

THE SKEINS OF LIFE

By HELEN ELISE FELDER

In the bedroom of a bleak little country home, Dr. Larry Hamlin felt the child's pulse again—slowly, sadly. The fever-racked little body was hovering on the brink of life; only the slightest thing would snap the slender thread by which it was feebly clinging on. All that medical skill could do had been done—but to no avail—he sighed at his helplessness.

As he touched the thin wrist, the child stirred. Eyes once a brilliant blue, but now dull and glazed, gazed up at him. At first there seemed to be no recognition in the gaze, although he had always been a favorite of the child, but finally a weak smile hovered about the pain-drawn lips in cognizance of the friends around the bedside.

The child's lips began to move, and the doctor leaned over to catch the words.

"Doctor Larry," came the faint murmur, "why is it so dark out there? I am afraid."

The kind-hearted old physician looked out of the window into the fast-gathering gloom of twilight. Only a very few stars were visible.

"Why, there is nothing to be afraid of, Derry," he said, soothingly. "I am surprised at you. Look out there once more now, what do you see?"

In obedient answer the young voice came a trifle closer.

"Just some tiny stars. Oh doctor, they are coming closer—closer. I hear something different from anything I have ever heard."

Doctor Larry's cheeks were wet with tears by now, and he said softly: "Derry, Derry, don't you see? The angels are lighting their lamps and singing to you."

"Ah! I hear them—I hear them! Angels, here I am! Take me with you! I want to see Jesus, and it's so dark! Please, please, light my way!" The boy's pleading voice grew excited and he raised himself in bed with arms outstretched. "Dear Jesus, here I am," he cried.

Suddenly the taut nerves relaxed. The precious soul had taken its flight.

The time for medical aid had passed, and the doctor turned and tenderly helped the sorrowing mother to her feet from her place beside the bed. Taking her by the arm he gently led her out of the room.

As he closed the door, he attempted to comfort her, his heart overflowing with tenderness.

"I know it seems more than you can stand, but you must try to be brave. Take heart," he begged. "The Lord hath given and the Lord hath received. Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

Realizing that she must fight it out alone and that he could not help her further, he wended his solitary way home.

Several days later, as he sat meditating, Dr. Larry's thoughts recurred to another time when a beautiful spirit had also taken its flight and left the realm of mortals. That time it had been one who was very near and dear to him. It was his boyhood sweetheart, who had died in his arms. He had never forgotten her, and, true to her memory, had never married.

Sitting there he could remember her eyes—truly the "windows of her soul." How they had gleamed when she had been happy, but how heart-breaking were they when she had been sad! And her heart, too, had been as pure and sweet as a baby's smile. Everyone had loved her. Everywhere that her lovely auburn hair, her flashing eyes, and her bewitching smile could have been seen, tears had turned to laughter. The old grew young, and the weak grew strong under her influence.

But that had been when they both were in their twenties. He was an old man now, but that memory was as fresh as though it had happened only yesterday. It was she, a wonderful Christian, who had told him that the angels were lighting their lamps and singing for her and that she must go. His pledge to her had been made as a death-bed troth of their love—that he would give his life to helping suffering fellowmen. And, thank God, he felt that he had done it thus far!

G. H. S. FLOWER GARDEN

Evening Primrose—Louise McCulloch.
Marigold—Luna Byrd.
Skull Cap—Graham Todd.
Ragged Robin—Victor Jones.
Spring Beauty—Lois Gillespie.
Wild Ginger—Virginia Vanstory.
"Star Flower"—Helen Felder.
Goldenrod—Marguerite Harrison.
Sun Flower—Margaret Hood.
Trumpet Flower—Bernard Shaw.
Dandelion—Troy Ziglar.
Pansy—Martha Garner.
Monkey Flower—Margaret Irvin.
Tulips—Sadie Clements.
Scarlet Sage—"Red" Atwater.
Forget-me-not—Marion Walters.
Innocence—Violet Moore.
Daffodil—Henry Jobe.
Indian Pipe—Lattis Johnston.
Brown-eyed Susan—Mary Lentz.
Blue-eyed Grass—Glenn B. McLeod.
Solomon's Seal—Maddry Solomon.
Indian Paint Brush—Rachael Reece.
Bachelor's Button—Bill Scott.
Wild Rose—Rose Lee Williams.
Snap Dragon—Mary Thurman.
Butter Cup—Billy Koenig.
May Apple—Nell Applewhite.
Dutchman's Breeches—"Pat" Forbes.
Morning Glory—Esther Shreve.

Peace

The end of another day is fast approaching. After a tiresome day's journeying in the pathless heavens, the god of beauty and love is driving at last his golden chariot and fiery steeds into the stables of the western horizon. As he retreats further and further into the crimson background, he tints the fleecy clouds as if the immortal Artist had taken his best brush and given the finishing golden touches to the day's work.

The soft glow of an early twilight falls silently over the river in all its harmony of colors. A gentle evening breeze is noiselessly but playfully blowing sparkling ripples on the mirror-like surface. A hush has fallen over all things. In the glory of sunset, Nature is offering to God her evening prayer. Serenely peaceful rests the world.

ARTHUR B. PEARCE.

The Flapper

*What a piece of work is a flapper!
Such soulful eyes! What perfect lips!
In form and fashion how complete!
In action how like a whirlwind!
In apprehension how sophisticated!
How worldly in faculty! In mentality
How shallow! And yet, what is she to
me?
Does she delight me? Why, goodness
Me, of course she does! What am I?
Nothing but a tea-hound.*

VERA CAGLE.

Faerie Lullaby

*Hush, my little one! Hush thy weeping;
Over the grass the sandman is creeping;
The dewdrops fall on the crimson rose,
And over the hills the west wind blows;
The stars come out from heaz'n's dark
blue;
Till sleepy birds sing "good night" to
you.
The faeries o'er you their watch will
keep,
And at dawn creep away to the cowslips
to sleep.
Hush, my little one, husky thy weeping!
Over the hills the twilight is creeping;
Sleep, my little one, sleep!*

MARJORIE VANNEMAN.

foun' him mos' dead wif 'monia an' he stuck by him when nobody else cared what become of him."

The old negro could get no further, for the sobs arising in his throat would not be checked; and, with shoulders heaving, he rose. Laying on the grave something which he drew from his pocket, he hobbled away. Those remaining at the grave watched the bent form of the old white-haired darky shuffling slowly out of sight and leaning on his gnarled stick.

Verily, the tangled skeins of life can be straightened by only One, as the gift of the old darky showed. The object so tenderly placed on the grave was a rough, hand-carved, love-inwrought wooden cross.

TO A BROOK

*Overshadowed by an oak
Astounding in its size,
There flows a brook, unconquered
And the color of the skies.*

*Its sound a joyous tinkle,
And color, clear as day,
As over moss it trickles,
Only to rush away.*

*Along the bank and in the grass,
The purple violets grow,
While meadow lilies, mass on mass,
Their gleaming colors show.*

*And as we follow down the stream,
It flows, a narrow path,
The sun's reflected rays do gleam,
And sunlight takes a bath.*

*Then it widens and becomes
A dashing rapids, mad;*

Over jagged stones it runs,

And sparkling, laughing, glad.

*A frenzied whirlpool farther down,
In raging, mad delight,
Is turning, swishing, swirling round,
And dragging all from sight.*

*No clearer mirror could be found
Than when a calm is come,
No swishing, swirling all around
Except where it is from.*

*And now initials we find cut
Within a pierced heart;*

Not only signs of lovers, but

Of friends from whom we part.

*Farther down it flows from sight,
No more of it is seen;*

It dwindleth into nothingness

And seems as if a dream.

*Of boundless width and endless length,
Thus it does look;*

Beauty, clearness, pureness, strength—

Thus is a brook.

JOHN MEBANE.

A Parody

To bob, or not to bob, that is the question—

*Whether 'tis better for the head to suffer
The heat and burden of long hair,*

*Or to take scissors 'gainst a nuisance
And by shearing end it—to cut—to clip*

*Even more;—and by that act to say we
end*

*The headaches and the thousand other
pains*

The head is heir to,—'tis an acquisition

Devoutly to be desired. To cut—to clip,

To clip! Perchance to shingle—ay, there's

the rub;

For in that ruthless act what terrors

may come

When we have singled off this "crowning

glory"

Must give us pause.

MARTHA JANE BROADHURST.

A Senior

*What a piece of humanity is a Senior!
how brilliant in scholarship! how well-rounded in activities! with pupils and
teachers how great and influential; in
his own eyes how like an angel! in fresh-men's eyes how like a god! the nobility
of the school! the paragon of nursery-
children! And yet, to the world, what
is this choicest of pupils?*

THE POTOMAC AND JACK FROST

*In the reign of Jack Frost some of the
most marvelous of feats are enacted.
The mighty Potomac which a few months
before had been navigable, is now frozen
over in its stupendous winter array.*

*Truly one would think it a gigantic
mirror reflecting the glare of somber
clouds which line the heavens and giving
off an almost twilight glow to the surrounding country.*

*Winding and twisting like an immense
glossy reptile, the river runs its course
through the white, snow-mantled valley.*

*Either side of the river is fringed with
a thin cluster of bare sinister-like trees
which give voice to the bleakness of the
weather. The wind from off shore is
driving a thin mist of snow into the
trees.*

*The scene is disturbed by a black
winged airplane, seeming in exact har-
mony with the environment, winging its
way wearily down the river. Distant,
so distant is it, that it is almost invisible
against the background of trees.*

MY LAST DUCHESS

*Draw aside the curtain there, my friend,
From o'er her face, for fast I feel the end
Of life draw nigh; and fain would I be-
hold*

*Her smiling once again, as in the days
of old.*

*Again I say, she was the fairest daughter
That ever woman bore. Her childish
laughter*

*Made the old house ring with its joyous
note.*

*No cares had she. Music poured from
her throat*

*Almost unconsciously, and like a lark
She sang from morn till night, changing
our dark*

*And gloomy castle into a land of dreams.
But she was far too blest with smiles, it
seems.*

*Dearly she loved each crannied nook in
the old*

*Stone wall. Each flower that sent its
fragrance bold*

*Into the balmy air, aroused a fathomless
delight*

*Within her poet's soul. How could dark
blight*

Descend on one so young and fair, on her

I loved

So dearly! So much I doted on her that

it moved

My very heart to tears to think of being

parted;

*Yet never a fear had I. Shy as a bird
she darted*

*Unto my side at every strange approach.
Yea, verily,*

Her face suffused with blushes at the

slightest courtesy

*Bestowed upon her. Thus, all uncon-
scious of my danger,*

*A hawk disguised, a wealthy and enti-
tled stranger,*

*Swooped down upon our happy nest and
bore*

*His prey away. Beast that he was! far
more*

Than even I discerned, she loved him.

*Oh, would it had been but a maiden's
whim,*

*Not long nor lasting! Then her tender
heart*

*Had not so easily been broken. Why
do you start?*

*Did you not know he killed her? Killed
her*

*I repeat, because she valued not the honor
That he bestowed upon her; nor cared*

for name

*Nine centuries old. How much am I to
blame*

*Who let her thus be borne away and
gloried*

*In her marriage! But when I far more
hoarded*

Than I be, with dying breath

*I'd send a curse upon him, that even
after death*

He might endure blood-curdling torment.

*O Thou Almighty Judge, Who wisdom
sent*

*In the hearts of men, can murder stalk
Thus boldly on the earth? In prisons
dark*

*The villains sit who, with the naked
sword,*

Have slain a fellow-man. Yet not a word

*Is said to him that robbed me of my
child;*