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## Her Season in Bath

*A STORY OF BYGONE DAYS*

**BY EMMA MARSHALL**

**AUTHOR OF "BRISTOL DIAMONDS," "THE TOWER ON THE CLIFF," ETC., ETC.**

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"One loving hour  
Full many years of sorrow can dispense.  
A dram of sweet is worth a pound of sour."

SPENSER

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## Her Season in Bath

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### CHAPTER I.

#### COIFFEUR.

It was the height of the Bath season in 1779, and there was scarcely any part of the city which did not feel the effect of the great tide of amusement and pleasure, which set in year by year with ever-increasing force, and made the streets, and parades, and terraces alive with gaily-dressed fashionable ladies and their attendant beaux.

The chair-men had a fine trade, so had the mantua-makers and dressmakers, to say nothing of the hairdressers, who were skilled in the art of building up the powdered bastions, which rose on many a fair young head, and made the slender neck which supported them bend like a lily-stalk with their weight. Such head-gear was appropriate for the maze of the stately minuet and Saraband, but would be a serious inconvenience if worn now-a-days, when the whirl of the waltz seems to grow ever faster and faster, and the "last square" remaining in favour is often turned into a romp, which bears the name of "Polka Lancers." There was a certain grace and poetry in those old-world dances, and they belonged to an age when there was less hurry and bustle, and all locomotion was leisurely; when our great-grandmothers did not rush madly through the country, and through Europe, as if speed was the one thing to attain in travelling, and breathless haste the great charm of travel.

And not of travel only. Three or four "at homes" got through in one afternoon, is a cause of mighty exultation; and a dinner followed by an evening reunion, for which music or recitations are the excuse, to wind up with a ball lasting till day-dawn, is spoken of as an achievement of which any gentlewoman, young or old, may feel proud.

The two ladies who were seated with their maid in attendance in a large well-furnished apartment in North Parade on a chill December morning in the year 1779, awaiting the arrival of the hairdresser, had certainly no sign of haste or impatience in their manner. The impatience was kept in reserve, in the case of the elder lady, for Mr. Perkyns and his attendant, for Lady Betty had now passed her *première jeunesse*, and was extremely careful that every roll should be in its right place, and every patch placed in the precise spot which was most becoming. Lady Betty's morning-gown was of flowered taffety, and open in front displayed a short under-skirt of yellow satin, from which two very small feet peeped, or rather were displayed, as they were crossed upon a high square footstool.

"Griselda, can't you be amusing? What are you dreaming about, child?"

The young lady thus addressed started as if she had indeed been awakened from a dream, and said:

"I beg your pardon, Lady Betty; I did not hear what you said."

"No, you never hear at the right moment. Your ears are sharp enough at the wrong. I never saw the like last evening at Mrs. Colebrook's reunion. You looked all ears, then."

"It was lovely music—it was divine!" Griselda said earnestly, and then, almost instantly checking the burst of enthusiasm which she knew would find no response, she said:

"Will you carry out your intention of paying a visit in King Street? Mr. and Miss Herschel receive guests to-morrow forenoon."

"Indeed, I vow I have but little inclination that way, but we will see. But, Griselda, take my word for it, you are playing your cards ill—staring like one daft at that singer who is no beauty, and forgetting to acknowledge Sir Maxwell Danby last evening when he made you that low bow. Why, child, don't you know he is a great catch?"

Griselda's cheeks flushed crimson.

"Your ladyship forgets we are not alone."

"Ha! ha! as if my waiting-maid was not in all my little secrets. No love-story is new to her, is it, Graves?"

The person thus referred to, who had been engaged in plaiting ruffles with a small iron, and sprinkling the fine lace with a few drops of starched water as she did so, on hearing her name, turned her head in the direction of her mistress, and said:

"Did you speak, my lady?"

"*You* know—*you* know, Graves. You know all about my billets-doux, and my pretty gentlemen."

If Melia, otherwise Amelia Graves, knew, her face showed no sign of intelligence. It was a stolid face, hard and plain-featured, and she was a strange mixture of devotion to her frivolous mistress, and strong disapproval of that mistress's ways and behaviour. The real devotion and affection for a family she had served for many years, often gained the day, when she turned over in her mind the possibility of leaving a service which involved so much of the world and its customs, which she was the indirect means of encouraging by her continuous attention to all the finery and gauds, in which Lady Betty Longueville delighted.

Lady Betty was the widow of a rich gentleman, to whom she had been married but a few years, when death ended what could not have ever been more than a *mariage de convenance*. An orphan niece of Mr. Longueville's, the child of a sister who had made what was considered a *mésalliance*, had been left to Lady Betty as a legacy, and was particularly mentioned in Mr. Longueville's concise will. His estate in Ireland devolved on the next heir, but Mr. Longueville had accumulated a pretty little fortune, which he had the power to settle on his wife. The estate was entailed, but the money was his to leave as he chose. Lady Betty had fully grasped the situation before she had accepted Mr. Longueville's proposal, and the understanding that Griselda Mainwaring was to be thrown into the bargain was rather agreeable than otherwise. Strange to say, Mr. Longueville did not leave Griselda any money, and simply stated that his niece, Griselda Mainwaring, the only issue of the unhappy marriage of his sister, Dorothy Mainwaring, *née* Longueville, was to be companion to his widow, and maintained by her, Lady Betty Longueville, for the term of her natural life.

It did not seem to have struck Mr. Longueville that either Lady Betty or Griselda might marry, and Griselda was thus left as one of the bits of blue china or old plate, which, being not included in the entail, fell to Lady Betty with the "household effects, goods and chattels."

Perhaps the feeling that she was a mere "chattel" weighed at times on the tall and stately Griselda, whose grave eyes had ever a wistful expression in them, as if they were looking out on some distant time, where, behind the veil, the hopes and fears of youth, lay hidden.

Griselda was outwardly calm and even dignified in her manner. She moved with a peculiar grace, and formed a marked contrast in all ways to the little vivacious Lady Betty, whose grand ambition was to be thought young, and who understood only too well how to cast swift glances from behind her fan upon the gay beaux, who haunted the city of Bath at that time. For although the palmiest days of the Pump Room, under the dominion of Beau Nash, were now long past, still in 1779 Bath held her own, and was frequented by hundreds for health, to be regained by means of its healing waters, and by thousands for pleasure and amusement.

Amongst these thousands, Lady Betty Longueville was one of the foremost in the race; and she spent her energies and her talents on "making a sensation," and drawing to her net the most desirable of the idle beaux who danced, and flirted, and led the gay and aimless life of men of fashion.

Graves was presently interrupted by a tap at the door; and, putting down the lace, she went to open it, and found the hairdresser and his assistant waiting on the landing for admission.

The hairdresser made a low bow, and begged ten thousand pardons for being late; but her ladyship must know that the ball to-night in Wiltshire's Rooms was to be *the* ball of the season, and that he and his man had been dressing heads since early dawn.

"That is no news to me, Perkyns. Am I not one of the chief patronesses of the ball? Have I not been besieged for cards? Tell me something more like news than that."

The assistant having spread out a large array of bottles, and brushes, and flasks on a side-table cleared for the purpose, Mr. Perkyns wasted no more time in excuses; he began operations at once on the lady's head, while Griselda was left to the hands of the assistant.

Lady Betty was far too much engrossed with her own appearance to take much heed of Griselda's; and it was not till something like a discussion was heard between the young lady and the "artist" that she said sharply:

"What are you talking about, Griselda? Pray, make no fuss!—you will look well enough. A little less curl on the right side, Perkyns. Oh! that bow is awry; and I will *not* have the knot of ribbon so low. I said so last week."

"The top-knots are not worn so high, my lady. Lady Cremorne's is quite two inches lower than the point you indicate."

"Folly to talk of *her!*—a giant who might be a female Goliath! As if *her* mode was any rule for mine! I am *petite*, and need height. Thank goodness, I am not a huge mass of bone and flesh, like my Lady Cremorne!"

"As you please, my lady—as you please. But it is my duty to keep my patronesses up to the high-water mark of fashion."

"I dare say folks with no taste may need your advice; but as I am blessed with the power of knowing what I like—and with the will to have it, too—I insist on the top-knot being at least two inches higher."

"Very good—very good, my lady. What is it, Samuel?"—for the assistant now approached.

"Shall I proceed to Sydney Place, sir? I have finished this young lady's coiffure."

"Finished!—impossible! Why, child, come here; let me see! Why, you are not made up!—no rouge, nor a touch to your eyebrows!"

"I do not desire it, madam; I do not desire to be painted. I have requested the hairdresser to refrain——"

"Well, you will look a fright for your pains by night! Nonsense, child! powder must have paint. However, take your own way, you wilful puss! I have no more to say."

"I have done my best to persuade the lady," Sam said; "but it is useless—it is in vain;" and, with a sigh, he began to gather together the cosmetics and the little pots and bottles, and prepared for departure.

Mr. Perkyns turned from the contemplation of the top-knots to give a passing glance at Mistress Mainwaring. He shrugged his shoulders, and murmured:

"A pity that what is so fair should not be made still fairer! But do not stand wasting precious time, Samuel; proceed to Sydney Place, and announce my speedy arrival. You can leave me what is needful, and I will follow and bring the smaller bag. Be quick, Samuel; and do not go to sleep—on a day like this, of all days!"

Samuel obeyed, and took leave; while Griselda, after a passing glance at her head and shoulders in the mirror, retired to her own room on the upper story, and, taking a violin from a case, began to draw the bow over the strings.

"If only I could make you sing to me as their fiddles sang last night! If only I had a voice like that sister of Mr. Herschel's! Ah! that song from the 'Messiah'—if only I could play it!" And then, after several attempts, Griselda did bring out the air of the song which, perhaps of all others, fastens on ear and heart alike in that sublime oratorio:

"He shall feed His flock like a shepherd."

"So poor it sounds!" Griselda said; "so poor! I *will* get to Mr. Herschel's, and ask if he will teach me to play and sing. I will. Why not? Ah, it is the money! She dresses me, and keeps me; and that is all. She would do nothing else. But I have bought you, you dear violin!" Griselda said, pressing her lips to the silent instrument, where the music, unattainable for her, lay hidden. "I have bought you, and I will keep you; and, who knows? I may one day make you tell me all that is in your heart. Oh that I were not at her beck and call to do her bidding; speak to those she chooses; and have nothing to say to those she thinks beneath her! Ah me! Alack! alack!"

Griselda's meditations were interrupted by a sharp knock at the door; and Graves came in with a bouquet in her hand, tied with pale primrose ribbon.

"That is for you, Mistress Griselda. The gentleman brought it himself; 'and,' says he, 'give it to the young lady in private.' And then he had the impudence to offer me a crown-piece! Says I, 'I don't hold, sir, with sly ways; and I don't want your money.' Then he looked uncommon foolish, and said I was quite right; he hated sly ways. He only meant—well, *I* knew what he meant—that I was not to let my lady know you had the '*buket*;' but I just took it straight into the room, and said, 'Here's a *buket* for Mistress Grisel;' and, what do you think? she was in one of her tantrums with Mr. Perkyns, who vowed he would not take down her hair again; and there she was, screaming at him, and you might have had fifty *bukets*, and she wouldn't have cared. Ah, my dear Mistress Griselda, these vanities and sinful pleasures are just Satan's yoke. They bring a lot of misery, and

his slaves are made to feel the pricks. Better be servants to a good master—better be children of the Lord—than slaves of sin. It's all alike," as she gave the violin-case a touch with her foot; "it's all sin and wickedness—plays, and balls, and music, and——"

"Nonsense, Graves! Never tell me music is wrong. Why, you sing hymns at Lady Huntingdon's Chapel—*that* is music!"

"I don't hold with *that* altogether; but hymns is one thing, and foolish love-songs another. I am trembling for you, my dear; I am trembling for you, with your flowers and your finery. The service of the world is hard bondage."

Griselda had now put away her violin, and had taken up the flowers which she had allowed to lie on the table, till her treasured possession was in safety; and, as Graves departed, she said, as she saw a note hidden in the centre of the bouquet:

"I am sure I don't care for these flowers; you may take them down to her ladyship, if you please."

But Graves was gone.

A girl of twenty was not likely to be absolutely without curiosity, and, though Griselda tore the scented, three-cornered billet open, and read the contents with some eagerness, her face was flushed and her lip curled as she did so.

"To the fairest of the fair! These poor flowers came from one who lives on her smile and hungers for her presence, with the prayer that she will grant him one dance to-night—if but *one*——"

Then there was a curious tangle of letters, which were twisted in the form of a heart, the letter "G" being in the shape of a dart which had pierced it.

Griselda tore the note in pieces, and said:

"Why does he not send his ridiculous billets to the person who wants them? I hate him, and his finery, and his flattery. I know not which is worse."

Hours were early in the eighteenth century, and by seven o'clock the two ladies met in the dining-parlour of the house in North Parade ready for the ball, and awaiting the arrival of the sedan-chairs, which were attended by Lady Betty's own man.

Lady Betty had recovered her good temper, and her rose-coloured sacque, with its short-elbow sleeves and long puckered gloves, was quite to her mind. The satin skirt was toned down by lamp-light, and the diamond buckles on her dainty shoes glistened and gleamed as she went through a step of the minuet, with her fan held in the most approved fashion.

"Upon my word, we are a pretty pair to-night! But, do you know, Carteret vowed he thought I was younger than you were at the last ball! Fancy! I, a widow, not quite fat, fair, and forty, but in my thirties I freely allow! Child, you look as pale as a ghost! But it is a vastly pretty gown. Lucky for you it did not suit my complexion; dead white never does. But perhaps you are too white—all white. For my part I vow I like colour. Your servant, madam! How do you fancy my new curtshey?" and the little lady went through elaborate steps with her tiny twinkling feet, and made a bow, which, however, she was careful should not be too low to run any risk of disarranging her high coiffure, the erection of which had cost so much trouble and sorrow of heart.

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE TIDE OF FASHION.

Wiltshire's Rooms were illuminated by many wax-candles, shedding a softened and subdued light over the gay crowd which assembled there on this December night. Lady Betty was soon surrounded by her admirers, and showing off her dainty figure in the minuet and Saraband.

There were three apartments in Wiltshire's Rooms—one for cards and conversation or scandal, as the case might be, and one for refreshments, and the larger one for dancing.

Griselda was left very much to herself by her gay chaperon, and it was well for her that she had so much self-respect, and a bearing and manner wonderfully composed for her years. She was anxious to make her escape from the ball-room to the inner room beyond; and she was just seating herself on a lounge, as she hoped, out of sight, when a young man made his way to her, and, leaning over the back of the sofa, said:

"I could not get near you at the concert at Mrs. Colebrook's last evening. Nor could I even be so happy as to speak to you afterwards. Less happy than another, madam, I accounted myself."

Though the speaker was dressed like the other fashionable beaux who haunted the balls and reunions at Bath, and adopted the usual formality of address as he spake to Griselda, there was yet something which separated him a little from the rest. His clear blue eyes knew no guile, and there was an air of refinement about him which inspired Griselda with confidence. While she shrank from the bold flatteries and broad jests of many of the gentlemen to whom she had been introduced by Lady Betty, she did not feel the same aversion to this young Mr. Travers. He had

come for his health to take the Bath waters, and a certain delicacy about his appearance gave him an attraction in Griselda's eye.

Lady Betty Longueville called him dull and stupid, and had declared that a man whose greatest delight was scraping on a violoncello, ought to have respect to other folk's feelings who detested the sound. Music accompanied by a good voice, or music like the band at Wiltshire's and the Pump Room, was one thing, but dreary moans and groans on the violoncello another.

"You were pleased with the music last evening, Mistress Mainwaring?" Mr. Travers was saying.

"Yes; oh yes! Do you think, sir, Lady Betty and myself might venture to pay our respects to Mr. and Miss Herschel?"

"Indeed, I feel sure they will be proud to receive your visit. To-morrow afternoon there is a rehearsal and a reception in Rivers Street. I myself hope to be present; and may I hope to have the honour of meeting you there?"

"I will do my best, sir. But I am by no means an independent personage; I am merely an appendage—a chattel, if you like the word better."

"Nay, I like neither word," the young man said; "they do not suit you. But to return to the visit to-morrow. Could you not make it alone?"

Griselda shook her head, and then laughing, said:

"It depends on the temperature."

"But a chair is at your disposal. I can commend to you two steady men who would convey you to Rivers Street."

But Griselda shook her head.

"I was not thinking of wind and weather, sir; but of the mood in which my lady finds herself!"

A bright smile seemed to show that Griselda's point was understood.

"The Lady Betty is your aunt?"

"Hush, sir!—not that word. I am forbidden to call her 'aunt,' it smacks of age and does not seem appropriate. I was Mr. Longueville's niece, and, as I told you, I am a chattel left to Lady Betty for the term of—well, my natural life, I suppose."

"Nay, that word might be well altered to the term of your unmarried life, Mistress Griselda."

Griselda grew her calm, almost haughty, self at once, and her companion hastened to say:

"You must see and know Mr. and Miss Herschel. Now, at this moment, while all this gaiety goes on, they are in silence—their eyes, their thoughts far away from all this folly and babble."

"Are they so wrapt in their production of music?" Griselda asked.

"I said they were at this moment engrossed in silence, for the music of the spheres is beyond the hearing of mortal ears; it is towards this, their whole being—brother and sister alike—is concentrated, at this very moment, I will dare to say. Mr. Herschel and his sister lead a double existence—the one in making music the power to uplift them towards the grand aim of their lives, which is to discover new glories amongst the mysteries of the stars, new worlds, it may be. What do I say? These things are not new, only new to eyes which are opened by the help of science, but in themselves old—old as eternity!"

"I am a stranger in Bath," Griselda said. "I have never heard of these things—never. I listened enchanted to Miss Herschel's voice last night, to her brother's solo performance on the harpsichord, but of the rest I knew nothing. It is wonderful all you say; tell me more."

But while Leslie Travers and Griselda had been so engrossed with their conversation as to be oblivious of anything beside, a stealthy step had been skirting the card-room, passing the tables where dowagers and old beaux sat at *écarté*, and other card games, with fierce, hungry eagerness, till at last Sir Maxwell Danby wheeled round, and, bowing low before Griselda, begged to lead her to the minuet now being formed in the ball-room.

"I do not dance to-night, sir," Griselda said. "I thank you for the honour you do me."

Down came Sir Maxwell's head, bowing lower than before, as he murmured:

"Then if I may not have the felicity of a dance, at least give me the pleasure of conducting you to supper. Several tables are occupied already, and let me hope that this request will not be refused."

While Sir Maxwell had been speaking Mr. Travers had left his position at the back of the lounge, and had also come to the front and faced Griselda.

The two men exchanged a cold and formal salutation, and then Sir Maxwell seated himself carelessly on the vacant place by Griselda's side, which Mr. Travers would not have thought he was on sufficiently intimate terms to do, and throwing his arm over the elbow of the sofa with easy grace, and crossing his silk-stockinged legs, so that the brilliants on the buckles of his

pointed shoe flashed in the light, he said:

"I will await your pleasure, fair lady, and let us have a little agreeable chat before we repair to supper."

"I think, sir," said Griselda, rising, "I will rejoin Lady Betty."

"The minuet is formed by this time, and her ladyship is performing her part to perfection, I doubt not. Let me advise you to remain here, or allow me to take you to supper."

Griselda gave a quick glance towards Mr. Travers, but he was gone. She felt she must do one of two things: remain where she was till the dance was over, or repair to the refreshment-room with her companion.

On the whole it seemed better to remain. Two ladies whom she knew slightly were seated at the card-table nearest her, and there might perhaps be a chance of joining them when the game was over. For another quartette was waiting till the table was free.

"You look charming," Sir Maxwell began; "but why no colour to relieve this whiteness? I vow I feel as if I, a poor mortal, full of sins and frailties, was not worthy to touch so angelic a creature."

Griselda was one of those women who do not soften and melt, nor even get confused, under flattery. It has the very opposite effect, and she said in a low, but decided voice:

"There are topics less distasteful to me than personalities, sir; perhaps you may select one."

"Ah! you are cruel, I see. Well, I will only touch one more personality. Why—why do I see no choice exotics in your hand, or on your breast? the colour would have enhanced your beauty, and relieved my heart of a burden."

Griselda made no reply to this, but, rising with the dignity she knew so well how to command, she walked towards the open door of the next room, and said:

"Mr. Travers, will you be so good as to take me to the ball-room that I may rejoin Lady Betty Longueville?"

The young man's face betrayed his pleasure at the request made to him, and the discomfiture of his rival—rather I should say the hoped-for discomfiture, for Sir Maxwell Danby was not the man to show that he had the worst in any encounter. He was at Griselda's side in an instant, and was walking, or rather I should say ambling, towards Lady Betty, and, ignoring Mr. Travers's presence, said:

"Your ladyship's fair ward is weary, nay, pining for your company, my lady."

Lady Betty shrugged her shoulders, and said:

"I vow, sir, she has enough of my company, and I of hers! Now, Griselda, do not look so mightily affronted; it is the truth. Let us all go to supper; and make up a pleasant little party. You won't refuse, Mr. Travers, I am sure."

"With all my heart I accede to your plan, Lady Betty," Sir Maxwell said, "though I see your late partner is darting shafts of angry jealousy at me from his dark eyes."

So saying, Sir Maxwell led the way with Lady Betty on his arm, and Griselda and Mr. Travers followed, but not before Griselda caught the words:

"Upon my honour, she acts youth to perfection; but she is forty-five if she is a day. Did you ever behold such airs and graces?"

Griselda felt her cheek burn with shame and indignation also, for had she not heard Lady Betty say that young Lord Basingstoke was one of her most devoted admirers? and yet she was clearly only a subject of merriment, and the cause of that loud unmusical laughter which followed the words. But Griselda had passed out of hearing before Lord Basingstoke's friend inquired:

"Who is the other? She looks like a 'Millerite' and an authoress. He would be a brave man to indulge in loose talk with her. Upon my word, she walks like a tragedy queen!"

"There'll be the story of Wilson and Macaulay told over again. We shall have her statue put up to worship!"

"I don't know what you are talking about," said the young lord, with a yawn.

"My dear fellow, have you never heard of Madam Macaulay, the writer of nine huge volumes of history, who deserted the reverend Dr. Wilson and married a young spark named Graham? She is Mrs. Graham now; has retired from the gay scenes of Bath with her young Scot, who feeds on oat-cakes and such-like abominations."

"Lady Betty will be following suit—not the white lady," said the young lord. "I think I'll try and get an introduction," he said, "and lead her through the 'contre danse.'"

"You won't get the introduction from Lady Betty. I'll lay a wager she will be too wary to give it; but I must look after my partner, so ta-ta!"

Truly the world is a stage, across which the generations of men come and go! Assemblies of to-

day at Bath and Clifton, and other places of fashionable resort, may wear a different aspect in all outward things, but the salient points are the same. Idle men and foolish women vie with each other in the parts they play. Age wears the guise of youth, and vanity hopes that the semblance passes for the reality.

Literary women may not write as Mrs. Macaulay did nine volumes of ill-digested and shallow history, and become thereby famous, and it would be hard to match the profane folly of a clergyman like Dr. Wilson, who in his infatuation erected a statue to this woman in his own church of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, adorned as the Goddess of Liberty—an infatuation which we must charitably suppose was madness. Nor would such a woman be the rage now at Bath or anywhere else.

Lady Miller was of a higher order of womanhood. She created a literary circle in a beautiful villa at Batheaston, inviting her friends to contribute poems and deposit them in a vase from Frascati.

It may seem to us ridiculous that successful contributors should be crowned by Lady Miller with all due solemnity with myrtle wreaths. But there is surely the same spirit abroad at the close of the nineteenth as marked the last years of the eighteenth century. The pretenders are not dead. They have not vanished out of the land. There are the Lady Bettys who put on the guise of youth, and the Mrs. Macaulays who put on the appearance of great literary talent. They pose as authorities on literature and politics, and they are often centres of a *côterie* who are fully as subservient as that which Lady Miller gathered round her in her villa at Batheaston. They may not kneel to receive a laurel crown from the hands of their patroness; but, none the less, they carry themselves with the air of those who are superior to common folk, and can afford to look down from a vantage-ground on their brothers and sisters in the field of literature, who, making no effort to secure a hearing, sometimes gain one, and win hearts also. It may be when the memory of many has perished with their work, that those who have laboured with a true heart for the good of others, and not for their own praise and fame, may, being dead, yet speak to generations yet to come.

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## CHAPTER III.

### ANOTHER SIDE OF THE PICTURE.

There was not a cloud in the sky on that December night, and the "host of heaven" shone with extra-ordinary brilliancy. The moon, at her full, was shedding her pure silvery light upon the terraces and crescents of the fair city of the West, and there were yet many people passing to and fro in the streets. The link-boys had but scant custom that night, and the chair-men found waiting for the ladies at Wiltshire's Rooms less irksome than when, as so often happened, they had to stand in bitter cold and darkness long after the hour appointed for them to take up their burdens and carry them to their respective homes.

In a room in Rivers Street a woman sat busily at work, with a mass of papers before her—musical scores and printed matter, from which she was making swift copy with her firm, decided hand. She was so absorbed in the business in hand, that she did not feel the weariness of the task before her. Copying catalogues and tables could not be said to be an interesting task; but Caroline Herschel never weighed in the balance the nature of her work, whether it was pleasant or the reverse. It was her work, and she must do it; and it was service for one she loved best in the world, and therefore no thought of her own likes or dislikes was allowed to enter into the matter. Presently a voice was heard calling her name:

"Caroline—quick!"

The pen was laid down at once, and Miss Herschel ran upstairs to the upper story to her brother.

"Help me to carry the telescope into the street. The moon is just in front of the houses. Carry the stand and the instrument. Be careful! I will follow with the rest."

"In the street?" Caroline asked. "Will you not be disturbed by passers-by?"

"Nothing disturbs me," was the reply. "I answer no questions, so folks tire of putting them. It is such a glorious night—there may not be another like it for months; and the moon is clearer than I have seen her since I had the seven-foot reflector."

As William Herschel spoke, he was preparing to carry the precious reflector downstairs—that outcome of many a night-watch, and many a weary hour of purely manual labour. Turning the lathe and polishing mirrors was, however, but a small part of his unflagging perseverance. This perseverance had evolved the larger instrument from a small telescope, bought for a trifle from an optician at Bath. That telescope had first kindled the desire in William Herschel's mind to produce one which should surpass all its predecessors, and help him to scan more perfectly those "star-strewn skies," and discover in them treasures to make known to future ages, and be linked for ever with his name. Caroline Herschel was his right hand. She was his apprentice in the workshop—his reader when the polishing went on; and often, when William had not even a moment to spare for food, she would stand over him, and feed him as he worked with morsels of some dish prepared by her own hand.



"You have copied the score for Ronzini, Caroline?"

"I have nearly finished it."

"And you have practised that quick passage in the song in 'Judas Maccabæus'?"

"Yes; but I will do so again before to-morrow. It is our reception-day, you remember."

"Yes; where is Alexander?"

"He is at the Ball at Wiltshire's. He was at work all the morning, you know," Caroline said, in an apologetic tone.

"Work is not Alex's meat and drink; he likes play."

In a few minutes the telescope was adjusted on the pavement before the house; and the faithful sister, having thrown a thick shawl over her head, stood patiently by her brother's side, handing him all he wanted, writing down measurements, though her fingers were blue with cold, and the light of the little hand-lantern she had placed on the doorstep scarcely sufficed for her purpose.

At last all was ready, and then silence followed—profound silence—while the brother's eyes swept the heavens, and scanned the surface of that pale, mysterious satellite of our earth, whose familiar face looks down on us month by month, and by whose wax and wane we measure our passing time by a sure and unfailing guide.

Caroline Herschel took no notice of the few bystanders who paused to wonder what the gentleman was doing. She stood waiting for his word to note down in her book the calculation of the height of the particular mountain in the moon to which the telescope was directed.

Presently he exclaimed, "I have it!—write."

And as Caroline turned to enter the figures dictated to her, a gentleman who was passing paused.

"May I be allowed to look into that telescope, madam?" he asked.

Caroline only replied in a low voice:

"Wait, sir; he has not finished. He is in the midst of an abstruse problem."

"I have it—I have it!" was the next exclamation. "Write. It is the highest of the range. There is snow on it—and—yes, I am pretty sure. Now, Caroline, we will mount again, and I will make some observations on the nebulæ—the night is so glorious."

"William, this gentleman asks if he may be allowed to look into the telescope."

"Certainly—certainly, sir. Have you never seen her by the help of a reflector before?"

"No, never; that is to say, by the help of any instrument so gigantic as this."

William Herschel tossed back his then abundant hair, and said:

"Gigantic!—nay, sir; the giant is to come. This is the pigmy, but now stand here, and I will adjust the lens to your sight—so! Do you see?"

"Wonderful!" was the exclamation after a minute's silence. "Wonderful! May I, sir, introduce myself as Dr. Watson, and may I follow up this acquaintance by a call to-morrow?"

"You will do me great honour, sir; and if you care for music, be with us to-morrow at three o'clock, when my sister there will discourse some real melody, if so it should please you. Is it not so, Caroline?"

"There will be more attractive music than mine, brother," Miss Herschel said.

"I doubt it, if, as I hear," said Dr. Watson, with a low bow, "the musical world finds in Miss Herschel a worthy successor to the fair Linley, who has made Sheridan happy—maybe happier than he deserves!"

Caroline Herschel bowed in acknowledgment of the compliment, and said:

"Miss Farinelli carries the palm, sir. Now, brother, shall we return to the top of the house?"

She was almost numb with cold, but she made no complaint; and when the telescope with all the instruments had been conveyed to the top story, she patiently stood far into the night, while her brother swept the heavens, and took notes of all he said, as his keen glances searched the star depths, and every now and then exchanged an expression of wonder and delight with his faithful friend, and the sharer of all his toils and all his joys.

So, while the gay world of Bath wore away the night in the hot chase for pleasure, this brother and sister pursued their calm and earnest way towards the attainment of an end, which has made their names a watch-word for all patient learners and students of the great mysteries of the universe, for all time.

"The thirty-foot reflector, Caroline! That is the grand aim. Shall I ever accomplish it? We must make our move at once, for I must have a basement where I can work undisturbed. I find the pounding of the loam will be a work of patience."

"Like all work," Caroline said, as she retired, not to bed, but to the copying of the score, from which occupation she had been disturbed when her brother called her.

"Expenses are ahead," she said to herself. "Money—money, we shall want money for this thirty-foot; and, after all, it may be a vain hope that we shall produce it. Thirty-foot! Well, music must find the money. Music is our handle, our talisman which is to turn the common things into gold."

"Well, Alex, is that you? Have you been playing as usual?"

"Playing, yes; and you had better play too, you look quite an old Frau, Lina."

"I don't doubt it—not I; a contrast to your painted dames at Wiltshire's."

"One, at least, was not painted. She is a queen!—she is lovely."

Caroline laughed a little ironical laugh.

"Another flame! Poor Alex! you will sure be consumed ere long."

"You won't laugh when you see her, Lina; and she is coming to-morrow to listen to your singing. Travers has told me she was raving about your singing at Madam Colebrook's the other evening, and he is to be here to-morrow and introduce her."

"He is very obliging, I am sure," said Caroline with another little laugh. "There is a letter to Ronzini which should be sent by a messenger early to-morrow to Bristol. Can you write it?"

"It is early to-morrow now," replied Alex. "Stay, good sister. I must to bed, and you should follow, or you will not be in trim to sing to the lady fair to-morrow. Come!"

"The bees make the honey, Alex; it would not answer if all were butterflies. You are one of those who think that folks were made to make your life pleasant."

"Bees can sting, I see," was Alexander's remark. "But give me a kiss, Lina; we don't forget our old home-love, do we? Let us hold together."

"I am willing, dear Alex; if I am crabbed at times, make excuses. These servants are a pest. I could fancy this last is a thief: the odds and ends vanish, who knows how? Oh! I do long for the German households which go on oiled wheels, and don't stop and put everyone out—time and temper too—like these English ones."

"We will all hasten back to Hanover, sister, with the telescopes at our backs, when——"

"When the thirty-foot mirror is made. Ah!—a——"

This last interjection was prolonged, and turned into a sigh, almost a groan.

When Alex was gone his sister got up and walked two or three times round the room, drank a glass of cold water, opened the shutters, and looked out into the night.

The moon had passed out of the ken of Rivers Street now, but its light was throwing sharp blue shadows from the roofs of the houses, and the figure of the watch-man with his multitude of capes as he stood motionless opposite the window from which Caroline Herschel was looking out into the night.

Presently the dark shadow of the watchman's figure moved. He sounded his rattle and walked on, calling in his ringing monotone:

"It is just two o'clock, and a fine frosty morning. All well."

As the sound died away with the watchman's heavy footsteps, Caroline Herschel closed the shutter, and saying, "I am wide awake now," reseated herself at the table, and wrote steadily on till the clock from the Abbey church had struck four, when at last she went to bed.

Her naturally strong physique, her unemotional nature, and her calm and quiet temper, except when pestered by her domestics' misdemeanours, were in Caroline Herschel's favour. Her head had scarcely touched the pillow before she was in a sound refreshing sleep, while many of the votaries of fashion tossed on their uneasy beds till day-dawn.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### MUSIC.

Griselda Mainwaring was up very much earlier than Lady Betty on all occasions, but on the morning after the ball in Wiltshire's Rooms she was dressed and in the sitting-room before her ladyship had made any sign of lifting her heavy head from the pillow. Heavy, indeed, as she had been too cross and too tired to allow Graves to touch the erection of powder and puff, which had cost Mr. Perkyns so many sighs.

Griselda had taken down her own hair without help, and had shaken the powder out of its heavy masses—no easy task, and requiring great patience.

"I will forswear powder henceforth," she said, as she looked at herself in the glass. "Lady Betty says truly, powder must go with paint. I will have neither."

So the long, abundant tresses were left to their own sweet will, their lustre dimmed by the remains of the powder at the top, but the under tresses were falling in all their rippling beauty over her shoulders.

Amelia Graves brought her a cup of chocolate and some finger-biscuits, saying:

"Her ladyship has already had two breakfasts, and after the last has gone off to sleep again."

"I hope she will remember she promised to go to Mr. Herschel's musical reunion," Griselda said. "If not, Graves, I must go alone; I must indeed. You will send the boy Zack for a chair, won't you?"

"More of the gay world! Ah, my dear, I do pity you."

"Gay world! Well, I know nothing that lifts one above it as music does. I am no longer the pleasure-seeker then?"

Graves shook her head, and, getting a long wrapper, she covered Griselda with it, and began to comb and brush the hair which nearly touched the floor as it hung over the back of the chair.

"Come, I will gather the hair up for you. Well, it's a natural gift coming from God, and the Word says long hair is a glory to a woman, or I'd say it ought to be cut close. It is like your poor mother's, poor lady!" It was very seldom that Graves or anyone else referred to the sister of Mr. Longueville, who had disgraced herself by a *mésalliance*. "Poor thing!—ah, poor thing! it all came of her love of the world and the lust of the flesh."

Griselda's proud nature always felt a pain like a sword-thrust when her dead mother was spoken of.

"Don't talk of her, Graves, unless you can speak kindly. You know I told you this the other day."

"Well, I don't wish to be unkind; but when a lady of high birth marries a wretched playwright, a buffoon——"

"Stop!" Griselda exclaimed. "No more of this. If you can be neither respectful nor kind, say no more."

"Well, my dear, there are times when I see your mother over again in you, and I tremble," said poor Graves, "yes, I shudder. If a bad man got hold of you, what then? I have my fears. It's out of love I speak."

Griselda was touched at once.

"I know it—I know, dear old Graves," she said. "There are few enough to care about me, or whether bad or good men are in my company. That is true, and I am glad you care," she added, springing up, and, throwing off the wrapper, she bent her stately head and kissed the lined, rugged cheek, down which a single tear was silently falling. "Dear old 'Melia, I am sure you love me, and I will keep out of the hands of bad men and women too. I want to go to-day to see a good, brave woman who sings divinely, and whose whole life is devoted to her brother—a wonderful musician."

"Musician, yes. Music—music——"

"But, to other things also; Mr. Herschel studies the wonders of the heavens, and is measuring the mountains in the moon and searching star-depths."

"A pack of nonsense!" said Graves, recovering herself from the passing wave of sentiment which had swept over her. "A pack of nonsense! I take the stars as God set them in the heavens—to give light with the moon—and I want to know no more than the Word teaches me. The sun to rule by day, the moon and stars to rule by night. There! I hear her ladyship. Yes, I'll order the chair—maybe two; but you'll dine first? Her ladyship said she should dine at two—late enough."

"Well, make haste and get her up, and stroke her the right way."

"Ah, that's not easy. There's always a crop of bristles sticking up after a night's work like the last. It's the way of the natural man, and we must just put up with it."

There could be no doubt that when Lady Betty at last presented herself from the room opening from the drawing-room she was in a bad mood, and Griselda said "her chance of getting to the Herschels' was remote if it depended on her will."

Lady Betty yawned and grumbled, and taxed Griselda with stupidity; and said by her airs she had affronted one of the best friends she, a poor widow, had.

"Sir Maxwell won't stand to be flouted by you, miss—a man of *ton* like him; and *you*—well, I do not tell tales, or I might ruin your chance of matrimony."

Griselda's eyes flashed angrily; and then, recovering herself, she said:

"At what hour shall we order the chairs?"

"The chairs?—who said I wanted a chair? I am too worn out—too tired. I vow I can scarcely

endure myself. However, it might kill time to go to listen to 'too-ti-toos' on that horrid big instrument. When Mr. Herschel played on it the other night, I could think of nothing but a wretch groaning in limbo. Ah, dear! Come, read the news; there ought to be something droll in the Bath paper. I have no appetite. I am afraid I am no better for the waters. But I must drag my poor little self up to-morrow, and be at the Pump Room early. One is sure to hear a little gossip there, thank goodness."

It was by no means an easy task to prepare the drawing-room at the Herschels' house for a rehearsal. Instruments of every kind blocked the way, and these were not all musical instruments. Then there was the arranging of the parts; the proper disposal of the music; the seats for the guests who might happen to drop in, for these receptions answered, perhaps, to the informal "at home" days of our own society of these later times, when "at home," written on the ordinary visiting-card, signifies that all who like to come are supposed to be welcome.

Caroline Herschel went about her preparations with the same steady perseverance which characterized everything she did. Her servant was one of her trials—I must almost say her greatest trial—at this time. If ever her temper failed her, it was at some misdemeanour of the handmaiden who, for the time, filled the part of general helper in Miss Herschel's household.

Like most of her countrywomen, neatness and order were indispensable to her comfort; and think, then, what the constant intrusion into every corner of the house of lathes and turning-machines, of compasses and glasses, and mirrors and polishing apparatus must have been! No wonder that the English or Welsh servant, however willing, failed to meet her mistress's requirements.

On this occasion she had, with the best intention, bustled about; but had always done precisely the reverse of what she was told to do.

At last, breaking out into German invective, her mistress had given her a rather decided push from the room, and had called Alexander to come to her rescue.

"The slut! Look at the dust on the harpsichord! Did I not tell her to remove every speck before it was placed by the window? I would fifty times sooner do all the work myself. What would our mother say at all this?"

"Heaven knows!" Alex said, laughing. "But, sister, the room looks spick and span; and here is an arrival."

"It is only Mr. Travers; he is to play the second violin. Entertain him, Alex, while I go and make my toilette."

Repairing to the humble bedroom, which was really the only space allotted to her—or, rather, that she allotted to herself—she changed her morning-wrapper for a sacque of pale blue, and twisted a ribbon to match it in her fair hair. As she was descending again to the drawing-room, she heard her brother William's voice.

"I have concluded the business about the removal to King Street, and we must make the move as soon as possible."

"Now—at once?"

"Yes; the garden slopes well to the river. There will be a magnificent sky-line, and room for the great venture. The casting of the great thirty-foot——"

"Yes, William—yes; but the people are arriving, and you must be in your place downstairs."

Then Mr. Herschel, with the marvellous power of self-control which distinguished him, laid aside the astronomer and became the musician, playing a solo on the harpsichord to a delighted audience; and then accompanying his sister in the difficult songs in "Judas Maccabæus," which hitherto only the beautiful Miss Linley had attempted in Bath society.

In one of the pauses in the performance the door opened, and Alex Herschel went forward to meet Lady Betty Longueville and Miss Mainwaring. He presented them to his brother and sister; and Lady Betty passed smiling and bowing up the room, while Griselda moved behind her with stately grace and dignity.

But Lady Betty was not the greatest lady in the company; for the Marchioness of Lothian was present, and was making much of Miss Herschel, and complimenting her on the excellence, not only of her singing, but of her pronunciation of English. The huge Lady Cremorne was also amongst the audience, and flattered the performers; and Lady Betty, wishing to be in the fashion, began to talk of the music as "ravishing," and especially that "dear, delicious violoncello" of Mr. Herschel's.

Mr. Travers had some difficulty in keeping his place in the trio which he played with the two Herschels, so attracted was he by the face of the rapt listener who sat opposite him, drinking in the strains of those wonderful instruments, which, under skilful hands, wake the soul's melodies as nothing else has the power to wake them.

They called Miss Linley "Saint Cecilia." Mr. Travers thought "sure there never was one more like a saint than she who is here to-day." It was a dream of bliss to him, till a dark shadow awoke him to the reality of a hated presence.

Sir Maxwell Danby and young Lord Basingstoke had appeared, and stood at the farther end of the room—Sir Maxwell fingering his silver snuff-box, and shaking out his handkerchief, edged with lace and heavily perfumed; while Lord Basingstoke looked round as if seeking someone; and Lady Betty, taking it for granted that she was the person he sought, stood up, and beckoned with her fan for him to take a vacant place by her side.

This suited Sir Maxwell's purpose, and he said:

"Go forward when the siren calls or beckons. Don't be modest, dear boy! What! must I make the way easy?" whereupon Sir Maxwell bowed, and elbowed his way to the top of the room; and Lord Basingstoke found himself left to Lady Betty, while Sir Maxwell dropped on a chair by Griselda's side.

Miss Herschel was just beginning to sing the lovely song "Rejoice Greatly;" and Griselda, spell-bound, became unconscious of the presence of Sir Maxwell, or of anyone else. There was only one person for her just then in the world—nay, it was scarcely the person, but the gift which she possessed.

Caroline Herschel had at this time attained a very high degree of excellence in her art, and Mr. Palmer, the proprietor of the Bath Theatre, had pronounced her likely to be an ornament to the stage. She never sang in public unless her brother was the conductor, and resolutely declined an engagement offered her for the Birmingham Festival. Anything apart from him lost its charm, and nothing could tempt her to leave him. Her singing was but a means to an end, and that end was to help her brother in those aspirations, which reached to the very heavens themselves.

It is the most remarkable instance on record of a love which was wholly pure and unselfish, and yet almost entirely free from anything like romance or sentiment, for Caroline Herschel was an eminently practical person!

At the close of the performance, Mr. Herschel told the audience that he should not be able to receive his friends till January, and then he hoped to resume his reunions in his new house in King Street.

"But," he added, "my sister and myself can still give lessons to our pupils at their own homes, if so they please."

"What marvellous people you are!" said Lady Cremorne in her loud, grating voice. "Most folks when they change their houses are all in a fuss and worry. You talk of it as if you carried your household gods on your back."

"So we do, your ladyship," William Herschel said, with a smile. "I doubt whether my sister or myself would allow any hands but our own to touch some of our possessions."

"Your telescopes, and those wonderful mirrors. Ah! here comes Dr. Watson. I saw him in the Pump Room this forenoon, and says he, 'I vow I saw the mountains in the moon through a wonderful instrument last night.'"

"And the little man in the moon dancing on the top of it, no doubt," said a voice.

William Herschel turned upon the dandy, with his lace ruffles and his elegant coat, a look that none might envy, as he said:

"Sir Maxwell, when you have studied the wonders of the heavens, you will scarce turn them into a childish jest."

The room was thinning now, and Griselda lingered. Lady Betty was too much engrossed with trying to ingratiate herself with the Marchioness to take any heed of her, and she had gone down to her chair, conducted by Alexander Herschel, without noticing that Griselda was not following her.

This was Griselda's opportunity. She went up to Miss Herschel and said:

"I want—I long to learn to play on some instrument. I could never sing like you, but I feel I could make the violin speak. Will you ask your brother if I may have lessons?"

Caroline Herschel was not a demonstrative person, and she said quietly:

"My brother will, no doubt, arrange to attend you. As you heard, Miss Mainwaring, we are soon to be involved in a removal to a house better suited to his purpose."

"But sure this is a charming room for music, and——"

"I was not then speaking of music, but of my brother's astronomical work."

"Ah! I had heard of that for the first time last night. It was you, sir"—turning to Mr. Travers—"who spoke of the wonders Mr. Herschel discovered in the sky. But where is Lady Betty? I must not linger," Griselda said, looking round the room, now nearly empty.

"Her ladyship has taken leave, I think. May I have the honour of seeing you to North Parade?"

"I thank you, sir; but I have a chair in attendance."

Mr. Travers bowed.

"Then I will act footman, and walk by the side of the chair, with your permission, and feel proud to do so."

"Then may I hope that Mr. Herschel will give me lessons?" Griselda said. "But," she hesitated, "there is one thing I ought to say—I am poor."

"Poor!"

Caroline Herschel allowed the word to escape unawares.

"Yes, you may be astonished; but it is true. I am a dependent on Lady Betty Longueville. I was," with a little ironical laugh, which had a ring of bitterness in it—"I was left by my uncle, Mr. Longueville, to Lady Betty for maintenance. I am an orphan, and often very lonely. The world of Bath is new to me. I know nothing of the ways of fine people such as I meet here. But I have some trinkets which were my mother's, and I would gladly sell them, if only," and she clasped her hands as if praying for a favour to be conferred—"if only I could gain what I most covet—lessons in music. I have a violin. I bought it with the money I received for a pearl-brooch. The necklace which matches this brooch is still mine. Its price would pay for many lessons. I would so thankfully sell it to attain this end."

Griselda, usually so calm and dignified, was changed into an enthusiast by the strong desire kindled within her, to be instructed in the practice of music.

"Here is my brother Alex!" Caroline Herschel said. "I will refer the matter to him. This lady, Alex, wishes to become a pupil on the violin."

"And to sing also," Griselda said eagerly.

"It can be arranged certainly. I will let you know more, madam, when I have consulted my brother."

"There are loud voices below, Alex. Is anything amiss?"

"Two gentlemen have had an unseemly wrangle," Alex said, "and in the midst Dr. Watson arrived, and a poor child begging. It is over now, and your chair waits, Miss Mainwaring."

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## CHAPTER V.

### GRISELDA! GRISELDA!

When Griselda went down to the little lobby, she found Mr. Travers with a flushed and excited face, and Mr. Herschel trying to calm him.

"Take my word for it, my young friend, there are always two necessary to make a quarrel, and I should beware of yonder dandy, who bears no good character."

"I will take your advice as far as in me lies, sir; but if he ever dares to speak again, as just now—in the presence of others, too!—to dare to speak lightly of her—I will not pick the quarrel, but if he picks it, then I am no coward."

Dr. William Watson, who had come for a second time that day to visit the "moon-gazer" of the night before, had been a somewhat unwilling witness of the high words which had passed between Sir Maxwell Danby and Leslie Travers, and now seemed impatient to be taken upstairs to inspect the process of grinding and polishing the reflector for great twenty and thirty foot mirrors, which was then achieved by persistent manual labour.

Dr. William Watson was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and had come to invite Mr. Herschel to join the Philosophical Society in Bath, which invitation he accepted, and by this means came more prominently before the world.

Mr. Travers led Griselda to her chair, and as the boy lighted the torch at the door—for it was quite dark—a small and piteous voice was heard:

"Oh, madam! cannot you do something for us? I heard Mr. Herschel was kind, but he is hard and stern."

"Mr. Herschel never gives alms," Leslie Travers said; "be off!"

"Nay, sir; wait. The child looks wretched and sad. What is it?" Griselda asked.

"Oh, madam! my father was engaged to play at the theatre, and he has fallen down and cannot perform the part. Mr. Palmer is hard, so hard, he says"—the child's voice faltered—"he says it was drink that made him fall—and he has no pity; and we are starving."

The group on the steps of that house in King Street was a study for an artist. The shuddering, weeping child; the stolid chairman; the link-boy, with the torch, which cast a lurid light upon the group; the young man holding the hand of the tall and graceful lady, hooded and cloaked in scarlet, edged with white fur; then the open door behind, where an oil lamp shone dimly, and the maid's figure, in her large white cap and apron, made a white light in the gloom. It was a picture

indeed, suggestive of the sharp contrasts of life, and yet no one could have divined that in that scene lay concealed the elements of a story so tragic and sorrowful, yet to be developed, and then unsuspected and unknown.

"Wait," Griselda said. "Tell me, child, if I can help you."

"We are starving, madam, and my father is so ill!"

"I have no money," Griselda exclaimed. "Mr. Travers, if you can help her, please do so."

"It is at your desire, for I can refuse you nothing; but I know Mr. Herschel is right, and that alms given like this, is but the throwing of money into a bottomless pit."

As he was speaking the young man had taken a leathern purse from the wide side-pocket of his blue coat, and had singled out a sixpence and a large heavy penny with the head of the King in his youth upon it—big old-fashioned penny-pieces, of which none are current now.

Mr. Travers put the money into Griselda's hand, and she held it towards the child.

"What brought you to Mr. Herschel's?" she asked.

"Brian Bellis sings at the Octagon every Sunday; he told me Mr. Herschel was kind, but he was wrong; it is you who are kind."

"Tell me where you live, and I will come, perhaps; or at any rate send someone to give you help."

"We live in Crown Alley; but Brian Bellis will tell you, madam. Oh!" the child said, "you are beautiful as the princess in the play; and you are good too, I know."

"Come, be off, you little wretch. We don't care to stay here all night for you, and orders waiting," said one of the chair-men.

"Will you find out Brian Bellis for me? Will you discover from Miss Herschel if the tale is true—now—I mean now? I will pay you extra for waiting," Griselda said to the men.

"Can't wait to oblige you, miss; if you don't step in we shall have to charge double fare."

Then Griselda got into the chair; the lid was let down with a jerk; the men took up the poles, and set off at a quick trot to North Parade.

The child was still standing on the doorstep, and Leslie Travers said:

"You must not stand here. The lady will keep her promise, you may be sure. Now then!"

The child turned sorrowfully away, and the click of her pattens was heard on the stone pavement getting fainter and fainter in the distance.

Leslie Travers was thoughtful beyond the average of the young men of his type in those days, and as Miss Herschel's servant shut the door—much wondering what all the delay had been about—he gathered his loose cloak round him, and walked towards the house his mother had taken in King Street, pondering much on the inequalities of life.

"Some star-gazing," he thought, "and with their chief aims set above the heavens; some singing and dancing; some working mischief—deadly mischief—by their lives; and some, like that poor child, dying of starvation. Yes, and some are praying to God for the safety of their own souls, or thanking Him that they are safe, and forgetting, as it seems, the souls of others—nay, that they have souls at all! And others, like that angel, whose face is like the fair lady of Dante's dream, or vision, seem to draw the beholder upward by the very force of their own purity and beauty."

This may sound very high-flown language for a lover, but Leslie Travers lived in a day of ornate expression of sentiment, as the effusions in Lady Miller's vase at Batheaston abundantly testified.

Leslie Travers was the son of a Lincolnshire squire, who owned a few acres, and had lived the isolated life of the country gentlemen of those times.

Leslie was the only son, and he had been sent to Cambridge; but his health failed before he had finished his course there, and he had returned to his old home just in time to see his father die of the ague, which haunted the neighbourhood of the fens before any attempt at proper drainage had been thought of, much less made.

Mrs. Travers was urged to shut up the Grange—which answered very well to the description of a moated Grange of a later time—and resort to Bath, for the healing waters might take their effect on her son's health. Mrs. Travers had now been resident in Bath for a whole year, and her figure in widow's-weeds was familiar in the bath-room waiting for her son's appearance after his morning douche.

But not only was her figure familiar in the bath-room, there was another place where she constantly took up her position, and where she could not persuade her son to follow her, and that place was the chapel which had been built by Selina, Countess of Huntingdon.

Mrs. Travers was at this time greatly exercised in mind about her son. Since his health had improved, he had entered more into the gaieties of the city of Bath, and made friends of whom she could not approve. The Pump Room was a place where many idlers and votaries of fashion found a convenient resort after the morning bath; and here many introductions were exchanged

between the new-comers and those who had been frequenters of Bath for many previous seasons. The present master of the ceremonies did not hold the sway of his famous predecessor; but outward decorum was preserved; and it was in the master's power to refuse or grant an introduction if it was objected to by any parent or guardian.

Mrs. Travers was one of those sweet and gentle women, who are themselves a standing rebuke to the harsh and iron creed which they profess to hold by. Mrs. Travers had lived in an atmosphere all her life of utter indifference and neglect of even the outward observances of religion.

The clergyman of the Lincolnshire parish where the Grange stood was a fair type of the country parsons of the time. He hunted with the squire, drank freely of his wine, and was "Hail fellow! well met!" with those of his parishioners who had like tastes with himself. A service in the church when it suited him, baptisms when the parents pressed it, funerals, a necessity no one can put aside, and administration of the Holy Communion on the three prescribed festivals of the year, were the limit of his parochial labours.

Who can wonder that a sympathetic and emotional woman, brought to hear for the first time a burning and eloquent appeal to turn to God, should very soon yield herself, heart and soul, to what was indeed to her a *new* religion!

She accepted the doctrine of her teacher without reservation, and the offer made her in God's name of salvation—a salvation which drew a circle round the recipient, into which no worldly thing must enter—a circle narrower and ever narrower, which, as it closed like an iron band at last, round many a true-hearted man and woman, had all unawares shut in the very essence of that world they had in all good faith believed they had renounced. For "the world's" chief idol is self, and there may be worship and slavery to this idol in the closest conventual cloister, and in the hardest and most ascetic life that was ever led in this, or any other age.

But, as I said, no creed could make Mrs. Travers hard or austere. Her sweet, pale face in its widow's cap, and straight black gown with the long "weepers" and linen bands, gave her almost a saint-like appearance; and the smile with which she greeted her boy was like sunshine over the surface of a little tarn hidden in some mountain-side.

"Late—am I late, mother? I am sorry, ma'am; but I was detained at Mr. Herschel's by—by a child begging for money at the door as we were leaving. She spoke of starvation and deep distress. She had a lovely face, and it sounded like truth."

"Poor little creature! Can we help, Leslie?"

"One of the singers at the Octagon Chapel will direct me to the place—Crown Alley, a low street enough, by the Abbey churchyard."

"Ah!" and his mother sighed; "a low place, doubtless."

"The child's father is an actor—he was hired to play here—and has had a fall, and is helpless."

"An actor!" Mrs. Travers' pale face flushed with crimson. "An actor! Ah, my dear son, one engaged in the devil's work cannot claim charity from Christians."

"I do not take your meaning, ma'am. An actor may suffer, and his child starve as well as other folk, and need help."

"I grieve for suffering, dear son, as you know; but——"

"But you condemn all actors wholesale. Nay, my sweet mother"—and Leslie changed his tone—"nay, my sweet mother, it is not you who steel your heart; it is the doctrine taught you in the fashionable chapel yonder of lords and ladies, who reserve for themselves the right to the kingdom of heaven."

"My son, do not speak thus; nor scoff at what you cannot yet understand. If prayers avail for your conversion, constant and persevering, mine will at last be heard."

"I thank you for your prayers, dear mother—they come from a true heart. And now to supper, and then to my violoncello. The Herschels are removing at once to this street—almost will their music be within ear-shot; and there will be great works in the garden, and the largest mirror in the kingdom will be cast. Who can tell what may be discovered? Now, mother, you do not see sin and wickedness in star-gazing, surely?"

Mrs. Travers shook her head.

"I would not care for myself to be too curious as to the secrets which God does not reveal."

Leslie stamped his foot impatiently, and then said:

"We cannot agree there, mother. Every gift of God is good; and if He has given the gift of mathematical precision, and earnestness in applying it for the better development of the grandest of all sciences, who shall dare to say the man who exercises that gift is wrong? For my own part, I feel uplifted in the presence of that great and good man—Mr. Herschel—and his wonderful sister."

"When I consider Thy heavens the work of Thy fingers," Mrs. Travers quoted from the Psalms, "I say, with David, 'What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou



considerest him?' Such knowledge, my dear son, as that, after which you tell me Mr. and Miss Herschel seek, is too wonderful for me, nor do I wish to attain it. Mr. Relley delivered a very powerful discourse on this matter last Sunday. I would you had heard it, instead of listening to the music at the Octagon, where the world gathers its votaries every Sabbath-day to admire music, and forget God."

Leslie knew, by past experience, that to argue with his mother was hopeless, and he therefore remained silent. Something told him, when all was said, that he needed something that he did not possess. When first threatened with consumption, and the grasshopper of his young life had become a burden, he had looked death in the face, and shuddered. Life was sweet to him—music, and the beautiful things which were to him as a strain of music, were dear to his heart.

At a time when the natural beauties of field, and flower, and over-arching sky were far less to many than the coteries of fashion and the haunts of pleasure, so called, Leslie Travers had higher tastes, and yet he would fain have been other than he was. Religion, as offered to him by his mother's teachers, repelled him; and he cherished a secret bitterness against the grand ladies who sat on either side of the *haut pas*—described by Horace Walpole, in balconies reserved for "the elect" of noble birth—in Lady Huntingdon's Chapel in the Vineyards.

The waters of Bath had worked wonders on Leslie's bodily ailments. He began to feel strong again, with the strength of young manhood; and now there had risen upon his horizon that bright particular star—that, to him, marvel of perfect womanhood—Griselda Mainwaring. He had scarcely dared to take her name on his lips—it was a sacred name to him; and *yet*, in the lobby of Mr. Herschel's house, he had heard the man, who had so broadly flattered her that she had shrunk from his words as a sensitive plant shrinks from a rough touch of a hand—say, in answer to a question from a casual acquaintance:

"Who is she? Low-born I hear, and a mere poor dependent on the bounty of Lady Betty."

"Heaven help her!" had been the reply, "if that is all her dependence."

Then with a laugh, as he tapped his little silver snuff-box, Sir Maxwell Danby had said:

"She will easily find another maintenance. A beauty—true; but a beauty of no family can't afford to be particular."

It was at these words—insulting in their tone as well as in themselves—that Leslie Travers had raised his voice, and angrily demanded what the speaker meant, or how he could dare to speak lightly of a lady who had no father or brother to be her champion.

"She has *you!*" had been the reply, with a sneer. "Poor boy!"

How the quarrel might have ended even then, I cannot tell, had not the master of the house, Mr. Herschel, tried to throw oil on the troubled waters. But the bitterness was left—a bitterness which Leslie Travers felt was hatred; and yet, if his mother's Bible told true, hatred was a seed which might grow into an awful upas-tree, shadowing life with its deadly presence. With that strangely mysterious power, which words from the great code of Christian morals are sometimes forced, as it were, to be heard within, Leslie heard: "He that hateth his brother is a *murderer*, and we know that no murderer hath eternal life!"

Again and again, as Sir Maxwell Danby's figure rose before him, and his narrow though finely-chiselled face seemed to mock him with its scornful smile, so did the words echo in his secret heart: "He that hateth his brother is a murderer, and we know that no murderer hath eternal life!"

Late into the night the strains of Leslie's violoncello rose and fell. The largo of Haydn seemed to soothe him into calm, calling up before him the beautiful face of Griselda Mainwaring, as with rapt, impassioned gaze she had drank in the music of Caroline Herschel's voice, as she sang, "Come unto Me ... and I will give you rest."

"I love her! I adore her! I will win her if I serve for her as Jacob served for Rachel! My queen of beauty! Griselda! Griselda!"

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## CHAPTER VI.

### GRAVE AND GAY.

"The quality" of Bath and of other towns and cities in England, a hundred years ago, knew nothing—and, except in rare and isolated instances, cared less—of those who were reduced to the lowest depths of poverty, and whose struggle for daily bread was often in vain.

It was in a low, unhealthy quarter of Bath—that queen of the West—that the child, who had begged for money at Mr. Herschel's door the evening before, was seated in an attic-chamber, with a heap of finery before her. Her little slender fingers were busy mending rents in gaudy gowns, sewing beads on high collars, and curling feathers with a large bodkin.

Stretched on a bed in the corner of the room lay a man, whose pale face, sunken eyes, and

parched white lips, told of suffering and want. A sigh, which was almost a groan, broke from the man, and the child got up and left her work for a minute that she might wet a rag in vinegar and water and lay it on her father's forehead.

"Is it your leg pains, father, or is your head worse?"

"Both, child; but my heart pains most. I am fallen very low, Norah, and there is nothing but misery before us. Child! what will you do when I am gone?"

Norah shook her head.

"We will not talk of that, father. You will get well, and then you will act Hamlet again, and——"

"Never! The blow to my head has clean taken away my memory. 'To be or not to be!'"—then followed a harsh laugh—"I could not get the next line to save my life! But, Norah, it is your condition which eats like a canker into my heart. You spoke of a kind gentleman and a beautiful lady yesterday, who did not spurn you. Find them again, implore them to come here, and I will move their very heart to pity by the tale of my sorrows! They will, sure, put out a hand to you."

"The lady was beautiful as an angel, father; but I don't think grand folks like her will care for us. But," she said, brightening, "I shall get some money for this job Mrs. Betts gave me; and I am to go to the green-room and help the ladies to dress."

"No!" the man said, his eyes flashing—"No! I command you not to enter the theatre! Do you hear?"

The child knew when her father's dark eyes flashed like that, and he spoke in the tones of tragedy, that remonstrance was useless; and the doctor said he was never to be excited or contradicted, or he might lose his senses altogether.

"As you please, father," Norah said meekly, and then returned to her needlework; and the heavy breathing in the corner where the bed was placed told that her father slept.

About noon there was a sound of feet on the stairs, and a tap at the door, and a curly head was thrust in. Norah held up her finger and pointed to the bed, but said in a low whisper:

"Come in, Brian."

"I've brought you my dinner," the boy said. "I did not want it. It's a meat-pie and a bun. I don't care for meat-pies and—come, Norah, eat it!"

Norah's blue eyes filled with tears. She was so hungry, but she knew her father might be hungry too. She glanced at the bed, and Brian understood the glance.

"Meat-pies are bad for sick folks," he said, shaking his head. "Very bad! He mustn't touch it."

"I'll keep the bun then, and p'raps that may tempt him with a drop of the wine you brought yesterday. But, Brian, he is very ill!"

"Well, eat your pie, and then we'll talk," the boy said.

"Not loud, or he may wake."

"I have something to tell you. There's a young gentleman who plays the violoncello grandly! He comes to the Octagon, you know, and I believe it was that very gentleman you saw at Mr. Herschel's yesterday. I'm going to hunt him up; and I'll bring him here, and he is certain to be good to you."

"I don't want to beg! Oh, Brian, I do not like to beg, and be spurned like Mr. Herschel spurned me yesterday!"

"He was in a hurry—he did not mean anything unkind. But I have got to sing a solo at a rehearsal, and I must be gone. Cheer up, Norah! What's all this rubbish?"

"It's the theatre dresses. Mrs. Betts, the keeper of the wardrobe, gave me the job. She will pay me, you know."

Brian nodded, and then left the room. His quaint little figure, in knee-breeches and swallow-tail short coat, with a wide crimped frill falling over the collar and the wrist-bands, would excite a smile now if seen in the streets of Bath.

Heavy leather shoes, tied with wide black ribbon, and dull yellow stockings, which met the legs of the breeches, and were fastened with buckles, completed his attire. But the fine open face, with its winning smile, and white forehead shaded by clustering curls, could not be disguised. Brian had a charm about him few people could resist.

He lived with his aunts, who were fashionable mantua-makers and milliners in John Street, and their rooms were frequented by many of the *élite*, who came to them to consult about the fashion and the mode, although the Miss Hoblyns' fame was not, in 1779, what it became when the Duchess of York consulted them as to her "top-gear" a few years later.

At this time they were young women, and had only laid the foundation of the large fortune which the patronage of the Royal Duchess is said to have built up at last. Brian Bellis was therefore lifted far above anything like poverty, and his aunts gave him a trifle for his pocket, as well as his

schooling, and were proud of his prominence in the choir of the Octagon Chapel, where on Sundays the sisters always appeared in the latest fashions. Indeed their dress on Sundays was eagerly scanned by ladies of the fashionable congregation as we might scan a fashion-book in these days.

Brian had seen Norah several times with a burden he thought too heavy for her to carry, and he had gallantly taken the basket from her hand and carried it for her.

Those were the days when there was money to pay for marketings, and before the accident happened which had laid her father low. But Brian was not a fair-weather friend, and that meat-pie and bun were not the first that he had bought out of his pocket-money for the now forlorn child.

He was running away to the rehearsal for next Sunday's music, when he jostled against Leslie Travers, who was coming out of the Pump Room.

Brian came to a dead stop, and said respectfully:

"Sir, there is a man and a little girl in great want in Crown Alley; the child was at Mr. Herschel's door last night."

"This is a lucky chance," Leslie Travers said, "for I am looking for Brian Bellis. Are you Brian Bellis? I know your face amongst the singers in the Octagon"—adding to himself, "a face not likely to forget."

It was lighted now with the fire of enthusiasm, as he said:

"Oh! sir; yes, I am Brian Bellis, and I can show you the way to Crown Alley; not now, for I have to be at the rehearsal. But, sir, I will come to the Pump Room this afternoon, and I will go with you then. I wish I could stay now, but I dare not. Mr. Herschel never overlooks absence from a rehearsal for Sunday."

"Very good; I will be there. Come to the lobby about four, and you will find me."

The Pump Room was full that afternoon.

Lady Betty was of course there, laying siege to the young Lord Basingstoke, and laughing her senseless little laugh, and flirting her fan as she lounged on a sofa, with the young man leaning over her.

Sir Maxwell Danby had had a twinge of gout, and was in an ill temper. He did not care two straws for Lady Betty, but he did not like to see his territory invaded, knowing, too, that a peer weighed heavily in the balance against a baronet.

Griselda had rebuffed him too decidedly for him to risk another public manifestation of her repugnance to him, and he watched her with his small close-set eyes with anything but a benign expression.

Griselda was surrounded by a mother and two smart, gawky daughters, who were strangers at Bath, and were of the veritable type of "country-cousins," which was so distinct a type in the society of those days. Now refinement, or what resembles it, has penetrated into country towns and villages, and the farmers' wives and daughters of to-day are more successful in presenting themselves in what is called "good society," than were the squires' and small landed proprietors' families when "the country" districts were separated by impassable roads from frequent intercourse with the gay world beyond.

These good people talked in loud resonant tones, with a decided provincial twang.

"La, ma! what a fine lady that is!" said one of the girls. "Did you ever see such a hat?"

"And look at the gentleman courting her!"

"Hush now, my dear! He is a lord, and the t'other is a baronet."

"Well, we *are* in fine company. I wish we knew some of 'em. I say, ma——"

At this moment the very stout mamma dropped her fan, and Griselda, who was nearest to it, picked it up and handed it to her with a gracious smile.

"Thank you, my dear, I am sure. Won't you take a seat here?" she continued, gathering together the ample folds of her moreen pelisse trimmed with fur, and edging up to her daughters, who were on the same bench.

A quick glance showed Griselda that Sir Maxwell was meditating a raid on her, so she accepted the offer, and almost at the same moment the Marchioness of Lothian appeared, and Sir Maxwell advanced to her, bowed low, and led her to a seat.

At least he would show Griselda, that if she chose to slight him, a live Marchioness was of a different mind.

The band now struck up, and Mrs. Greenwood beat time with her large foot, and nodded her head till the plume of feathers in her hat waved like the plumes of a palm-tree in the tropics.

Her daughters did not allow the band to hinder their remarks on the company, as some

promenaded up and down, and others reclined, like Lady Betty, on the crimson-covered lounges.

Presently Griselda received a nudge from one of the young ladies' rather sharp elbows:

"Pray, miss, who's that fine gentleman walking with? He is looking this way. Bab, don't giggle, I think he was speaking of us."

"Who is the lady?"

"The Marchioness of Lothian," Griselda said.

"Lor', ma; do you hear?" Miss Barbara exclaimed, leaning across Griselda, "that's a Marchioness!"

It really gave these good people intense pleasure to be in the same room with those who rejoiced in titles. It gave Mrs. Greenwood a sense of added importance, and made her even dream of the possibility of some lord falling in love with Bab. Thus a return to the remote country town of Widdicombe Episopi, where Mr. Greenwood farmed his own acres, and lived in a house which had come down to the Greenwoods from the time of Charles II., would be a triumphal return indeed.

"I shouldn't wonder, miss, if you was a titled lady," Mrs. Greenwood said, as the music stopped, and conversation in more subdued tones was possible.

Griselda smiled.

"No, I have no title of honour," she said.

"Ah, well! you *look* as if you might have, and that's something. I do like to see a genteel air; as I say to Bab and Bell, it's half the battle—it's more than a pretty face. We are come to Bath for Bell's health. She has been so peaky and puling of late. Do you take the waters, miss?"

"No," Griselda said. "I am quite well."

"Then you came for pleasure?"

"Yes," Griselda replied.

"Well, I am very proud to have made your acquaintance. We have apartments in the Circus. There's no stint as to money. Mr. Greenwood said—that's the squire, you know—'Go and enjoy yourselves. But I thank my stars I've not to go along with you, that's all.'"

At this moment Leslie Travers entered the room, and looking round with the quick glance of love saw Griselda, and Griselda alone.

But who were the people she was seated with? Lady Betty called him by name, and stopped giggling behind her fan to do so.

"Here, Mr. Travers; go, I beseech you, and rescue Griselda from those Goths, into whose hands she has fallen. What a set! Goodness! it's as fine as a play!"

Leslie crossed the room, and bowing before Griselda, said:

"Lady Betty would be pleased if you joined her, Miss Mainwaring."

Griselda rose, and, bowing to her three companions, walked towards the opposite side of the room.

"I knew she was somebody," Mrs. Greenwood exclaimed. "Lady Betty—did you hear? And what a vastly genteel young man!—one of her admirers, no doubt. Well, girls, shall we take a turn? For my part I am getting sleepy;" and a prolonged yawn, which was heard as well as seen, announced the fact to those who were near that Mrs. Greenwood had had enough of the Pump Room for that day.

"My dear girl!" Lady Betty exclaimed when Griselda joined her. "Who will you take up with next? Those vulgar folks! Did you ever see anything like the feet of the young one? I declare I'd wear a longer gown if I had such duck's feet!—and the waddle matches—look!"

Lady Betty's giggle was a well-known sound in any society she honoured with her presence, and when she could get a companion like the empty-headed Lord Basingstoke, she delighted to sit and "quiz" those whom she thought beneath her in the social scale.

"Griselda! She is offended. Look how she is strutting off! He! he! he!"

And Lord Basingstoke echoed the laugh in a languid fashion, Lady Betty leaning back and looking up at him with what she thought her most bewitching smile.

"I think it is very ill-bred to make remarks on people!" Griselda said, "and very unkind to hurt their feelings, as you must have hurt that lady's."

Griselda spoke with some vehemence, which she was apt to do, when her feelings were strongly moved.

"You see how I'm lectured," Lady Betty said, with the usual accompaniment—"the giggling fugue," as her enemies called it. "Griselda," she said, trying to hide her vexation, "you are very

good to look after my behaviour. Poor little me! I want someone, don't I, Mr. Travers? It is news to hear I am 'ill-bred.' What next, I wonder?"

But Griselda held her own, and repeated:

"I must think it ill-bred in any society to turn other folks into ridicule, and I am quite sure no one can call it kind!"

"My dear, may I ask you to mind your own business?" was said *sotto voce* as Lady Betty rose, declaring it was time for her third glass of water, and Lord Basingstoke escorted her to the inner room, where the invalids assembled to drink the waters.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE VASE OF PARNASSUS.

"I am glad to be allowed the chance of speaking to you, Miss Mainwaring," Leslie Travers began. "I wanted to tell you that I have found a clue to your poor little protégée of last evening. I am going to visit her, guided by the boy, to whom she referred me."

"That is good news!" Griselda said. "Will you be sure to let me know if I can do aught for her? Oh, I would that I was not dependent on others! I do long to help the poor and sad! I must try once more to get Lady Betty to make me ever so small an allowance. But," she added, with sudden animation, "I have many jewels and trinkets which were my grandmother's, and came to me at her death. Will you sell some for me? I had thought of selling a necklace to pay Mr. Herschel for his lessons; but it will be better to feed the starving than learn music."

"You must let me make all due inquiries first, madam," Leslie Travers said. "I do not desire that your charity should be ill-placed, and many beggars' tales are false."

"That child was telling the truth!" Griselda said. "I knew it! I felt it!"

"You can then judge of truth or falseness by the unerring instinct which is one of the gifts of true womanhood? I would hope—I would venture to hope—that, tried by that instinct, you would trust me, and believe that all I say is true. May I dare to hope it is so?"

"Yes," Griselda said, looking straight into the pure, clear eyes which sought hers. "Yes; I could trust *you*."

"Could? Change that word to *do*. Say you *do* trust me."

His voice trembled with emotion, and Griselda's eyes fell beneath his ardent admiring gaze. The story of his love was written on his face, and Griselda Mainwaring could not choose but read it. The compact between them might have been sealed then, had not a quiet, gentle voice near pronounced Mr. Travers' name.

"Leslie, my dear son!"

Griselda turned her face, flushed with crimson, towards Leslie's mother. He hastened to relieve Griselda's evident embarrassment by saying:

"May I have the honour of presenting you to my mother, Miss Mainwaring? I have promised to meet my guide to the house we were speaking of. I will return hither, mother; meantime, may I hope you and Miss Mainwaring will have some conversation which will be agreeable to both?"

"I will await your return, Leslie. But do not exceed half an hour, for the dark streets are not pleasant, especially for old folk like me, who have to pick my way carefully. Have you been long a visitor to Bath, madam?" Mrs. Travers said, as she seated herself with Griselda on one of the benches.

"We arrived in November, madam."

"Have you a mother and sister?"

"No, no!" Griselda said passionately. "I am alone in the world—an orphan."

"Ah, may the God of the fatherless be your Friend. You will make Him your Friend, my dear? This is a place fraught with danger. I feel it for my son—and how much more is it full of danger for you?"

"There are many beautiful things and interesting people in Bath. Do you know Mr. and Miss Herchel, madam?"

"I know them by report," was the reply. "My son is a musician, and attends Mr. Herschel's classes."

"It is not only music for which Mr. Herschel is famous. He is an astronomer, and reads the star-lit heavens like a book—a poem—a poem more wonderful than any written by earthly hands."

Mrs. Travers was surprised. She did not expect a child of the world—a fashionable young lady—to speak so seriously on any subject. But it was her duty to improve the occasion, and she said:

"I would rather read the Word of God than the star-lit skies, since the safety of the soul is surely a more important duty than to pry into the secret things of God."

"But He stretched out the heavens. He raises our thoughts above by their contemplation."

"Ah, my dear young lady, this is the vain tradition of men. Let me urge you to come to our chapel in the Vineyards on the next Sabbath, and hear the truth rightly divided by Mr. Relly. Do not be affronted at my boldness!"

"Oh no! I am obliged to you for caring about me. I have so few who do so care."

"I can scarcely believe it!" Mrs. Travers said. "So young and fair. Surely there are those who stand in the place of parents to you?"

"No; I know of none such. But here comes my aunt, Lady Betty Longueville. She will desire me to return, as we are expected at a small party to-night at Lady Miller's."

Sir Maxwell Danby, who had been watching his opportunity, now came forward:

"If you have quite done with yonder Niobe, will you permit me to escort you to your chair? No? You are walking? That is better; I shall have more of your company. Let me place your hood over your head—so! What a wealth of loveliness it hides!"

Griselda turned away impatiently; but as Lady Betty was in advance with Lord Basingstoke, she was obliged to follow them.

Sir Maxwell made the best of his opportunity, and held Griselda's hand as it rested on his arm, though she drew back from such familiarity.

"That old gentlewoman," he said, "was reading you a lecture on the sins of the world and its frivolities. I could see it; I have been watching you from afar."

"I am sorry, sir, you had no better subject of contemplation," was the reply.

It was but a step to North Parade; and, just as they reached it, Leslie Travers turned the corner from South Parade. It gave him a thrill of disgust to see Griselda on the arm of a man who he knew was no fit companion for any pure-minded woman, and a pang of jealousy shot through him, and got the better of his discretion.

"If you had waited, Miss Mainwaring, I should have returned at the time I appointed, and I could have told you of what I had seen."

"You did find her? You know, then, her story was true?"

"Yes, but the half had not been told; but more of this hereafter."

"I should be obliged to you, sir," Sir Maxwell began, "not to hinder this young lady any longer. She is under my charge, and I must move on."

"Who hinders you, sir?" was the answer. "Not I. Your goings and comings are matters of supreme indifference to me."

Sir Maxwell laughed.

"Boys are always outspoken, I know; and, like puppy dogs, have to be licked into shape."

"You shall be made to apologize for this insult, sir; and were you not in the lady's presence——"

"Oh, pray, Mr. Travers, do not be angry; no harm is meant. I shall look for you to-morrow to tell me the whole story of the poor little girl. Good-afternoon."

Then Griselda stepped on quickly to the door, and Sir Maxwell bowed his "Good-bye," taking her hand and kissing it.

"Why so cruel to me," he asked, "when I would be your slave? Nay, I *am* your slave, and do your bidding."

"If so, Sir Maxwell, you will allow me to pass into the house, and I wish to do so alone."

"I dare not disobey your orders, though I am invited to a dish of tea by her ladyship; only"—and he hissed the words out between his thin lips—"beware of puppy dogs—they show their teeth sometimes. Adieu—adieu!"

Lady Betty was in high good-humour in the drawing-room. A dainty tea-service had been set out—delicate cups with no handles—and a silver tea-pot and cream-jug; and Lord Basingstoke had taken up his favourite lounging attitude by the fire.

"What have you done with Sir Maxwell Danby, child?"

"He left me at the door."

"Where are your manners, not to invite him to come in?" Lady Betty said sharply. "I shall never teach you the proper behaviour, I believe."

"You might spare me before witnesses," Griselda said angrily. "If, indeed, I offend you, I will not inflict my company any longer on you."

Then, with a dignified curtsy, Griselda swept out of the room. It was terribly irritating to catch the sound of Lady Betty's laugh as she did so, and the words, "A very tragedy queen—a real stage 'curtshey.'"

Griselda hastened to her room, where she found Graves getting her change of toilette ready for the evening, and kindling a fire in the small grate.

"Oh dear, Graves! what a weariful world it is! Graves, tell me—now, do tell me—something about my mother."

"I have told you all I know many a time, my dearie. She was a fair flower, nipped and withered by the breath of this same world you speak of. May God preserve you in it!"

Griselda had thrown herself into a chair, and laid aside her cloak and hood. All her beautiful hair fell over her shoulders like rippling waves of gold.

"Dear Graves, I have met a gentleman often, who is not like the rest of the world's votaries. His name is Travers; his mother frequents the chapel in the Vineyards. Take me thither with you next Sunday! Say you will, Graves!"

"I will take you if her ladyship is up in good time; but I can't get off early if she chooses to lie a-bed. But you would not go to scoff, Miss Griselda?"

"Nay; I have done with scoffing. But, Graves, do you ever think of the miserable poor who have no food and no clothing, like a poor child I saw on Mr. Herschel's doorstep t'other night? This Mr. Travers has tracked her at my desire, and I want to sell some trinkets to feed and clothe her. Hand me the large box; I rarely open it. I did sell the amethyst-brooch to buy my violin, and now there are the two necklets my grandmother left my mother, and which came to me by will; and there are some other trinkets—a silver scent-box and golden ear-drops. Make haste, dear Graves, and let me do what I wish."

"Well," said Graves, "I suppose you can do what you will with your own; but, all the same, I don't hold with selling property—you may want it yourself some day."

"True—ah, that is true! I wonder how it came about that I had no maintenance!"

"Your poor dear mamma had her portion on her marriage with that good-for-nothing, and he made away with every penny. Then Mr. Longueville took you as you know, and gave you a home."

"Yes; he was good to me. I remember coming, I think, when I was four years old."

"You poor little thing!" Graves exclaimed. "Yes, I can see you now, in your black pelisse, so shy and so strange! If your poor uncle had never married, it would have been all right; but there, my lady could draw water out of a stone by her wiles and ways. It's no use moaning over spilt milk. Here's the box. Now, don't be in a hurry to sell, as I tell you these trinkets are all you've got in the world. I must go and look after her ladyship's buckles; she wants a blue rosette sewn on her shoes, and the buckles taken off. It is all vanity and vexing of spirit. She'll be as cross as two sticks to-night; she always is, when she has been to the Pump Room, drinking these waters for fidgets and fancies—they upset folks' stomachs, and then other folks have to put up with their tantrums."

When Graves was gone, Griselda pulled the little table towards her; and, taking a small key from her chatelaine, unlocked the box.

"Yes," she thought, "it is as Graves says, I have nothing in the world but these jewels. It seemed till to-day that I had no one in the world to care for me; but now I think *he* does care for me. He is not like those gay, foolish men who treat women as if they were dolls to be dressed up, or puppets to move at their bidding. No, *he* is of another sort, I think." And the swift blush came to her fair cheek. "What if he loves me! It would be sweet to be taken from this hollow existence—dressing and dancing, and looking out for flattery and admiration. If *he* were near, that dreadful man would not dare to talk to me as he does—he would *not* dare if I were not an orphan; and my only protector—that silly creature who drives me nearly wild with her folly—Well, let me hope better times are coming. Now for the jewels."

The box was lined with cedar, and as the cover was raised a faint, sweet odour of cedar mingled with otto of roses came with a message from the past. Through the dim haze of long years that scent recalled to Griselda a room, where a tall dark man had sat by the embers of a fire, the box before him, and some words which the fragrance mysteriously seemed to bring back.

"It was her wish, and the child must go." The child! What child?—and whither did she go? It was herself—it must have been herself—the man meant.

Then it was all haze again. The light that had penetrated the mists of the past, and brought the scene before her, was obscured once more.

That man must have been her father; but she had no memories of him either before or after that day, which had risen like a phantom before her, called up by the faint sweet scent of the old jewel-box.

The necklets were very fair to look at—one of pearls, with a diamond clasp, and initials on the gold at the back, which were her dead mother's. No, she could not sell that; but there were heavy ear-drops of solid gold, and a set of gold buttons—these would surely fetch something. The amethyst necklace, with its lovely purple hue, had never belonged to her mother; and she put it, with the gold buttons and ear-rings, into a small leather box, and was pressing down one of the compartments, when a drawer flew open she had never noticed before. In the drawer were some diamond ornaments and rings; a piece of yellow paper was fastened to one of the rings:

"Deserted by the husband I trusted, I, Phyllis Mainwaring, leave to my only child, Griselda, these diamonds. I place them out of sight, safe from dishonest hands. When I left him to get bread he knew nothing of them, or he would have sold them. They are my poor darling's only inheritance, and I leave them secure that one day she will find them. Let her take with them her unhappy mother's blessing."

This was indeed a discovery. Griselda had always remembered that this box had stood in her room at Longueville House. She remembered her uncle bidding her bring it to him, and that he placed in it the trinkets left to her by her grandmother, but never had anyone suspected the existence of the diamonds. No one knew, that when the man whom she had married was running through her little fortune, the unhappy wife had, in her despair, converted a few hundreds into diamonds, and hidden them away from all eyes in that old jewel-box.

Griselda's eyes filled with tears. She pressed the bit of paper to her lips, and, wholly unconscious of the worth of those precious stones, she closed the drawer again upon that unexpected discovery, and, putting the small box safely in the drawer of the bureau, she took her violin from its case, and tried to wake from it the music which lay hidden in it. As she played—imperfectly enough, yet with the ear of a musician—her spirit was soothed and comforted; and these verses, written in a thin, pointed hand, were dropped into Lady Miller's vase that evening with no name or cypher affixed, and the mystery of the author was not solved:

WAITING.

"Loveliest strains are lying,  
Waiting to awake,  
Till a master's hand  
Shall sweetest music make.

"Life's best gifts are waiting  
Till a magic power  
Calls them from their hiding,  
In some happy hour.

"Brightest hopes are watching  
For their time of bliss,  
When a kindred spirit  
Greeted them with a kiss.

"Dreams of purest joys  
Shadows still remain,  
Till the day-star rises,  
And loss is turned to gain.

"Sadness, grief, and sorrow,  
Like clouds shall pass away,  
If only we in patience wait  
Till dawns the perfect day."

"This author may claim a wreath," Lady Miller said, "but perhaps she likes best to be uncrowned."

There was endless discussion as to the author of what seemed to be considered a poem of unusual merit, and one and another looked conscious, and blushed and simpered, for no one was unwilling to take the honour to herself. Lady Betty was sure it was only the dear Marchioness who could have written them, only she was too modest to declare herself.

"Mock modesty I call it!" said Lady Miller, who was a bright, jovial woman, and had nothing of the grace or sentimental air which the verse-makers of those days wore as their badge.

Not a single person thought of taxing Griselda with the verses, so quiet had she been in these assemblies, seldom expressing any opinion as to the poems of other people. Griselda was not in the charmed circle of the *élite* of Parnassus, who had a right to wear one of Lady Miller's laurel crowns, and yet the verses, such as they were and poor as they may seem to us, were superior to the *bouts rimés* on a "battered muffin," which, report says, were once dropped into the Roman vase at Batheaston.

At the time of which I write, Lady Miller's sun was declining. Scarcely two years later, she died at the Clifton Hot Wells, at a comparatively early age. But in her day her reputation spread far and wide; and some of the contributions, notably one from Sheridan's able pen, were full of real, and not, as was too often the case, affected feeling.



This reunion to which Lady Betty and Griselda went on this December night was not one of the Fairs of Parnassus which were held every Thursday. It was a *soirée*, to which only a select few—such as marchionesses, and embryo duchesses, and future peeresses—were bidden.

Lady Miller's health was failing, though she tried to hide it; and even now a cough, which was persistent, though not loud, prevented her from reading the effusions which were taken haphazard from the vase, dressed with its pink ribbons, and with crowns of myrtle hanging from it. Six judges were generally chosen to decide on the best poems, and the authors were only too proud to come forward and kneel to receive the wreath from the hand of this patroness of *les belles lettres*.

How old-world this all seems to us now! and how we think we can afford to sneer at such folly and such deplorably bad taste as the poems then thought worthy display! "Siren charms" and "bright-eyed enchantress," "soft zephyrs" and "gentle poesies," might be the stock expressions always ready to lend themselves to rhymes, with a hundred others of the like nature. But these reunions had their better side; for reading verses was better than talking scandal, and apostrophes to bright eyes and ladies' auburn locks better than the discussion of the last duel or elopement, which, in the absence of "society papers," were too apt to form the favourite topic of the *beau monde*.

Lady Miller may have won her myrtle crown for attempting to set the minds and brains of her friends at work, even if only to produce doubtful *bouts rimés* where sense was sacrificed to rhyme, and sound triumphed over subject.

We have our Lady Millers of to-day, although there are no pink-ribboned vases in which contributors drop their poetical efforts.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### ON THE TRACK.

Griselda had been much surprised at the applause which followed the reading of her verses. They were called for a second time, and elicited great praise.

"They are vastly pretty, and full of feeling!" exclaimed Lady Betty the next morning. "I declare, Griselda, you are without an atom of sentiment; you sat listening to them with a face like a marble statue. It is well for you that you are not a victim to sentiment as I am. I vow I could weep at the notion of the sorrowful soul who wrote those impassioned couplets which were read before the five stanzas, so much admired. Ah!" Lady Betty continued, with a yawn—for it was her yawning-time between her first and second visit to the Pump Room—"ah! it is well for some folks that they are callous. I am all impatience to get a copy of those rhymes for Lord Basingstoke; and—*entre nous, ma chère, entre nous*—when do you propose to accept Sir Maxwell Danby's suit? He formally asked my permission to address you. It would be a good match, and—"

"I have not the slightest intention, Aunt Betty, of listening to Sir Maxwell Danby's proposal."

Griselda always gave Lady Betty that title when angry.

"Oh! how high and mighty we are! But I would have you to know, miss, I cannot afford to keep you for ever. I am now embarrassed, and a dun has been here this very morning; so I advise you not to overlook Sir Maxwell Danby's offer."

"If there were not another man in the world I would not marry Sir Maxwell," Griselda said, rising. "I will consider other matters, and tell you of my decision."

"You silly child! Where are you going, pray?"

"To my own chamber."

"You must be powdered for the ball to-night. I promised Sir Maxwell he should have his opportunity at my Lady Westover's dance. Perkyns is coming at four o'clock. You must be powdered. It is not the mode to appear in full toilette, with your hair as it was dressed last night. That gold band may suit some faces, but not yours. Do you hear, miss?"

"I hear," Griselda said; "and I repeat I do *not* go with your ladyship to Lady Westover's ball."

"The minx!—the impudent little baggage! You shall repent your saucy words. But you'll come round, see if you don't, if you hear that pale-faced fellow Travers is to be of the company. Yes; go and ask his old mother about it—go!"

Griselda shut the door with a sharp bang, which made Lady Betty call loudly for her salts, and brought Graves from the inner room.

"Such impudence! I won't stand it—the little baggage! She *shall* marry Sir Maxwell Danby, or I wash my hands of her."

Graves calmly held the salts to her mistress's nose: they were strong, and Lady Betty called out:

"Not too near! Oh! oh! I am not faint;" and immediately went off into hysterical crying, which, for obvious reasons, was tearless.

Meanwhile, Griselda had gone to her room; and, putting on a long black pelisse and a wide hat with a drooping feather, set well over her eyes, she left the house, carrying in a large satchel, which was fastened to her side, the box containing the jewels she wanted to sell.

At first she thought she would go to consult Mrs. Travers in her difficulty. She was determined to run no risk of meeting Sir Maxwell Danby; and if Lady Betty persisted in backing up his suit, she would leave her; but where, where should she go?

An open door in King Street attracted her, and she saw Mr. and Miss Herschel passing in, each carrying some favourite and precious musical instrument. They were in all the bustle of removal, doing this, as they did everything else, with resolute determination to be as earnest as possible in accomplishing their purpose.

Miss Herschel, in her short black gown and work-a-day apron with wide pockets and her close black hood, did not see, or if she saw did not recognise, Griselda. She was giving directions to her servant, enforced with many strong expressions; and as she went backwards and forwards from the door to a cart lined with straw, she was wholly unconscious of anyone standing by.

Griselda could not help watching, with interest and admiration, the swift firm steps of this able and practical woman, as she went about her business, intent only on clearing the house in Rivers Street, and filling the house in King Street, as quickly as possible.

"She is too busy to speak to me now," Griselda thought.

Mr. Herschel now came hurriedly out, exclaiming:

"The two brass screws, Lina, for the seven-foot mirror! They are missing!" and then he disappeared in the direction of the house they were leaving.

Fortunately it was a bright winter noon, and everything favoured the flitting, which was accomplished in a very short time. But we who have in these days any experience of removals—and happy those who have not that experience—know how patience and temper are apt to fail, as the hopeless chaos of the new house is only a degree less hopeless than that of the old house we are leaving. We have vans, and packers, and helpers at command, unknown in the days of Mr. and Miss Herschel; for at the close of the last century few, indeed, were the removals from house to house. As a rule, people gathered round them their "household gods," and handed them down to their children in the house where they had been born and brought up. Removal from one part of England to another was not to be thought of at that time, when roads were bad and conveyances rare, and a distance of twenty miles more difficult to accomplish than that of two or three hundred in our own time. Mr. Herschel's reason for taking the house in King Street was that the garden behind it afforded room for the great experiment then always looming before him—the casting of the great mirror for the thirty-foot reflector.

Griselda passed on without even getting a smile of recognition from Miss Herschel, so thoroughly engrossed was she with the business in hand; and a sense of loneliness came over her, as she said to herself:

"How could I expect Miss Herschel to recognise me, especially in this thick pelisse and hat? I must not expect my concerns to be of importance to her or to anyone."

And as this thought passed through her mind, she became conscious that to someone, at least, her concerns were of importance; for Leslie Travers had seen her from the window of his mother's house, and had thrown his cloak over his shoulders without delay, and, with his hat looped up at one side in his hand, advanced, saying:

"This is a happy chance! I am anxious to see you; and, if you will, I would fain tell you more of a visit I paid to the poor people in Crown Alley. It is a pitiable case!"

"And I want to see them," Griselda said, "and to help the child with the angelic face. I have in my bag the trinkets I spoke of. Will you take me at once to a shop in the Abbey Churchyard, and inquire for me the price they will fetch? I want also," she said hurriedly, "to consult you, or rather your mother, as to what I should do. I cannot—I cannot live any longer with Lady Betty, unless she promises to protect me from the man I detest!"

Leslie Travers's face kindled with delight.

"Come at once to my mother, at No. 14 in this street. She will be proud to receive you," he said eagerly.

"I must not act hastily," Griselda said. "I left Lady Betty in anger this morning; but I have reason to be angry."

"You have indeed, if you are forced into the company of a man like Sir Maxwell Danby. From him I would fain protect you. But," he said, checking himself, "I am at your service now about the trinkets, or shall we pay a visit to the poor folks first? It is, I warn you, a sad spectacle—can you bear it? I have questioned Mr. Palmer of the theatre, and he says the man (Lamartine) is a man of genius, but a reprobate. He has for some time made his living on the stage, and when not in drink is a wonderful actor. But he is subject to desperate fits of drunkenness, and on his arrival here

from Bristol he broke out in one, and falling down the stairs at the theatre after the second rehearsal, injured himself so terribly that he cannot live."

"And the child!—the sweet, innocent child?" Griselda asked.

"The child is the daughter of a young girl employed about the theatre, whom Lamartine married some years ago. She died of burns from her dress catching fire at the Bristol Theatre, where she was acting and getting a fair living. That is the story. The man is by no means a deserving character. Shall we visit him to-day?"

"Yes," Griselda said; "I wish to see the child."

It was now near the hour when it was fashionable to resort to the baths for the second time before the dinner hour, which was generally at two o'clock; and as Griselda and Mr. Travers passed the Pump Room they met several acquaintances.

It was no uncommon thing for the beaux to conduct the ladies to the baths, drink the water with them, and lounge away an hour or two while the band played; and, one by one, those who had been bathing came, well muffled in wraps, to the chairs waiting to convey them to their apartments.

But eyes, which were by no means kindly eyes, were upon Griselda, and as Sir Maxwell Danby stood at the entrance of the Pump Room he made a low bow, to which Griselda responded with a stately inclination of her head.

"Whither away, my fair lady, with that puppy?" thought he. "Ha! I will be on your scent, and maybe find out something. A silversmith's shop! Ah! to buy the ring, forsooth! Ah! ha!"

"What amuses you, Danby?" asked a man of the same type as Sir Maxwell. "Let me have the benefit of the joke, for I am bored to death dancing attendance on my wife and girls."

"Come down with me, and I will show you the finest girl in Bath and the biggest puppy. They have disappeared within that shop. We may follow."

"What are you turned spy for?" asked his companion.

"Who said I had turned spy?" asked Sir Maxwell angrily. "Please yourself!" and he went down the street, and turned into the jeweller's shop as if by accident just as Griselda had laid her trinkets on the counter and the master of the shop was examining them.

Sir Maxwell retired to the further end of the shop and asked to see some snuff-boxes, where he was presently joined by his friend. Sir Maxwell threw himself into one of his easy attitudes, and, while pretending to listen to the shopman, who had displayed a variety of little pocket snuff-boxes in dainty leather cases, he was taking in the fact that Griselda was selling her necklace and gold ornaments.

As soon as the transaction was over, Sir Maxwell made a sign to his companion, and, leaving all the snuff-boxes, he loftily waved away the master of the shop, who was advancing to inquire which he would prefer, and left in time to see which way Griselda went.

"To Crown Alley—a low place! By Jove! this is a queer notion. And with that jackanapes, too, who sets up for being so pious! We won't follow them further," he said, taking out an elaborately-chased snuff-box and offering it to his friend. "We won't follow them—this is enough."

"You are that fair lady's devoted slave, so report says. What are you about, Danby, to let another get before you? It is not like you!"

"No, it is *not* like me; you are right, sir. But I am not beaten out of the field yet. Crown Alley, forsooth! haunted by the scum of the theatre! Ah! ha! We must unearth this rat from its hole, and I am the man to do it!"

"You are well fitted for the business, I must say," was the rejoinder, with a laugh.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### WATCHED!

Scenes of poverty and sickness are familiar now to many a good and fair woman, of whom it may be said in the words of the poet Lowell, that

"Stairs, to sin and sorrow known,  
Sing to the welcome of her feet."

But few indeed were the high-born ladies a hundred and twenty years ago who ever penetrated the dark places where their suffering brothers and sisters lived and died in penury and want.

Class distinction was then rigid, and the sun of womanly tenderness and compassion had not as yet risen on the horizon with healing on its wings.

Thus the two wretched attics, furnished with the barest necessities of life—to which she ascended by dark, narrow stairs—was indeed a new world to Griselda Mainwaring.

She shrank back when the door of the room was opened, and turned away her head from the pitiful sight before her. The sick man was propped up on his miserable bed, the child kneeling by him listening to, and trying to soothe, his incoherent mutterings.

Leslie Travers went in first and touched the child's shoulder.

"I have brought the lady to see you, and to ask what she can do for you."

Instead of answering, Norah held up her hand as if to beg Leslie to be silent, and continued to stroke her father's long thin hands with one of hers, while with the other she pressed the rag of vinegar and water on his burning brow.

Presently the muttering ceased, and the breathing became more regular, and then Norah rose, and said in a low voice:

"Nothing stops his wild talk till I kneel by him and hold his hand, and stroke his forehead; that is why I could not speak, sir." Then the child went up to the threshold of the door where Griselda still stood, and said: "I thought you would come—I felt sure, lady, you would come; but do not be afraid, he is asleep now, and may sleep for an hour."

Griselda felt ashamed of the disgust she could not conceal at what she saw. But the true womanly instinct asserted itself, and pointing to an open door leading into another garret, she said:

"May I go in there?"

"Yes, it is my room; it is where I put the clothes when I have mended them. The queen's gauze veil got torn, and I can mend gauze better than anyone, so Mrs. Betts gave it to me. Mrs. Betts is kind to me." Then seeing Griselda's puzzled look at the heterogeneous mass of finery heaped up on a table supported against the wall, as it was minus one leg, the child explained: "I mend the actresses' dresses. Mrs. Betts is the wardrobe keeper at the theatre, and she has had pity on me, or—or I think we should have starved."

"Well," Griselda said, "I have brought you money to buy food, and surely you want a fire; and where is your bed?"

The child pointed to a mattress in the corner under the sloping angle of the roof, and said:

"I sleep there most nights, but now he is so bad I watch by him."

Griselda opened her satchet and took from it a crimson silk purse.

"Here are two guineas," she said; "get all you want."

Norah clasped her hands in an ecstasy.

"Oh!" she said, "this is what I have prayed for. God has heard me, and it is come. My beautiful princess has come. You are my beautiful princess, and I shall always love you. I will get Brian to buy lots of things; he will be here after school. Does the gentleman know?"

"Yes, he brought me."

"Then I shall love him, too; you are both good. I shall try and make father know you brought the money; but he does not understand much now. Hark! he is calling—he is awake!"

Norah hastened back to her post, and Griselda followed her.

Leslie Travers had been standing by the sick man's bed, and Griselda, ashamed of her feelings of repulsion and shrinking, took her place by his side.

Suddenly a flash of intelligence came into those large dark eyes, and the man started up and gazed at Griselda, repeating:

"Who is she?—who is she?"

"The dear beautiful lady who has brought us all we want. Thank her, father—thank her!"

"Thank her!" he repeated. "*Who is she?*"

Then an exceeding bitter cry echoed through the rafters of the chamber as if it would pierce the very roof. And with that cry the man fell back on his pillow, saying:

"Phyllis—Phyllis! come back—come back!"

Griselda started towards the door, and Leslie Travers caught her, or she would have fallen down the steep, narrow stairs.

"Take me away—take me away! I cannot bear it! Oh, it is too dreadful! That face—those eyes—that cry!"

"Yes," he said, carefully guiding her downstairs, and shielding her as much as possible from the inquisitive stare of the dwellers in the same house, taking her hand in his, and drawing it into his arm: "You are not accustomed to such sad sights, the poverty and the squalor."

"It was the man who frightened me. What made him call Phyllis—Phyllis! that beautiful sacred name, for it was my mother's?"

"He was raving; he fancied he was on the stage. He will not live many days, and then we will see that the child is cared for."

The "we" escaped his lips before he was aware of it; but the time for reticence was past. He turned into the Abbey, and Griselda made no resistance. Then with impassioned earnestness Leslie Travers told his love, and often as the tale is told, it is seldom rehearsed with more simple manly fervour. For in the reality of his love Leslie Travers forgot all the flowery and fulsome love epithets which were the fashion of the day. He did not kneel at her feet and vow he was her slave; he did not call her by a thousand names of endearment; but he made her feel perfect confidence in his sincerity. This confidence ever awakes a response in the heart of a true woman, and makes her ready to trust her future in his hands who asks to guard it henceforth.

"Yes," she had answered in a low but clear tone; "yes, I thank you for the kindness you do me."

He tried to stop her, but she went on:

"It *is* a kindness to take a friendless and penniless orphan to your heart." Then she looked up at him, and reading in his clear pure eyes the story his lips had so lately uttered, she added with a smile, through the April mist of tears in her beautiful eyes: "Yes, it *is* a kindness, let me take it as such; but not leave myself your debtor, for I will give you in return all my heart, and be henceforth to you tender and true."

He seized her hands in rapture, and kissed them passionately.

"We are in a church," he said; "let us seal our betrothal here, and pray for God's blessing."

They were hidden from sight as they stood within the entrance of Prior Bird's Chantry Chapel, and there, hand clasped in hand, the young lovers knelt and silently prayed for God's blessing.

As they rose, Griselda looked round, and a blast of chill air came over her from the opening of a side door. She shuddered, and said:

"How cold it is!"

"Yes; cold and damp. Let us hasten out into the sunshine."

"Who opened that door?" she said.

"Some old woman, I dare say, who comes to dust and clean," he answered, as they walked down the nave, surrounded, as it there was, with many tombs, and the walls crowded with tablets in memory of the dead.

Lady Jane Waller's stately monument, and Bishop Montague's, were then, as now, conspicuous; and Griselda paused for a moment by the recumbent figure of the Lady Jane.

As she did so, a figure, well known and dreaded, was seen coming from behind the monument.

Griselda clasped Leslie Travers's arm with both hands, and said:

"Let us hasten away—we are watched."

But Leslie turned, and faced Sir Maxwell Danby.

"The shadow of the church is a better trysting-place than the shelter of the dwellings in Crown Alley," he said, hissing the words out in what was hardly more than a whisper.

Leslie was on the point of retorting angrily, when he controlled himself:

"This is not the time and place," he said, "to demand an apology for your words, Sir Maxwell Danby. I will seek it elsewhere."

But Griselda clung to his arm, and tried to advance towards the side door to get away from the man, who had dogged her steps.

"Come—come, I pray you," she said; "do not stay."

And Leslie Travers, saying in low but decided tones, "I will seek satisfaction elsewhere," let the door swing behind him, and he and Griselda passed out of the dim Abbey into the sunshine.

It was still bright and beautiful without, and the fair city lay under the shadow of the encircling hills, which were touched with the glory of a brilliant winter's day.

A slight fall of snow had defined the outline of church and houses, and the leafless trees were sparkling with ten thousand diamonds on their branches.

The keen, crisp wind had dried the footways, and there was nothing on the smooth-paved roads to make walking anything but delightful.

"I want to take you to my mother now," Leslie said. "Will you come?"

"Will she be kind to me?" Griselda asked. "Do you think she will be kind to me?"

"Kind! Pride in you is more likely to be her feeling, I should venture to say."

"But," Griselda said, casting anxious looks behind, "I am really afraid of Sir Maxwell Danby. He will go to the North Parade with all haste, or find Lady Betty in the Pump Room, and speak evil of me."

"Let him dare to do so!" Leslie said. "I will challenge him, if he dares to take your name on his lips!"

"Oh no, no!" Griselda said; "no! Promise you will not quarrel with him? He is a man who would be a dangerous foe."

"He is my foe already," Leslie said. "As to danger, sweet one, I do not recognise danger where honour is concerned. Do not talk more about this now, nor mar these first sweet hours of happiness. Say it is not a dream, those blessed words you spoke in the church, Griselda?"

She gave him a look which was more eloquent than any words, and then said, in a low voice:

"I feel as if I had found my rest."

"Dear white-winged dove," was the reply, "if you have been wandering over stormy waters tempest-tossed, let me love to think you have found your rest with me."

They were now at the door of Mrs. Travers's house; Leslie knocked, and it was opened by the old servant, who followed his young master wherever he went—a faithful retainer of the old type of servant, who, through every change and chance, would as soon think of cutting off a right hand as forsake his master's son.

Giles had a most comical face—a mass of furrows and wrinkles, a mouth which had very few teeth left, and small twinkling eyes. He wore a scratch yellow wig, and a long coat with huge buttons, on which was the crest of the Travers—a heron with a fish in its beak—a crest suggestive of the land of swamps and marshes, where herons had a good time, and swooped over their prey with but small fear of the aim of the sportsman—so few were the sportsmen who ever invaded those desolate wild tracks of water and peat-moss.

"Aye, Master Leslie," Giles said, "ye're late, and there's company at dinner."

"It is scarcely one o'clock, Giles. Where is my mother?"

"Up above with the company; and not well pleased you are not there, either."

"Oh!" Griselda said; "I do not wish to stay. Please take me back to the Parade! Let me see Mrs. Travers another day, *please*. I ask it as a favour."

She pleaded so earnestly, that old Giles interposed:

"There's room at my mistress's board for all that care to come. There never yet was a guest sent away for lack of room."

"It is not that—not that," Griselda said.

"Whatever it is," Leslie said, "I cannot let you leave us thus"—for Griselda had moved to the door. "Nay—now, nay—do not be so cruel!"

Here voices were heard on the stairs, and the next moment Mrs. Travers appeared, leaning on the arm of a man who wore a clerical dress, a black coat and bands, and a bag-wig tied with a black bow.

"My son, Mr. Relly," Mrs. Travers said; and then she looked with dismay at the figure by Leslie's side.

It was no time for explanation, and Leslie merely said:

"Miss Mainwaring will dine with us, mother."

"You are late, Leslie," Mrs. Travers replied, in a low, constrained voice; and she did not do more than bow to Griselda, adding: "Our mid-day meal has been waiting for some time. Shall we go to the dining-parlour at once?"

Surely no position could be more embarrassing for poor Griselda. All her dignity and gentle stateliness of manner seemed, under this new condition of things, to desert her. Her large hat scarcely concealed the distress which was so plainly marked on her face, and tears were in her eyes as she said, in a low, trembling voice to Mrs. Travers:

"I fear I intrude, madam?"

But Mrs. Travers was anxious to avoid what she called the hollow courtesies of the world of fashion, and thus she only replied:

"Will you be pleased to remove your warm pelisse? The air is very cold. Abigail," she said to a maid-servant who had appeared, "conduct this lady to the inner parlour, and assist her to lay aside her pelisse. Now, Mr. Relly, we will take our seats, and my son will do the honours."

Griselda hastily unfastened her pelisse, but instead of following the maid to the room, she held it towards her; and then, with a gesture which implied her trust in Leslie, she put her hand into his arm, and he led her to the dinner-table, where Giles had taken up his position behind his

mistress's chair.

The meal was, as Giles had intimated it would be, very bountiful. Mr. Relly said a long grace, which was really a prayer, and which Griselda thought would never end.

During dinner the conversation lay between Mr. Relly and Mrs. Travers, if conversation it could be called. It was rather an exchange of religious sentiments, quotations of texts of Scripture, seasoned with denunciations of the vanities of the world, as Bath spread them out for the unwary. Griselda felt that many of Mr. Relly's shafts were directed at her, and she felt increasingly ill at ease and uncomfortable. It was only when she could summon courage to look at Leslie that her spirits rose to the occasion, and she answered him in low, sweet tones when he addressed her.

To the great relief of everyone except Mrs. Travers Mr. Relly took leave before the cloth was drawn, excusing himself on the plea of having to attend upon that aged servant of God, the Countess, who expected him to consult on important business.

"If I may be so bold, may I beg you to convey my dutiful remembrances to her ladyship?" Mrs. Travers said.

Mr. Relly assented, but in a manner which implied it was a very bold request to make, and then departed.

As soon as they were alone and Giles had left the room, Leslie rose, and going to his mother's chair, he said:

"I have brought you a daughter to-day, mother. You have often longed for her appearance, and it is with joy and pride that I tell you Miss Griselda Mainwaring has done me the honour to promise to be my wife and your dear daughter."

Mrs. Travers's face displayed varying emotion as her son went on. Surprise and disapproval were at first prominent; then the certainty that Leslie was in earnest, and that to turn him from his purpose was at all times hopeless, when his mind was set on any particular course of action, brought tears to her eyes.

"Oh, my son!" she began; but Griselda left her chair, and, coming to her side, she said:

"Madam, I pray you to receive me as your daughter. I will try to be a loving and true wife. Madam, I am alone in the world, and as I have been so happy as to win the love of your son, you must needs think kindly of me. I will strive to be worthy of him."

This avowal was so entirely unexpected that Mrs. Travers could not at first speak. This simple confession of love, this sad reference to her lonely condition, this promise to be a true and loyal wife—how unlike the coquettish and half-reluctant, half-triumphant manner which Mrs. Travers thought a Bath belle would assume under these circumstances!

"My dear," she said, after a pause, during which Leslie had thrown his arm protectingly round Griselda—"my dear, may I do my duty to you as my only son's wife? I pray that you may be kept safe in this evil world, and that we may mutually encourage each other to tread the narrow way leading to everlasting happiness."

Griselda bent, and said simply:

"Kiss me, dear madam, in token of your approval;" and Mrs. Travers rose, and very solemnly putting her arm round Griselda, and holding the hand which was locked in her son's, pressed a kiss on the fair forehead of her future daughter-in-law, and uttered a prayer for God's blessing on her. Then Griselda said, "I must return now to Lady Betty. Will you come, sir?"

"Give me my name," he said. "Let me hear you give me my name."

"There is time enough for that," she said, rallying with an arch smile. "We will come to that by-and-by."

And soon they were retracing their steps to the North Parade, joy in their hearts, and that sweet sense of mutual love and confidence, which in all times, whenever it is given, comes near to the bliss of the first love-story rehearsed in Paradise. Alas! that too often it should pass like a dream, and that the trail of the serpent should be ready to mar the beauty of the flowers of an Eden like Leslie Travers's, and Griselda Mainwaring's.

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## CHAPTER X.

### A PROPOSAL.

The door of the house in North Parade was opened by Graves.

"Where have you been?" she said anxiously. "Dinner is not only served, but just finished. There have been tantrums about it, I can tell you. You may prepare for a fuss. Her ladyship——"

"Perhaps," Griselda said, turning to Leslie—"perhaps you had better pay your visit to-morrow. Let me see Lady Betty alone."

Graves, who saw the hesitation, now said:

"Yes, Miss Griselda, her ladyship is in no mood to see a stranger. You had best bid the gentleman good-day, and come in."

"It may be it is best," Griselda said. "So good-bye—good-bye till to-morrow."

"Unless we meet in the Assembly Room," Leslie said, holding her hand; and bending over it, he pressed it to his lips again and again, as if he could not give it up.

She drew it gently away, and then ran with a light step to her own room. Graves followed her.

"What does it mean, my dear?" she asked.

"It means that I am no longer alone in the wide, cold world. Oh, be glad for me, Graves, be glad! I am to be the wife of a good man—Mr. Leslie Travers."

"Good! Well, there is none good—no, not one! He may be better in the eye of *man* than the rest, but *good!*—he may be a *moral* man."

"He is everything that is noble and good! Oh, Graves, I am so happy!"

"Poor child!—poor child!" the faithful woman said, as she smoothed the bow on the wide hat before putting it away—"poor child! Well, you'll need a protector. There's a great to-do in the dining-parlour. I heard your name again and again; and her ladyship and that man who is so often here—worse luck—were making free with it, I can tell you. There! that's her bell—ring-ring-ring! And here comes David."

David was the man-servant, and tapped sharply at the door.

"Mistress Graves, are you here? Is Miss Mainwaring here? She is wanted by her ladyship in the sitting-room—*now*," he added—"this instant. Do ye hear?"

"Yes, I am not deaf," was Graves' retort; "so you needn't make a noise like so many penny trumpets. You had better change your dress, my dear. Here is your blue skirt and flowered-chintz gown—and your hair is all falling down. Come!"

Griselda was putting away the money she had received for her jewels, and then submitted to Graves' hands, as she changed her morning-gown for a pretty toilette of chintz and under-skirt of blue brocade.

"I must be quick, or she will ring again," Graves said. "There! I thought so"—for again the querulous bell sounded, and hurrying feet were heard on the stairs.

"Her ladyship is in a regular passion," David said, through the door. "You'll repent it, Graves, as sure as you are alive."

"Hold your tongue, and be off," was the reply; "I can take care of myself, by your leave!"

David grumbled a reply, and again departed.

In other times, Griselda would have shown some sign of desire to avert the storm of Lady Betty's anger; but to-day she went through her toilette without any undue haste.

"Graves," she said, "I want you to go to Crown Alley for me, and see a poor, man who is dying, and take him some comforts. Surely there are plenty of wasted luxuries that might be of use to him! And, Graves, he has a dear little girl—such a clever child!—and as lovely as an angel, though half-starved. Graves, will you take some of that mock-turtle soup and a bottle of wine before night to No. 6, Crown Alley?"

"Well, to say the truth, Miss Griselda, I ain't partial to low places like Crown Alley, and——"

"But you might talk to the man of good things—you might tell him of the love of God."

Graves shrugged her shoulders.

"I must tell him first of the wrath of God—poor dying creature!—if he has been mixed up with theatre folk. It's awful to think of him!"

"Do go—to please *me*, dear Graves," Griselda said. With a sudden impulse, she stooped and kissed her rugged face as Graves bent down to arrange a knot of ribbon on the chintz bodice. "Oh, Graves, I am so happy! I want to make someone else happy. Don't you understand? Do go; and take what you can in your hand. Now, what do I care for scolding?" she said. "I feel as if I had wings to-day;" and in another moment Griselda had tripped downstairs, and was at the door of the sitting-room, where on a sofa reclined Lady Betty.

Lady Betty was fanning herself vigorously—always a sign of a coming storm; and Sir Maxwell Danby was leaning back in an armchair, toying with his snuff-box and the trifles hanging to his watch-chain. The ruffles on his coat were of the most costly lace, and so was the edge of the long cravat, which, however, was peppered with the snuff he was continually using.

There was a gleam of something very much the reverse of kindly intention in his little deep-set



eyes, and cunning and malice were making curves round his thin lips, though, on Griselda's entrance, a smile, which was meant to be fascinating, parted them; and, rising in reply to her curtsy at the threshold of the door, he bowed low, advanced to her, and, offering his hand, said:

"May I beg leave to hand you to a chair?"

Then, as Griselda drew her hand away and turned on him a look of disgust, Lady Betty almost screamed out:

"What do you mean by flouncing like that, miss? Sit down at once, and hear of the honour this gentleman proposes to do you. He offers you what you little deserve."

"Nay—nay, my lady," Sir Maxwell began; "that is impossible for any man to offer. A diadem laid at this fair lady's feet would be all too little for her deserts. But may I venture to address a few words to your fair ward? and then I will take my leave, and await with anxiety a reply—say, to-morrow at this time. I would not hasten her. Madam," he began, with his hand on his heart—"madam, I pray you to listen to my poor words; and, as you listen, believe that they come from one weary of the hollow insincerities of a gay world, and longing to rest itself on something real and steadfast. I see in you the perfection of womanhood. I adore you; and Lady Betty favours my suit. I can offer you a position—a social rank—not to be lightly esteemed. Danby Hall is my ancestral home, and thither I crave leave to convey you, ere many months have passed, as its beautiful mistress, and——"

"Sir," Griselda interrupted, as this suitor bent on one knee, with due care not to cause a rupture between the silk stockings which met his knee-breeches by too sudden a genuflexion—"sir, I must beg you to desist. Surely, Aunt Betty, you have not encouraged this gentleman to pursue a suit which is distasteful to me?"

Then, as Lady Betty began to raise her voice, Griselda turned to Sir Maxwell, who was finding his position uneasy, for his joints were not as supple as they had been twenty years before:

"Sir Maxwell Danby," she said, her voice trembling, in spite of every effort she made to control it, "I thank you for the honour you do me, but I decline to accept the proposal you make me."

"She only means to put you off, Sir Maxwell; she will think better of it—she *shall* think better of it."

"Nothing will change my purpose—nothing *can* change it." Then, though it seemed almost sacrilege to bring to light what lay like a fount of hidden joy in her heart, she looked steadily into the face of the world-worn man, who quailed before the clear glance of those young pure eyes. "Nothing can change my purpose, sir; and for this reason—I am pledged to another."

"Ha! ha!" broke out almost involuntarily from Sir Maxwell "I understand. Lady Betty, let me warn you that this fair lady is in some danger from designing folk, who frequent the lowest purlieus of the city. I warn you; and now"—with a low bow—"I take my leave." And casting a Parthian arrow behind as he made another low bow at the door, he said: "And unless you receive my warning in good part, you will see cause to repent it. It may be you will have to repent it through *another*."

Griselda's face blanched with fear as she turned to Lady Betty:

"Tell me," she exclaimed, "what that bad man has been saying of—of me, and of another!"

"Saying! That you have misbehaved yourself, miss; and that you have been taken to Crown Alley by that canting hypocrite whom I detest. Speak to him again, and you leave this house. *Dare* to refuse Sir Maxwell Danby's offer, and I cast you off. You had better take care, for your poor mother disgraced herself, and——"

"Stop!" Griselda said; "not a word about my mother. I will not hear it. But, Aunt Betty, I will not listen to the proposal made me by Sir Maxwell Danby. I would not, as I have told you, marry him were there no other man in the world; but, as it is," she said proudly, the fire of her eyes being suddenly dimmed with the mist of gentle tears—"as it is, I am the promised wife of Mr. Leslie Travers. He will see you to-morrow on this matter, and——"

"I will not see him. You shall marry Sir Maxwell; he has a fine fortune, and a fine place. You are mad; you are an idiot—a fool! Go to your room, miss, and keep out of my sight till you come to your senses. Get out of my sight, I say!"

How long this tirade might have raged I cannot tell, had not David announced "Lord Basingstoke." Shallow waters are easily lashed into a storm, and as easily does the storm spend itself.

Lady Betty quickly recovered herself, and as Griselda left the room she heard her aunt's usual dulcet tones and the inevitable giggle as the young lord, who was sorely at a loss how to "kill time," sank down in the chair Sir Maxwell had so lately left, and the usual badinage went on and received an additional piquancy by the arrival of two or three more idle people who had been to the Pump Room for their afternoon glass of water, and missing Lady Betty, had come to inquire for her health, and to talk the usual amount of scandal, or harmless gossip, as the case might be.

The various love affairs on the tapis were discussed in their several aspects, and Mrs. Greenwood's plain daughters were made the target for the shafts of foolish satire.

"Could you fancy, my lady, that the vulgar mother asked young Mr. Beresford what his intentions

were because he had danced twice with that fright, her daughter Bell, out of sheer pity? Lor', what fun young Beresford is making of her!"

"Ridiculous! vastly amusing!" exclaimed Lady Betty.

"But there is another marriage spoken of. I hear you are to give your beautiful ward"—Lady Betty's friends always took care to call Griselda a ward, not a niece—"to Sir Maxwell Danby. He has a fine place, upon my word," said an old beau, who posed as a young one. "He has a fine place, and a pretty fortune. I congratulate you, madam, and the young lady. For my part, I always have reckoned her the belle of Bath this season."

Lady Betty smiled, and accepted the congratulation and the admiration at the same time.

"Sir Maxwell had just left her," she said.

"Where is the young lady?" the old gentleman asked. "Upon my word, Danby is a lucky fellow. There are many who will envy him. I confess *I* am one."

"Yes. I say, where is Miss Mainwaring?" Lord Basingstoke asked.

And Lady Betty, flirting her fan vigorously, said:

"She has a headache, and will not be at the Assembly to-night, I fear."

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## CHAPTER XI.

### A LETTER.

Griselda was glad to escape to her own room that she might have time to think over her position and decide what was best to do, and what was the next step to take.

She laid aside her dress and hoop, and put on a long morning-gown which Lady Betty had discarded because the colour was unbecoming; and then, opening her desk, chose a very smooth sheet of Bath-post paper, and sat with her quill pen in her hand as if uncertain what to write.

But her face was by no means troubled and anxious; on the contrary, it was happy, almost radiant, in its expression.

Griselda had not had an experience of many lovers; indeed, the sweet story had never been told to her till Leslie Travers told it; and there was a charm for her in thinking that her heart had responded so fully to him and given him her first love.

Foolish protestations like Sir Maxwell Danby's had indeed been made to Griselda since her arrival at Bath, but a certain stately dignity had kept triflers at a distance, and it might be said of Griselda, that she

"Held a lily in her hand—  
Gates of brass could not withstand  
One touch of that enchanted wand."

It was the lily of pure unsullied womanly delicacy, which contact with the world of fashion in every town is too apt to touch, and even wither with its baleful breath.

It would not be fair to say that in the Bath assemblies this baleful influence was all-pervading. Then, as now, there were many who, by their own guilelessness and purity, repelled the approach of what was harmful in word or jest.

But what is now spread over a wide surface was—in those days of small centres like Bath and other places of fashionable resort in or near London—pressed within a narrower compass, and thus the evil and its results were more prominently brought forward.

But is not the canker at the root of many a fair flower of womanhood in the higher circles of our own time? Do not maidens and matrons, young and old, of our own day permit, nay, encourage, the discussion of scandal and improprieties in their presence, which by their very discussion tend to stain the pure white flower of maidenhood and motherhood? Is it not true that familiarity with any evil seems to lessen its magnitude, and that continual conversation about matters that are even perhaps condemned, has the effect of making the speaker and hearer less and less guarded in their remarks, and less and less "shocked," as they perhaps at first declared themselves to be, at some sad lapse from the straight path amongst their acquaintances and friends?

It would be distasteful to me, and it would not add to the interest of the story I have to tell, were I to draw a picture true to life of Sir Maxwell Danby. He was an utterly unscrupulous and base man. He had no standard of morality, except the standard of doing what best satisfied his own selfish and low aims. How it was that he had determined to win a woman like Griselda, I cannot say, so utterly different as she was from the many women who had fallen into his power. But the fact remained that he *was* determined to win her, and if he failed, his love—though I desecrate that word by applying it to any feeling of Sir Maxwell Danby's—would assuredly turn to hatred and determination to do what he could to destroy her happiness.

As Griselda sat that evening with the light of two tall candles in their massive brass candlesticks, shining on her beautiful face, there was no shadow over it.

What if Lady Betty renounced her, and turned her out of the house?—well, if the whole world were against her, she was no longer *alone*. She was his, who loved her, and was ready at any moment to take her to his heart and home. "I must write to him," she was saying as she stroked her cheek with the soft feather at the end of her quill; "I must write to him and tell him all—everything! and then he will know what to do."

Soon the pen began to move over the paper, and she smiled as she put it through the "sir," which had been written after "dear," and substituted "Leslie."

How strange and yet how sweet it was to look at it! And then she went on:

"I said you must wait till I called you by your name! You have not had to wait long."

She wrote on till she heard a bustle on the pavement below her window. She went to it, and looking down saw the link-boys with their torches and the chair in which Lady Betty was being carried off to the Assembly, and the chair was followed by another, and several dark figures shrouded in long cloaks were in attendance.

It was a clear frosty evening. The sky was studded with countless stars, and the fields and meadows then lying before North Parade, made a blank space of sombre hue where no distant forms of tree or dwelling could be traced; while beyond was the dim outline of the hills, which stand round about that City of the West. Lonely heights then!—now crowned by many stately terraces and houses, where a thousand lamps shine, and define the outline of the crescents and upward-reaching streets and roads. But gas was not known in that winter of 1780! It lay hidden in those strangely-mysterious places, with electricity and the power of steam, waiting to be called out into activity; for those hidden forces are old as the eternal hills, only waiting the magic touch of some master's hand, to be of service to men, who are but slow to recognise whence every good and perfect gift comes.

When the house was quiet, Griselda returned to her desk, and slowly and deliberately finished her letter. It was not long, and covered only one side of the sheet. Then it was folded with care to make the edges fit in nicely, and nothing remained but to seal it; and she was about to light the little taper, and get the old seal from the corner of her desk, when a tap at the door was followed by Graves's entrance with a tray.

"Your supper," she said shortly, "Miss Griselda."

Graves's voice and manner were so unusual that Griselda started up.

"What is the matter?" she asked. "Why do you look so miserable? Was she trying your patience—you poor dear old Graves—past bearing? Graves, why don't you speak?" But Graves's mouth was close shut, and she looked as if determined not to answer. "Look, Graves, I have written a letter to Mr. Travers, and told him what Lady Betty said to me; that is, I told him she said she would cast me off, unless I did as she chose in a matter which I could not explain in a letter, but connected with Sir Maxwell Danby."

"She can't cast you off! You were left to her in the will for maintenance. I do know that much."

"Yes!" Griselda said vehemently—"yes! like any other of my uncle's goods and chattels! Oh, I am free now!—I am free!—or shall be soon! I will not think of vexing matters to-night of all nights! What a dainty little supper! I like oyster-patties. Ah! that reminds me of your promise, Graves. Have you been to Crown Alley? Did you take the soup? and were you kind in your manner to the poor little girl? Graves, did you go?"

"Yes, Miss Griselda, I went."

"And what did you think? Had I made too much of the misery, and want, and wretchedness of that poor man?"

"No, Miss Griselda—no, my dear!" said Graves.

"I must go again in a day or two, and you shall come with me."

Graves relapsed into silence again, and then Griselda put the important seal on her letter, and addressed it, and gave it to Graves, with instructions to send it safely by the hand of David early the next morning.

"It is a comfort to have told him all!" she said, as Graves finally left the room. "And how happy I am to be no longer a chattel, but a part of the very life of another, and that other a man like my Leslie!"

Sweet were Griselda's dreams that night, all fears seemed to have vanished, and the image of Sir Maxwell Danby bore no part in them.

Women of Griselda's type, tasting the cup of happiness for the first time, are inclined to drink deep of its contents. Perhaps only those who have not felt the loneliness of heart like hers can tell how great was the reaction. Hitherto she had been plainly told she was an encumbrance, and that her business in coming to Bath was to get a settlement in life as soon as possible. It was this that had made her maintain the cold, reserved demeanour which was, as I have said, unlikely to make

her popular in the mixed assemblies of Wiltshire's Rooms and the Pump Room. She had surrendered the citadel of her heart with a whole and perfect surrender; and while the gay crowd was bent on enjoyment, and beaux and belles were trying who could be first in the exchange of pleasantries and jokes not of the most refined character, Griselda dreamed her dreams, and slept in peace; while Graves, carrying the letter downstairs, stopped from time to time, and murmured:

"I have not the heart to tell her! I dare not tell her! Or, if I do, not to-night!—not to-night! How could I spoil her happiness to-night! May the Lord call her, and may she hear His voice, for I fear trouble lies before her, poor lamb!"

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It is wonderful what perseverance and energy can effect! Even in the very prosaic and commonplace circumstances of a removal from Rivers Street to King Street, these qualities were conspicuous in the Herschels. Miss Herschel had worked with a will from daybreak to nightfall, and the stolid Welsh servant, Betty, had been infected with the general stir and bustle of the household.

By nine o'clock that evening Mr. Herschel was established in his observatory at the top of the house, without a single mischance happening to any of his mirrors or reflectors, and without the loss of a single instrument. It was a night when the temptation to sweep the heavens was too great to resist, and although he felt some compunction when he heard the running to and fro below-stairs, and his sister's voice raised certainly above concert-pitch in exhortations to Betty and entreaties to Alick to be sharp and quick, he had fixed one of his telescopes, and was lost in calculations and admiration at some previously unnoticed feature of the nebulae, when his brother Alex came into the room.

"We have got supper ready," he said, "and Travers is below offering help—rather late in the day—and the only help he can give now is to help to eat the double Gloucester cheese and drink the Bristol ale. But come, Will; you have had no proper meal to-day!"

"Humph! what," Mr. Herschel said, "did I say? Nineteen millions of miles, or eighteen and three-quarter millions? Yes, Alex—yes. Can I be of any assistance? How about the violins and the harpsichord? There are several lessons down for to-morrow, and Ronzini will be here about the oratorio. I ought to have gone to Bristol, but it was impossible. There's the score of that quartette in G minor, Alex—is it safe?"

"Yes—yes. I pray you, brother, trust the sagacity of your workers, and repay them with a scrap of gratitude." Then yawning, "If you are not as tired as any tired dog, I am; and I am off to bed, such as it is, for there is only one bedstead put up—that is the four-post for you. Lina and I have decided to sleep on the floor."

"Nonsense! I shall not sleep to-night, I have too much to settle. Let good Lina take some rest for her weary limbs. And, Alex, to-morrow, we must see about the workshop in the garden and the casting for the thirty-foot reflector, for I can have no real peace of mind till that is an accomplished fact. The mirror for the thirty-foot reflector is to be cast in a mould of loam, prepared from horse dung. It will require an immense quantity; it must be pounded in a mortar; it must be sifted through a sieve."

Alex shrugged his shoulders, and made an exclamation in German which brought a laugh from his brother.

"Poor Alex, is the lowest yet most important step of the ladder distasteful to you? I will not trouble you, my boy, nor will I enlist Lina in the service against her wishes—do not fear."

"I fear no work for you, William," Alex said, "when music is concerned, you know that; but——"

"I know—I know," William Herschel said, patting his brother's shoulder; "but, remember, I make even music—yes, even music—that heaven-born gift, subservient to the better understanding of that goodly host of heaven, beyond and above all earthly consideration and mere earthly aims. But let us go to supper. We must eat to live—at any rate, young ones like you must. Come!"

The room below was not in such dire confusion as might have been expected. The harpsichord was pushed close to the wall, with a company of violin, violoncello, and double-bass cases, standing like so many sarcophagi in serried rows.

The table was spread with a clean cloth, and a large drinking-cup of delft ware, supported by three figures of little Cupids, with a bow for a handle, was full of strong ale.

A large brown loaf, and a Cheddar cheese, looked inviting; while a plate of Bath buns, with puffed shining tops, indented with a crescent of lemon-peel, showed the taste for sweet cakes which all Germans display.

"My good sister," Mr. Herschel said, "you are a wondrous housewife; we must not forget to give the mother far away a true and faithful report of your skill—eh, Alex?"

"Skill!" Caroline said. "There is not much skill required—only strength. Come, Mr. Travers, take what there is, and overlook deficiencies."

Then the legs of the mahogany chairs scraped on the bare boards, and the four sat down to their

meal. The grace-cup was passed round. Miss Herschel, drawing a clean napkin through the handle, with which those who took a draught wiped their lips and the edge of the cup. The conversation was bright and lively, and Leslie Travers, who was in the first joy of Griselda's acceptance of his love, thought he had never before tasted such excellent bread and cheese, or drunk such beer.

"There is a ball at Lady Westover's to-night, Travers," Alex said. "You are absenting yourself from choice, I doubt not. I absent myself from necessity."

"You could have gone, Alex; only I warned you I had no time to get up your lace-ruffles to-day; and you are so reckless with your cravats—all were crumpled and dirty."

"My dear sister, I do not complain. I heard, by-the-bye, Travers, that the voice of the Assembly Room is unanimous in declaring Miss Mainwaring the reigning beauty; but——"

"But what?" Leslie asked.

"There are two or three men inclined to make too free with her name."

Leslie's brow darkened.

"I know of *one*," he said; "but, sir, if you should chance again to hear a word spoken of Miss Mainwaring, you may remind the speaker that she is my promised wife. She has, unworthy as I am, done me the honour to look favourably on my suit this very day."

"Indeed! you are a fortunate man," Alex said heartily.

"I came with the purpose, madam," Leslie said, turning to Miss Herschel, "to ask if you will, when agreeable to you, give Miss Mainwaring lessons in singing? I am," he said, colouring, "responsible for the price of the lessons, only I do not desire to let Miss Mainwaring know this."

"I must look in the book of engagements," Miss Herschel said; "we are over-full as it is. The days lost in the removal threw us back, but," she said, drawing a book with a marble-paper cover from her capacious pocket, "*I* will run my eye over the lists, and try to arrange it, William."

But Mr. Herschel had left the room; he returned in a few minutes to say:

"Lina, the men will be here as soon as it is light to-morrow about the furnace; and, Lina, I shall be glad to have the micrometer lamp and the fire in my room."

"Yes, William;" and the question of singing-lessons for Griselda Mainwaring, or anyone else, was for the time forgotten.

Far into the night did that loyal-hearted sister, tired with a hard day's work, assist her brother in the arrangement of his new study—his *sanctum sanctorum*, on the top-floor of the house, made memorable in the annals of Bath and the records of the country, to which he, William Herschel, came a stranger, as the spot where his labour received the crown of success in the discovery of Uranus.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### DISCOVERED.

Griselda shrank from meeting Lady Betty after the stormy scene of the previous day, and Graves brought her breakfast to her own room.

"Did you send my letter, Graves?"

"Yes."

"Surely, by a safe hand?"

"I hope you don't think David's unsafe!" was the short reply.

"Graves, why *are* you so gloomy—like the day? Oh!" she said, turning to the window, which was blurred with a driving mist of rain—"oh! there ought to be sunshine everywhere to suit me to-day."

"There's not likely to be a ray of sun to-day. Bath folks say that if the weather once sets in like this, it goes on rain, rain——"

"Well, it can't last for ever—nothing does."

"No; that's true," said Graves.

Griselda now settled herself to her breakfast with the appetite of youth; and, as Graves left the room, she said:

"Bring the letter the instant it comes, Graves—the answer to *my* letter, I mean; or perhaps Mr. Travers may come himself."

But the day wore on, and Griselda waited and watched in vain. She tried to occupy herself with her violin; she made a fair copy of her verses, and smiled as she thought, that waiting—*her* waiting—had at last been crowned with reward.

Then she fell into dreams of her past life; the dull dreary round at Longueville Park; her uncle's long illness; her dependence for education on the library and its store of books, and the good offices of the clergyman of the little parish, who gave her lessons in Latin, and such Italian as he knew. Needlecraft and embroidery she had learned from his wife; and she was an accomplished needlewoman.

It was a haphazard education, but Griselda's natural gifts made her able to adapt it to her needs; and she was a self-cultured woman, who lived her own life apart from the frivolity of Lady Betty, to whom, as she said, she was simply an appendage.

Then there was the closing of Longueville Park till the heir returned from the Grand Tour; for, in spite of Lady Betty's wiles and effusive letters, the heir made it very evident that he did not desire her to remain at the Park till his return in a year or two, as Lady Betty fondly hoped.

Then the little widow made the best of the circumstances, and set forth with David and Graves to see the world.

This was two years ago now, and the interval had been filled up with a few months in Dublin, a short sojourn at the Bristol Hot Wells, and then, in the October of 1779, the house on the North Parade, Bath, was taken, where Lady Betty emerged from her weeds, dropping them as the butterfly drops the chrysalis, and floating off into the world of fashion, with Griselda as her "sweet friend," and "pet," and protégée, but never as her "niece."

From time to time Griselda gave up meditation, and stationed herself at the window. The small panes, set in thick frames, were dim with moisture. The fields before her, which stretched to the hills, were reeking with damp. The hills themselves, and the houses and terraces which the day before had laughed in the sunshine, were now hidden, or only seen gray and black through the driving rain.

No grand chariots, with red-coated post-boys, swept round the corner from South Parade, drawing up with a flourish at a door near. Very few people were out in the dim wet streets, and only a few disconsolate patients were conveyed at intervals by drenched and surly chair-men to and from the Pump Room, the water dripping from the roofs of the chairs, and the men's feet making a dull sound on the wet pavements, or on the miry road below.

Soon a panic seized Griselda that perhaps that letter had been a little premature. Was it possible that Leslie Travers could think her unmaidenly to write as she had done?

The thought was torture, and the torture grew more and more hard to bear, as the leaden hours passed.

At the dinner-hour Graves appeared.

"Have you brought it—the letter?"

"No; I've brought a message from her ladyship—that Sir Maxwell Danby is below, and dines here; and you are to go downstairs."

"I will *not* go downstairs—I will not see him," Griselda said passionately. "Say, Graves, please, that I am unwell, and desire to remain in my room."

"My poor child!—my poor child!" Graves said. "I think you had best go—I do, indeed!"

"You would not say so if you knew. *No*; I will not go. Make my apologies, and say what is true—that I am not well. But, Graves, that letter—*did* you send it?"

"I have told you so, Miss Griselda. I speak the truth, as you ought to know."

"Did David take it?"

And now Graves hesitated a little:

"I gave it to his care as soon as I went down this morning; but——"

"But what?"

"The gentleman has been here, and David was ordered to refuse him admittance. I must take your message; there's the bell ringing again."

Griselda stood where Graves left her, her hands clasped together, and exclaimed:

"What shall I do?—wait till he writes? He will surely write! Oh, that I had someone to consult! Shall I leave the house?—shall I go to Mrs. Travers? No; I would not force myself on her—or anyone. I must wait. Surely my poor little rhymes were prophetic! Waiting and watching——"

Again Graves appeared with a tray, on which was Griselda's dinner. A little three-cornered note lay on the napkin.

Griselda snatched it up, and read, in Lady Betty's thin, straggling, pointed handwriting:

"Do not attempt to shew your face, miss, till you have made a proper apology, and have declared your readiness to meet the gentleman who has done you the honour of addressing you.

"B. L."

Lady Betty's spelling was, to say the least of it, eccentric; and Griselda smiled as she crumpled up the note and tossed it into the fire.

"Very well, I am a prisoner then till my true knight comes to set me free. Make my compliments to her ladyship, and say, Graves, that I am obedient to her orders, and have no intention of showing my face."

"My dear," Graves said, "pray to the Lord to help you; you will need His help."

"What do you mean? Speak out, Graves."

But again Graves left the room, murmuring to herself:

"I have not the heart to tell her, yet she must surely know; she must be told."

The long, slow hours passed, and twilight deepened early, for the sky only showed a lurid glow in the west for a few minutes at sunset, and then the rain and mist swept over the city, and nothing was to be seen from the window but the dim light of an oil-lamp here and there, and the flare of the link-boys' torches as they passed in attendance on chairs, or lighted pedestrians across the road for a fee of a halfpenny.

At the accustomed hour Lady Betty set off to the Assembly Room, and the house being quiet, Griselda came out of her room.

David was in attendance with his mistress, and only the woman who let the house and cooked for the family was at home with her daughter.

Griselda heard her voice raised to reproach her daughter, who acted as servant to the establishment, and she caught the words: "Shut the door, Sarah Anne! Send the young rascal away!—a little thief, no doubt!"

Griselda ran downstairs, impelled by some hidden instinct, and feeling sure that the messenger came from Crown Alley.

The door was partially open, and Sarah Anne was evidently trying to shut it against an effort to keep it open.

Then Griselda heard a voice pleading—a musical boyish voice:

"Let the young lady know I'm here; pray do."

And now Graves came from the back of the house, and exclaimed, as Griselda was trying to admit the boy:

"Go back into the dining-parlour, Miss Griselda. Go; I'll speak to the boy."

But Brian Bellis had pushed the door open, and now stood under the dull glow of the lamp hanging over the entrance.

"Madam," he said, addressing Griselda, "I am sent to tell you that Mr. Lamartine is dying; he can't last till morning, and he craves to see you. For Norah's sake, madam, I beg you to come. I am Brian Bellis, you know—Norah's only friend. I beg you to come."

"Yes, I will come."

"He has something to tell you. He says he cannot die till he has told you."

"I will come. Stand back, Graves; what do you mean?"

For Graves had laid her hand on Griselda's arm as she turned to go upstairs to get her cloak and hood.

"You must not go to Crown Alley at this time of night; wait till morning."

"No, I will not wait; it may be too late to-morrow."

Poor Graves almost groaned in the agony of her spirit. "My dear—my poor dear," she said, "you are not fit to go and see a man like him die."

"Do not listen to her," Brian Bellis said; "do not listen—for Norah's sake."

Griselda freed herself from Graves's hand and ran upstairs, returning presently in her long cloak and a *calèche* well pulled over her face.

All this time Mrs. Abbott and her daughter Sarah Anne had watched the scene with curious eyes, and a small boy who ran errands and turned the spit in the kitchen, cleaned knives, and performed a variety of such menial offices, had, all unperceived, been watching from the top of the stairs leading to the basement and offices.

The boy had his own reasons for watching. A bit of gold was already in his pocket which had been given him by a fine gentleman who had stopped him in the morning as he was running off at David's command, with Griselda's letter to King Street.

Another bit of gold was promised this hopeful young personage if he kept a watch on the proceedings of the beautiful young lady who lived with Lady Betty Longueville. This boy, who was familiarly called "Zach," was only too pleased to be thus employed. He had, in fact, given up the letter to this smart gentleman, who was Sir Maxwell Danby's valet, and who had also been well-paid for acting spy on many like occasions. It was the most natural thing in the world for him to stop Zach, ask to look at the letter, slip a half-guinea into his hand, and tell him he would convey it to Mr. Travers, as he had a message for him from his master, and that he might go about his daily business and hold his tongue. The letter would reach its destination—he need not trouble himself about it; and the bait held out of another piece of gold for further information if wanted, depended on his keeping silence; if he did this, his fortune was made.

So those little lynx eyes of Master Zach's were very wide open indeed, and he saw Graves make a final effort to prevent the young lady from going off with Brian Bellis.

It was ineffectual, for Griselda said proudly:

"Do not interfere, Graves; I will not suffer you to do so."

"Then I must come along with you," poor Graves said, and getting near to Griselda, she seized her hand, and putting her mouth close to her face, whispered something which seemed to turn the graceful figure standing ready for departure into stone.

She put out her hand and supported herself against the back of a tall chair which stood near, but beyond this she never moved, till poor Graves, in a duffle-cloak with many capes and a large black beaver bonnet, returned, ready to accompany her on her errand. Then she took the hand which hung passive at Griselda's side.

"I am ready, my dear—I am ready," Graves said. "Show the way, boy. Have you a torch handy?"

"No, madam; but I can find the way in the dark."

Then Mrs. Abbott called Zach.

"Quick, Zach! quick! light a torch, and light these ladies on their way; or shall he call a chair, madam?"

"No," Griselda said, starting as if from a dream; "no. Now, Graves!" Then pulling her hood over her face, and taking Graves's offered arm, she said to Brian: "Lead the way; I am ready."

Zach trotted along with the link in his hand, keeping close to Brian, and the two women followed. Neither spoke till they were well within the shadow of the Alley, from which a noisy party of women and girls were coming out.

Brian, who was in advance, stopped, and Griselda stopped also.

"Are you sure?" she asked in a low voice—"are you sure? Is there no mistake?"

"There is no mistake. I wish there was—oh! I wish there was!"

Griselda seemed to be gathering strength now, for she left Graves's arm, and followed Brian up the long narrow flight of stairs. The child Norah had heard the sound of coming feet on the creaking staircase, and opened the door of the attic, saying:

"He is quieter now." Then, with a sob: "Oh! Brian, Brian! you have been such a long, long time; and have you brought her—the lady—the young lady?"

"Yes, I am here," Griselda said; "yes. How is your——"

The word died away on her lips—that word that ought to bring with it nothing but tender feeling of respect and love—that word which we use when we speak of the highest and the best guardian for life and death—"Father!"

Yes, that wild haggard man, who had sunk back in a lethargy after long incoherent ravings, was the father of the beautiful woman who, unfastening her cloak, let it fall from her on the floor of that wretched room; and, kneeling, clasped her hands, and cried, in the bitterness of her soul:

"Oh, that it was not true! Can it be true? Graves—Graves, tell me it is a frightful dream, and not reality!"

"My poor dear!" said Graves, in a choked voice, kneeling by Griselda's side, and putting her strong arm round her to support her. "My poor dear! I wish I could tell you it was a dream; but bear up, and put your trust in the Lord. It may be that He may save yonder poor creature as He saved the thief, in the hour of death."

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## CHAPTER XIII.



## THE PLOT THICKENS.

The money which Griselda had brought the day before had added some comfort to that bare room. A good fire was burning, and the bed on which the man lay was covered with blankets.

There was wine, too, and food; and thus, all unawares, the daughter had performed a daughter's duty, and had ministered to the comfort of the last sad hours of that wasted life.

But it were vain to try to tell how Griselda's whole nature shrank from this sudden revelation—how the impulse was strong to leave the room before consciousness returned to the dying man—so intensely did she dread the recognition which she knew must follow.

For Graves had risen from her knees; and, going to the table, had taken a small case, and a letter from it, saying:

"He showed me these last night; they tell their own tale."

Poor little Norah had resumed her place by the bedside, exhausted with her long watching. She had slipped down on the floor, and had fallen into a doze. When Graves touched the case, she sprang up:

"No; you must not. Father said I was to let no one touch it till she came. No——"

The movement, and the child's voice, roused the sick man. He opened his large eyes, and looked about him—at first with no expression in them; but presently those black, lack-lustre eyes became almost bright as he fastened them on Griselda, and said, in a collected manner:

"Yes; I am glad I have lived to see you. Look! there is the portrait of your mother, and a letter from her, in which is her wedding-ring. I would not bury it with her; I kept it for you—her child—her only child—*my* child. Let me hear you call me 'father!' I was so cruel—so base—she had to flee from me—my poor Phyllis!"

Griselda had opened the case, and stood irresolute with the portrait of her mother in her hand. A lock of light hair was twisted into a curl, fastened by a narrow band of small pearls.

The mother's face, lovely yet sad, looked up at the daughter's, and seemed to express sympathy and pity for her.

Deeply had the mother suffered—would her child be like her in this, as in outward form and semblance? The likeness was so unmistakable, that, except for the different style of dress, the miniature might have been painted as a portrait of Griselda herself.

"My mother!" she whispered softly; and, to the surprise of those who stood by, the sick man said, in a voice very different from the raving tones which had been ringing through the room and reaching to every part of the house:

"Yes; your mother. I remember you, little Griselda—little Griselda. I took you to Longueville, and left you there. You cried then to leave me; you weep now to find me. Well, it is just. I have been a wicked wretch; I have but little breath left—but take my poor little one out of this—this stage-life. Take her, and try to love her; she is your sister."

"I will," Griselda said. "I shall have a home soon—she shall share it."

"I thought as much—I hoped as much. He looks worthy of you, Griselda. Norah," he said, "this is your sister—your princess, as you call her; she will care for you. You will be a good little maid to her?"

"Yes, father," Norah said; and then, with touching simplicity, she put her little hand into Griselda's, and, looking up at her, she saw tears were coursing each other down her cheeks.

"Will you pray for me?" the dying man said. "Pray that I may be forgiven."

"Pray for yourself, father," Griselda whispered.

He heard the word fall from her lips; and, putting out his long, thin, wasted hand, he laid it on her head as she knelt by the bed, and said:

"I pray to be forgiven, and for blessings on you."

"For Christ's sake!"

The voice was from Graves, who, in broken accents, called upon the Master whom she loved to have mercy on the poor penitent who lay dying.

Then little Norah, nestling close to her father, repeated the 23rd Psalm; but before she had ended, her father became restless, and fumbled for the paper, and said:

"The ring—the ring—her mother's ring!"

Griselda put it into his feeble, uncertain grasp, and he murmured:

"Put it on—put it on; and forgive me for all the misery I caused your mother. I broke her heart; and then the flames—the cruel flames—took from me the other poor child who loved me. My wife—Norah's mother—well, if she had lived, I should have broken her heart, too."

After this there were no coherent words—all was confusion again; and before the Abbey clock had struck out eleven, the spirit had passed away. Who shall dare to limit the love and forgiveness of God in Christ?

With this sad story of a misspent and miserable life we have no more to do here. It rolls back into the mists of oblivion with tens of thousands like it in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and in all the centuries since the world began. We dare not say such life-stories leave no trace behind, for true it is that the evil lives, when the doer of the evil is gone. The two daughters of this unhappy man were bearing the consequences of his sin. The child cast penniless on the cold world, the beautiful girl by her side suffering as only such a nature could suffer from the sense of humiliation and distress that her father had been a man whose very name must perish with him—for who would wish to keep it in remembrance? Oh for the good name which is better than riches to leave to our children! Surely, when troubled for the future of our sons and daughters, we may strive to leave them that which is better than silver and gold—the inheritance of a good name, of parents who have been honourable members of the great commonwealth, true to God, and true to man, and have scorned the paths of deceit and guile, as well as the ways of open sin and treacherous wickedness.

"We must get back, Miss Griselda. Her ladyship will be returned. We must go at once."

"Yes. But Norah—the child?"

"I will take care of her," Brian Bellis said. "See! she is almost stupefied with her grief—she will scarce heed your departure!"

"I cannot leave her—poor little girl! She has no one in the world but me!" Griselda said, in a tone of deep emotion.

While they were thus speaking, the stairs creaked under the weight of Mrs. Betts, who, with one of the actors from the theatre, came to inquire for Lamartine. Mrs. Betts was a coarse, loud-voiced woman, but her nature was kind, and she pitied the child who had done so much for her father with all her heart. She was a woman of decision too, and, with one glance at the bed, she lifted the almost unconscious Norah in her arms, and turning to the pale, haggard man, who had been acting in Lamartine's place, she said:

"You bide here while I take the child to my lodgings. And we must give notice of the death, and club to get him decently buried. Mr. Palmer will give a guinea, and we'll all follow in the same line. Harrison, do you hear?"

"Yes—yes," the man said hurriedly; "but don't leave me long alone here. I—I don't care to have the company of a dead man for long."

"You are an arrant coward, then, for your pains! There, go into the inner chamber, and I'll be back in half an hour. Turn the key in the lock," Mrs. Betts said, as she began to trudge down the dark stairs with Norah in her arms—"turn the key."

But the man sprang to the door:

"Don't—don't lock me in! I'll stay; but don't lock the door!"

A scornful laugh from Mrs. Betts was the answer, and Graves coolly turned the key as she was told.

Brian Bellis had gone down to look for Zach and the torch, but no Zach was to be found. He had made off to earn another gold-piece, and had performed his errand well, as the event proved.

Poor Griselda had need of the support of Graves's strong arm as she hurried her along to the North Parade. What if Lady Betty were before her! What if it should come to her being really refused admittance to the house! Graves trembled to think of it, and of what she would personally be made to suffer if she were not at her post in her mistress's bedroom at the appointed hour.

Griselda had really no thought about this. Her one longing was to get back—back to her room, where she could pour forth her trouble, and consider how she should tell him who had loved her so well, that she was the daughter of the man by whose bedside they had stood together, all unconscious that they were doing anything more than responding to the entreaty of a child who was almost starving, and who was the only friend the wretched man seemed to possess.

To Graves's intense relief, Mrs. Abbott opened the door, and, in reply to the anxious question, said:

"No, her ladyship is not come home. Nobody has been here since Zach returned to say you did not want him any more."

"I never said so!" Graves exclaimed. "We've groped home as best we could, for the rain and mist put out the lights, and as to the lamps, the glass is so thick with damp you can scarce see a spark in them."

While Graves was speaking, Griselda had gone wearily upstairs. Her cloak was saturated with rain, and as she unfastened her *calèche* the masses of her hair fell back. At the top of the first flight she stopped.

"Graves! ask if a messenger has brought a letter for me."

"No," Mrs. Abbott said, answering—"no. Not a soul has been near the house since you left it."

"No letter!—no letter!" Griselda murmured; and then, when she reached her room, she threw aside her cloak and seated herself, with folded hands, staring out into the embers of the fire with a look in her face which made Graves say, as she hastened towards her:

"My dear! my poor child! don't look like that. It is over now—and a mercy too. There will never be any need to tell—no one need know. It's safe with me, and no one else need know. Come, let me help you to bed before I am wanted elsewhere. Come!"

"I am not going to bed," Griselda said. "I must wait till he comes or sends again."

"We'll, the gentleman won't send at this time of night, that's certain! Come, they will be back at any minute now! Let me put you to bed. I declare," said Graves, shuddering, "a change in the weather like this is enough to give one rheumatism! I don't call the Bath climate so wonderful—frost one day, thaw and rain the next!"

Graves made up the fire, and then, finding Griselda quite determined to sit up, she left her to fetch some refreshment, wisely thinking that to urge her against her will was hopeless just then.

"She will come round, poor child! It is a dreadful shock! I almost wish I'd told her last night; but I hadn't the courage to do it. I make no doubt the Lord is leading her to Himself by a rough path. But I don't like that look in her face; it is not natural. She ought to cry; tears are always softening to grief. Not that one can call it grief to lose a father like him!"

No, it was not grief, but it was deep pity; and it was shame, and soreness of heart, and wounded pride.

Then that letter she had written in the fulness of her first joy—that letter, by which she cast herself upon Leslie Travers, and confided to him her trouble about Sir Maxwell. He had never answered it. He had come to the house, it is true, but he had been sent away. Hours had gone by since, and he made no sign. What could she think but that he had looked with an unfavourable eye upon that outpouring of her full heart—perhaps thought her reference to Sir Maxwell's hateful addresses unmaidenly, unwomanly?

Griselda went over all this again and again, sitting as Graves had left her, her head resting against the back of a high Chippendale chair, her feet on the brass fender, her hands clasped, and the wealth of her beautiful hair covering her as with a mantle.

"How shall I tell him?" she said at last. "I must tell him; he must know; he will not wish me to be his wife now, perhaps. There is little Norah; I cannot part from her. How selfish I am! I am not thinking of her, or of anybody but myself. Oh, what a cruel, cruel blow to all my hopes! Ah, mother! mother!" she exclaimed as she suddenly remembered the case she had dropped into her wide pocket with the ring and the letter. "Ah! mother!"

For as her cold hands drew out the case, and she pressed the spring, it flew open, and the mother's face seemed to have a living power for the daughter.

Sympathy and maternal love and tenderness were all seen on that beautiful countenance; and yet there was a strength in the lines of the lovely mouth, those rosy, curved lips, parting as if to say, "Be of good courage! the battle may be sore; but victory comes at length. Trust, and be not afraid!"

Then tenderly and reverently Griselda unfolded the yellow paper, to which a ring was fastened with many clumsy stitches of silk, and read the faint characters of the few lines which were traced there.

"I send you back the ring, as the tie between us is broken, Patrick. Keep it for our child; she is in safety at Longueville Park. Do not molest her; leave her to a better home than *you* can give her. You took her there by my request; leave her there. Before you read this I shall be no longer on earth; but I have forgiven you, dear, as I hope to be forgiven. Ours has been the wrong. Oh, do not let the child suffer! Leave her in the place where I was born and bred, and fulfil your vow, never, never to do aught which may turn her uncle's heart against her. It is my last request—my last hope! Adieu, Patrick!"

These words were so blurred that they were illegible; and Griselda sunk on her knees by the chair, and the tears, so long frozen, poured forth in a flood till her full heart was relieved.

Graves, coming in an hour later, found her with her fair head bowed on her arms, asleep. Youth had triumphed over sorrow of heart, and sleep had come, as it does come, with gentle power to blot out for a time the sorrows of the young. Graves's eyes filled with tears as she looked at her, and, taking a quilted cover from the bed, she threw it over her, putting a pillow under her head, and murmuring:

"Alas, poor dear! I fear the worst for her is *not* over. May God help her! for man's help is vain. I can only pray for her. I dare not wake her—not yet—not yet!"

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## CHAPTER XIV.

## BRAWLS.

Leslie Travers had received an answer from David when he called at North Parade that day, which had puzzled him not a little.

"Miss Mainwaring could not receive any visitor," David was commissioned to say.

"Was Miss Mainwaring ill?" Leslie asked.

"No, not that I know of, sir; but these are my orders."

Surely there was something behind David's calm exterior, and Leslie turned away dissatisfied.

"She will be at the Assembly to-night," he thought. "I must possess my soul in patience till then."

So he dressed, and went to the Assembly Room, arriving just as Lady Betty stepped out of her chair, in a new primrose-coloured sacque and sea-green brocade petticoat. Her hair was powdered as usual, and several brilliants flashed as she moved her head in answer to Leslie Travers's bow.

Where was Griselda? Lady Betty gave him no chance of asking the question, as she swept past with all the dignity her little person could command, and was soon forgetting her indignation against Griselda and her rejection of Sir Maxwell Danby's suit, in her own delight in having apparently captured Lord Basingstoke.

Leslie wandered from room to room, and was trying to make up his mind whether to brave all consequences, and boldly go to Lady Betty's house and inquire for Griselda, when he was met by Mr. Beresford, an acquaintance whom he had made at Mr. Herschel's house, who told him that he was going to Bristol the next day to play in the orchestra at the rehearsal for "Judas Maccabæus," and asking him to accompany him.

"There will be room," he said, "in the conveyance that is hired. Post-horses, and a large chariot, are engaged by the Herschels, who are making a pretty fortune by music, and spending it all in those jim-cracks of mirrors and tubes and micrometers."

"Jim-cracks!" Leslie repeated. "I could not give them such a name; they are like the steps in the ladder Mr. Herschel is climbing skyward."

Mr. Beresford laughed.

"I confess I am very well content to let the stars take their course without my interference—I mean without my looking into the matter. There is enough to do for me to consider my ways down below without star-gazing. By-the-bye, *your* star of beauty is not here to-night; has she set behind a cloud? Here come the two Miss Greenwoods, simpering and putting on fashionable airs which don't suit them. Like their gowns, such airs don't fit. Fancy their fat old mother asking me what my intentions were!"

Leslie could not help laughing at his friend's remarks on the various beaux and belles who passed in review before them.

Presently the young man said:

"Look! did you see that?"

"What?" Leslie Travers asked.

"Sir Maxwell was called out to speak to someone by his valet. He is brewing mischief, I'll take my oath. Let us go into the room next the lobby and find out."

"I decline to act spy. You may do so if you like," Leslie said.

And he turned away towards another part of the room, and began to talk for half an hour to a retiring gentle girl, who, when the "contre danse" was formed, had no partner. Leslie led her out to take a place in it, and found himself *vis-a-vis* with Sir Maxwell Danby and one of the most conspicuously dressed ladies who frequented Lady Miller's reunions at Batheaston.

She was attired in a loose white gown, supposed to be after the Greek pattern, and her arms were bare, the loose sleeves caught up with a large brooch. She wore her hair in a plain band with a fillet, and cut low on the forehead. This lady had sat for her portrait to Gainsborough in her youth, now long past, and she had become very stout since those days, when many reigning belles repaired to Gainsborough's studio in Ainslie's Belvedere.

She talked in a loud voice, and Leslie's attention was soon diverted from his companion, as he caught a name dear to him.

"Miss Mainwaring is a beauty, no doubt of that," the lady said; "but a trifle stiff and heavy in manner. Why is she absent to-night? *You* ought to know, Sir Maxwell."

Sir Maxwell stroked his chin, and said:

"Perhaps she is better engaged, from all I know. Miss Mainwaring's behaviour is a little eccentric."

"Is there a romance connected with her? I do love a bit of pretty romance. You know the *on dit* is

that she is to be Lady Danby?"

"My dear lady," Sir Maxwell said, "it is not safe to trust to *on dits*. From what I have heard, Miss Mainwaring's tastes lie in a somewhat lower level of society than that in which you, for instance, live and move. There are, it seems, attractions for Miss Mainwaring in a quarter of the town where we look for actors and actresses, and such-like cattle—that is, supposing that we desire their acquaintance off the stage—which I, for one, do not!"

"I really hardly credit what you say; I vow I can't believe it. There's some mistake, Sir Maxwell."

"I wish I could agree with you," was the reply; "it is a matter which affects me very deeply. I do assure you——"

At this moment it was Sir Maxwell's turn to take the hand of Leslie's partner, and he repeated in a voice which he meant should reach his ear:

"Miss Mainwaring, the lady in question, pays daily and nightly visits to these low purlieus. Charity is made the pretext, of course."

The dance was over, and the hour for departure drew on.

Leslie Travers watched his opportunity, and lay in wait for Sir Maxwell in one of the lobbies.

He was passing him with a lady on his arm, when Leslie said:

"A word with you, sir, in private. I demand an apology for the shameful lies you are circulating. They are lies, and——"

"Softly, softly, my dear boy; let the presence of a lady be remembered."

"Oh! pray let us have no high words!" the lady said. "For mercy's sake, don't quarrel, gentlemen!"

"Madam," Leslie Travers said, in an excited voice, "you have heard the basest slanders uttered against—against one whom I would not name in such company. Look you, sir," Leslie said, seizing the velvet sleeve of Sir Maxwell's coat—"look you, sir; you have been a liar, and you are now a coward. I will prove it."

"Come, come, gentlemen; no brawling here," said the master of the ceremonies, bustling up. "Settle your matters elsewhere. A man of honour has his remedy."

"Precisely!" said Sir Maxwell, who was white with rage. "Precisely! And as to you, poor boy—poor insensate boy—I will send my answer to your private residence as befits a gentleman; but I decline to brawl here. Move off, sir, I say!"

A knot of people had collected, and young Beresford was one. He took Leslie's arm, and said:

"Come away, and cool yourself."

"I will not cool. I will throw the lie back in that fellow's throat; and——"

But Mr. Beresford drew Leslie away; but not before Lady Betty—cloaked and muffled, ready to step into her chair—pressed through the little crowd.

"What is it? Goodness! What is amiss, Sir Maxwell?"

"My dear lady, we have a madman to deal with—that's all. We will settle our affairs on Claverton Down, as others have done."

"Oh, mercy! don't fight a duel; it is too shocking, it's——"

But Sir Maxwell hurried Lady Betty away, saying in his cold, hard voice, which, however, trembled a little:

"That poor boy will repent insulting me; but let it not disturb you." And then Sir Maxwell resigned Lady Betty to David's care, and she was soon lost to sight in the recesses of the chair.

The ubiquitous Zach had been on the watch, and had reached North Parade before Lady Betty.

Graves, who, as we know, had been anxiously watching for Lady Betty's return, and congratulating herself that she had got Griselda safely to her own room before her ladyship arrived, heard Zach's voice below.

Mrs. Abbott loved news, and thus was ready to pardon the boy's late return to the little box where he slept below-stairs, dignified with the name of the "butler's pantry;" and Graves, at the sound of voices, went to the top of the kitchen stairs, and hearing Miss Mainwaring's name, went down two or three steps.

"Is anything wrong?" she asked.

"Dear bless me, Mrs. Graves, I don't know! This boy says he has been waiting for you all these hours down in Crown Alley."

"That's an untruth," said Graves; "but what do I hear him saying about the ladies?"

"There's been a brawl in the lobby of the Assembly Room, and they say the baronet and young Mr. Travers will fight afore they settle it."

Graves descended now to the kitchen, and asked with bated breath if Zach was telling the truth now, "for," she added, "the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped."

Zach's little eyes twinkled. He knew he had got his reward, so Mistress Graves might say what she liked.

"Yes," he whined, "it's a fine thing to keep a little chap like me, who works hard all day, awaiting in a place like Crown Alley."

Graves took Zach by the arm and shook him vehemently.

"You weren't there. You were gossiping by the Assembly Room door. What did you hear there?"

Zach made a face, and said:

"Let go, and I'll tell you." Graves relaxed her hold. "I heard the young gent tell Sir Maxwell he was a liar, and he'd fight him about Miss Mainwaring. There! you've told me *I'm* a liar, and I'd like to fight *you*" quoth Zach savagely.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### CHALLENGED.

When the first heat of passion was over, Leslie Travers went sorrowfully towards his home in King Street.

Mr. Beresford would not leave him till he saw him safely to the door, which was opened by Giles, who greeted his young master with a yawn, and said:

"The mistress has been a-bed these three hours. Ye are burning the candle at both ends, Master Leslie."

Something in Leslie's manner struck the old servant. He preceded his young master to the parlour, threw on a log, and lighted two candles, which stood like tall sentinels on either side of the mantelshelf, in heavy brass candlesticks.

"There's nothing like light and warmth if folks are down-hearted," he said to himself; "and really the young master looks down-hearted. Ah! it's the world and its ways. The mistress has the best of it."

Little did Giles's mistress think, as she slept peacefully that night, how the leaden hours dragged on in the room below, where Leslie Travers sat and wrestled with that most relentless foe—an uneasy conscience.

A hundred years ago duels were common enough, and any man who was challenged would have been scouted as a coward if he had not accepted the challenge.

Leslie knew he had thrown the lie back to Sir Maxwell Danby, and that he should be called upon to answer for it, perhaps by his life.

He was no coward, but this very life had become sweeter to him than ever before, during the last few days.

He had gained the love of the woman who was to him a queen amongst all women, and now in vindicating her from the tongue of the slanderer, he might perhaps be on the eve of leaving her for ever.

He had often looked death in the face when he had been lying ill at the Grange, and sometimes for utter weariness it had seemed no fearful thing to die. Since his mother had come under the influence of Lady Huntingdon's ministers, Leslie had heard a great deal of "the King of Terrors," as Death was termed in their phraseology, and he had often thought that it had not worn that guise to him in times of sore sickness—rather, as a friend's arm outstretched to lull his pain and give him peace. But now—now that the strength of his young manhood was renewed—now, when life was as a pleasant song in the possession of Griselda's love, in dreams of a useful happy life, with her to sympathize in all his hopes and aims—parting from life, and all that life holds dear, was very different.

As he sat by the fire, or left his chair and paced the room, he seemed to hear words spoken in the very inner recesses of his soul.

"I say unto you, love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you."

"Yes," he argued, "yes; but it is not for myself, it is for her! That man's disappointment and disgust at her rejection of his suit will goad him to say all evil of her—my pure, beautiful Griselda! And yet——"

Then he went hopelessly over the past week. That child who had come to the Herschels' doorstep; the pity which she had called to life; that expedition for the relief of the suffering man—

if—if only that had never been, all this had been averted. All for a stranger, a worthless stranger, who was probably neither deserving of pity or help.

If he had known how close between Griselda and this man the tie was, how far the poor dying actor was from being a stranger to her, would his feelings have been different? would the truth have changed the aspect of things for him—made the situation more or less painful? I cannot tell.

The gray January dawn, creeping in through the holes in the shutters, and penetrating the room where the fire had burned out, and the candles died in their sockets, found Leslie in a fitful doze in the chair, into which, after walking up and down the room during the night, he had sunk at last from sheer exhaustion. On first waking he could not recall what had happened. He stretched his stiff limbs, and then the faint pallor of the dawn showed him the familiar objects in the room, and the present with all its stern realities became vivid.

He tottered upstairs to his bed, not wishing his mother to find him dressed in his gay evening clothes, when she came down to breakfast.

As he passed her door he heard her voice raised in prayer.

To pray aloud, in pleading earnest tones, had become a habit of the good people with whom Mrs. Travers had cast in her lot, and Leslie paused as he heard his name.

"My son! my son! Convert him, turn him to Thee, for he is wandering far from Thee, in pursuit of the vain pleasures of a sinful world!"

"I need your prayers, sweet mother," the poor fellow murmured, as he passed on to his room near hers. "Perhaps to-morrow I shall be beyond their reach. Oh! that great mystery *beyond!*"

The message came, as he expected, brought by Mr. Dickinson, who was to be Sir Maxwell's second, and Leslie referred him to Mr. Beresford to act for him.

"It's a pity you can't square matters without fighting," Mr. Dickinson said.

He was the good-natured, easy-going man who had been in the jeweller's shop on that day when Sir Maxwell had first had his evil suspicions roused.

"It's a pity, but Sir Maxwell is bent upon fighting, so the sooner it is over, the better. He is an old hand—and you? Can you handle a sword?"

"Fairly well," Leslie said.

"It is proposed to have a round with swords. The place—Claverton Down, out Widcombe way; the time—dawn, to-morrow. It is Sunday, by-the-bye, and we are safe not to be hindered. What answer shall I take to Danby?"

"Say I am ready," Leslie said; "ready—aye, ready!"

"You don't feel inclined for a compromise, then?"

"No, I do not. He has heaped insults on me which I have overlooked, but he has dared to slander one whom I love better than life. Do you suppose I can brook that?"

"Dear! dear!" exclaimed Mr. Dickinson. "Women are the bottom of half the mischief that is brewed in the world, I do believe."

Mr. Dickinson had not been gone long before Mr. Beresford arrived. He ran in to the Herschels to excuse himself from accompanying them to Bristol, saying he had urgent business, and then returned to his friend.

All the arrangements were made, and the utmost secrecy agreed on.

"No one need know"—hesitating—"certainly not Miss Mainwaring or my mother. I will employ to-day in setting my house in order, and leave letters behind me."

"Don't say 'behind me,' man. Hundreds of people who fight do not get a scratch. You will be all right, and marry the lady, and live happy ever after."

"I am in no jesting mood, Beresford; and although you profess to look on the whole affair as a joke, you do not do so, in your secret heart. You do not forget, any more than I do, that last month we walked together to Claverton Down to see the spot where Viscount Barré asked for his life of Count Rice, not much over a year ago."<sup>[1]</sup>

"Ah! that was a different matter. We are to have no pistols, only a little sword-play. I hope one of Danby's evil eyes may be put out, and, better still, his tongue slit. Aim at his mouth, with that end in view. Yes, try for the mouth and eyes, Travers."

"Has the matter got wind in Bath?" Leslie asked.

"Oh! the gossips have got hold of the quarrel. But dear heart, man, there is seldom a day but there is a war of words in the Assembly or Pump Room."

Leslie Travers spent the rest of the day in his room, excusing himself to his mother on the plea of indisposition. And, indeed, she was too much occupied with a prayer-meeting at the Countess of Huntingdon's house to do more than pay Leslie a visit at intervals, see that his fire burned

brightly, and exhort him to take the soup and wine she carried to him herself. Thus, all unconscious of the sword which was hanging over her, gentle Mrs. Travers went on her way.

Unconscious, too, of trouble affecting their near neighbour and friend, Mr. and Miss Herschel were at Bristol, rehearsing, amidst the congratulations of the audience privileged to be present, the great oratorio to be performed in a few days under the *bâton* of Ronzini, who was to conduct it.

Unconscious of the peril in which Leslie Travers stood, Griselda was occupied with the event of the previous night—her father's death—and the necessary confession to Leslie Travers, of her relationship to the dying man, by whose bedside they had watched together.

The house in North Parade was unusually quiet that day, for Lady Betty had caught cold, and kept Graves in perpetual attendance.

A few visitors arrived, but were refused admittance, and Griselda waited in vain for any message from Leslie Travers.

She had begun several letters to him, and then torn them into fragments.

Then there was the thought of poor desolate little Norah, as she saw her carried away from that attic where her father lay dead, in Mrs. Betts's arms.

Had she not promised to befriend her? and how could she fulfil her promise?

Graves kept out of her way; she had heard enough from Zach to make her fear the worst about the quarrel between Sir Maxwell Danby and Mr. Travers. She dreaded to be questioned, and yet she longed to speak.

Lady Betty was a fractious invalid, and she was constantly crying out that her illness was brought on by the conduct of that minx upstairs, telling Graves to let her know she never wished to see her face again—that she had disgraced her, and that she might beg her bread for all she cared; that she hoped Sir Maxwell would fight that young jackanapes, and get him out of the way. Then she cried that she had got the smallpox—her back ached, her eyes ached—she must have the doctor. Graves must send for the doctor—Mr. Cheyne, a young man who claimed to be a grandson of the great Dr. Cheyne, who had been a celebrated doctor in Bath in the days of Beau Nash.

Graves preserved a calm, not to say stolid, manner, and this could alone have carried her through that long, dull winter's day. Her anxiety did not centre in Lady Betty, nor the pimple on her cheek, which she thought might be the precursor of the dreaded smallpox, which the little lady awaited Mr. Cheyne's assurances to confirm, and professed to believe that she was smitten by that dreadful malady.

Graves's heart was occupied with the sorrow of the young mistress upstairs, not with the fancied illness of the lady who, propped up in bed in an elaborate nightgown, surmounted by a cap furbished with pink ribbons, was enough to wear out the patience even of her patient waiting-woman.

Mr. Cheyne was slow in making his appearance, and the long, dull day had nearly closed, and still he did not answer the summons sent to him by David at his mistress's request.

Graves had sent Mrs. Abbott's daughter up to Griselda's room with her dinner, and preferred waiting till it was nearly dark before she stood face to face with her. She dreaded lest her face should betray the fear at her heart.

It was nearly dark when she came to Griselda's room. She found the table covered with letters and papers, and the case with her mother's portrait and the old jewel-case standing on it.

"I thought you were never coming—never," Griselda said, in an injured voice. "Oh, dear Graves! do a kind thing for me this evening! Go to Crown Alley, and take this money for Norah's black dress. Oh, dear Graves! I must wear a black gown; he was my father. Look!" she said; "I have put on her little wedding-ring. There is a posy inside. I need those words now—'Patience and Hope.' Why won't you speak, Graves? It is as if you had not heard."

"I hear—I hear, my dear; but as to leaving her ladyship, I don't see how I can do it—not till she is off to sleep. If the doctor came, he might give her a draught to settle her."

"I *do* want you to go to Crown Alley, and to—to King Street, to take a letter to Mr. Travers. It is so odd; so unaccountable, that he never writes nor sends. I *must* know why. Perhaps he has heard that I am that poor man's daughter, and he feels he can't marry one so low-born. Yet it is not like him to cast me off, is it, Graves?"

"Well," said Graves, "I'll try what I can do; but, after all, I'd as lief you left the letter till to-morrow. Leave it till to-morrow."

"To-morrow! No; who can tell what to-morrow may bring? No; I cannot wait. Graves, I feel as if I should go mad, unless I hear soon if Mr. Travers is angry, and has cast me off."

"You may be sure he has not done that, my dear; you may be at rest on that score."

"How can I rest? Well, he must be told about my father—my *father*! I Do you think he has found it



out, and that this keeps him away?"

"No; I don't," said Graves shortly.

"Hark! there's a ring! Run down—run down, and see who it is! Run, Graves!"

Graves departed, glad to be released, and returned presently:

"It's the boy, Miss Griselda."

"The boy! What boy?"

"The boy that came the night the man"—Graves corrected herself—"the gentleman, Mr. Mainwaring, was dying. He has a message for you."

"I will come down and see him. He shall take this letter to King Street. He shall wait and bring me an answer. I shall meet no one on the stairs. Let me pass you."

Brian Bellis was standing in the entrance-hall, and Griselda went eagerly towards him:

"Have you brought me tidings?"

And Brian replied:

"I have taken Norah home to my aunt's house. I've had a piece of work to do it; but they will keep her till after the funeral. He is to be buried to-morrow afternoon. I thought you would like to know this, madam."

"Yes—yes," Griselda said; "and I will reward you for your care of Norah."

"I want no reward, madam," Brian said quickly. "Have you any commands?—for it is late. The actors at the theatre have subscribed for the burial; but——"

"Not enough—I understand. Follow me upstairs—gently—softly," she said, as she led the way to a small room at the head of the stairs where Graves worked.

Griselda pointed to the door; and then going to her own room on the upper story, she took up the letter she had at last written to Leslie Travers, and the packet of money she had sealed for Graves to take to Crown Alley. When she rejoined Brian, she said:

"I entrust you with these two packets. I had them ready. The money is for the—for my sister. Let her have decent black, and proper mourning; and there are two guineas for the funeral of—her father. But," Griselda said, with a strange pang of self-reproach she could not have defined, as she felt how little the death of her father and her sister's sorrow weighed in the balance against an aching fear and anxiety about Mr. Travers—"but this letter I want you to put into the hands of Mr. Leslie Travers in King Street. For this—oh! I would reward you in any way that you desire. Bring me an answer back, and I will owe you eternal gratitude. Do you hear?"

Yes, Brian heard. It seemed all but impossible that this tall, beautiful lady should clasp her hands as a suppliant to him. His large, honest eyes sought hers, and the appeal in them touched his boyish heart.

"I will do what you wish, madam, and as quickly as I can."

"Thank you—I thank you, dear boy, with all my heart. Oh, that you may bring back a word to comfort me!—for I am shadowed with the cloud of coming, as well as past, misfortune; and I scarce know how to be patient till the pain of suspense is relieved." Then, laying her hand on Brian's shoulder, she said: "Promise to see Mr. Travers, and put the letter in his hand."

And Brian promised, and kept his promise faithfully.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### IN THE EARLY MORNING.

Griselda returned to her room to watch the timepiece, and listen for the striking of the Abbey clock, as the slow hours passed, and she paced the floor in her restlessness from the fireplace to the window, and then back again from the window to the fire.

About ten o'clock Graves came in with a cup of chocolate, and to tell her that Mr. Cheyne, the doctor, had seen Lady Betty, and pronounced her really ill this time. She was to keep in bed, and if not better on the following day, he must let blood from her arm.

"Do you know the doctor, Miss Griselda—this young Doctor Cheyne?"

"I may have spoken to him. Yes, I have seen him; but what is he to me?"

"He asked for you, that's all," said Graves; "how you did, and whether——"

Graves stopped. It was a habit of hers to break off suddenly in her speech, and Griselda scarcely noticed it.

"Is the boy, Brian Bellis, come back?"

"No, Miss Griselda; he won't be here again to-night. I hear he is nephew to the Miss Hoblyns, the mantua-makers, and that they look sharp after him; they would not let him run about the streets at midnight."

"Midnight! It's not midnight! Oh, Graves, I am so tired!"

"Go to bed, and sleep till morning; that is my advice to you, and read a verse in God's Word to go to sleep on. You'll never know rest till you find it in the Lord, my dear. Let me help you to undress."

"No, I am not going to bed. Promise, Graves, if Brian Bellis comes to the door with a letter you will bring it here. Promise——"

Graves nodded her head in token of assent, and departed.

There are few troubles, and few anxieties, which do not find a temporary balm in the sleep of youth.

And Griselda, worn out at last, threw herself on her bed, and fell, against her will, into a deep and dreamless slumber.

The Abbey clock had struck eleven when Graves, softly opening the door, found the fire low, and the candles burned out; while on the bed lay Griselda, dressed, but with the coverlet drawn over her under the canopy of the old-fashioned tent-bed, which was the bed then commonly in use for rooms which were not spacious enough to receive a stately four-poster.

Graves had a small tin candlestick in one hand, and a letter. She carefully shielded the light, and, looking down at the sleeping girl, murmured:

"I cannot wake her. I will leave the letter on the bed; she will see it in the morning the first thing—better she should not see it till then. I promised to bring it, but I did not promise to rouse her if she was asleep. Poor child! Poor dear! May the Lord pity her and draw her to Himself!"

Graves moved gently about the room, and put the tinder-box near the candlestick, and then softly closed the door, and went downstairs to sit by the side of the fractious invalid, who declared she could not be left for a moment, and who kept her patient handmaiden awake for hours, till at last she, too, sunk into a heavy sleep.

Never a night passes but in the silent watches some hearts are aching, some sick and weary ones are tossing in their uneasy beds, some suffering ones are racked with pain, either of body or mind! Our own turn must surely come; but till it does come, we are so slow to realize that for us, too, the night that should hush us to repose, and bring on its wings the angel of sleep for our refreshing, will bring instead sorrowful vigils by the dying, mourning for the dead, or cruel and biting anxiety for the living, so that tears are our meat, as we cry, "Where is now our God?"

Griselda slept on, and it was in the chill of the early morning before the dawn that she awoke.

She started up, and at first could not remember what had happened. It was quite dark, and she sprang from the bed, and, groping for the tinder-box, struck a spark, and lighted a candle.

She was still scarcely awake, and it was only by slow degrees that she recalled how the evening before she had waited, and waited in vain, for a letter—his letter! an answer to hers—in which in a few words she had told him of her father, and asked him to release her from her promise if so he pleased. Then she had asked if his silence since the letter she had written two days before, meant that he desired her to think no more of him. Only to *know*, and not to be kept in uncertainty, she craved for a reply—she begged for it—by the hand of Brian Bellis, who had brought this, her last appeal.

"No answer, no answer!" she exclaimed; "and hark! that is the clock striking—three—four. No answer—it is all over!" And as the words escaped her lips she saw lying on the floor a letter, which had fallen from the bed when she had sprung from it.

She picked it up, and became quiet and like herself at once. She saw by the address it was from Leslie Travers, for in the corner was written: "By the hand of Brian Bellis."

The tall candle cast its light on the sheet of Bath post, which had been carefully sealed, and threw a halo round the young head which bent over it.

"I have received no message from you"—so the letter began—"but, dearest love, sweetheart, could you dream that any circumstance could alter my love for you? Nay, Griselda, I will not permit such a possibility to enter my head, or wake a sorrowful echo in my heart.

"My only love, I am yours till death—and death may be near! I go to-morrow to meet the man on Claverton Down who has first persecuted you with his suit, and then, rejected, has vilely slandered you. I gave him the lie, and he has challenged me to fight, and as a man of honour I cannot draw back. If I live—I live for you; if I die—I die for you. I would there were any other way whereby I could vindicate your honour and my own. I am no coward, nor do I fear death; but I think these duels are a remnant of barbarism, meet for the old Romans, perchance, over whose buried city we move day by day, but

unworthy of men who call themselves by the name of Christ.

"My love, when you read this letter, be not too much dismayed.

"When the dawn breaks over the city, we shall have met—that base man and I—and it may be that I shall fall under his more practised hand. If it is so, I commend you, in a letter, to my poor mother. You will weep together, and you shall have a home with her, and you will be united in sorrow. The child—your sister—shall be her care, as she would have been mine.

"I have made my last will and testament—duly attested; and in that you are mentioned as if you had been my wife.

"And so I say farewell, my only love.

"L. T."

A strange calm seemed to have come over Griselda as she read these words.

The restlessness and feverish anxiety of the preceding days were gone. In their place was the firm resolve—immediately taken—to stop this duel with her own hand. That resolution once taken, she did not falter. But Claverton Down!—how should she reach it? There was no time to lose. The dawn broke between seven and eight—it was now four o'clock and past.

The Bible lay open on the table, and her eye fell upon the words: "They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up on wings like eagles; they shall walk and not be weary; they shall run and not faint." I do not think that Griselda had ever known up to this moment what it was to wait on the Lord. Perhaps faithful Graves's words had struck deeper than she knew!

"I want strength now," she said. "Give it to me, Lord! Direct me—help me—for I must go on this quest alone."

Then she made ready for her departure, wrapping herself in the long cloak she had worn when she went to her father's dying bed, and covering her face with a thick veil under her hood.

The few hours' sleep had refreshed her, and she felt strong to perform her mission.

"Only not to be too late," she said; "not too late!"

The courage of many a woman would have failed in prospect of a walk in the dark through the suburbs of Bath.

There were watchmen here and there, and she might ask the way of one, perhaps; but no one must know her errand, or she might be stopped from performing it.

The clock struck five, in deep sonorous tones just as Griselda crept noiselessly downstairs, and with trembling hands drew back the bolts of the door, turned the key in the lock, and, closing it behind her, went out into the winter's morning.

The sky had cleared, and the rain of the past two days had ceased. There were breaks in the clouds, and in a rift Venus, in full beauty, seemed to smile on Griselda with the smile of a friend.

Widcombe Hill had to be climbed, and then beyond, at some distance, Claverton Down stretched away in gentle undulations. In 1790, it was a desolate and unfrequented tract of moorland, with here and there a few trees, but no sign of habitation except a lonely cottage or hut, at long distances apart.

Griselda's figure, in its black garments, did not attract attention from a boisterous party who had just turned out from a night's revel. Their coarse songs and laughter jarred on her ear, and she shrank under the shadow of a church portico till they had passed.

Presently the watchman's voice broke the stillness as he ascended Widcombe Hill.

"It's just six o'clock, and a fine star-lit morning."

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Yes, it was a fine morning. The rift in the clouds had widened, and above, the sky was clear, and the host of heaven was shining in full glory.

After two or three nights, when dull lowering skies had made astronomical observations impossible, the change in the weather was welcome to those who "swept the heavens," and found in them the grand interest and beauty of their lives.

The Herschels had returned to their new home, after a long and fatiguing day in Bristol. There had been not a little worry connected with the arrangements for the oratorio, the proper distribution of the parts, jealousies amongst the performers, and missing sheets of score. But Caroline Herschel immediately recommenced the arrangement of the new house, which a day's absence in Bristol had interrupted. The sorting of books and music, the instruction of Betty in her duties, with not a little scolding for the neglect of the work she had been left to get through during her mistress's absence.

Mr. Herschel, after taking slight refreshment, went to his new observatory at the top of the house, and began to arrange all his instruments and draw a plan for the furnace, which he intended to make in the workshop below, where the tube for the great reflector was to be cast.

A stand, too, for the large instrument would have to be carefully constructed, and William Herschel was in the midst of his calculations for this, and preparation of a plan to give the workmen early on the ensuing week, when a tap at the door announced Caroline.

"William!" she said, "the sky is clear. Venus is shining gloriously. Can I help to arrange the telescope?"

"Yes—yes," William Herschel said, going to the window and throwing it up. "Yes; lose no time, for it is getting on for morning."

Presently Caroline said, as she looked out:

"There is a chaise waiting at the end of the street, with post-horses."

But her brother's eyes were directed upwards, and he scarcely noticed her remark.

"Well," he said, "get the micrometer."

Caroline's feminine curiosity was roused, and presently she saw a figure muffled in a long cloak glide down the street to the opening where the carriage stood.

This was followed by another, and then, after some delay, the chariot drove off.

Alexander Herschel did not generally take part in these nightly vigils, although he lent his assistance in the daytime in the workshop, and in the correspondence about the music, which was very frequently necessary.

But about six o'clock Alexander appeared, and said:

"Did you hear carriage-wheels roll off not long ago?"

William Herschel did not answer. He had just brought a double star into the proper focus, and Caroline stood by with note-book and pencil, ready to write at his dictation.

"Yes," she said, in a low voice; "I heard carriage-wheels. What of that?"

"There is a rumour in the town that Leslie Travers is to fight a duel on Claverton Down—with that beast, Sir Maxwell Danby—this morning."

"I do not believe it is true," Caroline answered. "Hush, Alex!" for William Herschel called out: "Write! Attend!"

The necessary figures were jotted down, and then Caroline said:

"Do you think Leslie Travers was going off in that carriage?"

"I have no doubt of it. I shall follow and find out."

"Take care, Alex—do not get mixed up in any quarrel; and there is the new anthem of Spohr's at the Octagon this morning. You will be wanted."

"Well, what if I am?" Alexander said. "Surely, Caroline, the life or death of a friend is of more importance than an anthem?"

"You do not know that it is life or death; you are conjecturing. Yes, William, I am ready!"

This was characteristic of Caroline Herschel. It was not really that she had no human sympathies or affections; on the contrary, her love for her brother was absorbing, and she had but one aim—to soar with him to the unexplored regions of space; and to effect this, the business in hand, whether it was music, or mixing loam for the mould of the new tube, or in giving a lesson in singing, or in singing herself at a concert, was paramount with her. Such characters, persistent, and with single aims, are often misunderstood by natures like Alexander Herschel's, who love to skim the surface, and pass from one thing to another, as their mood changes.

"You take it mighty coolly," he said, "that the life of a man we call our friend is in peril. I confess I am not so hardened."

And then he closed the door with a bang, and ran downstairs.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE BITTER END.

Meanwhile the lonely woman, shrouded in her long cloak, pursued her way. She missed it again and again, and was forced to inquire if she was right, first of a countryman she met, and once at a cottage at Widcombe of a woman who was standing at the door with a lanthorn in her hand.

"Two miles further," she said. "What are you going there for, pray, if I may be so bold?"

"On an errand of life or death," Griselda said, the words escaping her lips almost unawares.

"If that's it, and a duel is to be fought, it most like is death to one of 'em. I am watching for my husband; he has never come home, and I fear something has happened. He is often in liquor, and may have stumbled into the quarry. I call *mine* real troubles, I do. What do the gentry want with stabbing one another to the heart about paltry quarrels? Why, the French lord was killed out on Claverton Down by Count Rice a few months ago, and all about a trumpery pack of cards—a pack of lies, more like! I've no patience with folks who quarrel with no reason. You look very wan, my dear," the woman said, as Griselda turned away. "I can give you a cup of milk."

But Griselda shook her head. To eat or drink at that moment was impossible to her.

"Tell me," she asked, "how I shall know the spot where the men fight."

"Oh! you'll see four tall fir-trees, and a big stone. It won't be light yet. I'll tell you what. I'll lend you my lanthorn. Here, it's trimmed! You can carry it along." Griselda hesitated as the woman went on: "Take the road straight as a line from the church. Then you'll come to cross-roads. You follow on with the one which leads to the right hand, and you'll come to the firs and the big stone. The ground where the fine lord's body lay for hours is just hard by. Will you have the lanthorn; you can leave it as you come back?"

"No, I think not—I think not; but thank you kindly."

And then Griselda pressed on—on to the church, on, as she was directed, along a lonely road, till the tall sign-post was reached, with the four arms painted white, stretching out in four directions. On then to the right, eastward, for the first faint pallor of the dawn was in the sky. It was clear now, and the moon in its last quarter was hanging low in the horizon.

Griselda's feet ached, and when she saw the tall fir-trees, and the large rough stone, she hastened towards it, and sat down to rest. All was still; the silence broken only by the murmur in the dark plumes of the fir-trees as the crisp cold air wandered through the branches.

The silence was so profound that Griselda could almost hear the beating of her heart. Here alone, unprotected, she could hardly realize her own position. Whatever happened to her, she thought, there was no one who would care so very much, except him whom she had come to save. Lady Betty would cry hysterically, but be more angry than sorry; little Norah—poor little Norah—perhaps she loved her; and Graves—faithful Graves.

Presently there was a rumbling sound as of distant wheels. Griselda started up, but she saw nothing.

Then she advanced from the shadow of the trees, and looked over the open space. The dawn was breaking now, and she saw two figures stooping over the ground, and apparently marking it.

In breathless anxiety she waited and watched. She was too far off to distinguish the men, but she presently discerned four more figures appearing at the ridge of rising ground, where the Down dipped rather sharply to the valley below.

Then there were two figures isolated a little from the rest. They seemed to meet and part again, and then Griselda waited no longer. She ran forward and skimmed the turf with fleet steps—steps that were quickened by a great fear.

Breathless and voiceless she reached the spot just as the two combatants' swords had clashed, and the seconds on either side had given the signal for another round. Griselda went up to Leslie Travers and seized his arm.

"Stop!" she said, "for my sake."

Her appearance seemed to paralyze both combatants.

"It is for your sake," Leslie said in a low voice. "Let go, my love—let go! I must carry this on to the bitter end."

"You shall not! Desist, sir!" she said, turning upon Sir Maxwell Danby.

Then the seconds drew near, and the doctor, Mr. Cheyne.

"I will have no blood shed for me," Griselda said, gathering strength in the emergency of the moment. "I will stand here till you give up this conflict."

"Unfortunately, fair lady, we have no intention of giving up till we have settled our little affair as men of honour should," said Sir Maxwell.

"Stand back, Griselda—stand back!" Leslie cried in despairing tones. "There is only one condition on which I will give in; yonder base man knows what that condition is. He must withdraw the lies he has uttered concerning you."

"I know not what the lies are," Griselda said; "but if lies, will the death of him who uttered them, or of you who resent them, convince those who believe them that they *are* lies? Nay," she said, her breast heaving and her voice trembling, though every slowly-uttered word was distinctly heard. "Nay, wrong-doing can never, never make evil good, or set wrong right."

"Pardon me, fairest of your sex," said Sir Maxwell; "permit me to ask you to withdraw. We will prove our strength once more; and, unwilling as I am to do so in the presence of a lady, I must, as your—your noble friend says, carry this matter through."

"Can't you come to an understanding, gentlemen?" Mr. Dickinson said. "Upon my soul, I wish I could wash my hands of the whole business. A miserable business it is!"

"Beresford," Leslie said to his second, "help me to get free from her, or she may be hurt in the conflict."

But Griselda still clung to his arm; and how it might have ended who can tell, had not Sir Maxwell said in his satirical, bitter voice:

"It is new in the annals of the world's history for a woman to be used as a shield by a man! Coward—poltroon is a more fitting phrase for such an one."

Mr. Beresford caught Griselda as with a desperate effort Leslie unclasped the long white fingers which were clasped round his arm, and saying: "Guard her carefully," the signal was again given, and a fierce struggle ensued, which ended in Leslie Travers lying motionless on the ground with a sword-thrust through his breast; and Sir Maxwell, binding his hand, which was bleeding, with a lace handkerchief, asked coolly of Mr. Cheyne, who was bending over Leslie:

"He is alive, I think?"

"Yes, he is alive; but I doubt if he will live ten minutes unless I stop the bleeding. This, sir, is a pretty piece of business for you."

For a moment, Sir Maxwell's face blanched with fear; then, recovering himself, he made a sign to his servant, who ran on towards the dip in the moor, and presently another servant appeared with two horses. The valet mounted one, and Sir Maxwell the other; and before the doctor or Mr. Beresford had time to consider what course to take, Sir Maxwell Danby was galloping off in the direction of the high-road which led to London.

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Griselda knew no more till she found herself in a strange room, and with an unfamiliar face bending over her.

"Where am I?" she asked, sitting up, and looking round bewildered.

"You are safe with us, my dear young lady. You must take this glass of reviving mixture, made from a receipt of my mother's."

And Caroline Herschel held the glass to Griselda's lips.

"How did I get here?"

"My brother Alexander brought you; but do not ask further questions, but lie still."

The draught seemed to restore poor Griselda to consciousness, and with consciousness the memory of what had happened came back.

"Oh!" she said; "did—did he die? I saw him fall. Yes; I remember now. For pity's sake, answer me!"

It was well for Griselda that she was in the hands of a person at once so sincere and so really kind-hearted. While many well-meaning people would have fenced the question, and put it off, she answered quietly:

"Mr. Leslie Travers is very dangerously hurt. He is lying in his mother's house hard by; and all that care and tenderness can do will be done."

"Can I go to him?" Griselda said piteously.

"No; not yet—not yet. You are exhausted with all you have gone through. Your duty is to lie quiet."

Duty was ever first with Caroline Herschel herself, and she thought it should be first with others also.

Griselda struggled to her feet; but a deadly faintness overcame her, and she sank back again, crying:

"His life for me—for me! Oh! I am not worthy——" and then she burst into hysterical weeping.

"My dear Miss Mainwaring," her friend said, "the doctors say that Mr. Travers's only chance of life is to be kept quiet. If the wound bleeds again, he must die. If he is kept motionless and calm, he may live. Do you understand?"

"Yes," Griselda said; "it is always waiting with me. Look! that is my mother's wedding-ring! There is a posy inside—'Patience and Hope.' But I can only have patience; I dare not hope. Did you know that my father was the actor who died in Crown Alley?—that Norah, the beggar-child at your door in Rivers Street, is—is my sister?"

"No; I did not know it. But why should you be distressed?"

"Because I know it has been the root of all this trouble. I know it is so! That bad man's evil eye was on us in the church that day—that bright, beautiful day—when was it?"

Caroline Herschel thought she was wandering, and stroked her head, and said gently:

"I will draw down the blind, and you must try to sleep."

"Hark to the bells!" Griselda said. "They sound like joy-bells—joy-bells. They ought to be funeral bells."

"It is Sunday afternoon! They ring for service in the churches."

Then Griselda turned her head away, saying:

"Sunday! What a Sunday this has been! Sunday—Sabbath, Graves calls it—a day of rest—rather, a day of strife, and sin, and sorrow."

Yes; it had been a Sunday never to be forgotten by those who were concerned in that day's work.

Long before the evening shadows fell over the city, the story of Sir Maxwell Danby's duel with Leslie Travers was circulating in the various coteries of Bath society.

The gay world expressed pity and surprise.

The gossips' tongues were busy about the beautiful lady, who had been the cause of the melancholy affair.

That she was the daughter of an actor, who was on that very afternoon laid in his hastily-dug grave, was a shock to the feelings of the *élite* amongst whom Griselda Mainwaring had been considered worthy to be reckoned, by the unwritten laws of social etiquette.

The daughter of an actor—a mere playwright—who by hard drinking had reduced himself to poverty, and finally killed himself by his evil habits!

What a fall was this for the stately beauty who had held herself a little apart from the crowd, and had often been secretly complained of as one who thought herself mighty good, and vastly superior to many who now could hold their heads with pride and talk of her as their inferior!

The religious clique who frequented the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel, of which Mrs. Travers was an esteemed member, were filled with horror; and the terrible event was alluded to, or rather made the basis of the sermon, in the Vineyards Chapel that evening.

In many hearts there was awakened real sympathy for the stricken mother, and the sad condition of the girl who must feel that she had, even if unwittingly, been the cause of the duel.

Lady Betty, when she was told by Mr. Cheyne of what had happened, suddenly recovered from her indisposition, and sent off several three-cornered notes to her friends to say the lamentable occurrence had, of course, separated her from the *unhappy* girl, to whom she was no real relation, and with whom she was sure the dear departed Mr. Longueville would not wish her to have any further dealings. It was not to be expected that a woman of rank and family could be mixed up with one of low birth who had made herself notorious.

Graves, who was commissioned to despatch these notes, one of which was addressed to Lord Basingstoke, handed them to Zach, to whom she said:

"There have been letters given to your hand that have never been delivered. Let me tell you that you may deliver these or not, as you choose, you little spy!"

And Zach grinned, and said:

"Give me a crown, and I'll take them safe enough."

"I'd as lief give you a crack on the crown of your head!" said Graves wrathfully; "you little wretch!"

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### IN THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW.

It was late on that memorable Sunday evening when Griselda watched her opportunity, and rising from her bed, dressed, and went downstairs.

Only the servant was in the house, for the Herschels were gone to the evening service in the Octagon Chapel, and had not yet returned.

Griselda let herself quietly out, and, with slow and faltering steps, reached the door of the house, where, as everyone believed, Leslie Travers lay dying of his wounds.

It was with a trembling hand that she knocked at the door, which was after a pause opened by

old Giles.

"I am come," she faltered, "to see Mrs. Travers."

Giles shook his head.

"My lady can see no one," he said; "she is in sore trouble."

"Tell me, please, how the gentleman is who was—who was wounded in a duel."

"As bad as he can be," was the short reply; "he won't live till morning."

"I want to see Mrs. Travers, if only for a moment—I want to see Mrs. Travers. I am Miss Mainwaring," she urged.

Giles had not known up to this moment whom he was addressing, for Griselda had only been in that house once, and she had drawn her hood over her face.

When he heard the name, Giles made an exclamation of horror, and said:

"My lady won't see *you*! You are the last one she'd wish to look upon. It was an evil day for my young master that *he* ever looked on your face!"

"Oh! you are very cruel—very hard-hearted!" Griselda said; and with a sob turned away.

As she was leaving the door, a young voice she knew greeted her.

It was Brian Bellis'.

"Madam," he said, "I have come to tell you that Norah—poor little Norah—is safe at my aunt's house in John Street. I took her there after the funeral, and she is made welcome; it would melt a heart of stone to see her. Will you come and comfort her?"

"Comfort her! I am in need of comfort myself. Yes, I will come. No one wants me—no one cares!"

"I care, madam," Brian said. "Is the gentleman dead? It is said in the town that he is dead of his wound."

"No, no, he is alive, but dying," said Griselda. "Take me to poor little Norah—my poor little sister! And then will you go for me to North Parade—see, Graves, the good waiting-woman—and ask her to bring me my possessions, for I shall never return thither; I am homeless and helpless."

"No, madam—no," the boy said; "my aunts will receive you—I feel sure they will."

Then they walked on silently towards John Street, and there the Miss Hoblyns were awaiting her arrival. They had not reached the pinnacle of their fame at this time, for it was not till the Duchess of York, in 1795, visited their establishment that they became the rage. But they were kind-hearted women, of a superior type to the ordinary class of mantua-maker and milliner of those times. Gentlewomen by nature, if not by birth.

Brian, the son of their dead sister, was their idol, and they found it hard to refuse any request he made. When the poor desolate child had been led to their home from her father's grave, their hearts had gone out to her, and they gave Brian leave to fetch the sister of whom he spoke.

Great, indeed, was these good women's surprise, when, as Griselda dropped her hood and cloak, they recognised the beautiful young lady, on whom they had waited at Lady Betty Longueville's, and who had done such credit to their skill in altering the white paduasoy which Lady Betty had discarded, and which Griselda wore when she had been the admired belle of the great ball in Wiltshire's Rooms. How was it possible she could be the sister of the orphan child, and the daughter of an actor, who had died sunk in the depths of misery and poverty?

But they asked no questions, and, taking poor Griselda's hand, led her to the room where, on a couch drawn near the fire, the child lay, asleep.

Worn out with watching and sorrow, this sufferer for the sins of another had fallen into a profound slumber, and Griselda, as she looked on the pale face, about which a tangle of golden curls lay in wild confusion, stooped and kissed her sister.

The child stirred—as she did so, opened her eyes for a moment, smiled, and said:

"My beautiful lady! I am *glad* you are come."

Then Griselda lifted her in her arms, and pressing her close, shed the first tears which she had shed since the night before, when she had first heard of Leslie Travers's peril, incurred for her sake.

Norah was soon asleep again, and the kind women threw a covering over both sisters, and left them together with the tact and sympathy which is the outcome of a noble nature, whether it is found in a milliner or a marchioness.

It certainly was not found in Lady Betty Longueville.

When Graves went to her with the tidings that Brian Bellis brought, she flew into one of her "hysterical tantrums," as Graves and David called them.



"Yes, Graves," Lady Betty screamed, "pack up the minx's things; I am well quit of her. Let 'em all go," she said; "but take nothing of mine—I would not give her a groat—spoiling my Bath season like this—treating my friend, Sir Maxwell, with contempt—forcing him to send that insolent puppy a challenge. Disgracing me—disgracing her poor departed uncle—lowering me in the eyes of society—she, the child of a common actor, with whom her wretched mother ran away. Oh! I never wish to set eyes on her again!"

Graves coughed significantly.

"She was left to your ladyship for maintenance," she said.

"How dare you speak like that to me? Leave the room instantly. And, mind, I disown the baggage—the ungrateful hussy—when she might have been my Lady Danby—and—and—of use to me, repaying me for all my kindness these many years—for, let me tell you, Graves, Danby Place is a fine mansion, and she might have been mistress of it—the idiot—the fool! I wash my hands of her—she may go where she lists—but let me never see her face again!"

Graves listened to this tirade with her accustomed composure, and went to Griselda's room to do her lady's bidding.

She gathered together a few things which Griselda might immediately need, and gave them, with the violin, to Brian. The old leather case she would not trust out of her sight, and, hastily putting on her cloak and huge *calèche*, she said she would follow the boy to John Street.

As they left the house, Zach was peeping out from behind the door, and Brian shook his fist at him.

"I would like to thrash you—you wicked little spy—you!"

But Zach had the gold-pieces in his pocket, and only made a grimace in return to Brian's threatening gesture.

Graves' heart was touched, perhaps, as it had never been touched before, when she saw Griselda lying on the couch, with Norah asleep in her arms.

Griselda was not asleep, and looking up to Graves, said, in a piteous voice:

"Oh, dear Graves, I am alone now!—there is no one belonging to me but this child—we must hold together. Kiss her, Graves—gently, she may wake. Poor, poor little Norah! I have forgotten her in this day's misery. Speak to the kind people here, and ask them to let me stay with them—I can pay them. I can work for them—I was always clever with my needle."

"Here is your box of jewels, my poor dear, I brought them myself; the boy has brought your clothes and a gown for to-morrow."

"You forget, you forget, Graves—I must have a black gown for my father, and—for *him*—my only love. Oh! Graves—do hearts break? I feel as if mine must break—and that I must die."

Graves struggled in vain with her tears: they chased each other down her furrowed cheeks.

"Trust in the Lord, my dear. There may be a bow in the dark cloud—who can tell?"

Then Graves went to the Miss Hoblyns, who had considerably left Griselda and the child alone together, and she arranged a bedroom at the back of the house, and placed her young mistress's possessions in some order.

"The young lady will be able to pay for her lodgings and board, madam," Graves said, "and for the child's also. She has already sold some jewels, and——"

But Miss Hoblyn waved her hand, as if to say she wanted nothing else said just then, and Graves proceeded to light a fire, and make the room allotted to Griselda's use as comfortable as circumstances allowed; and then, wringing Miss Hoblyn's delicate hand in her large work-worn fingers, she hastened back to North Parade.

There was no immediate need for Griselda to put on a mourning garment. Distress of mind, and the long, long walk in the cold chill air of January to Claverton Down, had the effect of throwing her into an illness—a fever—which attacked her brain, and rendered her unconscious of all troubles, past and present, for some time.

It was touching to see how the child, so prematurely old, and so well accustomed to privation and nursing of the sick, took up her place by her sister's bed, and proved the most efficient of little nurses—as nursing was understood in those days.

Griselda was certainly an instance of a patient suffering more from the remedy than the disease. The doctor—Mr. Cheyne—who was called in, let blood several times from her arm, cut off her beautiful hair, and blistered the back of her head, and brought her to the very verge of the grave. She took no heed of any one who came and went, or she would have seen Caroline Herschel by her bed every day, and would have known that many little delicacies were brought by her hand. She was immersed in ever-increasing musical engagements, for, besides the preparation for the oratorio to be performed during Lent, she actually copied with her own hand the scores of the "Messiah" and "Judas Maccabæus" in parts for an orchestra of nearly one hundred performers; and in the vocal parts of Samson, Caroline Herschel instructed the treble singers, of whom she

was now amongst the first.

Very few women of these days have gone through the amount of hard continuous labour which Caroline Herschel did; and when we are tempted to think highly of the increasing number of women, qualified by culture and natural gifts to fight the battle of life for themselves, we must not forget that the end of the eighteenth century produced a goodly list of able and distinguished women.

Perhaps Caroline Herschel has hardly received the prominent place she deserves in that list, and yet it would be hard to trace a life more useful and more loyally devoted to serve in the cause of science—a service which in her case, and that of her distinguished brother, was encompassed with difficulties, that would have daunted the courage of less steadfast souls.

While Leslie Travers lay on the borderland between life and death, all unconscious that the woman he loved so well was also treading the path through that dim mysterious valley of the shadow, the favourite scheme on which William Herschel set so many hopes failed!

The house in King Street had been taken with the view of building a furnace on the lower floor, which was on a level with the garden.

Here the musician, in the full tide of professional duties, would, between the lessons he was giving to the ladies of Bath, run in to see how the workmen were progressing. Here Sir William Watson, Colonel Walsh, and other philosophical friends would meet, and Sir William Watson was only disappointed that the noble-hearted musician and astronomer would not hear of any pecuniary assistance.

At last the day came when all was in readiness. The metal was in the furnace, and the mould prepared, when a leakage caused the red-hot metal to pour out on the floor, tearing up the stones, and scattering them in every direction, William and Alexander Herschel and the workmen having to rush away for their lives.

William Herschel fell exhausted on a heap of brickbats, and for the time the dearest scheme of his heart, in the construction of the large telescope, had to be abandoned.

"Success next time, and greater care to secure it," was all he said; and he hastened to have the rubbish cleared away, recompense the workmen for their lost labour, and that very night "sweep the heavens" with his old instrument, and enter into the most animated conversation on the nebulae with his chief and constant friend, Sir William Watson.

Everyone must have noticed how quickly events, whether sorrowful or joyful, are forgotten.

The wonder-wave which rolls over a city or town, at the report of any great mercantile failure, or the discovery of dishonest dealing in a man who has held a responsible position, soon ebbs!

This is even more true of private griefs affecting families and individuals. Griefs which leave a lifelong scar on the few, or on *one* sufferer, are speedily forgotten by the outside world.

This ebb and flow, a poet has well said, is the law to which we must all bow. None can escape from it.

Pity, however sincere, is soon exhausted, and fresh cares of bereavement and loss, or sorrow, start up to excite a passing sympathy, while others are crowded out and forgotten.

The duel between Sir Maxwell Danby and Leslie Travers was a nine days' wonder. It was the favourite topic in the Pump Room for that time, but scarcely longer. At first it was reported that Leslie Travers was dead; then, indeed, there were conjectures about Sir Maxwell's escape, and wonderment as to whether he would be pursued and captured, as Count Rice had been, and tried for murder.

But when it was found that Leslie Travers was likely to live, the interest in the matter visibly declined.

Lady Betty reappeared in the Pump Room and at the balls, and to all inquiries said Miss Mainwaring had left her, that she was no relation to her, and that she had very properly considered it better to return to the station in life whence dear Mr. Longueville, in the nobleness of his heart, had rescued her!

Lent came, and was followed by a bright Easter. The Bath season was over, and the principal event of that season was almost forgotten.

The *élite* left the City of the West, or if they remained, there were no public assemblies at which they might display their jewels and varied costumes.

It is needless to say that Lady Betty took her departure, as it was considered "the mode" to do so; and report said young Lord Basingstoke had made it evident that he had no serious intentions, by leaving Bath some time before the vivacious little widow deserted No. 6, North Parade.

Perhaps few noticed, or made more than a passing remark of wonder, when a paragraph in the *Bath Gazette* announced the marriage of Leslie Travers, of the Grange, county Lincoln, to Griselda, daughter of Adolphus Mainwaring, and Phyllis, his wife.

The bride had walked to the Abbey church one fair May morning in her ordinary dress,

accompanied by her faithful friend Miss Herschel, and the Miss Hoblyns, and Norah. There were present with the bridegroom his mother and Brian Bellis. Thus so small a wedding-party was not likely to attract attention.

A great change had passed over both bride and bridegroom since that January day when they had sealed their betrothal in the old Abbey church.

The brilliant beauty of Griselda had faded, and there were traces of long illness on her sweet face. Leslie Travers's lithe figure was bent, and he walked slowly and with none of the elasticity of youth. He had been given back to his mother's prayers, contrary to the hopes or expectations of the surgeons, who had watched over him with unremitting care; but the duel had left an indelible mark on him.

The chariot to take the bride and bridegroom was waiting at the door, and here the "Good-byes" were said.

Mrs. Travers felt Griselda's clinging arms round her as she whispered:

"I will try to be a good daughter to you, madam. I pray you love me a little, for his sake!"

"I love you for your own, my child," was the reply; "and I will cherish and comfort this little one till we meet again"—for poor Norah was convulsed with weeping, and only the promise of a home at the Grange with her sister could console her.

And so the curtain falls, and the bridegroom and the bride pass out of our sight; but we must take one farewell look at them when years have gone by, and see how the promise of their early love had been fulfilled.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### TEN YEARS LATER—1790.

There is no country, however flat and uninteresting, which does not respond to the glory of a real English summer's day.

The moated Grange, near Louth, was no exception to the rule. The moat itself had been drained, and was now covered with turf, and studded with countless daisies, with their golden eyes looking up into the blue, clear sky.

Even the old-fashioned, low-roofed house, with its many gables and the heron carved in stone over the porch, was laughing in the sunshine; and on the well-kept lawn was a group, on which the eye of an artist might have loved to linger.

A sweet and gracious mother was seated on a low garden bench with a baby on her knee, while on either side stood two children—twin boys—who were the joy and pride of her heart.

The little sister of ten months old had come to put the last jewel in the crown of Griselda Travers's happy wifehood and motherhood.

The place where she sat was under the shadow of a row of tall whispering poplars, which made the pleasant "sound as of falling showers," as the summer breeze stirred the leaves. At the back of the house was a plantation of fir-trees, where the turtle-doves were cooing, and the murmur as of "far seas" in the dark topmost branches made a low undertone of melody.

In the old-fashioned garden, or pleasaunce to the right of the house, bees were humming at their work, and gay butterflies dancing over the lavender-bushes and large trees of York and Lancaster roses, which made the air sweet with their fragrance.

A wide gravel-path divided the pleasaunce, and there a pair of happy lovers were pacing, forgetful of everything but their own happiness.

Presently one of Griselda's boys left her side, and ran across the grass to a little gate which led from a copse, and bounded the lawn on that side.

"Father!" the boy exclaimed; and his brother followed him, echoing the joyful cry.

Griselda also rose, and went across the lawn with the same graceful movement which had distinguished her in the Bath assemblies of old.

"I hope the gig came to meet the coach, dear husband?" she said. "It must have been a hot walk from Louth."

He put his arm round her, and kissed the mother first, and then the little daughter, of whom he was so proud, saying:

"Yes; I left the gig at the corner; and walked across the field. How delightful the country seems after London! and as to the boys, they seem in rude health. Have you taken care of your mother, William and Alex?"

"Yes; and we have said our Latin verbs every day, and done our parsing and spelling out of the grammars and dictionaries," said Will.

"I hate spelling," said Alex; "but I love sums."

"That's good. Your godfather was asking how you got on with that branch of your education. Your godfather is a great man, boys; you may be proud to feel he is your godfather."

"Was it very charming at Slough, Leslie?"

"It was, indeed; and wonderful! 'The sweeping of the sky' is a nightly business; and the wife is as much devoted to it as the sister. You must take the journey to London ere long, my dearest, and see for yourself. The twenty-foot Newtonian telescope is a marvel; and there sits Caroline, as of old, writing down calculations and observations. I went to bed at one o'clock; but even on that night William Herschel had discovered four or five new nebulae."

"And he is now quite a great man?"

"Great in everyone's eyes but his own. Royal favour has not turned his head, nor Caroline's either. She has sent your boys a case of little mathematical instruments, and she says you are to go to Slough next visit I pay."

"And little Phyllis, too, father?"

"Yes, when she is old enough. So you have two happy people still here, I see?"

"Yes. Brian got an extra week's holiday from the law office at Bristol; and I knew you would not mind. Mother is so pleased to have him here."

At this moment Brian Bellis and Norah awoke to the fact that they were not the only people in that flowery garden; and Nora, now a beautiful girl of nineteen, leaving Brian's arm, came springing to her brother-in-law, with a face flushed with welcome, to receive her accustomed kiss.

Then from the low French window at the side of the house Mrs. Travers appeared, and greeted her son with a tender welcome.

Mrs. Travers took the baby from her mother's arms, saying:

"She is too heavy for you, my dear; she grows such a great girl. Is not Phyllis glad to see father safely back again?"

The baby cooed as a sign of contentment, but whether this was the result of the contemplation of her silver rattle, or of her father's return, may not be told.

Then the happy party turned into the house, and Leslie drew from the wide pocket of his blue coat with brass buttons a sheaf of letters.

He singled one from the rest, and said gravely:

"I got the letters at Louth. This tells sad news. It has been written for Amelia Graves."

"Dear Graves!" Griselda exclaimed; "what does she say?" She took the letter, written in a round clerkly hand from her husband, and read:

"DEAR AND HONOURED SIR:

"This leaves me well; but I have to inform you my poor mistress departed this life yesterday. I prayed by her, and asked the Lord to pardon her. Honoured sir—and you, dear Madam Travers—that bad man, Sir Maxwell Danby, behaved so ill, that she had to leave his home. He is gone to foreign parts again, and let us hope never to return. He treated my poor mistress shameful, and she was made miserable. We went to Bath for last season, but she was too ill to enter into gaieties, and sank into a sad state—mind and body.

"I send my duty to you, honoured sir, and the dear lady, your wife, and remain,

"Your humble servant,

"AMELIA GRAVES."

Griselda's sweet face became very grave as she read this letter. Then she folded it and returned it to her husband.

"I should like Graves to come and live with us, and take care of her in her old age. Might I ask her?"

Then Leslie bent over his wife, and kissing her, said:

"I knew that would be your wish. I will write by next post to Bath, and bid her come hither. She was good to you when you were in trouble, and won my lasting gratitude."

"Poor Lady Betty! Oh that she ever was so blind—so foolish—as to marry that dreadful man! I never see his name without a shudder!"

The news this letter contained had brought back to the happy wife and mother many sad memories; but the past did not long cloud her present.

As she put her hand into her husband's arm that evening when the children were asleep, and no sound broke the silence as they paced the garden walk, she stopped suddenly, and said:

"Dearest, you have made my life so beautiful. You have taught me so much. You said once—do you remember?—you would die for me, or live for me! You have lived for me, and I—"

"And you have kept your promise, sweetheart," he said. "Do you remember that promise?"

"Yes," she said. "It has been so easy to keep it. All joy and pleasure to give you what you asked for that day in the Abbey church."

So, with interchange of loving words, the husband and wife saw the shadows of the night steal over the woods and far-stretching level country round their home.

The lovers were also enjoying their twilight walk, and talking, as lovers will, of the bliss of the future they are to spend together.

A happy dream is that dream of young love; but is there anything in this mutable life more beautiful than the deepening of that young love into the serene and blessed sympathy of a husband and wife who, through the changes and chances of ten years, can feel, as Leslie and Griselda felt, more secure in each other's loyalty and truth as time rolls on; who can feel that if all other earthly props and joys vanish, their love will remain, that sorrow is shared and grief softened, that all good will be intensified and all happiness doubled, because felt by *two*, who are yet *one* in the highest sense?

This is the true marriage, which has been taken as a type of the highest and the holiest union. Why is it that it is so often missed? Why does the reality of love so often flee away, and only a ghost-like shadow and pale semblance remain?

There is a solution of this problem, but it is not for me to give it here. The hearts of many who read the story of Leslie and Griselda will, if they are true and honest, answer the question each one for herself, and it may be with tears and unavailing regret, yes! and of self-reproach also, that this full cup of bliss has never reached their lips, but that the honeyed sweetness of the elixir of youth has, long ere old age is reached, been as an exceeding bitter cup given them to drink!

As the husband and wife of whom I write, went into their peaceful home, they looked up at the sky where the stars were shining in all their majesty, and their thoughts turned to their friends who were far away, and probably making their accustomed preparation for sweeping the sky.

Many and many a summer night has come and gone since then; many and many eyes have been raised to the star-lit sky, and keen intellects and abstruse calculations have brought to light much for which the great astronomer, William Herschel, prepared the way. But I doubt if even amongst them all has been found a more single-hearted and reverent contemplation of the mysteries of that illimitable space which he thus describes:

"This method of viewing the heavens seems to throw them into a new kind of light. They are now seen to resemble a luxuriant garden which contains the greatest variety of productions in different flourishing beds, and one advantage we may at least reap from it is, that we can, as it were, extend the image of our experience to an immense duration. For is it not almost the same thing whether we live successively to witness the germination, blooming, foliage, fecundity, fading, withering and corruption of a plant, or whether a vast number of specimens selected from every stage through which the planet passes in the course of its existence be brought at once to our view?"

This is a finely-expressed and profound thought, and the mind which originated it must indeed win our admiration and respect.

Surely the house in King Street, Bath, and the association with it, may well consecrate it as a shrine which all who appreciate true and honest labour, and brave struggles with difficulties, should visit. The discovery of the planet Uranus in that house was a grand achievement. The light thrown on the mysteries of double stars, and of the perpetual motion and marvellous evolutions of the milky way was scarcely a less memorable step towards the better understanding of the star-depths which mortals may well scan with bated breath, so infinite is the infinite! But it almost seems to me that pilgrims to the house where the great astronomer and musician lived and worked, may do well to think most of the faithful performance of duty, the unflinching perseverance, the courageous struggle with untold difficulties which was carried on by William and Caroline Herschel while the Bath season was at its height, and the butterflies of fashion and the votaries of pleasure danced and chattered, and sang and made merry in the assemblies, where a hundred years ago so many people whose names are now forgotten, flocked in the pursuit of health and amusement! There will always be these contrasts sharply defined. The bees and the butterflies go forth together over the same flowery pastures. There are countless hidden workers, unknown to fame, who yet do their part—if a humble part, in life—in the place appointed them by God. But there are some who by force of an indomitable will and the highest gifts of intellect and culture leave behind them a name which to all time shall be honoured, and Bath may think herself favoured that in the long list of distinguished men and women who have frequented that fair city and Queen of the West, she may write in letters of gold the names of William Herschel and his sister Caroline.

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[1] DUELLING ON CLAVERTON DOWN.

In the year 1778 many foreign nobles made Bath their residence. The Viscount du Barré and two ladies of great beauty and accomplishments, and Count Rice, an Irish gentleman who had borne arms in the service of France, lived in the Royal Crescent.

A quarrel at cards between Du Barré and Rice resulted in an immediate challenge—given and accepted. At one o'clock in the morning of November 18, 1778, a coach was procured from the Three Tuns in Stall Street, and Claverton Down was reached at day-dawn.

"Each man," says a contemporary, "was armed with two pistols and a sword, the ground being marked out by the seconds. Du Barré fired first, and lodged a ball in Count Rice's thigh, which penetrated to the bone. Count Rice fired, and wounded Du Barré in the breast. Afterwards the pistols were thrown away, and the combatants took to their swords.

"The Viscount du Barré fell, and cried out, 'Je vous demande ma vie!' to which Count Rice answered, 'Je vous la donne!' and in a few moments Du Barré fell back and expired. Count Rice was brought with difficulty to Bath, being dangerously wounded; and was found guilty, at the Coroner's inquest held on the Viscount's body, of manslaughter.

"Du Barré's body was left exposed on Claverton Down the whole day, and was subsequently buried in Bathampton Churchyard. Count Rice recovered; he was tried at Taunton for murder, and acquitted. He died in Spain in 1809. A stone slab in a wall skirting Claverton Down marks the spot where Du Barré fell. The ivory hilt of the sword once belonging to Count Rice is now attached to the City Seal in the town clerk's office."—Condensed from R. E. Peach's "Rambles about Bath."

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