

The Albany Register.

VOLUME VI.

ALBANY, OREGON, MAY 23, 1874.

NO. 47.

Miscellaneous.

The Story of a Kiss.

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"You wished to see me, Doctor?"

"I did, Miss Dallas, and upon a very serious matter. Pardon me if I appear to be meddling with your secrets; I do it only to save a fellow-creature's life."

The young woman's face flushed during the remarks, but paled when he spoke so gravely. He continued:

"Three weeks ago I was called to the bedside of Harry Gilman, and I found him prostrated with brain fever. I saw at the outset that the case was a desperate one, but hoped that skill and care might bring him through. From that day until this I have been almost constant in my attendance upon him; have battled with the disease inch by inch; and have striven with what skill I had at command to save him."

"Early in my attendance I saw there was some dreadful disappointment beneath his malady, if not the cause of his prostration. In the hours that his mind wandered your name was constantly on his tongue. His sister told me in answer to my questions, that Harry was deeply and truly in love with you, but that an estrangement has come between you lately; and I think this blow has been the one that brought him under my care. To-night the crisis in his disease will be reached, and to-night will answer our questions as to whether he will live or die. Without any help but such as I can render him he may be saved; but a man's life is too great a jewel to trifle with, and we feel if you would but help us we could surely save him. Will you consent to assist us?"

"What could I do?" she asked. "The plan I have marked out in my mind," said he, "is simply this. About midnight he will arouse from his stupor, and in the next ten minutes his fate will be decided. The main point will be to have him make an effort for his own life. Should he try to live, his chances will be among the best; should he make no such effort, we might with stimulants carry him beyond danger; but if at that moment he recalls the past, and despondently sinks under it, no power under heaven but you can save him."

"And what would you have me do?" "Just this, Miss Dallas; if, when he awakes, he is hopeful and remembers nothing of his disappointment, we will not need you at all. But should he begin to sink, the sight of you would save him."

"But how?" "We could pretend you had recalled your decision of a few weeks ago."

"Oh, that would be too horrible! I could never do that."

"Not to save a man's life?" he asked solemnly.

"He would not thank me for saving his life by such a mockery," she said. "Why, I might have to say that I loved him, might I not?"

"Yes."

"Oh, I could not do it?" "Not even to save his life?"

"You said that before," she said, "but not even for that could I do this thing. Harry and I have ever been dear friends. I never fancied that he could love me until he surprised me by his avowal, and then I told him it could not be. How could I stand at his bedside now and say that I loved him? No, no, it cannot be. Think of some other plan."

"I have thought of all ways,

Miss Dallas. I may not have to ask you to do this thing that you dislike so much, unless in the contingency I spoke of. I will not say to you what you ought to do, my dear young lady, but I promise you, if I am compelled to ask your assistance, that I will explain the whole matter to Harry, just as it is, and give him a correct report and understanding of your part in it."

"But how could I ever meet him again?"

"It will be no harder than it is now. And I have no doubt Harry will leave the place if he recovers."

"I would be glad to help you, Doctor, but this would seem like profanity to me."

"It is to save a fellow-creature's life, and be all the blame on me."

"I wish I could do it, but what an awful thing it is for a girl to do!"

"I can appreciate your hesitation, and yet, if you were my daughter I would say it was your duty to do it."

"Thank you for saying that, Doctor; it decides me. I will do what you ask."

"Thanks; I will call for you this evening, and explain your part to you."

Later in the night there gathered around the bed of the sick man his mother and sisters, the doctor and Kate Dallas. The doctor had explained to the others the part he had persuaded Kate to act, if it should be necessary, and they had thanked her over and over for consenting. They sat near each other; the mother and sisters wondering in their own hearts that any girl could know their Harry and not love him, but yet, they are women enough to know that love can not be forced or reasoned.

"How is he now, Doctor?" the mother whispers, and his reply, "There is no change." They await the slow turnings of another hour, and then the sleeper makes some movements with his lips, and the doctor, bending over, catches the word, "Kate," but he does not tell it to the others. By and by there is another movement, and the doctor beckons them out of the room.

"In a quarter of an hour more he will awaken," he says. "You, Mrs. Gilman and Ruth, will stand near me and be ready to catch the first question he asks and answer it. Miss Dallas, you will stand at the door and come if I speak to you, and act as I have told you before. If we are prompt and careful, and God wills it, we will save his life."

The mother and sisters step softly back to the bedside, and the doctor, reading the tremor in Kate's eyes, waits to speak with her.

"You will not have to say a word, Miss-Dallas. I will play the tyrannical doctor to perfection and save you, as well as quiet any apprehensions that come to his mind. God bless you?"

It was no common case with Doctor Brown, this attendance on Harry Gilman. When he came to Melville's poor, unknown graduate, seeking to establish himself and earn his daily bread, it was Harry Gilman's father who had been the first to trust him, the first to say a kindly word to him, the one who had taken him to his own fireside and made him feel he was in the home of a friend, the one who had honored him with his friendship in all the succeeding years. Doctor Brown was boy, with skill and care, repaying to the son the debt he owed the father, and he could not have done more for his own child. As he looked into the face of Kate Dallas, he could not but feel it was a fearful experiment he was about to make in two lives,

but he brushed the thought aside, and returned to his patient.

There were the premonitory symptoms of awakening upon the part of the sick man, and the hearts of the women around him seemed almost bursting with suspense and anxiety. At last the eyes opened; the wild look in them soon gave way to one of recognition, and the lips feebly uttered:

"Mother."

She could not speak; her heart was too full for words, but she bent over and kissed him.

"Have I been here long?" "Not such a great while," said the cheery voice of the doctor, "but plenty long enough. Here, take a drop of this," and he gave him some stimulating drops.

"Have I been very sick?" "You have been pretty sick, my boy, but you must not talk. Turn over and go to sleep again, and you can talk as long as you wish to-morrow."

"Is that Ruth?" "Yes, Harry."

"Tell Kate—"

"Nonsense," broke in the doctor, "take a little more of this and go to sleep without another word," but he turned to Kate, and his eyes said, "it will have to be done."

She tried to still the beating of her heart, but she had no fear for herself.

"Tell Kate"—Harry started again, but the doctor—after a quiet draught was administered—said:

"Why don't you tell her yourself?"

"Who? Is she here?" he asked excitedly, but the doctor caught his hand quietly, saying:

"Do not get excited, Harry, but listen; obey me exactly, and all will be well. Miss Dallas and you have had some misunderstanding, but you have fancied it to be much more serious than it really was. She is here now to see after you; she wants you to get well, and if you obey me you will."

The sick man's eyes opened wider and wider as his physician proceeded, and when he said, "Miss Dallas is now here," he would have raised himself, but the doctor was watching, and prevented his making more than the first effort. He turned to Kate, and in answer to his look, she came close to the bedside.

"My orders," said the doctor, "are that you may look at Miss Dallas a moment, but you must not speak, and then she and your own people must leave the room."

Kate's face was almost deathly white as she turned toward Harry.

"Kate, oh Kate!" cried he with the most supreme happiness written in his face.

"There, there!" said the doctor, "you disobey me already. Clear out of the room, you women, at once."

"No," said Harry. "Stop a minute! Kate, will you kiss me?"

"Yes," she said, and she pressed her lips to his face.

"You may go now," he said, and he took the draughts the doctor offered him, turned to the wall with sweet contentment written on his face, and in a few moments the doctor's practiced ear told him his patient was asleep.

He walked out where the women were awaiting him, took Kate's hands in his, and said, "You have saved his life."

"Thank God!" came swelling up from the mother's heart.

From this point Harry's recovery was rapid. His frequent inquiries for Kate were parried until the hour came when Dr. Brown felt the story had been told. There was no danger to be feared for Harry, while something might possibly happen to Andy Kline, as he set about undoing the strat-

agem. Harry listened attentively, his face turning red and pale by turns, but he spoke no word until the story was finished.

"I did this," said the doctor, "because I knew it was the last chance of saving your life. I kept her back until I saw it must be done."

"Have you seen Kate since that night?" Harry asked quietly.

"I saw her but once, and then only for a moment. The poor girl's nerves underwent a terrible strain that night, and I failed to help her."

"Doctor, I want to ask you one question. Do you think I can ever have any hope of winning her love?"

"To be frank with you, my dear boy, I do not think you ever can. I have given you a careful account of what passed between us at our interview, and to me, her manner showed that you had no part in her heart."

"Yet mother says she has sent over daily to inquire for me."

"Yes, but it was at my suggestion, until I had told you the story."

"Doctor, I am, so far as you can tell, in my right mind; am I not?"

"Certainly you are."

"The fever has all gone?" "Of course it has. What are you driving at?"

"Just this, said he with despairing bitterness, "I wish to heaven you had let me die!"

"Why, Harry?" "I mean it. You ought to have let me die."

"My boy, you are too young to talk like this. There is more in life than just loving or being loved. You have your mother and sisters, if you care nothing for yourself."

"Well, let it go. As I am alive, I must make the best of it. I thank you just as much as if life was dear to me. When can I drive out?"

"To-morrow, if you choose. Where do you want to go?"

"To see Kate Dallas."

"Not to worry her, Harry?" "No, to thank her, and then withdraw from her presence forever."

"Can I help you?" "No, except to let me visit her without announcing that I am coming."

"It shall be as you wish."

The next day Harry was driven to the home of Kate Dallas, and as he sat in the parlor awaiting her appearance, his thin white lips seemed to move as if he were rehearsing his part.

"I am glad to see you out again, Harry," she said, as she came towards him, but though her voice was sprightly, her face was as pale as his.

"Thank you, Kate, this is my first call; but Dr. Brown consented to my ride to-day."

Her eyes tried to read in his if the doctor had told the story, but she said:

"I hope you will soon be out of the doctor's hands."

"I learned from Dr. Brown only last evening," he went on, as if determined to say at once what he had come to say, "of what you consented to do for him during my sickness. I ought to thank you for, perhaps, saving my life. I do thank you heartily for all that you did, and all the more because I know it was a terrible task for you. He told me the complete history of his plan, and while I wish I had never been thought of, I cannot but see how great a sacrifice you made for me, and I thank you for it."

She had covered her face with her hands as soon as he began, and still kept them there. He waited a moment, as if to give her an opportunity to speak, but the room had become so still, that he said, "I have come," he murmured, "not

to thank you only, but also to say 'Good-bye.' She uncovered her face at that, and her eyes filled with anxiety—he went on: "In a few days I will leave Melville forever, but it—no matter where I am—the day shall come when I can be of help or assistance to you, you will remember that I owe my life to you, and"—he almost broke down here—"all that I am or have will be at your service."

She had covered her face again, and had he looked closely he might have seen tears forcing their way between her fingers, but his eyes were on the carpet, where they had been all the time.

"I am sorry," he continued, "more sorry than I can tell you, that I have ever been the cause of annoyance to you, or have ever brought aught of sadness into your life, but you have beautiful days yet in store for you wherein these will be forgotten, and I hope you will think of me, if at all, as one who would rejoice in your happiness and be happy in your joy."

He waited a moment, as if hoping she would say a word, but the tears were dropping from her eyes thick and fast, and her tongue refused to speak.

Finding that she did not intend to break the silence, he arose to take his departure, and then, for the first time, saw her tears. A wild, exulting light leaped into his face and eyes, but died away as soon again.

"Good-by, Kate," he said, and he moved towards her.

Her answer was a sob.

"It is my lot," he said, "to bring your life unpleasant experiences, when my dearest wish would be to bring you joy. I shall never be a cloud on your horizon again, so once more, 'good-by.'"

She turned her face from him, and said between her sobs, "I don't want—to drive you—from your—home."

"Let that give you no pain," he said tenderly; "I could not live here now."

"But it is I who am driving you away," she said.

"No, you must not take the blame," said he, "I should never have supposed you could love me, but let that go now. Good-by."

"Don't go," was her answer.

"I must. I could not stay and see you, the wife of some one else."

"Don't go," she repeated.

Heaven! Could he believe his own heart! Could it be possible that she loved him! His eyes filled with light and hope again, and with one step he was beside her.

"Kate," said he, "am I coming from death once more to life? Can you love me? Do you love me? Ask me to stay but once again! I am yours for life or death if you love me! What shall it be, darling, will I go or stay?"

"Don't go," was all she said.—*Hearth and Home.*

August Lytle, who was convicted of the murder of Indian Skolls, last Summer, was to have been hung at Steilacoom last Friday. Men were building the gallows, when a reprieve was telegraphed by the Governor, and the work stopped. Some flaw, it seems, was found in the earliest stage of the proceedings, and the case will be carried before the Supreme Court.

A Vancouverite, while exercising his horse, a few days since, discovered a large hole in the ground, which, upon examination proved to be a grave, in which the skeleton of a female was found, who had been buried there long years ago.