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Selected Story.

FOR ANOTHER.

Adeline Von R. was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment. I was notified to receive her in prison. The lady did not interest me, because I was not personally acquainted with her. I was also ignorant as to the cause of this judgment, but still I could not place the order out of my sight without repeated persuasions, feeling a foreboding that something unusual and gloomy would surely transpire in connection with it.

There was really nothing remarkable about the seven days' imprisonment, and yet it might be that a longer sentence was obtained by the social position of the lady, had not the document ordered these confinements and no amelioration of the rules of the place for her.

But other business pressed, and one week and then another went by, and the circumstances had almost been forgotten when the last day of the third week again recalled it.

It was getting late; the prisoners had received their supper, and I had retired to my room to attend to some writing that my duties during the day had left me little time for. I was so deeply absorbed that I did not hear the door open, and was consequently in a state of surprise when I heard, not far from me, a trembling voice utter a soft "Good evening."

Looking up, I saw an elegantly attired young girl, hesitating at a nearer approach, and seemingly waiting to be addressed.

I had time to make observations. Her style of dress first attracted my attention. It was not such as I have been accustomed to see around me on my visitors to this establishment.

Her face was young, fresh, and round; the regularity of features alone caused an exclamation in favor of its beauty, the downcast eyes closed their privacy from view, but the whole expression of face and person indicated a sense of horror, shame and fear.

Such conduct is rare in prison, yet the girl had evidently come to stay, judging by the bundle of wearing apparel she carried.

My sympathy was awakened, and in a kinder tone than I should have used under ordinary circumstances for this ill-fated disturbance, I requested her to approach me.

She did not move; her head remained bowed, the eyes drooping.

"What is your name?" I inquired to no reply. The girl seemed to struggle for composure, her lips quivered, her mouth vainly trying to form words.

"But, dear child," I asked rather impatiently after a pause, "you must tell me what you desire; why are you here?"

"Oh, God!" she cried, "I am here under arrest."

"I am called Adeline Von R."

"Ah!"

The exclamation escaped me before I was aware of it. The girl was startled, and directly raised her head and gazed me full in the face, with an unspoken inquiry. I saw two eyes, large and wondrous beautiful, an irresistible power of fascination within their depths speaking of childlike innocence, childlike sorrow and childlike fear, yet expressive of resignation; they were lit up with suppressed tears, and the light of the will to be strong and endure.

What should I do with Adeline Von R., how a cold, I treat her?

Her station in life demanded a proper respect. I did not want her to see that I felt this to be so, and yet I did not wish to repulse her. I was yet undecided how to meet when she said: "Mr. Inspector, you know now why I am here. I cannot ask you to set aside your duty in my behalf; but oh, I beg you will not make my position harder to bear than is called for. May I be left alone, left to myself?"

"If you desire it."

"And no one will see me?"

"None but the prisoners employed on the premises."

"That good; I would like to hide myself from all humanity, and from the dear God too. Under arrest! Oh, the disgrace. It will cling to me forever. Oh! it is horrible, and to bear it through life—terrible!"

In her excitement Adeline Von R. struck her hands together, alternately covering her face with them, as if to shut out a picture conjured by the imagination of a fearful future.

"You go too far," said I, trying to comfort her; "the disgrace does not consist in the arrest, but in the causes the deed that requires such a penance."

"True, that is true. But do all people think this? How often does it occur that they care to know if the punishment is just, if one is really guilty? But who can alter such things? Can those do it who suffer innocently? Can they make war with the majority, swim against the tide and be lost in the stream? All that is left them is endurance and oblivion to hide where we know from whence you came or where you go."

"I think," I interrupted her, "that the judgment of the people is less to be feared than the reproaches of one's own conscience."

"Oh, hush! hush! sir. Do you believe that I underrated this inner judgment? I struggled long before I became reconciled to come here. I was even induced—not to. Oh, God! I dare not think of it; and you do not know—you cannot understand. But I did not wish it otherwise. I must not frighten myself with reproaches. Others will do that."

As she said this her whole manner changed; she seemed to cast aside all fear; her hand was possibly arrested; her eyes brightened with a determination that changed the child to an earnest woman. She picked up the bundle that had fallen from her arm, and coming close to me, she said:

"Mr. Inspector, I am to remain in here seven days. I was told yet had received the order for my reception. Here is the document that binds me prisoner—is this sufficient? If not, please tell me what else is required of me?"

Her manner had acquired such a quiet dignity that my intercourse could not go beyond business questions; although my hot and capricious words would like to have known more about her family and self, and particularly the crime that brought her under my supervision.

She still retained her calmness when locked in her cell. Without exhibiting any particular emotion she entered the little, dark room. I directed her to the bed, gave her a few particulars in regard to the rules of the place and left her alone. This was the beginning of a distressing drama.

The following morning I went to the examining bureau to find particulars in regard to Adeline Von R., but could discover little. The case had been heard at some place quite distant, where the prisoner was formerly resident, and in the requisition it was particularly remarked that she desired to "serve her time" under me; but the net that called for seven days' imprisonment was not stated whether by design or mistake we were to be left in ignorance; I could not say.

There is nothing more passing than time. Adeline Von R. had done penance six days. Only I had seen her during this time; even the director, being indisposed, had not made his customary revision. I did what was in my power to make her punishment light, and she showed her appreciation by giving me no cause to complain.

I was no wiser in regard to her circumstances. Every attempt to question her was delicately turned, and I was given to understand that my right did not extend into her private affairs.

The morning of the seventh day she greeted me with a hearty cheerfulness, telling me how she would count the hours, and I discovered that some one was looking for her release as anxiously as she herself desired it, but I could not tell was it father, mother, brother, or sister, or friend. Another time and place enlightened me.

Some hours later I received an order for the appearance of Adeline Von R. before the examining judge. The person that brought it hinted at something peculiar in regard to the prisoner, as the judge and the city officials with him were enjoying some joke in connection with her arrest.

I did not send her the order, but went myself, to acquaint her that she must again appear before the court. Joyfully she met me. "Oh, Mr. Inspector," she cried, "only six hours and a half, and then I shall be free. I can again inhale the air of freedom. Sweet thought! Freedom! how shall I love thee now; but what is it, you look so stern, so dark, as if—"

"You are to appear before the judge; follow me."

"He wishes to speak to me! My God! I do not know this man; what can he want of me?"

"I cannot inform you; he will no doubt enlighten you. Hasten, they are waiting."

"One moment, I will be ready."

She appeared innocent, certainly she was astonished, but more impatient than frightened. But her lovely eyes no longer laughed; she searched for something, and they rested on a cloth hanging on the back of a chair. With a charming movement she threw it over her head and placed herself at my side.

"Mr. Inspector, my toilet is finished. The judge has probably some news to communicate, for, of course, I can abide here no longer."

She again laughed in childish glee. All the way her spirits were joyous, she was unconscious of wrong, and I hoped, free from future punishment. With the judge were other officials belonging to the city and a stranger unknown to me, a large, stout man, evidently a detective in civilian's dress. Feeling that he would figure in what followed I particularly noticed him.

As we entered I noticed him cast a quick, sharp glance at my prisoner, and his features relaxed into a meaning smile. I read in it that my prisoner was a guilty person and he a detective. At the time that did not annoy me as much as the man's smile. How could he laugh?

The profession is not a trifling one. To him up guilty parties requires a character that is conscious of the duties it undertakes, and to characterize with a frivolous carelessness seemed out of place then. The mind must have a body without feeling.

"Well," asked the judge.

"It is as I said," replied the man.

"Mr. Inspector," said the judge, turning to me, "you have noticed that Adeline Von R. was under arrest when you seven days."

"Yes."

"It is false."

"Judge! Sir!"

"I repeat, it is false! Are you personally acquainted with Adeline Von R.?"

"No!"

"This person has lied to you. She has assumed a name she has no right to. What is your name?" he asked the prisoner.

I had quite overlooked her since we entered the room. Now I turned towards her; she was standing near the door, pale as death, trembling, dumb, as if she had not heard the judge.

He stepped towards her, "I asked you to give your name, will you answer?" he questioned in a loud and angry voice.

The prisoner seemed frightened, so that her limbs refused to bear her, and had I not quickly grasped her, she would have fallen to the floor. I placed a chair for her and remained standing at her side. Spite of all our endeavors we could not get the girl to speak. She sat silent and utterly speechless, gazing on the floor; but as the judge in conversation with others declared, "This person remains a prisoner! She cannot go free!" she sprang from the chair, her eyes rove from one to another until they rested on him, and looking him firmly in the eyes, she said:

"I have suffered my seven days' imprisonment; and to night it will not detain me longer. You have not the right."

"That is not for you to decide."

"Just think, sir, I am not guilty of anything; not only I, but two others will be so miserable if you do not let me go."

The poor child was the picture of suffering and fright.

"Now," said the Judge mildly, "answer me. Are you the Adeline Von R. that was condemned by a military court at B.?"

"No, I am not the condemned. But what of that?" she asked.

"Much, very much. You are guilty of an act punishable by ten years' imprisonment and a fine of one hundred to ten thousand dollars, and until final judgment is passed in the matter you return to close confinement."

"Oh, God! my God!" she cried, wildly. "I do not understand what

you say. I did not wish to do harm."

"That cannot avail you even should your intentions have been of the best. You cheated the court out of a righteous judgment by countenancing the escape of the real criminal."

"No, no; did not think of such a thing. I only desired to save another from utter destruction. Oh, believe me, the gentle, lovely girl would have become insane. I am stronger than she. Never would you have brought her alive to this place, and if so only her corpse would you have had to bring out."

"Even that will not clear you from the charge. You are on or free from punishment."

"What shall I say to soften your hard heart?"

"Ask that person," she said, pointing to the detective, "he will tell you I have only spoken the truth about my friend; he knew her. Do you think it was an easy matter to place myself here? Did I not suffer indescribably? My strength failed me even at the prison; but I thought of my friend, of her kisses, as if parting she wept and moaned in her anguish, and I became strong again, and when my spirits failed me during this time that picture gave me courage."

"Well, well, tell your friend to judge this as you have told us. I have nothing to do with it. Perhaps they will, in consideration of this give you only two years and \$100 fine."

"I will do everything you tell me, sir, but you will let me go now, will you not? May I return home this evening?" she pleaded.

"No," he replied, shortly.

"Must I repeat it, sir? I shall go mad. I must be home to-night; my friend awaits me; she numbers the moments until I see her again; she will die in her sorrow and fear!"

Your friend receives with you the same punishment!"

"What say you?" she screamed, "you tell me she will suffer also? Why, she does not, not even know that I am here; she believes that I have gone to some one in a distant place to undergo a severe examination in my profession."

"My examination! the girl repeated. 'Oh, I tell so strange!' all is void in my heart; and yet it seems as if it would break from the fullness of its misery. I comprehend and still cannot realize. It cannot be. Oh, Mr. Inspector, you will let me go home this evening?"

"I dare not," I answered, as firm as I could.

"No!"

That word I enclosed my soul in so small a space I cannot understand it. The heart-rending cry she uttered will never be forgotten. All were silent; only the quick breathing of the prisoner could be heard. The judge thought she had become satisfied; further words were useless, and by a motion he bade me take her away.

I led her out by the hand; she uttered not one word; arriving at the prison she entered her cell in the same silence; her eyes were hard and dry; she did not appear to see me, but sat with folded hands gazing into vacancy.

The pressure of her troubles was too much for the spirit of the girl; six days had she waited for the moment when she could face her beloved friend and say, "You are free!"

She had constantly kept before her mind the sorrowful pictures of their parting, and then fancied the happiness her arrival would bring. Such visions had kept her courageous and cheerful; now with one fearful blow they were destroyed, and only the prospect of a life covered with disgrace left her.

I appended to the judge in my behalf, and explained my fears in regard to the girl's reason, but she could become hardened through familiarity to suffering in every shape. He anticipated nothing serious in consequence.

But her situation did not alter; she observed neither my coming nor going. I tried to draw her interest from her own thoughts, without success. She neither ate nor drank. Occasionally her eyes would be raised from the floor to that from one object to another, as if in search of something that could not be found. It was the restless wandering of a suffering soul—the language of a broken spirit. She had exhibited the courage of a man; she had offered more than life in the act of entering the prison; that she could not realize the unhappy result did not detract one iota from the nobleness of the intention. She was not aware she was committing something forbidden; she only believed that self-sacrifice would bring peace to her family and happiness to his friend.

My heart bled for her, and after eight days the physician in charge pronounced her incurable. He could not help her condition, and two years later the sufferer died in an insane asylum.

I after a time discovered that the crime for which Adeline Von R. was sentenced was nothing more than an unintentional injury done this detective that also discovered the fraud. It seems A. Von R. repeated a bit of information at a social entertainment that she had received from her seamstress, and it was thus spread until it reached the ears of his superiors. It was of such a nature that he appeared in a contemptible character and when called upon for her authority she could give none but the needlewoman; but as she was the original cause of his disgrace he soon found a healing remedy by hunting her down to punishment and causing her such harm as he knew would bring the ignominy home to her and her position. Thus for a careless repetition of a piece of frivolity she was sentenced to the disgrace of arrest and a prison cell. The discovery happened unfortunately through one of the officers under him, who had seen Adeline Von R. while he supposed her to be in close confinement, and shortly after the lady herself appeared before him to beg pardon for the trouble she had innocently caused him.

The unhappy girl that suffered so fearfully for her kind act was the niece of Adeline Von R. bore the same name, and was the same age.

This lady herself I never met, but who can doubt how fearful it shadow this trial cast over her whole future.

"Why, I'll just take both, and then I'll be sure."

"Well, I think you won't then, for one is for mamma."

"Let me see, then—I will take this one"—and Eddie showed her the rosy red cheeks.

"Oh, my!" exclaimed Gussy, all surprise; "just the reddest and softest and nicest apples I ever saw—but oh! dear, you are mean, Eddie Smith—this one is the little one; I just know you gave me this of purpose. Oh! I wouldn't be so mean—no, not for all the apples every where; you just wanted that for yourself, and I s'pose that's what mamma meant yesterday when she said some people were selfish, and that means—like themselves so much better than they like other people"—and with that she snatched the largest apple and rolled the smaller one off in the grass. "There, now, Mr. Meanness, take your little suit of a one and go; Kitty and I will have this one; won't we, Kitty?"

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