

Aunt Diana

The Sunshine
of the Family

CHAPTER IX.

Miss Carrington received a letter from Alison soon after this, the conclusion of which made her smile; but that was not Alison's fault. Roger had taken possession of the half-finished sheet of note paper and had filled it after his own fashion, adding a lengthy message from Rudel. Alison protested in vain; the letter must go with Roger's appendix or else a day's post would be lost.

"We have good times now and then, and get up a laugh and astonish ourselves. One thing, I have enjoyed my breakfast for the last three weeks. No more lukewarm coffee, poured out with an acidulated smile, we have the real thing in smiles now. There, I think I have inflicted enough on you, so I will subscribe myself."

"Your affectionate and grateful nephew, 'ROGER.'"

When Miss Carrington read this letter to Mr. Moore, on the old bench by the river, a pleased look came over the old man's face.

"I like that lad," he said, striking his ivory-headed stick into the ground. "I remember his voice pleased me when he was here some years ago; a good honest voice it was. Mark my words, Miss Diana, our little sunbeam is fulfilling her mission."

"I think Roger is all the happier for having his sister," returned Miss Carrington, with a sigh.

"Oh," he said, turning his sightless face toward her quickly, "you are missing the child, and so am I. Sunny is beyond our reach just now; one can not help wishing her back sometimes. For my part, I had no idea how sorely I should miss my little pupil."

"I always knew what her loss would be to me," returned Miss Carrington, with some emotion; "that is the worst of isolating one's affections. I have so few who are absolutely necessary to me; only you and Greville and Alison—three out of this world full of millions; it seems wrong somehow."

"The fewer to love—the fewer to leave," replied the old man, somewhat dreamily.

"Do you know," observed Miss Carrington, a little abruptly, "that Greville is very angry with me for sending Allie away?"

"Oh, he has written to you, has he?" with a half smile, for he had already received a stormy letter from his grandson on the same subject.

"Yes; he is as indignant as possible about the sacrifice, as he terms it. He calls me shabby for not letting him into the secret; he declares he shall go round by Chester on his way home and have it out with Alison; but I have put a stop to that."

"What! you deprived him and Sunny of that poor little pleasure? What a hard-hearted woman you are, Miss Diana! and yet you were young yourself once."

"My dear friend, it would not do at all," returned Miss Carrington, in her most resolute tone. "You spoil that boy so dreadfully that you give in to all his whims. You want me to keep you all in order."

"But where would be the harm?" persisted Mr. Moore, smiling. "Just a call and a chat; why, it would do Sunny good."

"No, no; it would only unsettle her. Greville shall go down to The Holmes some day, but not just yet. Allie will get on better if we leave her entirely to herself the first few months. Why, unless things go very wrong, I do not intend to go down myself until next spring. But Greville, oh, no; I told him on no account to do it."

"And you expect him to obey you, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes, he will obey me now. Later on, perhaps—but we shall see. I am sure it would be only cruel kindness for Greville to unsettle her. She frets enough after us, I am sure of that, and seeing him will only bring us more vividly before her. Besides, there are other reasons; but, my good old friend, you do not often distrust my wisdom."

"Nor do I now," he returned, slowly. "I was only putting myself in my boy's place, and thinking how he must long for a glimpse of Sunny. Have it your own way, Miss Diana; Greville is almost as much your boy as he is mine, and I know you would not cross him if you could help it."

"No, indeed," she replied, very gently; "I think you, and Greville, too, may trust me." And then the conversation dropped.

CHAPTER X.

"Roger, does it not seem strange that Miss Hardwick never brings her sister to The Holmes?"

"Well, no, Allie. I am too profound a student of human nature to think anything strange. You women know how to tyrannize over one another. Revenge is sweet, even to the feminine mind. Poor Miss Alison is expiating the offense of having excited our commiseration. The fiat has gone forth—her days at The Holmes are numbered."

"I took rather a fancy to the poor little thing, and I hoped to have been of some use to her—she seems so utterly devoid of friends."

Alison and Roger were walking down a country road. The evening was sultry, and Roger had invited his sister to accompany him in one of their pleasant

strolls. There was a moment's silence after Roger's speech, and then he began again—but this time there was a glimmer of mischief in his eyes.

"Allie, what should you say if I should promise to bring you and Miss Anna together in less than half an hour?"

"I should say you were a magician," returned Alison.

"Nevertheless, the thing shall be done," was his oracular reply, and then he said quickly, "Look at the clouds, Allie; we shall have a thunder storm directly." Alison gave a startled glance at the sky; there was no mistaking the gathering blackness overhead.

"What shall we do?" she exclaimed, in a disconcerted voice. "I have my new hat on, and this nice clean cambric, and we have no umbrella, and there is not a house in sight."

"All right," was Roger's cheerful response; "things are just as they should be. Walk as fast as you can; in less than ten minutes we shall be at the gate of Maplewood. Could anything be more cleverly arranged? Of course we must take refuge from the impending storm. They will be compelled to house us for an hour at least."

"Oh, Roger, what a good idea," exclaimed Alison, laughing. "Please let us make haste, though, or we shall never reach Maplewood in time." And Alison quickened her walk into a run. But the heavy drops pelted on her before she took refuge in the portico.

Before Roger could lift his hand to the knocker, the door was flung open, and Anna stood on the threshold.

"I saw you both running down the road," she exclaimed, eagerly. "I knew you would take refuge here from the rain; there is going to be such a heavy storm, and I was just beginning to feel frightened at the thought of being alone in it, but I don't mind a bit now."

"Do you mean that Mrs. Hardwick, your sister are out?" asked Roger, as he shook Alison's light mantle, which was already wet.

"Yes, they are out dining. There is to be a dance afterward, so they will be very late. Do you mind my taking you into the morning room? I have some work that I must finish, or Eva will be disappointed, but I can talk to you all the same. Oh, it is so nice to see you again," looking at Alison affectionately.

"Is it not nice to see me, too?" asked Roger, in a comical tone. "I don't think you ought to leave me out in the cold, Miss Anna."

Anna laughed and blushed at this, then she said, very prettily, in her childish way, "Oh, I am glad to see you, too, but I never thought of telling you so. Will you ring, Mr. Roger? and then Morton will bring us some tea. Please take that easy chair by the window, Miss Merle—it is Eva's favorite seat, because there is such a pretty view of the garden."

"No, indeed, I am going to help you," returned Alison, laying her hat aside, and pulling off her long gloves. "Oh, you poor child, what a task!" as she inspected Anna's work. She was trimming an Indian muslin gown with coffee-colored lace.

"Yes, is it not pretty?" returned Anna, innocently. "Eva means to wear it at our garden party on Thursday. You and Mr. Roger are both coming, are you not?"

"We are not invited," returned Alison, a little gravely, as she took a thimble from her pocket, and helped herself unasked to a needle and thread. "I am going on with that blouse," she continued, quietly, "so you have nothing to do but to talk to me and Roger."

"Oh, how kind you are!" returned Anna, gratefully. "The thunder always makes my head ache a little, and I have been working all the afternoon, and it was so hot; indeed," interrupting herself, "Eva was writing out your notes of invitation to-day. I think she gave them to Mabel. I am sorry," flushing a little as she spoke, "that you should have them so late, but Eva is always so busy."

"So is some one else always busy," observed Roger, with a pitying glance at the girl's tired face. Both he and Alison thought she looked thinner and paler than when they saw her last; her blue eyes looked large and heavy, and the veins of the forehead were marked too clearly; her fair hair was strained from her face and coiled somewhat untidily, and her gray linen dress looked tumbled and far from fresh.

"I am afraid you will have to house us for a good hour or more," Roger observed, "for the weather means mischief, and in this climate it never rains but it pours, so while Allie does your work you may as well make yourself comfortable. I suppose you will not mind my going into the library for a book, for I am not much of a hand at talk? You may summon me when tea is ready." And Roger marched off, muttering to himself: "Two is company, three is none; she shall not be bothered with making company talk for me, poor little girl!"

"How good he is!" whispered Anna, almost before the door had closed behind him; "he thinks I want to talk to you alone, and so I do. Oh, how quickly you work! your needle seems to fly. My head was aching so with stooping over the muslin that I could hardly see, but when I told Eva so she said I was always full of fancies, and that I was so dreadfully idle. But I don't think I really am idle, do you?"

"No, indeed," returned Alison, with something of Aunt Diana's abruptness; "I am sure you have been working too hard, you look so thin and unsubstantial. Tell me, Anna, why have you never come to see me again, as you promised?"

"Eva does not want me to come; at least, I think so; she always raises difficulties when I ask to accompany her; and—and"—her eyes filling with tears—"she was so angry that afternoon when you and Mr. Roger were so kind to me; she said I was so forward that people could not help noticing me, and that she was sure Mr. Roger thought so."

"Never mind, Anna dear—may I call

you Anna? and please remember I am only a girl myself, and my name is Alison, and not Miss Merle. Never mind, what your sister says is not true; people often say things when they are put out which they do not really mean. No one could think you forward; I am sure Roger would laugh at such an idea if I were to tell him."

"You must not do that," returned Anna, quietly; "he would be so angry with Eva; they are not good friends, you know. Oh, how glad I am to tell you this; it takes quite a load off my mind. I was afraid you would think me so ungrateful after pressing me so kindly to come; you might have thought I did not care—I ceded about it so often."

"You must never do that again," replied Alison, quite pained at this; "if you do not come to The Holmes I shall quite understand where the fault lies; we will not make things worse by fretting over them. We must try and be patient for a little—things may be better by and by."

The girls continued to chat until the tea came in and it was time to summon Roger. He was not sorry to be called. The library was rather a gloomy apartment this wet evening, as it looked on the darkest part of the shrubbery, the evergreens coming far too close to the windows. But, as no one sat in the room, this was not considered a grievance. He thought the morning room looked snug and cozy when he went back to it. The muslin dress still reposed on the center table, but a smaller one was placed in the bay window, round which the three young people were gathered.

Anna quite forgot her headache and fear of the thunder as she performed her simple duties of hostess. She looked so pleased when Roger told her that he had never tasted better tea, that he laughingly accused her of never having entertained company before. To his surprise she answered him quite seriously, "Oh, no; I never had a tea party before. How nice it is! Eva has her friends sometimes, but I do not seem to know any girls."

"Or young men," put in Roger mischievously. He seemed bent on teasing her to-night.

"Well, there is Cousin Anthony, you know," she replied in her usual naive fashion; "he is a young man, of course; but I don't think he would like to come to my tea parties. Eva always says that I am such a child that people don't care to talk to me. I am afraid I am not very clever."

"I am glad of that," returned Roger, promptly. "I detest people who think themselves clever. You are quite clever enough for Alison and me. By the bye, Miss Anna, how do you get on with your Latin?"

"Oh, pretty well," she answered, with one of her varying blushes, which made her almost pretty. "I have so little time and you have not given me a lesson for so long, Mr. Roger."

"The rain is over now," observed Alison, in a regretful voice, "and it is growing so dark, Roger, we ought not to stay any longer."

"Never mind, I shall see you on Thursday," replied Anna. "I am looking forward to the day so much. I have a new dress, too," she continued, as Roger left the room to find Alison's mantle; "it is not so pretty as Eva's dress—such a beautiful muslin; mine is only cream-colored cloth."

"I am sure you will look very nice, and I shall bring you some flowers," returned Alison, kindly, with a vivid recollection how well Anna had looked with the knot of roses fastened in her gray dress.

Then they joined Roger in the hall. "Well, Allie," he observed, as they walked briskly down the wet road, "have you had a nice time with your new friend?"

"Yes, indeed, Roger. I am so thankful for the rain. I am getting quite fond of Anna. There is so much goodness under that shy, childish manner."

"I know you would appreciate her," he returned, heartily. "Poor little girl! One is glad to do anything to help her. There is not much a fellow like me can do, except say a kind word when people snub her, or leave her to sit alone in the corners. That is almost all I have done."

"But you teach her Latin, Roger?"

"Nonsense!" was the hasty reply. "A pretty sort of teaching. The poor little thing once confided to me her difficulties, and so whenever an opportunity came I gave her a quarter of an hour's constraining. She used to come rather often to The Holmes once upon a time. Well, I shall leave her in your hands now, Allie. A girl friend of her own age will be far better for her."

"I am sure you have been good to her, Roger, or she would not be so grateful to you." But as Roger only said "Nonsense!" rather impatiently, Alison, with her usual tact, changed the subject.

(To be continued.)

Horse with a Speaking Tube.

Perhaps the only horse in the world provided with a "speaking" tube direct from its stall to its owner's living apartments is Birthday, a hunter, owned by Mrs. Walter Wadham-Petre, of London. Hearing it neigh at night, she concluded to have an arrangement constructed so that she could speak to it from her room. "Now," said she to a visitor recently, lifting up a trapdoor six inches square, which was hidden beneath a Turkish rug, "when I say, 'Hello, boy!' you will hear Birthday respond with a cheerful whinny." According to a writer in a London paper, no sooner had Mrs. Wadham-Petre spoken than the horse set up a series of whinnies.

A good game cock has no white in its plumage, and hence the synonym for cowardice—"to show the white feather."



Eggplant Salad.

Cut the eggplant in quarter-inch slices, pare, sprinkle with salt and pepper and saute them quickly in hot butter. Drain on cheesecloth; when cold cut them in dice, sprinkle on them some minced watercress and cover with a cream salad dressing, made by stirring three teaspoonfuls of grated horseradish, three tablespoonfuls of lemon juice, one-half teaspoonful of salt and a dash of paprika into one cupful of thick whipped cream.

Escalloped Squash.

Cut the squash in to small pieces and boil until tender, but not soft enough to mash. Butter a baking dish and cover the bottom with a layer of squash, over which sprinkle a little salt, a little sugar and a few bits of butter. Keep doing this until the dish is full. On top, in addition to the seasoning, add a little grated nutmeg. Pour in about two-thirds of a cupful of milk and bake in a moderate oven. Serve hot.

Stuffed Pears.

This autumn dainty is delicious and is made by taking firm pears, cutting off the tops and removing part of the cores. Steam the fruit until tender in a steamer and dip in sugar syrup on the point of crystallization. Fill the centers with marshmallow frosting in which are mixed equal parts of chopped dates and candied cherries. Top with whipped cream and serve with angel cake.

Cheese Omelet.

Beat six eggs light without separating yolks and whites and stir into them half a cup of milk, a full teaspoonful of salt and a pinch of pepper, then two tablespoonfuls of grated cheese. Have your omelet pan ready with melted butter, turn in the mixture and cook as you would any other omelet.

Raisin Pie.

Put over the fire in a saucepan a cup of water, a cup of seeded raisins, a cup of sugar and a pinch of grated nutmeg. Thicken this mixture after boiling for a few minutes with a little cornstarch or flour, and bake with a top-crust, cutting slits in this to let out the steam.

Beef and Carrots.

Take one pound of round of beef and chop coarsely. Chop three carrots fine and cook with the meat in water just to cover until done. Season this with salt, pepper, butter and an onion grated. Thicken with a tablespoonful of flour, rubbed smooth with cold milk.

Peach Sherbet.

Boil together for twenty minutes one quart of water and a pound of granulated sugar. Cool, add a scant pint of peach pulp, a teaspoonful of gelatine, softened in cold water, then dissolve over the tea kettle, and the juice of two oranges and one lemon. Freeze.

Simple Way to Beat Eggs.

The beating of eggs to a froth, often a tiring task, will be made easier if, before breaking the eggs into the basin, the latter is rinsed in cold water. Add to the eggs a pinch of salt, stand in a good current of air while beating them, and they will soon froth.

Steamed Custard.

Beat four eggs with four tablespoonfuls of sugar; add one pint of cold milk and one teaspoonful of vanilla extract. Pour into a buttered mold, cover with buttered paper and steam very gently for one hour. Turn out carefully and serve hot or cold.

Molasses Nut Taffy.

Boil a quart of molasses until a little dropped in ice water is brittle, add a saltspoonful of baking soda and stir in as many broken English walnuts or hickory nuts as desired. Pour into a greased tin and when cold break into pieces.

Care in Cleaning Poultry.

If while cleaning poultry the gail is broken, an unpleasant taste is given to the meat. This taste can be removed by soaking the meat for half an hour in cold water, to which a tablespoonful of baking soda has been added.

Pork Pancake.

Cut sweet salt pork into small pieces, fry a little and stir into a good griddle-cake batter. Put into a bread pan and bake to a nice brown. A little sugar is an improvement. Pancakes are good made with apples instead of pork.

Apple Snow Cake Filling.

Grate one large, peeled apple, add a cup of powdered sugar, the beaten whites of two eggs and beat for as long as you can to make it very light. Twenty minutes is not too long. Spread on cake layers.

Baked Cheese Omelet.

Prepare as for other omelet, but turn into a well-greased bakedish or custard cups, half filling these, and then set in a pan of hot water and bake, covered, until firm.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY

Austria's state railways in 1906 were run at a loss of \$16,849,000.

The city of Haroun al Raschid, Bagdad, has a foreign trade of nearly \$25,000,000 a year.

British Honduras is short of labor for its increasing fruit growing and is trying to get coolies from India.

Central Park in New York city is assessed at the valuation of \$215,000,000, not for the purpose of taxation, but so as to show the amount of real estate value that is exempt from taxes.

There is an agreement among the keepers of first-class restaurants in New York city that the business would not pay, on the scale now followed, if it were not for the sale of alcoholic beverages.

Palestine's ancient wells, famous in history for centuries, are giving way to pumping by modern engines and outfits, particularly for watering gardens and orchards. There is a large demand for and import of pumps.

The new docks at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, are to be further enlarged at a cost of 65,000,000 milreis (\$19,500,000), in addition to the extensive dock work now going on. The docks are owned by the Brazilian Federal government.

Chinese are discarding the old oiled paper umbrellas, in use for centuries, in favor of the kind of umbrellas used in Europe and America. Germany and Japan are fighting for the trade. Last year China imported 1,102,333 umbrellas and the year before 1,280,111.

Introduction of motor boats into the fishing industry is held to be responsible for the steady increase in that industry in Norway. These boats make it possible for the fishermen to make a much larger catch and also furnish better protection in rough weather and are safer than the old boats driven by sails.

Women employed as ordinary day laborers in the construction of buildings, mixing the mortar, sifting sand and carrying bricks and for unloading coal, are the unusual conditions described as existing in Prague and elsewhere in Bohemia. The women are paid from 32 to 40 cents a day. The working day for these women is from 6 a. m. to 6 p. m., with an hour for dinner.

Japan's second largest steamship company, the Alaska Shosen Kaisha, is starting a semi-monthly service to the United States with six vessels, using Tacoma and Seattle as starting points and Hongkong as the terminus. An agreement to this effect has been made with the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company, to begin in August, 1909. The six vessels are now being built at Kobe and Nagasaki.

Here is a possible explanation of the strong predilection J. Pierpont Morgan has for cigars. According to the United States Tobacco Journal, the Chester School of Waterbury, which the financier once attended, has sued a man in Hamden, Conn., for a year's board and tuition for his son. The defendant makes the answer for his refusal to pay that the school officials and teachers used tobacco in the presence of the pupils, thereby encouraging them to contract the habit.

Charles Francis Barker, of Boston, has held the title of American champion at checkers for about thirty years, and has just shown that his grip on it is firm by defeating Joseph Drouillard, of Kansas City, in a match of fifty games. Barker won ten games in the match, while Drouillard captured only two, the remaining games resulting in draws. Incidentally, it cost Drouillard and his friends \$1,000 to test Barker's mettle. The match was played in Kansas City.

After the performance of the "Goettermemering" in Paris recently, according to Figaro, complaint was entered by Wagner enthusiasts because the opera had not been performed in its entirety. The directors, Massager and Broussau, made reply in an open letter to the effect that to render the complete work several times in one week would overtax the performers, and "inasmuch as we give four hours and twenty minutes of music, we should not be blamed for omitting parts which could be rendered in seven minutes."

On the Hedjaz railway in Arabia there is to be operated a carriage fitted up as a mosque, where pilgrims will be able to perform their devotions during the journey to the sacred cities. Externally the praying carriage is only distinguishable from the other carriages by a minaret six feet high. The interior is luxuriously fitted. The floor is covered with the richest of Persian carpets, while around the sides are verses from the Koran appropriate to the pilgrimage and in letters of gold. A chart indicates the direction of Mecca at one end, and at the other are placed four vessels for holding water for the ritual ablutions.