

WHEN MARJORIE REMEMBERED  
By Annie Hamilton Dornell  
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"MY dear sir," Dr. Sperry hesitated and fitted his finger tips together with careful precision before he continued.  
"My dear sir, it is one of the strange cases, but it does not stand alone in the records. I have known of others, a few, quite parallel. There is only the one treatment."  
"And that?" interrupted the little man opposite, haggard with anxiety.  
"Is the one I have prescribed all along. There is no change."  
The little man, Marshall Graham, got on to his feet and began to pace the floor with nervous little runs. He plucked his hands in his pockets to hide their trembling.  
"We must humor her still, doctor?" he asked. "You mean that?"  
"You must humor her still—I mean that; I mean just that. Humor her—humor her. Believe what she believes, if you can. If you can't, make believe. I tell you—"  
The little man's hands came down resoundingly on the learned doctor's knee.  
"I tell you, Graham, you've got to do it if you'd save her. It's the only way in a case like hers, and, good Lord, man, haven't I been studying these cases forty years? I tell you—I tell you—"  
One long forefinger lifted the words on the other palm. The doctor's face was solemn.  
"She—must—be—humored! Any rude shock, any forced awakening, will be her death or something worse. She must awaken herself; she must come out of her delusion by herself, of herself, naturally and quietly."  
"But—!" The little man's lips stammered helplessly. The rest of his question would not ask itself, but the doctor read it in his anxious face. He got up and forced the little man into a chair gently. Then he stood over him with his big, square bulk and gave him comfort.  
"Man alive," he said, "are you going daft?" Will she come out of it? That's what you want to ask, eh? Well, then, listen. I believe she will. I believe—she will. I believe there will be a quiet, natural waking up of her own accord when the time comes. But you've got to wait for it. You've got to watch over her constantly and make it that no laboring idiot breaks the spell of her dream for her. I told you what that would mean. You've got to wait, and the Lord give you patience."  
"It is terrible—the waiting," Marshall Graham said slowly. "It is terrible to her so happy, doctor?"  
"Good Lord, man, wouldn't it be worse to see her miserably?"  
"In one way—in one way," groaned the stricken little man.  
The doctor settled back into his pivot chair and once more adjusted his finger tips precisely.  
"It's an unusual case—an unusual case, my dear sir," he said in his stilled, professional tone. "The shock was so severe. It is seldom one loses four children at a single blow. And then her terrible illness that followed—I suspect her constitution and put a tremendous hindrance on nature's method of cure. It is only what you would expect—that the cure is delayed immensely. Immensely. By the way, Graham, are the servants all trustworthy, eh?"  
He wheeled about and put the question abruptly. Marshall Graham awoke from his deep preoccupation.  
"Perfectly—every one of 'em, doctor," he said briskly. "I can trust them down to the last iota. They are all devotedly attached to Marjorie—to Mrs. Graham."  
"Good!" That's of the utmost importance. Honor her, do they? Fall in with all her vagaries about the children?"  
"All poor things, it's terrible for them too! They were all so fond of the—the little ones."  
"Is the children's nurse still with you?"  
"Roxey? Oh, yes—Mrs. Graham will not think of letting her go. She is waiting for them to come home."  
The little man's voice broke pitifully. He caught up his hat and hurried to the door.  
"Good morning, doctor," he said over his shoulder. He shut the door behind him, and his heavy steps sounded down the long hall. But Dr. Sperry was at the outer door a second later and called him back. The big white right hand was held out to him, and when it got the little, nervous, tense one in its grasp he gripped it.  
"Good day, Graham," was all the doctor said, but the little man's heart heaved above him—and delicately frail. The rings of soft hair lying on her brow were almost white, but she was very far from old. Her whole aspect was happily expectant. A stranger looking at her sweet, pleased face would have told himself she must be expecting some beautiful happening, and the stranger would have been right. Marjorie Graham was expecting her four little dead children to come home in a few days. She was getting ready for them. Only the restless, watchful eyes betrayed any mental disorder, and even in them it was hardly apparent to ordinary notes.  
"I've got a secret to tell you and something I want you to do," the sweet voice cried gayly in his ear.

"You didn't know—you funny, so-sentimented by not to—that next Saturday's Christmas? Christmas, do you hear, Marshall Graham? To think I had to tell you! And the children coming just in time! Those people—where they are, you know?"—the puzzled look in her eyes—"must have planned just right. They must have remembered Christmas if you didn't, forgetful boy! I'm so thankful—why, Marshall Graham, what kind of a Christmas would it be without the children? And that makes me think of the rest of it. That's the secret, and now what I want you to do is—can't you guess?"  
She tilted her head and looked at him again. He made a brave attempt at smiling, and shook his head.  
"Can't do it, ma'am. I'm not as good a guesser as I am a forgetter."  
"Well, then, take your wife out in the sleigh to choose a Christmas tree," she cried. "That's what you took me last year and the year before—and before—and before—oh, most back to the flood! Did you think you were going to get off this year? Not a bit of it, sir! We'll go right after lunch—way out in the country, you know. I'm going to be very particular to get a fine one this time."  
She chattered on too busily to notice the look of pain on the little man's face. When she glanced at it, it was smiling again bravely.  
They went right after lunch. The sun was shining, and a smart little wind sent a flurry of light snow into their faces, and Marjorie laughed at it. The cutter sped along out of the city into lovely snow christened country roads.  
"I'm so happy, dear boy," Marjorie said. "There's so much to be happy over. The children coming home—Isn't that enough to make a mother feel happy? Oh, but you don't know—you can't think, how I've been missing them! How could you know, when you're nothing but a man, poor boy? It's different with mothers—There, you needn't look so grieved, dear! Of course you've missed them too."  
"Yes; I've missed them, too," the little man said steadily.  
"Elsie and the girls twins are bad enough," ran on the sweet voice in her ear, "but, oh, the baby! You can't think how I miss that little peck of mischief, Marshall! It makes me ache. I keep all his horses and things lying round to keep me patient till he comes. I don't see—I can't understand."  
"Isn't that a good tree? Look, Marjorie!" Marshall Graham interrupted quickly, pointing with his whip, and the little crisis was past. They bent their attention to the choice of a Christmas tree after that, and nothing more was said about the children coming home—the little children that never would come.  
The tree was found at last that suited Marjorie, that had straight enough, symmetrical enough, low enough branches and was just big and just little enough. She was very hard to suit. "For," she insisted gently, "it must be a perfect one this year; just a perfect one, dear boy."  
"It is marked plainly and the localities distinctly noted, so on the morning the man could go after it, and then in the early, crisp winter twilight they rode home."  
The next afternoon Marjorie sat by her window, absently watching the little Coopers next door build a deformed snow man. There were four of them, all sizes, and they all wore little stout red mittens. Everything else they wore was old, worn and shabby, like the little Cooper house itself, but all the little mittens were dazzling and new. Mrs. Graham's eyes followed them in unconscious fascination. She had never noticed the little Coopers much before. Her own little children had never played with them. If she thought of them and their small, shabby house at all, it had always been with gentle veneration because they were there at all, behind her own pretentious, handsome home. They were the only blot on her pretty "view."  
Today she was not thinking of them really. She was trying to decide what things she was to get for the children's Christmas. The decorations for the tree—of course those were easy enough; but the toys! They puzzled her, baffled her strangely. She couldn't seem to remember—  
"They've been gone so long, the children have," she murmured wistfully. "That's why. But I should think I'd remember. I should think I'd know what Elsie'd like and the girls twins and little Peck. Mischief—oh, I don't see why I'm so stupid I can't remember—I can't decide! Oh, dear!"  
Roxey, the children's nurse, came into the room on an errand. Or was it to make sure the children's mother was safe?  
"Roxey," the children's mother said abruptly, "did you ever have any little sisters and brothers?"  
"Me, mem? I had a little brother once, but he'd—he went away when he was a baby," the girl answered quietly.  
"Oh, then you can't help me! I thought you might be able to remember."  
Marjorie began her restless rocking again, with a little sign of disappointment. Then her eyes fell once more on the little red mittened hand outside. They were just putting on the snow man's head. The oldest girl was holding the baby up to do it. Mechanically the pale woman at the window counted little cold blue noses. "Why," she cried softly, "why, Roxey—but Roxey was gone—there are four of them! There are just four—and why, they are almost the same sizes too!

One, two, three—three of them girls, and the little one a boy!"  
She sat up, mildly excited. Little red spots blossomed out in her white cheeks. Just four and just—almost the same sizes! Then she had an inspiration.  
"Oh, yes, they know!" she cried. "They'd know everything!"  
She raised the window a little way and called down to them in her clear, sweet voice that "carried" distinctly. "Little children! Little girl—you old-one, won't you please come over here and see me a little while? I want to ask you something."  
The children stopped their play and looked at each other with round, astonished eyes.  
"Oh, my!" said Nip excitedly.  
"Oh, my!" said Tuck.  
Nip and Tuck always said the same things.  
"Let's go to tell 'em," advised Ann Sophy wisely. "I'll ask my mother, ma'am," she called up to the eager face at the window.  
"Mother! Mother!" they all chorused. "The queer lady wants us to go over there at her house. She called us out the window—honest, she did! She wants to ask us something!"  
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