

NO LONGER SAD.

BY ALFRED CRAYON.

"There's a gentleman to see you, miss."

Miss Marion Audley walked into her aunt's artistic drawing room with a slight hastening of the artificially languid step that had lately become habitual with her.

A gentleman, at this particular afternoon, meant some one she was conscious of rather wishing to see than otherwise.

She gave in passing a sidelong and surreptitious glance at a mirror, which reflected a satisfactory vision in severely elegant visiting dress, and with a most unexceptionable spring bonnet upon a well poised little head, and raised her eyes to encounter a straight-forward masculine gaze which caused her to start back with a dark flush suddenly overspreading her cheeks.

"Owen Hilyar!"

"Yes. You don't seem very much pleased to see me."

She did not; there was no doubt of that. The young man came forward and took her hand.

"Marion, come. Haven't you a word of welcome to say to me? I have looked forward to this moment so long and so ardently."

He was very handsome and eager, bending down to her, but to Marion he only seemed, compared with the men she had of late been thrown in contact with, uncouth and rough; and his clothes had not the right appearance at all.

"Of course I am glad to see you," she said drawing herself away with badly concealed impatience, "but you took me so by surprise. I didn't expect you."

She turned from him and began removing her bonnet.

He looked a moment at her slight, round form, thrown into delicious relief with the two raised arms, and then said in a changed tone:

"I thought the surprise might be as pleasant to you as it would have been to me."

She made no reply. Good gracious! And why need he be so intense? And why need he come dropping in upon her like this, without a word of warning?

"You expect someone, evidently," he hurried on. "Who? Some man? Tell me, Marion! Why have you written so little of late, and such cold letters? Have you changed towards us all? Have you forgotten us?"

He had approached her again, and suddenly, with a burst of uncontrollable passion, stooped and seized her in his arms.

She gave a low cry pushed him from her and stood before him with flaming eyes.

"How dare you!" she said, trembling with anger. "How dare you presume! I have forgotten you in the sense that you mean, if you must know all. I do not wish to be reminded at all of those days before I left home. The whole thing is hideous to me—the life, and the place, and all. Aunt Harriman has made another sort of existence for me, and I mean to follow it. I have nothing more to say, and I hope you understand, once for all."

Hilyar had looked at her very steadily while she spoke. He interrupted her by not so much as the movement of a muscle. When she had quite finished, he slowly took up his hat and walked towards the door.

"Thank you for opening my eyes. You have been very frank," he said. She made, unconsciously, a faint movement to detain him, but the door had already closed behind him.

Five minutes later, the person she had expected to find on coming in from her drive, and whose name was Frank Dutton, made his appearance.

He noticed that she looked a trifle pale. He did not know that she was quite as pretty for it. And Mr. Frank Dutton was in matters of feminine loveliness quite a connoisseur, or so he considered himself.

One bright spring afternoon two years later, Mrs. Harriman was driving up the Champs Elysees, in Paris, with her two nieces, Marion and Virginia Audley. The latter had only recently enjoyed her favors and the advantage of her position and her fortune, but, though not to be compared in point of looks to her stately elder sister, had already impressed her aunt with the idea that after all, she might "do better" than Marion.

To speak truth, Mrs. Harriman was very much disappointed in that young lady. Had she not done everything for her, taking her from her plain home in an obscure little town, and giving her two seasons in London and one now in Paris, and all under the very best auspices? And what had come of it all? She had had a great deal of success at first, to be sure, and had seemed very sensible of her privileges and alive to the duty incumbent upon her of making the most of them. But then gradually she had lost interest, grown more and more listless, and actually let pass three most exceptional opportunities—such as any girl in her right mind would have jumped at—of settling herself in life. And now this last inexplicable freak about the Comte de—

"Why, Marion. There is Owen Hilyar," suddenly cried Virginia, interrupting her aunt's irate monologue.

The carriage, rolling slowly on in the press of vehicles, passed close by a

tall, broad shouldered pedestrian, who was waiting for a momentary break in the stream of horses and wheels to make his way over.

He heard the exclamation and raised his eyes. Virginia leaned forward and smiled all over her pretty face. Hilyar raised his hat, and already the crowd had separated them.

"Oh, hasn't he got to be awfully handsome!" cried Virginia. "He always was, of course. But Paris and civilization have agreed with him wonderfully."

"Who is the young man?" inquired Mrs. Harriman.

"Why, a friend of our earliest childhood, isn't he Marion? Good gracious! What's the matter, Marion?"

Marion was leaning back in her seat, pale as the white lilac in her dress.

"Nothing. These first spring days are so oppressive."

Mrs. Harriman produced her gold-mounted, cut-glass pungent, and having insisted upon her niece making use of that restorative, concluded that she had recovered sufficiently to listen to her warnings.

"I should like you to tell me whether you really mean to let all your chances slip, Marion? With the exception of Frank Dutton, you never had as good a one as this Comte de— You let that go—Heaven knows why, I didn't!—and now you're on the way to letting this go, too. But let me tell you, if you do you'll rue the day. Do you hear me?"

"Oh yes, I hear you aunt," was the weary reply.

She had been through numberless scenes of this sort before now, and she had always held her own. But now, somehow, as the carriage drove through the porte-cochere and they alighted and mounted the long stairs to Mrs. Harriman's apartments, Marion felt as though she could battle no longer—as though something had snapped within her.

A few hours later Mrs. Harriman, with her two nieces in tow, entered the drawing rooms of the American Minister. It was one of the largest balls of the season.

Marion was regally lovely in pure simple white, and Virginia looked like a fresh rosebud in her fleecy skirts of pink. Mrs. Harriman's ambitious soul filled with gratification at sight of the sensation the two girls were evidently producing. And to make her sense of triumph complete, there was the Comte de—approaching and claiming Marion's hand for the first waltz.

Having assured herself that Virginia's order of dances was being also rapidly scribbled over with the hieroglyphics of desirable partners, she allowed herself to be led away by an elderly diplomatist to a retired coign of vantage, where her nieces could seek the shelter of her wing during in their unattached periods during the evening.

The elderly diplomatist proved to be a conversationalist of exceptional brilliancy; so much so that Mrs. Harriman, usually the myst Argus-eyed of chaperons, quite failed to notice that Virginia was dancing and had already danced repeatedly with the broad shouldered young fellow whom they had passed in the afternoon.

Not so Marion. She had become conscious of Hilyar's presence before she had been in the house a quarter of an hour. Now, as she passed on the comte's arm, listening with a distant distrust look upon her face, which the Frenchman took for the expression of maidenly shyness to the words of respectful adoration he poured into her ear, she came upon him standing with her sister in the deep embrasure of a curtained window.

Virginia was looking up with a smile that played in a thousand enchanting dimples about her mouth, and Hilyar's eyes were bent with a sort of pleased contemplativeness upon her. The comte gave a glance sideways, and a half smile which seemed to express an appreciative apprehension of the situation.

A pang shot like a knife through Marion Audley's heart. After all, she asked herself, why not? Virginia was so pretty, so unspoiled by the world, so true, though she professed to be so worldly.

She turned her head slowly, and the two looked towards her. Virginia made a sign with her hand, and simultaneously Hilyar's eyes met Marion's. There was no look of recognition in the man's calm direct glance. The next moment Marion had passed on.

"Why, it is not possible you did not know that that was Marion?" said Virginia.

The next morning a storm burst in the Harriman abode. The diplomatist's conversation had not succeeded in rendering Mrs. Harriman oblivious to all surrounding persons and things during the entire evening before, and towards the end of it she had become conscious of certain happenings, the thought of which now caused a violent unkinging of the vials of her wrath.

"I had hoped better things of you, Virginia, at least, whatever your sister may see fit to do. I did not think you would put all your prospects in jeopardy at the very outset of your career by making yourself so scandalously conspicuous with a young man who is a nobody—a pauper—"

"I'm sure he is not a nobody at all," cried Virginia. "Owen Hilyar is well born and a gentleman. And as for his being a pauper—well, one doesn't think

of an artist's pecuniary position as one does of other men's, and he is rising wonderfully. The work he is going to send to the Salon is quite remarkable. In any case, he's an old friend. And if Marion chooses to turn her back upon such I don't."

To which Parthian shot Marion replied nothing.

But as the days passed she saw a change come subtly over her laughing little sister. And once, having called unexpectedly upon a friend, she found Virginia, was supposed to be spending the day with one of Mrs. Harriman's French acquaintances, deep in conversation with Hilyar.

The latter turned a trifle pale as Marion entered, and Virginia crimsoned with an embarrassment that was absolutely painful. Marion made but a short stay. She had learned more than she wanted to know.

That evening, as the two sisters went to their room, Marion said very quietly: "Tell me, Virginia, do you love Owen Hilyar?"

Virginia bit her lip, hesitated, then laughed.

"Well, you're such a Mentor, I suppose I must make a clean breast of it with you. I don't know that I exactly love him, but I admire him more than any man I know. He is so simple and manly, so unlike that foppish Comte de—, and all those fellows of the type of Frank Dutton, you know. And he seems to single me out for attention wherever we go—and well, I think I could be happy with him, really."

"You are sure?" very gravely.

"Yes, I think I am sure. What makes you look so solemn, Marion?"

"A human being's happiness in this world is a solemn thing, little one. Sometimes one misses it before one is aware. That must not happen to you, Virginia."

A month passed, and then one evening Marion came face to face with Hilyar at a ball. It was a last breaking up for the season, as it were. The night was warm and the windows stood open. People who had been growing languid in their pursuit of social pleasures of late, were galvanized into new life by the feeling that society was disbanding till next year.

Marion, with a sudden resolution that was the fruit of many sleepless nights, made a sign to Hilyar and stepped out upon one of the small balconies—flower encumbered—which looked down upon the broad Parisian avenue, with its even procession of lights broken into here and there by the broad glare of a cafe, and with its quietly moving forms of pleasure seekers enjoying the warmth of the night.

"You will think what I am going to say extraordinary, I know," she began at once. "But let that pass. I have a duty to perform and I will not neglect it. We were friends once—I want you to forget all the past and be my friend again. I know all about Virginia and you—and I wanted to tell you that I will help you both, if you will let me. There, that is all."

She put out her hand bravely and he took it slowly in his. His eyes burned so strangely in his white face that an irrespressible nervousness took possession of her.

"Let me go," she said faintly. He paid no heed.

"Did you think I loved Virginia?" he said in a voice that echoed in her inmost soul. "Did you think I had forgotten?"

"You can't—you can't—" she stammered.

"Love you yet? Ah, Marion!" His grasp tightened like a vice upon her hand, his eyes burned into hers through the darkness.

"But I treated you so shamefully—I did not know then—I was crazy! Can you forgive me all?"

"Marion!" the passionately appealing tone seemed to draw her to him, and perchance the midnight stars might have looked down on the lover's kiss they knew so well, had not Mrs. Harriman appeared at that moment with a certain look of haughty surprise.

"Marion, aren't you dancing this waltz?"

"Yes, aunt. With Mr. Hilyar."

"What will your aunt say?" Owen was asking a little later in the pauses of the dance.

"I shudder to think of it!" she laughed; but nevertheless there were no signs of overwhelming dread on the charming face upon which Hilyar's glow looked down, at last unrebuked, with adoring eyes.

And Virginia? Alas for the selfishness of poor human nature! The thought had never come to Marion until she had shut herself into her own room on her return. But then it caught her heart with a cold spasm. Was her younger sister's happiness, then, to be wrecked because she, the elder, had found her own?

She went to Virginia's door and knocked. Some moments elapsed and then Virginia slowly opened the door and stood before her sister in her long white wrapper. The child-like face was paler than usual.

"Oh, Virginia!" said the latter, conscious-stricken, and could say no more.

But if Virginia had a battle to fight, she would fight it out alone and in silence.

"I know why you have come, Marie," she said quickly, "and I know that you are feeling badly about me. But you

needn't. You had a first claim on him, and he has loved you all along. I didn't know anything about that at the beginning, but of late I have found it out. I think he saw that I was getting fond of him, and he—I don't know how he did it—but he made me understand. And to-night, when I saw you two come in from the balcony together, I was sure—and I knew you had made it up. There! Don't cry, Marie! I'm sure you're much more worthy of him than I ever could be. And I—I'm a scatter brain, you know, and I'm certain to get over it!"

And, with a laugh that might have ended in a sob, had she permitted it, Virginia resolutely pushed Marion back, and closed the door.

A little while, and in spite of Mrs. Harriman's opposition, Owen Hilyar and Marion were happily united.

Starvation, semi-starvation, surcharging, "banting," alkalies, purgatives, Turkish baths, exercise, and the thousand and one ways of reducing corpulency to respectable dimensions still leave a large section of our stout population in despair. M. Germain See comes to the rescue and solves (?) the difficulty with his accustomed dash and skill.

"O, ye massive fat ones, desiring to be made lean, eat not much meat, but drink enormously of tea." This is Mr. See's good news in a nutshell. That is the cry now to be heard in the Parisian wilderness of fat. Obese individuals may suffer from shortness of breath from many causes, writes M. See, and infiltration of the muscles with fat is an important one. There are many ways of reducing the fat. The first is by diet; the second by moderating the inhibition of fluid; the third by muscular exercise; and there are also balneotherapy or bathing and treatment by medicaments. M. See does not approve of "banting," as it takes too long; and, further, he argues that protoids such as meat, eggs, etc.; are productive of fat. Ebstein has recently advocated "banting," combined with some fatty food; but our author does not fall in with this method. Stout people do not bear bleeding well, although this was the treatment in vogue in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Iodides, alkalies and diuretics are not well borne by fat persons. Moreover, these medicines, when they reduce obesity, do so by destroying, or at least damaging, the organs on which the nutrition of the body depends.—London Lancet.

The New Year. She smeth forth in her virginal whiteness, This dainty, winsome, glad new Year; She smiles in all her genial brightness, And promises bountiful hope and cheer.

Her robes are wrought in some fairy palace, Fashioned by fingers as nimble as light, And set with millions of shining jewels, Pearls, and diamonds as Pleiads bright.

Last night the Old Year, stern and hoary, Breathed his last on her gentle breast; She closed his eyes with her lily fingers, And followed him out to his final rest.

At morn she rose in regal beauty To reign as queen o'er all the land; Her kingdom's a realm unbounded, She rules it with a magic wand.

All hail to thee, fair and lovely New Year. We own thy charms, thy witching power, We feel the spell of thy wondrous presence And do thee homage from this hour! —Yelma Caldwell Melville, in St. Louis Magazine.

Snakes in Her Stomach. The wife of Lem Allen, a prominent citizen of Churchill county, has been an invalid for a long time. Occasionally her sufferings were great, and recently her ailments were most serious, such as to cause her friends to almost lose hopes of her surviving. While laboring under the most acute pain, accompanied with symptoms of inflammation of the stomach and bowels, the most heroic medicines were used. After a time four snakes of the water species were taken from her. One was quite three feet in length, another about twenty inches, and two about eight inches. The powerful medicines used poisoned them, and evidently they remained dead in the stomach some little time. How they were taken into the stomach and survived is a question. For quite awhile the lady seriously complained of a peculiar sensation as if something was creeping around within, little thinking there was any reality in it. Since the serpents were unwittingly poisoned she has recovered rapidly, and bids fair to soon enjoy her wonted health.—Reno (Nev.) Gazette.

A Wide Difference. "Father," said a young lady to her paternal friend, "do you not think that we, as a race, are rapidly degenerating?"

"I do, indeed," replied her sire.

"In your opinion, do you think man is now what he used to be?" asked the daughter.

"No, there is a great difference between the two, for he used to be a boy."

Religion in Chicago is graded in prices. Fashionable religion is quoted as active and in good demand by rich, aristocratic invalids. Second-class religion, with a sufficiency of pie-crust morality, trimmed with an abundance of deception, is excessively active, and bring good prices. The wicked cry for it, if they have no collaterals to purchase it with. First-class religion is in demand. Faith, honesty, virtue and honesty are the only collaterals accepted for it.—National Weekly.

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