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LIVING TOO FAST, OR THE Confessions of a Bank Officer.

"Yes, I remember," replied Mrs. Oliphant. "I don't take boarders, but I was willing to do what I could for Lillian's comfort and happiness."

"You were, madam; and I was very grateful to you for your consideration, both to Lillian and to me. You intimated that it would not be convenient for you to take us to board, but you were willing to sacrifice your own comfort and your own feelings to oblige us. I was very sorry indeed that the circumstances compelled us to trespass upon your kindness. You did us a favor for which I shall never cease to be grateful. But I did not feel willing to compel you to submit to the inconvenience of boarders, unless it was absolutely necessary. My gratitude compelled me, when I found a house, to take it, and relieve you at once from all the care and responsibility which your self-sacrificing nature had imposed upon you."

"And without even permitting me to see the house in which I was to live," exclaimed Lillian, coming to the assistance of her mother, who seemed to be thrown into disorder by her tactics.

"I did not suppose it was possible for any one, even with your refined taste, Lillian, to object to such a beautiful little house. I was obliged to hire it on the instant, or lose it. Another man would have taken it in less than half an hour. It is so near your mother's that you can come to see her half-dozen times a day, if you please."

"But I will never live in that house," protested Lillian, with more energy than I thought the occasion required, though I could not help admiring her while her cheeks glowed and her eyes snapped.

"Don't say that, dear Lillian. You should endeavor to conform to the wishes of your husband, mildly interposed the suffering parent. "Doubtless he has done all for the best, and perhaps you will know I never shall like it, snapped the divine Lillian; which was as much as to say that she was fully determined not to like it."

"Mrs. Oliphant, would you do me the favor to walk over to the house with me?" I suggested to the affectionate mother.

"No," I would rather not. I never step between man and wife, replied she, with praiseworthy resolution. "I do not wish to see the house. This is an affair between you and Lillian, and it is my duty to be strictly neutral."

"But I hope you appreciate my motives?"

"I cannot say that I do," she answered. "I think a man should consult his wife before he hires and furnishes the house in which she is to spend a great deal more time than her husband."

"There's a woman, the miserable sinner, He'd sooner a bogger'd starve than give a cent towards paying a dinner."

"I tell you our minister's right, he is, but I can't quite determine, When I heard him give it right and left, Just who was hit by his sermon. Of course there couldn't be no mistake. When he talked of long-winded prayer For Samson and Johnathan they snort and scowl."

"At every word he was saying, And the minister he went on to say, 'There's various modes of cheating, And religion's as good for every day. As it is to bring to meeting'."

"I don't think much of a man who gives the Lord Amen at his preaching, And spends his time the following week In chaffin' and over-razin'."

"I guess that dose was bitter enough. For a man like Jones to swaller, But I noticed he didn't open his mouth. Not once after that he hallooed. Hurrah, says I, for the minister— Of course I said it quiet, Give us some more of this open talk, I've refreshing dinner."

"The minister hit 'em every time. My personal mode of amazin' I'd have gone to work right to myself, And not sit here a-gossipin'."

"Just then the minister says, says he, 'And now I've come to the feller Who's best, let this shaver by using their friends. As sort of moral umbrella, 'Go home, says he, and find your faults, Instead of bustin' your leathers' and 'Go home, says he, and wear the coats. You've tried to fit on others. My wife she nudged, and Brown he winked, And there was lots o' lookin' at our pees."

"It says, 'I'll tell him when he's next, I ain't at all that kind of a critter."

"I told Mrs. Oliphant that I had hired a house which she had furnished it at an expense which was beyond my means, in order to please Lillian. I said something more about the 'pleasant surprise,' and was positive that no bank officer of my degree had so fine an establishment as I had. I repeated all that and about not imposing upon self-sacrificing nature. But all I said seemed to fall flat upon her ear. She was not touched by my devotion to her daughter; on the contrary she was disgusted with her face, for she did not utter a word in my favor."

Lillian felt that she had an able champion in her mother, and she said but little. Still professing entire impartiality, Mrs. Oliphant read me a lecture on the impropriety of my conduct, frequently interrupting the discourse with the statement that it was none of her business, though, as I had asked her advice (which I had not), she felt obliged to be candid with me. She and Lillian seemed to understand each other perfectly, and while the latter resolutely refused to occupy the house I had prepared for her reception, the former mildly said, but in reality to find an opportunity to think over my situation. I did think it over, and I did not by any means, for I was not allowed to smoke them, even in the kitchen. Lillian would yield at once, if she could, escape her mother's influence. As it was, I must fight the battle with both of them.

I walked across the common, thinking what I should do. If I submitted this time, I should not be obliged to bear the privations to which the Oliphants subjected themselves in order to maintain their social position, but I must forever be the willing slave of a 'dear ma.' I could not enquire of the thought. If the family, however, lived on tough beef and salt fish, it was their affair, I thought, and I did not stand it. I went back cided not to stiffen for anything to the best, though it almost made me heart-throb to think of opposing Lillian.

"Perhaps the person who wanted the house you have hired would be willing to take it now, and purchase the furniture you have put into it," suggested Mrs. Oliphant when the subject was resumed.

"Perhaps he would, but my idea just then was that he would not have the opportunity to do so."

"I think not; the party who wanted it would have furnished it at half the expense I have incurred," I replied.

"You let it be as a furnished house," she added.

"My loss does not permit me to under-let it."

"I think it would be cruel to take Lillian away from her own pleasant home, when she wishes to remain here so much," continued Mrs. Oliphant, a little more sharply than she had yet spoken. "But, of course, it is none of my business, and I do not wish to interfere between you."

After supper, I saw Lillian alone in our room. She was as resolute as a little tiger. She positively refused to go into the English basement house, or to have anything to do with it.

"I think you have insulted my mother," she added.

"Insulted her?" I exclaimed, rather startled by this new charge, which had evidently been put into her brain by her arrangements to board us, and now you want to go away."

"She hasn't made any arrangements at all. Not an article of furniture has been added to the house."

"She says she has, and I think she knows best," retorted Lillian, sharply.

"Mother says she boards us cheaper than anybody else would," snapped my pretty one. "Now you insult her for her kindness to us."

"I have already explained my position to her. I did not mean to insult her, and I don't think my mother will bear that construction. But, Lillian, the house in Needham street is all ready for us. I have even hired a servant girl, who is there now."

"I will not go into it, Paley. If you wish to abuse my mother, you can, but I will not. I am sorry you have come to love me."

"I have not ceased to love you, Lillian," I replied, putting my arm around her neck and kissing her.

Then I went over the whole argument again, and if I did not convince her that I had not insulted or wronged her mother, it was because her fears led her to night.

"You will sell the furniture and give up the house—won't you, Paley?" said she, in her most fascinating way.

"I would if I could, Lillian, but the die is cast. I must go or I am ruined."

Suddenly, in a fit of passion, she shook my arm from her neck and shrunk from me.

"For the last time, Paley, I say it, I will never go into that house."

"I am sorry, Lillian," I replied, sadly. "You do not act like the loving wife you have always been."

"I will not be insulted any longer."

"Very well, Lillian; I am going to move into the new house to-morrow."

"What?" exclaimed she, aghast, for she evidently did not believe me capable of such rebellion.

"I shall go to the new house, to-morrow, after bank hours. If you will not go with me, I cannot help it, and I must go alone."

"Do you mean to say that you will desert me?" gasped she.

"Lillian, I will not pretend to say that what I have done is right, though I did it to please you. I have provided you a home much better than the home of your parents. I have done everything I could to make it comfortable and pleasant. I am sorry I did this without your knowledge, but it is done, and cannot be undone. If you will live in the house a year, I will give you a hundred dollars. I will go, and then I do not move to please you."

"I will not move into it," said she, more bitterly than ever.

"I went out of the house, and walked the streets until eleven o'clock at night in utter misery," returned house. "I could never ever see many things her mother had said, and was firmer than ever. The next morning when I went to the bank I felt like a hopeless martyr."

"Mr. Bristlebach wishes to see you in the directors' room, Mr. Glasswood," said the messenger to me.

The president looked stern when I entered the room, and I realized that some charge was pending against me.

CHAPTER V. A SHADOW OF SUSPICION.

I had not signed against the bank in thought, word, or deed, and I had no fears of the result of an interview with the president. All my sorrows related to my domestic difficulties, which were hardly banished from my mind for a moment, though I did try to imagine what Mr. Bristlebach could possibly want of me. Whatever pecuniary trouble stared me in the face, I had never even been tempted to appropriate a penny belonging to the bank.

"Mr. Glasswood, I have sent for you," said Mr. Bristlebach, sternly. "Yes, sir; and I am here," I replied very respectfully.

"When did you balance your cash last?"

"Yesterday afternoon."

"Did it come out right?"

"Yes, sir," I replied with the utmost confidence.

"Close the door, if you please."

"I did so, and though Mr. Bristlebach did not often take the trouble to spare anyone's feelings, this order looked ominous to me. I would give all my earthly hopes at this moment for the consciousness of the rectitude of my character which I possessed at that time. I shut the door, and took my stand again in the august presence of the great man—he was great to me, if he was not to others."

"Mr. Glasswood!" continued Mr. Bristlebach, severely.

"I bowed modestly, to intimate that I was ready to hear anything he was pleased to say.

"Your cash is not right."

"It was right yesterday, at three o'clock," I answered.

"If it was right at three, it was not at five. I advise you, Mr. Glasswood, to make no denials to any statement which you know to be true. You are a defaulter, sir!"

Troubles never come singly. It was not enough that I should quarrel with my angelic wife, but I must cross words with Mr. Bristlebach, who wasn't angelic. I might as well find the deep water off Long Wharf and drown myself. What would Lillian say if I did? Would she care? Or would she only be shocked? Bad as it was, the affair at the bank did not seem half so desperate as the quarrel with Lillian. I bowed my head meekly to Mr. Bristlebach's charge. I was innocent, and it did not make much difference to me what the president said. Under the shadow, as I was, of a heavier weight than this, it really did not seem worth while to defend myself.

"I say you are a defaulter, Mr. Glasswood," repeated the president, more severely than before.

"No, sir, I am not," I answered, very mildly.

"Have you the entry from the defaulter's charge?"

"Yes, sir, I have."

"You have robbed the bank of twelve hundred dollars, at least; and how much more I don't know."

"No, sir, I have not robbed the bank of twelve hundred dollars; nor of even a single cent."

"I am surprised that you should have the hardihood to deny the charge. Shall I call on your uncle, who is one of your bondsmen?"

"If you please, I do not object," I replied, and I think I should not have objected to any thing that Mr. Bristlebach would say.

"Perhaps you will make the bank good yourself," sneered Mr. Bristlebach.

"I don't owe the bank a penny, sir."

"Mr. Glasswood—sit down!"

"I sat down."

"Listen to me, sir!"

"I listened."

"I have worked up the case, and understand it perfectly. I am informed that three or four weeks ago you had in your pocket several hundred dollars—perhaps a thousand dollars for more," continued Mr. Bristlebach, whose looks as Mr. Glasswood's words were intended to carry confusion to my soul. "Will you do me the favor to say whether or not this statement is true?"

"Quite true, sir. The sum in my pocket-book was five thousand dollars. I replied, beginning to gather up a little light on the subject.

"A thousand dollars! Very well, sir. I am glad you have not the effrontery to deny it. Bank officers in your situation do not usually carry a thousand dollars about with them."

"I do when I have it to carry, sir."

"Don't be impudent, Mr. Glasswood. Will you deny that this sum was abstracted from the funds of the bank?"

"Certainly I shall deny it, sir. Did Mr. Shaytop inform you that I had taken it from the bank?"

"Who said anything about Mr. Shaytop?" demanded he, sternly.

"I did, sir. It is not very manly in him to accuse me of stealing simply because I refused to hire any more teams of him. Since I was married I have found it necessary to curtail my expenses."

"Do not attempt to dodge the issue, sir."

"I am ready to look the issue fairly in the face."

"You had this money. You confess it."

"I affirm it. I don't confess it."

"Since you had it, perhaps you will not deem it impertinent in me to ask where you got it?" sneered Mr. Bristlebach, who seemed to be as certain that I had robbed the bank as though he had already proved the charge.

"Under the circumstances, sir, I should not deem it impertinent, I replied, coolly; and, under the influence of my domestic trouble, I felt rather reckless.

"Well, sir, where did you get it?"

"I borrowed it."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Bristlebach, but there is a wide gulf between my promise and your conclusion. I did not borrow the money of the bank. If I had, doubtless the paper offered would have passed under your eyes."

"Mr. Glasswood, your tone and manner do not please me."

"I hope you will excuse me, sir, if I venture to say that the charge you make against me does not please me."

"Will you tell me of whom you borrowed the money?"

"With pleasure, sir. Of my Aunt Rachel!"

"Mr. Bristlebach looked at me; looked sharply at me. He seemed to be a little staggered at something, though, of course, I did not suppose he believed me. He asked me twenty questions about my aunt, all of which I answered with a greater regard for the truth than I was in the habit of paying to that sublime virtue."

"Mr. Glasswood, your cash is twelve hundred dollars short," I added.

"I was not aware of the fact," I replied.

"After you went away yesterday, I made a strict examination of your department, and you have heard the result."

"I was surprised at the announcement, and, of course, I could not disprove the assertion."

"I can only say, sir, that I left it right at three o'clock yesterday, I added.

"Do you doubt my statement?"

"Certainly not, sir; but I do not understand it."

"The fact that you had a thousand dollars, or any large sum about you, and that you recklessly exhibited it in the dining room of a hotel was quite enough to excite my suspicions."

"If I had stolen the money, I think I should not have been so stupid as to exhibit it. If I know myself, I should not."

"But you did show it."

"I did show it; but it was not stolen."

"I think it was; and when I heard of the circumstances, I spent my afternoon here in making the investigation. Perhaps you can put me in the way of verifying your statement that you borrowed the money from your aunt?"

"I shall be very glad to do so. My aunt lives in Springhaven. She will show you my note."

"Even if she does show me your note, and it is fully proved that you borrowed a thousand dollars of her, that will not explain how your cash happens to be twelve hundred dollars short."

"Perhaps I can explain that myself, if you will allow me to examine my drawer," I replied.

"Just then a light flashed through my mind, and I recalled an incident which had occurred just after the closing of the bank on the preceding day, which my private griefs had driven out of my head. I understood it all then, and I was satisfied that I should utterly confound Mr. Bristlebach, though I was at the same time in danger of confounding the cashier. But the clock was striking nine, and it was time to open the bank. There was not time to count the cash again, and I did not care to expose a little irregularity on the part of the cashier, by telling what I knew."

"Mr. Bristlebach bit his lips and looked at the clock. Through the glass windows of the directors' room, he saw a man come in with a check in his hand. He was evidently deliberating upon the propriety of permitting me to discharge my duties for the forenoon. We were one hand short, and there was no one to take my place."

"Mr. Glasswood, you will not go out of the bank; even for a moment, until this matter is settled. Go to your place, and as soon as the bank closes, we will count the cash again in your presence."

(To be continued.)

Becher.

The name of the great divine of Brooklyn has not been in the newspapers much lately, for the memory of his troubles is fading out gradually. Whether guilty or not, Mr. Becher has recovered his partially lost standing. His church is crowded regularly as of yore, and his recent lecture tour was the grandest ever given a man. Every-where his halls were crowded, people coming hundreds of miles to see him. He stands as well as he ever did in the popular estimation, though the loss of friends worries him immensely. Tilton is lecturing in California with no remarkable success. Mrs. Tilton is keeping boarders with her mother and is very poor. Beattie Turner is entirely forgotten, and in no one knows where, Frank Moulton has gone back to his old business, the salt trade, to re-build his fortunes which were terribly impaired by his chivalrous standing by his friend, and Carpenter is painting pictures.

The great scandal is dead, and is never thought of, except when divines like Dr. Biddington refuse to affiliate with Mr. Becher as he did last week. Becher is older than he was, and has changed for the worse. His hair is whiter, and there is an anxious worried look about his face, which shows that the trials of the last five years have told on him. But the indomitable spirit of the man keeps him up and he will doubtless live longer than any of his opponents who were younger. People differ as to his goodness—no one doubts his greatness. His sermons have the old favor, though he says they are taken with many grains of allowance by his hearers. The scandal hurt him, if it did not destroy him. And by the way who was in it that it did not hurt.

Chunks of Wisdom.

Industry is the key to success. A philosopher cannot reason with a child.

If you want good neighbors, be one yourself.

Dog makes some people rich and others poor.

True charity consists more in doing than in giving.

It is easier to talk information into a child than to beat ignorance out of him.

When children rule their parents, it is time to break up housekeeping.

Never talk about your neighbors unless you have something good to say.

We are ever ready to acknowledge what is right, but seldom ready to do it.

If we can be polite and agreeable abroad, why can we not be so at home?

If everyone depended upon hearing, nobody would have anything to lead.

If you don't want to go without a fire in a storm, cut your wood in a clear day.

Dollars are spent for useless clothing, where pennies are spent for useful knowledge.

A hungry man needs a bit of bread, rather than a lecture on bad economy, or mis