

MOONLIGHT.

The salutation of the moonlit air,
Night's dewy breath, the fragrance of the
brine,
The waste of moving waters everywhere,
The whispering of waves—a bush divine—
Leagues of soft murmuring dusk, to the sea's
rim,
The infinite, limitless sky,
Wherein the great orb of the moon on high
In stillness down the quiet deeps doth swim:
Behold the awful beauty of the night,
The solemn tenderness, the peace profound,
The mystery—God's glory in the light
And darkness both—his voice in every sound!
Be silent and behold where hand in hand
Great Nature and great Art together stand!
—Celia Thaxter to Century.

DORA.

The night after his stepfather, Squire Halsted, whipped Harold Burr for a thing he had not done, Harold ran away. No one knew it but I, and I was nobody. But I thought as much of Harold as ever a human being could think of another. And I knew that he was wronged, and I felt that Mrs. Robling had done a dreadful thing when she took Squire Halsted for her second husband, and let him rule her, take possession of her money, and ill use her handsome boy.

I had had my share of it too, for while Mr. Robling lived, and while she was a widow I was like a daughter of the house. But no sooner had she come back from her honeymoon trip than all that was altered. The squire looked at me coldly, and I heard him ask Mrs. Halsted who I was.

"Her mother died when she was born," Mrs. Halsted said, "and I took the baby to my own nursery, where Harold lay in the cradle."

"More fool you, my dear," said the squire.

"The father went away," said Mrs. Halsted, "and was lost at sea—so they said—and I kept the little girl."

"You must remember that she will need to earn her own bread," said the squire. "She is not a lady. Let the servants keep her in their part of the house and teach her her duties as wait-ress."

"Oh, Mr. Halsted!" cried the bride, "I cannot do that."

"My dear," said Mr. Halsted, "I am master here."

The poor lady was helpless. She had no longer any control of her own money. I was six years old, Harold the same age, and a terrible life we had had of it. I was very well used in the kitchen, but I felt cast down and degraded. I wore big crash aprons that covered me from head to foot, instead of my pretty muslin and silk dresses. I was delicate, and waiting is hard work when your wrists are slender.

Mrs. Halsted did all she could for me. I used to hear her pleading with the squire to let her send me to a boarding school to learn to be a teacher, but he called her a "little goose," and she fancied him very wise.

But for Harold I should never have known anything, as after school he used to come to me and teach me what he had learned himself.

Cook would whisper:

"That's right, Master Harold. It's a good deed you are doing. God spare you. I was never taught to read myself, on account of an evil minded stepfather iv me own that put me to service before I could get schoolin', an' I know the loss."

And not a servant but would have waited in my place, for they said I was too small to carry dishes; but the cruel squire would have me come in to make sure that he was obeyed.

Mrs. Halsted really felt badly about it, I know. But two little girls came soon, and then a little boy, and soon she cared nothing for her own splendid boy, and why should she care for me?

But I am wandering away from the morning when Harold Robling, just eighteen that day, walked down the garden path in the gray morning light, and I with him, choking down my sobs. For now the one being I loved was going away from me, perhaps forever.

It was only 5 o'clock, and no one was up. The grass was wet with dew, and there were only a few pink streaks in the sky to tell that day was coming. We did not dare to speak until we got out of hearing of the house, but then I said:

"Oh, Harold, what will you do with no money and no friends—alone in the world?"

"Many a young fellow has done the same sort of thing," Harold said. "No man with his limbs and senses need to starve, and I mean to make my fortune. But I'd rather work in the trenches for my daily bread than to live in Squire Halsted's house, and with a mother he has bewitched into doing what he wishes, whatever it may be. It was a crime to make a servant of you, little sister. But remember, the moment I have power in my hands all that shall be altered. I will write to you, and you shall know just how I get on."

But now we had got to the wharf where he was to take a little market boat to New York, and I was obliged to leave him, for he did not want the squire to find out what he had done until he was fairly out of reach, and then he put his arm about my waist and kissed me.

"Goodby, little sister," he said, "goodby, Dora, my pet. Keep up a good heart and never forget to answer my letters." And he was off, and I went home weeping as though my heart would break.

There was a terrible time at the house when they found he was gone, and the squire swore he should never enter his doors again. But the squire's daughters, who hated Harold as their father did, though he was their own mother's child, said they were glad he was gone. And only I remembered him, I think, very long. A good woman was Mrs. Halsted, and her husband had got her under his power. The way he managed her has always made me think that there must be something in magnetism or hypnosis. She seemed to have lost her senses or to have grown mentally blind, and he led her where he would.

Just about this time I fell very ill, and when I grew better the squire, knowing I was good at my needle, made

a seamstress of me. I was ashamed to say why, but it is because I looked rather stylish and was called pretty, and so many questions were asked me by guests. As a seamstress I could stay in my upper room and work. I was so thankful for the change. Now I could read a little and be more to myself. I made the finery for the young ladies of the family, and no one troubled me.

Once, indeed, a rich old gentleman, having somehow got my story from good old cook, sought me out and made me a proposition of marriage, saying it was a shame that such an elegant woman should live as I did. But I thanked him and declined his offer. I was not unhappy now, except that I pined for news of Harold, for in all these years no word had come from him—none of those letters he had promised.

I felt sure he was not dead, and it was very natural that he should forget to write; but my heart had no rest. He was twenty-six years old by this time, and in all that time much might have happened.

My pillow was often wet with tears from thoughts of him—fancies of what he had suffered, and longing to meet him, or only see him from afar but once again.

At last news came. Mrs. Halsted came running into my room wild with joy.

"News of my boy!" she said, holding a letter toward me.

"I thought you had forgotten all about him, madam," I said.

I was sorry the next moment, for she burst into tears and faltered through her sobs:

"You don't know what it is to be the wife of a man who dominates your will! I never have forgotten or ceased to regret other things." Then she wiped her eyes and said: "But, as far as Harold goes, it is all over. He has written to me. He is rich—really rich. He has made a fortune in California, and he is coming home to see me. He is in New York and will be here tomorrow. The squire is pleased; the girls are wild to see him; his little brother is delighted."

She ran out of the room again, looking young and happy, and I sat down to my machine, swallowing a great lump that had risen in my throat.

He had not written to me. Well, I was only a servant, and he was a rich man now. They were rejoicing in his coming for that reason—the squire and his children. He was a very different person from the poor Harold Robling who went away.

"I expect he will give us lots of presents," I heard one of the girls say. "An older brother who is rich is a great thing to have. We must get him and make him good natured."

"Oh, yes," said the other, "When girls have as stingy a father as we have a generous elder brother is a godsend."

And I—oh! if he returned in rags, begging his bread, I should have welcomed him. I cared for him, not for his money. And if he had returned poor it was I to whom he would have written, I knew well. But I tried to put the selfish thoughts away and rejoice for his sake that he had prospered, even if he had forgotten his little sister Dora.

The morning came. As I sat at my machine I heard the sounds below that told he had arrived. I heard his mother cry out and the squire say heartily: "Welcome home, my boy!" and his sisters squeal and giggle after a way they had. Then the great drawing room doors were closed, shutting me out.

I, who loved him so dearly, went back to my room alone, uncared for, wretched! I felt as though my heart would break. I could no longer keep back my tears. Half an hour passed; then some one came to the door—a servant—who told me briefly that I was wanted in the parlor.

Trembling, quivering, feeling as I had never felt before, I obeyed the summons I opened the drawing room door.

The squire stood before the fire, important as usual, one hand in the breast of his coat, the other waving toward me as he uttered these words:

"Dora, I have sent for you because Master Harold has returned, and wishes to meet a faithful servant of the family."

But before the words were out of his mouth, Harold, handsome and larger, but the same for all that—the very Harold that I knew—rushed forward and took both my hands and bent down and kissed me.

"I told you, sir," he said, "that I wanted to see Dora—the dearest being alive to me! Such words as you utter I cannot permit you to speak as though they were mine. You have never received any of my letters, Dora, but I have guessed why."

"I never have received a letter, Harold," I answered.

"So I thought," said he. "We will not ask who kept them from you. I have no wish to quarrel with any one; but you were my only friend years ago, when I went out into the world homeless and penniless, and I have come now to ask you to share with me the home that I can now offer to you."

"Share your home, Harold?" cried the squire. "The girl is not your sister. I can't be done. It would be improper!"

"I am glad, sir, that the girl is not my sister," replied Harold, "for she is the girl I want for my wife; and here, before you all, I ask her for her hand and heart, and proud shall I be if she will give them to me."

I could not answer, but he saw all I felt in my face, and led me away with him.

There was no quarreling. People like the squire and his family never offend rich people, and I am the happiest woman living.—Mary Kyle Dallas in Fire-side Companion.

HELPING A LITTLE MOTHER.

New York Shop Girls Interpret a Passage of Scripture Literally.

It was on a cross street near Sixth avenue that one of the human race was struggling with bottomless courage against an overwhelmingly adverse Fate with a big F. This member of the human race was about three feet high and of the feminine gender, and the fate took the form of a great, fat two-year-old child dead asleep.

Where she had come from or how she had ever gotten away from there is more than I can guess, but when I first saw her she was staggering across the street under her impossible load, only to sink, helplessly overcome, on the curbstone. It was dark, a little after six in the evening, but the young ones had chanced to tumble under a gas lamp. Just then two young women came along; they had come out of the back entrance of one of the great shops on the avenue. Evidently they were shop girls.

"Do see that poor young one with the baby!" cried one, as her eyes fell on the hapless pair. Just then the unconquerable "young one" struggled to her feet and loaded up again.

"I say," said the same speaker, "she can't carry that child. Wait a minute, missy," and the two hurried across the street.

It was easy in the gloom to keep in ear-shot, and if ever eavesdropping is justifiable it is not when it seems to promise a chance to see a better side of human nature than this sordid old world usually brings to the surface?

"Where are you trying to go?"

"You can't carry that child to save your life." The two spoke together.

"I've carried him lots and lots of times," declared the mite in a voice divided between defiance and misery.

"Well, I guess he's gained five pounds since last week by the look of him, and a baby asleep like that always weighs a ton. Where do you live?"

The mite murmured something about Second avenue. One of the girls whistled. It was very unladylike, but I for one am willing that she should whistle whenever she pleases. She and the other one looked at each other a minute.

"It'll be nine before we get home," said she, adding, "unless we take the Twenty-third street car one way."

"We can't afford it; you know we can't. It won't hurt us to lose our dinner. They'll save us something to eat."

The mite began trying to gather the young Jumbo off the pavement again.

"Hullo—wait—we'll carry him for you." Both were speaking, and both leaned over to pick him up.

"Let me take him first," said the girl that whistled and that had first spied the pair.

"Whew, what a load! You're no idea," said she, and the queer quartet started off, the mite trotting along with a watchful eye cocked on the baby, but entering now into friendly explanations.

"He just would go to sleep all at once," I heard her say.

I had not heard the Scripture about bearing one another's burdens quoted during the whole episode, but some way I felt as if I had been listening to a large and eloquent sermon thereon.—New York Herald.

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