

scene at home, and he had angrily declared his intention of either taking Glen and leaving her, or else of putting her in an inebriate asylum.

Never before had he talked like that to her, and she realized that he was roused to desperation.

Leaving her in maudlin tears, he strode gloomily down the street, his hat drawn closely over his eyes.

"I will do it!" he was saying to himself. "She shall not drag me and my child any lower. She is ruining my every prospect even as she has my happiness. Endurance—"

"Say, there, Clayton!" It was the voice of an acquaintance. "Going to the lecture to-night?"

"Lecture? 'No, not as I know of; had forgotten it, in fact."

"Well, you must go; 'tis a temperance address by Flora Forrester, the authoress, you know. She spoke several times here a couple of years since at a temperance campmeeting, and the city went wild over her. Temperance was popular for once. It will be a treat. Better go."

"Maybe I will."

Clayton gave the half promise indifferently, with little intention of keeping it, but chancing to pass the opera house as it was rapidly filling up, he allowed himself to drift in with the rest.

His wife's habits were not generally understood among their acquaintances in Carson yet, or his sensitiveness would have forbade him attending such a meeting.

Absently he watched the house fill and listened to the opening chorus and prayer. Then the chairman rose, saying—

"It will hardly be necessary for me to introduce to this audience the well known speaker, Flora Forrester," turning, as he spoke, to the woman who had just mounted the steps from a rear dressing room. A burst of applause greeted her as she came forward, bowing with simple dignity.

"Blanche Bird! Great heavens!" were the smothered exclamations that burst from Clayton's lips, and then he sat like one stunned, gazing fixedly at the graceful, womanly figure before him.

She did not seem changed, only riper and more lovely, and her soft, white dress reminded him of the one she had worn on that last morning. A bunch of purple pansies, nestling in the lace at her throat, was her only ornament. He remembered that she always wore them of old, and that he used often to call her "Heartsease."

Breathlessly he listened for the first sound of her voice. It fell low, but sweet and clear, carrying him back to the time when it had been the sweetest music on earth to him; and then—God pity him!—looking at the perfect woman, he thought of his wife.

She was speaking in an earnest tone, but he listened without knowing what she said. It was enough to hear her voice and see her.

Strange that this one hour of heaven had been forced upon him to make the hell of his daily life more unendurable! But hark! What was she saying?

"One word to husbands, if there be any here who have wives addicted to the fatal cup. Most of you start in horror at such a suggestion as you think of the pure woman who makes your fireside bright, your home a haven of rest and safety; but let me tell you there are, in this fair land, wives and mothers descending to the inebriate's grave. Not many, comparatively speaking, thank God, but some, and to the husbands of such I would say, stand by that sin-stricken woman until the coffin lid closes over her ruined life.

"As a rule women are more faithful to wrecked partners than are men, but there should be no difference. If I were the wife of a drunkard, I would stand by him until death's grasp was upon him, and then follow him down, as it were, into the very gates of hell, pleading a merciful father to fulfill the promise, 'Ask and ye shall receive.' His soul should at least be wafted out on the wings of prayer, and then I could but leave the rest with God.

"I knew a woman who left such a husband because the climate where they lived did not agree with their child. How much better to have let the little lamb go, to be carried in the Savior's bosom, than to let her husband die, as he did, alone, with no wife's prayers to rise like incense before Jehovah.

"What I have already said to wives, I now repeat to husbands, 'What God hath joined together let no man—or anything—put asunder.' You took them for better or worse, chose them from among all others, now stand to your vows. You have no right to shirk because your task is an unpleasant one, because it has turned out for 'worse' instead of 'better.'

"If it be your life work to bury ambition and pride and fill up the time by counsel, entreaty and prayers over an inebriate wife, do it, leaving the results with Him who 'knoweth the end from the beginning.'"

Frank Clayton was weeping silently when she finished, but there had arisen in his soul a mighty purpose, a determination to follow her advice, though it led through sorrow and disgrace. Nor did he regret this resolve or his firm adherence to it, when, a year and a half later, he stood beside the earthly remains of his once beautiful wife. There was no remorse; he had been true to his marriage vow.

Twice had winter's snow and summer's flowers alternated above the grave of fair, frail Olive Clayton, when the following paragraph met the eye of Lawyer Clayton—