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VOL. 3.

LOUISBURG, N. C., FEBRUARY, 27, 1874.

NO. 17.

ORIGINAL STORY.

Seeking A Home.

BY VIVIAN.

CHAPTER VII.

The knocker is muffled, and death the Great High Priest of Nature, has put its seal on everything.

Pause, and stop, ere you step. With solemn tread guide the feet. The last, farewell seems to breathe from everything, a solemnity is diffused filling the whole apartment! A shade, a stillness, a twilight of the heart deepening in the gloom of sorrow. The divine woman is lying on the lap of her Saviour. Angels are hovering around. She is gone. Yes! dear Mrs. Vane is gone, but her memory will be honored among men, her death is a shadow that rests upon the homestead. The places which once knew her, now wear the sadness and desolation of the tomb. The aspect of Nature is changed. The wind which made an anthem of praise among the boughs of the elm trees, now wails with dirge-like melancholy through the foliage. And the moon itself shines with a sickly lustre, as if mourning a departed worshiper.

Oh, brave and tender, pure and ho'y heart! Art thou indeed still and pulseless? Has the indwelling deity departed, leaving the noble temple to crumble into dust?

Yes! suddenly smitten by the angel of death, instantaneously as the electric flash, the bolt descended, and she bowed to man's last enemy.

She fell as the oak of the forest falls, firm and stately to the last, full as the tree falls when a strong wind sweeps over it or the lightning blasts it. She was spared the humiliating process of dependence and decay, the gloomy passage through the valley of the shadow of death, the pains, the agonies, the expiring conflict. One moment on earth, the next in Heaven. One moment she gazed on the beauties of this life, the next upon that glory of glories.

But she was prepared for the conquerors coming. Though to her the joys of earth were sweet. Heaven was sweeter still; and with it she had long held close and divine communion.

There were loved ones gone before, whom her spirit longed to embrace. Not till the last dark hour had she departed the work of preparation. There was a daily sanctity in her life, that anointed her for the sacrifice of death. She seemed a temple with all its fair proportions unmarred, unchanged. No trace of ruin was there, its beauty and symmetry were not broken and defaced. Firmness, dignity, simplicity and truth were the columns that supported it, tenderness, sensibility and grace its ornaments, and religion the sunlit dome that crowned and perfected the noble fabric.

There was an altar within that temple, where the incense of prayer and praise were ever ascending, and the threshold was sprinkled with the blood of the eternal sacrifice. From the moment when we saw her in her white shroud with the sad white flowers scattered among its folds, and saw mysterious, solemn signs of death upon her face, the smile of more than earthly placidity and peace upon her lips, we were as sure she had gone to Heaven as though we saw the golden portals open, and her admitted into its celestial mansions. She is in the bosom of her Saviour and her God. She was only given to earth while, and we rejoice that we have given another to swell the orchestra of Heaven.

CHAPTER VIII.

Some of us have said in our hearts, "we are all alone," when one whom we loved was removed, though many were left to care for us. Heaven pity those who in their bereavement may cry without hyperbole, "I am all alone." But without Mrs. Vane,

Claudia Grant could indeed cry out, "I am all alone."

There is no need to describe the girls grief when she knew that her adopted mother was dead. She would cry out with anguish—

"Oh, mother, come back to me. I am alone in the world, fatherless and motherless. Death would be a blessing to me for life will be filled with suffering."

She was too good, too pure for earth I knew. He took her to himself. But why couldn't He spare her to me longer—am I so wicked, so sinful that I should be thus punished? Forgive me I pray for the impious thoughts which have struggled for mastery in my bosom. I have dared to question his justice as well as his mercy. It is right that I should suffer, my life with her has been so happy, so blessed. What? she exclaimed, lifting up her streaming eyes and deprecating hands to Heaven—

"What have I done that thou shouldst thus heavily lay thy chastening hand upon me? The world seems a wide gray yard to me now. She is happy, while I am wretched. O, Lord I need thy chastisement, I deserve the stroke. Divest death of its terrors to me, let me love to meditate upon it. Let me visit her grave, and there let me realize the truths of thy word, and oh, if departed spirits are ever permitted to minister to those they loved on earth, I know the guardian wings of my two mothers will ever hover 'round my head."

And she prayed oh, how fervently for grace and strength to endure to the end, and forgiveness for the past. And she felt that she could bear her fathers blessing and see her mothers wondrous smile and feel her arms around her neck. She almost had a glimpse of Heaven, and the light that she saw there, shed itself over and around her, and something surged through her soul as only a breeze from its Edenized shores could have done; and she thought she heard the soft rustling of wings, and with its departure faded forms bending over her.

And Claudia arose from her knees, with a resigned and softened heart. CHAPTER IX. "Well Claudia dear, you will make our home, your home now," said Paul Ashley. "We will endeavor to make your life with us happy. The grief which has fallen upon you now, is one which will at first be a great shock, but like every one else this grief will soon be subdued, and you will after a time forget your sufferings. My wife you well know is a woman of the world, devoted only to fashion and its vanities, one whom I am free to confess to you is little calculated to make another happy. Once, my child I loved a woman, as pure and guileless as ever lived; but at an unfortunate time I was governed by the wishes of others, for the moment I forgot my manhood, forgot truth—everything else, and trampled under foot the love of this woman. Never after that have I seen her—never did I obtain her forgiveness; but my God has forgiven me; and Claudia this woman whom I loved, this woman whom I wronged was your mother. Never has my heart been given another, though my name and fortune have. My home has never been made glad by the smiles that would have greeted me from her. All is cold, utterly devoid of that affection and confidence that marks the intercourse of man and wife, but down deep in my heart is that love that was hers, not gone, still warm and lasting, and my child I now give it to you. Let me protect you, let me be a father to you, for the sake of the dead whom we both held dear, for the sake of her whose spirit has kept, and is still keeping watch over me, only to guide me in the right path and at last receive me in Heaven. To you Claudia I have revealed the secret of my heart, to you alone is it known. I have told it to you with the hope that it might bind you more closely together. Let us love each other, let us feel that you are

mine, image of your own dear mother."

With this he fell into a fit of weeping, and with her arms about his neck the tears of the young girl and the gray-haired man mingled together.

Long they remained thus. Claudia raised her head, aroused Mr. Ashley from his reverie and begged him to tell her something of her mother, in the days when he knew her, in the days of her prosperity.

He told her all, everything about her mothers family, and then, said, "Come Claudia, be ready to-morrow. To-day, I will give you, in which to prepare to leave here; to-morrow I will call for you, and take you home with me."

She wept more violently. "Can I leave this home? away from it all things seem cold, uncertain, dead; but these familiar things in the one home that I have known for so long. Nothing else I love now. But I thank you so much for what you have just said, and the home that you offer I must accept. But bear with my weakness. You cannot understand how dear to me is this home, and to leave it is almost as bitter as death, here the happiest days I have ever known, have been spent, and a tear plashed down upon the crape dress, the folds of which were crisp and fresh, mourning for the last dear one on whom yesterday closed the doors of the family vault.

"Think of something more than your troubles, Claudia, try to overcome them, soon again we hope, by pleasant associations to make you the bright blooming girl you were a week ago. I too grieve for the sister I loved, a sister ever kind and ready to make life brighter, but while I am sorely bereft, I resign her more cheerfully, knowing she is at rest."

Claudia, and Mr. Ashley parted until the morrow, she to pack her trunks and get together the many costly gifts scattered here and there about the house, things held sacred now. Mrs. Ashley's son now traveling in Europe, young Paul Ashley, would become heir to Mrs. Vane's immense wealth. Dying suddenly she had left Claudia entirely unprovided for, and having no children herself, it had descended to her only nephew, Paul Ashley.

Claudia's preparations were completed, and she retired, not to sleep, but to spend the night in making some plans for the future by which she might enjoy an independent life, for she did not like to feel that from Mr. and Mrs. Ashley came every comfort she enjoyed.

The next morning early Mr. Ashley in his carriage came to accompany her to his own house. Arriving there she was met by Mrs. Ashley, and the two gave her a welcome, warm and affectionate, on the part of the man, but with a cold hauteur on the wife's part. She was not carried into the large parlors, but up into her own room, where she found her furniture taken from her room at home, and brought here to make this feel more like home to her. They were all so kind. At last she had discovered that the love which Phil Raymond cherished for her was dearer than a friendly interest, she had seen the jealous look, which had caused his eye to flash, when in society some more fortunate one had obtained her hand for a dance or a promenade, she had noticed this, and she well knew that in coming here to make his home her home, she was placing herself where this love would daily grow, and finally become a part of him. She knew Phil's nature. She knew the strong love of which he was capable; how he would exalt, and honor its object.

The next day, and the next, passed until Claudia was becoming interested in things around.

The wound in her heart was being healed, life possessed charms for her. Mrs. Ashley was kind, but daily, she was planning, and thinking of a new life, humble it must be, but independent it should be, and soon she will find it.

(To Be Continued.)

A little girl who was sent for some indigo, forgetting the name, asked the grocer: "Please, sir, what do people dye with?" "What do people dye with?" exclaimed the grocer; "why, with the cholera sometimes." "Then," said the child, "mother wants twenty-five cents' worth of cholera."

The Child's Pocket Etiquette.

1. Always say, yes, sir; no sir; yes, papa, no, thank you; good night; good morning. Never say 'how' or 'which,' for what. Use no slang terms. Remember that good spelling, writing and grammar are the base of all true education.

2. Clean faces, clean clothes, clean shoes and clean finger nails indicate good breeding. Never leave your clothes about the room. Have a place for every thing, and every thing in its place.

3. Rap before entering a room, leave it with your face to the company. Never enter a private room or public place with your hat on.

4. Always offer your seat to a lady or old gentleman. Let your companions enter the carriage or room first.

5. At the table eat with your fork; sit up straight, never use your tooth-pick, although Europeans do, and when leaving ask to be excused.

6. Never put your feet on cushions, chair or tables.

7. Never overlook any one when reading or writing, or talk or read aloud when others are reading. When conversing, listen attentively and do not interrupt or reply till the other has finished.

8. Never whisper or talk aloud at churches, or other public places, and especially in private where any one is singing or playing the piano.

9. Long coughing, hawking, yawning, sneezing or blowing is ill-mannered. In every case cover your mouth with your handkerchief (which never examine—nothing is more vulgar except spitting on the floor.)

10. Treat all with respect, especially the poor. Be careful to injure no one's feelings by unkind remarks.—Never tell tales, make faces, call names, ridicule the lame, mimic the unfortunate, or be cruel to insects, birds or animals.

A Burst of Eloquence.

Western eloquence continues to improve. A Wisconsin reporter sends the following sketch. A lawyer in Milwaukee was defending a handsome young woman accused of stealing from a large unoccupied building in the night time, and thus he spoke in conclusion:—

"Gentlemen of the jury, I am done. When I gaze with enraptured eyes on the matchless beauty of this peerless virgin, on whose resplendent charms suspicion never dared to breathe; when I behold her radiant in the glorious bloom of lustrous loveliness which angelic sweetness might envy but could not eclipse; before which the star on the brow of the night grows pale, and the diamonds of Brazil are dim; and then reflect upon the utter madness and folly of supposing that so much beauty would expose itself to the terrors of an empty building in the cold damp dead of night, when innocents like hers are hiding itself among the snowy pillows of repose; gentlemen of the jury my feelings are too overpowering for expression, and I throw her into your arms for protection against this foul charge, which the outrageous malice of a disappointed scoundrel has invented to blast the fair name of this lovely maiden whose smiles shall be the reward of the verdict which I know you will give."

The jury acquitted her without leaving their seats.—EXCHANGE.

They have some very smart business men in New Jersey. Last week a young man was struck by lightning in a field near Trenton, and when the people began to flock to the spot to look at the victim, they found a man standing by the corpse trying to sell lightning rods to the crowd.

Fashionable lady coming out of Church: "What a powerful sermon! I was never before so impressed with the duty and privilege of giving freely. I am determined to do better, and to send this very weak another silk dress to my daughter."

True goodness is like the glow-worm, it shines most when no eyes expect those of heaven are upon it.

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