having such a helper as Alida was proving herself to be, made him vindictive. Fortunately her face was turned away and she did not see his heavy frown. Then, to shield her from a disagreeable f ct, he said quickly, "Do you know that for over a year I steadily went behind my expenses, and that your butter-making has turned the tide already? I'm beginning to get ahead again." "I'm so glad," and her face was radiant. "Yes, I should know that from your looks. It's clearer every day that I got the best of our bargain. I never dreamed, though, that I should enjoy your society as I do-that we should be such very good friends. That wasn't in the bargain, was it ?' "Bargain !" The spirited way with which she echoed the word, as if thereby repudi-ating any thing like a sordid side to their mutual relations, was not lost on her wondering and admiring partner. She checked herself suddenly. "Now let me teach you herself suddenly. "Now let me teach you how to make butter," and with the tray in her lap, she began washing the golden product and pressing out the milk. He laughed in a confused, delighted way at her piquant, half saucy manner as he watched her deft round arm and shapely hand.

dience Alida watched his reluctant departure. She kept on diligently at work, but one might have fancied that her thoughts rather than her exertions were flushing her cheeks.

It seemed to her that but a few moments elapsed before she followed him, but he had gone. Then she saw that the rain had ceased and that the clouds were breaking. His cheerful whistle sounded re-assuringly from the barn, and a little later he drove up the lane with a cart.

She sat down in the kitchen and began sewing on the fine linen they had jested ahout Before long she heard a light step. Glancing up, she saw the most peculiar and uncanny looking child that had ever crossed her vision and with dismal presentiment knew it was Jane.

#### CHAPTER XXVIII. ANOTHER WAIF.

It was indeed poor, forlorn little Jane that had appeared like a spectre in the kitchen door. She was as wet and bedraggled as a chicken caught in a shower A little felt hat hung limp over her ears; her pigtail braid had lost its string and was unravelling at the end, and her torn, sodden shoes were ready to drop from her feet. She looked both curiously and apprehensive. ly at Alida with her little blinking eyes, and then asked in a sort of breathless voice, 'Where's him ?" "Mr. Holcroft ?"

Jane nodded. "He's gone out to the fields. You are Jane, aren't you ?"

Another nod. "Oh, dear !" groaned Alida mentally ; "I wish she hadn't come." Then with a flush of shame the thought crossed her mind, "Summe the thought crossed her mind, "She perhaps is as friendless and homeless as I was, and 'him' is also her only hope.— Come in, Jane," she said, kindly, " and tell me every thing."

"Be you his new girl?" "I'm his wife," said Alida, smiling. Jane stopped; her mouth opened and her eyes twinkled with dismay. "Then he is married after all?" she gasped.

" 1 es, why not ?" "Mother said he'd never get any one to take him." "Well, you see she was mistaken."

"Well, you see sne was mistaken. "She's wrong about every thing. Well, it's no use then," and the child turned and sat down on the doorstep. Alida was perplexed. From the way

Alida was perplexed. From the way Jane wiped her eyes with her wet sleeve, she was evidently crying. Coming to her, Alida said, "What is no use, Jane? Why are you crying?" "I thoug'ıt-he-might-p'raps-let me stay and work for him." Alida was still more perplexed. What could be said by way of comfort, feeling sure as she did that Holcroft would be bit-terly hostile to the idea of keeping the

terly hostile to the idea of keeping the child? The best she could do was to draw the little waif out and obtain some explanation of her unexpected appearance. But first she asked, "Have you had any break-But fast ?"

Jane shook her head. "Oh, then you must have some right

away." "Don't want any. I want to die. I oughtn'ter been born." "Tell me your troubles, Jane. Perhaps

"No, you'd be like the rest. They all

hate me and make me feel I'm in the way. He's the only one that didn't make me feel

He's the only one that didn't make me feel like a stray cat, and now he's gone and got married," and the child sobbed aloud. Her grief was pitiful to see, for it was overwhelming. Alida stooped down, and gently lifting the child up, brought her in Then she took off the wet hat and wiped the tear stained face with her handkerchief. "Wait a minute, Jane, till I bring you something," and she ran to the dairy for a glass of milk. "You must drink it," she said, kindly, but firmly.

said, kindly, but firmly. The child gulped it down, and with it much of her grief, for this was unprecedented treatment and was winning her attention. "Say," she faltered, "will you ask him to let me stay ?"

"Yes, I'll ask him, but I can't promise that he will."

"You won't ask him 'fore my face and then tell him not to behind my back ?" and there was a sly, keen look in her eyes which

only worked round smart as you, p'raps she'd hooked him 'stid er you.

Alida's only reply was a slight frown, for the remark suggested disagreeable images and fancies. "Oh, how can I endure it?" she sighed. She determined to let Jane plead her own cause at first, thinking that perhaps this would be the safest way. If necessary, she would use her influence against a hostile decision, let it cost in discomfort what it might.

5.

At a few moments before twelve the farmer came briskly towards the house, and was evidently in the best of spirits. When he entered and saw Jane, his countenance in-dicated so much dismay that Alida could scarcely repress a smile. The child rose and stood before him like a culprit awaiting sentence. She winked hard to keep the tears back, for there was no welcome in his manner. She could not know how intensely distasteful was her presence at this time, nor had Holcroft hims.lf imagined how unwelcome a third person in his house could be until he saw the intruder before him. He had only felt that he was wonderfully contented and happy in his home and that Jane would be a constant source of annoyance and restraint. Moreover, it might lead to a visitation from Mrs Mumpson, and that was the summing up of earthly ills. But the child's appearance and manner were so forlorn and deprecating that words of irritation died upon his lips. He gravely shook hands with her and then drew out the story which Alida had learned.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

#### It's Always the Way.

"Didn't I tell you so ?" said a gentleman to an acquaintance whom he chanced to meet on the street ; "it's always the way." "What's always the way?" inquired a mu-tual friend of the two men who happened along just then. "Why, just this," replied the first speaker: "you see Smith, here, the last time I met him he had one of the worst coughs you ever heard. He complain-ed of a loss of appetite, of night sweats, of low spirits and other unmistakable premonitory symptoms of consumption. I told him to get a supply of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery at once. He did so, and look at him now! Did you ever see a healthier looking man? The 'Discovery' has snatched thousands from consumptives' graves. I knew it would cure Smith. It's always the way.

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#### She Broke the Engagement

because she saw that he had ceased to love her. Her beauty had faded, her former high spirits had given place to a dull lassi-tude. What had caused this change? Functional derangement; she was suffering from those ailments peculiar to her sex. And so their two young lives drifted apart. How needless, how crue! ! Had she taken Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription she might have been restored to health and happiness. If any lady reader of these lines is similarly afflicted, let her lose no time in procuring the "Favorite Prescription." It will give her a new lease of life. Sold by druggists, under a positive guarantee from the manufacturers, of perfect satisfaction in every case, or money refunded. See guarantee on bottle wrapper.

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"Certainly. What's the trouble ?"

the old lady, anyhow. I've shaken hands with her."

"If her husband and son should come and

apologize and say they were sorry, would you truly and honestly forgive them?" "Certainly. I couldn't hold a grudge af-ter that. What are you aiming at?" and he turned and looked inquiringly into her face.

It was flush and tearful in its eager, earnest interest. " Don't you see !" she faltered.

He shook his head, but was suddenly and strangely moved by her expression. "Why, Mr. Holcroft, if you can honestly

forgive those who have wronged you, you ought to see how ready God is to forgive.

He fairly started to his feet, so vividly the truth came home to him, illumined, as was, by a recent and personal experience. After a moment, he slowly sat down again and said, with a long breath, "That was a close shot Alida." first wor "I only wish you to have the trust and p'ison."

comfort which this truth should bring you," she said. "I seems a pity you should do yourself needless injustice when you are willing to do what is right and kind by others

"It's all a terrible muddle, Alida. If God is so ready to forgive, how do you ac-count for all the evil and suffering in the

rld?" "I don't account for it and can't. I'm pose." "You once said you would like to do only one of his little children, often an erring one, too. You've been able to forgive grown people, your equals, and strangers in sense. Suppose you had a little boy that hid done wrong, but said he was sorry, would you hold a grudge against him?' "The idea! I'd be a brute."

She laughed softly as she asked again, " Don't you see ?"

He sat looking thoughtfully away across the fields for a long time, and finally asked, "Is your idea of becoming a Christian just being forgiven like a child and then trying to do right ?"

"Yes. Why not?"

"Well, he remarked, with a grim laugh, "'I didn't expect to be cornered in this

way." "You who are truthful should face the truth. It would make you happier. A good deal that was unexpected has happen-ed. When I look out on a scene like this ed. When I look out on a scene like this and think that I am safe and at home, I feel

"Oh, well, since we all and everything are affected in the same way, it don't mat-

ter." "But it does. It's unaccountable. I'm beginning to rub my eyes and pinch myself to wake up." "If you like it, I wouldn't wake up."

"Suppose I did, and saw Mrs. Mumpson sitting where you do, Jane here, and Mrs. Wiggins smoking her pipe in the corner The very thought makes me shiver. My first words would be, 'Please pass the cold

"What nonsense you are taking to "What nonsense you are taking to-night!" she tried to say severely, but the pleased, happy look in her eyes betrayed her. He regarded her with the open ad-miration of a boy, and she sought to divert his attention by asking, "What do you think has become of Jane?"

"I don't know-stealing around like a strange cat in some relation's house, I sup

something for her.

"Well, I would. If I could afford it I'd like to send her to school."

"Would you like her to come here and

study lessons part of the time?" He shivered visibly. "No, Alida, and you wouldn't either. She'd make you more "No, Alida, and nervous than she would me, and that's saying a good deal. I do feel very sorry forher and if Mrs Weeks comes to see you, we'll find out if something can't be done, but her presence would spoil all our cosey comfort. The fact is, I wouldn't enjoy having any one here. You and I are just about company enough. Still, if you feel that you'd like to have some help"-

"Oh, no, I haven't (nough to do."

"But you're always a doing. Well, if your content, I haven't Christian fortitude enough to make any changes."

She smiled and thought that she was more than content. She had begun to de-tect symptoms in her husband which her you have that old trouble on your mind,— brief, it looked as if he were drifting on a

"The farmers' wives in Oakville would

say your hands were too little to do much." "They would !" and she raised her blue eyes indignantly to his. "No matter, you are the one to say about that." "I say they do too much. I shall have to

get Jane to help you." "By all means. Then you'll have more

society.

"That was a home shot. You know how I dote on everybody's absence, even Jane's." "You dote on butter. See how firm and yellowit's getting. You wouldn't think it was milk white cream a little while ago, would you? Now I'll put in the salt and you must taste it, for you're a connoisseur. A what !'

"Judge, then."

"You know a sight more than I do, Alida

"I'm learning all the time." "So am I—to appreciate you."

"Listen to the sound of the rain and the water as it runs into the milk-cooler. It's like low music, isn't it?"

Poor Holcroft could make no better an

"Oh-h," she exclaimed, "you're catch-ing cold ! Come, you must go right up-stairs. You can't stay here another min-ute. I'm nearly through."

ute. I'm nearly through." "I was never more contented in my life." What "You've no right to worry me. What would I do if you got sick? Come, I'll stop work till you go." "Well then, little boss, good-by." With a half suppressed smile at his obe-

tears could not conceal. "No," said Alida gravely, "that's not

my way. How did you get here Jane?" "Run away." "From where?"

" Poor-house."

Alida drew a quick breath and was silent a few moments. "Is—is your mother there?" she asked at length.

Yes. They wouldn't let us visit round any longer." "Didn't your mother or any one know

you were coming ?"

Jane shook her head. Alida felt that it would be useless to bur den the unhappy child with misgivings as to the result, and her heart softened towards her as one who in her limited way had known the bitterness and dread which in that same almshouse had overwhelmed her own spirit. She could only say gently, "Well, wait till Mr. Holcroft comes, and then we'll see what he says." She herself was both curious and anxious as to his course. "It will be a heavy cross," she thought, "but I should little deserve God's goodness to me if I did not befriend this child."

Every moment added weight to this unexpected burden of duty. Apart from all consideration of Jane's peculiarities, the isolation with Holcroft had been a delight in itself. Their mutual enjoyment of each other's society had been growing from day to day, and she, more truly than he, had shrunk from the presence of another as an unwelcome intrusion. Conscious of her secret, Jane's prying eyes were already beginning to irritate her nerves. Never had she seen a human face that so completely embodied her idea of inquisitiveness as the uncanny visage of this child. She saw that she would be watched with tireless vigilance. Her recoil, however, was not so much a matter of conscious reasoning and perception as it was an in-stinctive feeling of repulsion caused by the unfortunate child. It was the same old story. Jane always put the women of a household on pins and needles just as her mother exasperated the men. Alida had to

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mother exasperated the men.Alida had tostruggle hard during a comparatively silent<br/>hour to fight down the hope that Holcroft<br/>would not listen to Jane's and her own re-<br/>quest.A. FRASKA, Sec'y-Treas.As she stepped quickly aud lightly about<br/>in her preparations for dinner, the girl<br/>watched her intently.Rats she gave<br/>yoice to her thoughts and said, "If mother'dC. C. KOBB, Chief Engineer.A. FRASKA, Sec'y-Treas.Balling weekly between Montreal and Liverpool.<br/>\$40, \$50, and \$60; Return Tickets, \$80, \$80 and \$100<br/>encoding to Steamer and accommodation. Inter-<br/>mediate and Stearage at lowest rates. For further<br/>particulars and to secure Berths, apply to H. E.<br/>Square, Montreal or to the Local Agents in the dif-<br/>terent Towns and Cities.