

A Deception

It Was Long Maintained and Ended Only In Death

By HELOISE BRAYTON

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When Sam Bartlet at sixteen went away from home without bidding his parents or his little sister Ethel goodbye, not communicating with them afterwards, he wrecked the comfort of the family. His mother died within a few years, and her death left the old man desolate indeed. His eyesight and his hearing were both impaired. His daughter Ethel, poor girl, had a hard time with him. To read to him was difficult, since she was obliged to shout, and he could not see to read himself.

Ethel loved her father, but it was natural that she should wish for something more inspiring than taking care of a broken down old man. She was but eleven years old when her brother went away and fourteen when her mother died. When at times she would have a temporary respite from the care of her father, like many another girl, she would dream of the prince who would come to marry her and give her the comforts of a home that would be her own—and his.

One morning there was a knock at the door. Ethel was upstairs and did not hear the summons. It sounded again and this time loud enough for Mr. Bartlet to hear. He went to the door and opened it. There stood a young man.

"I am looking for the home of Mr. Bartlet," said the stranger. "Have I struck the right house?"

"Speak louder," replied Bartlet, putting his hand to his ear; "I'm hard of hearing."

"I'm trying to find a Mr. Bartlet, and I think you are he. I judge by the resemblance your son"—

"My son?"

"Yes, your son Sam."

"Sam?"

"Yes."

"Oh, Sam, my boy, how could you have left us as you did with never a word all these long years? You killed your poor mother, and I have one foot in the grave. How could you? How could you?"

The father put his arms around the stranger's neck and wept.

The visitor was standing in this absurd position, not knowing whether to mingle his tears with those of the weeping father or to laugh when he saw an attractive looking girl descending the staircase.

"But I'll not reproach you Sam," continued Mr. Bartlet. "I dare say I was severe with you, and a spirited boy won't stand too much correction. I'm glad you've come back and to stay—haven't you? Oh, stay with us! Ethel and I are so lonely, and we need your help. Your old father needs a strong young arm and brain to support him."

By these words and the half amused, half sympathetic look on the face of the stranger Ethel understood that her father had made a mistake. Dreading to have him suddenly disabused, fearing a reaction consequent upon disappointment, she gave the young man a meaning look and put a finger on her lips as a signal for silence. Her father's back was to her, so he did not see her, and she, wishing to release the visitor from his embarrassing position, laid her hand softly on the old man's shoulder. He turned and saw her.

"Oh, Ethel," he exclaimed joyfully, "whom do you suppose this is? Your long lost brother Sam has returned."

He disengaged himself from his supposed son that Ethel might embrace the prodigal. But Ethel stood mute.

"Forgive him, Ethel, as I have forgiven him. Forget the past and what he might have been to us during the years that are gone. It was I who drove him away by my harshness. Forgive him for my sake."

"I forgive him, father," said Ethel.

But there was no warmth in the words, nor did Ethel greet her brother with a sisterly kiss. An expression of infinite pain crossed the father's face. The stranger saw it and stepped in the breach.

"Forgive me, Ethel," he said. "I have done very wrong."

He advanced to her with outstretched arms. Ethel drew back.

"Ethel!" cried her father in an agony.

The stranger folded her in his arms and kissed her. Had the old man better eyesight he would have known by the blushes that the kiss was not a brotherly and sisterly one. And had not the two whose sight was perfect strongly approved of each other's personal appearance, had not each seen in the other's expression that approval, besides something akin to

love's first spark, probably the girl might not have blushed. The old man put one arm around his supposed son and the other around his daughter, forcing them to prolong their embrace.

"Thank heaven, my dear children, for this reunion!"

"Father," said Ethel, "let us hear what Sam has to say in explanation, or, rather, I had better hear it first and repeat it to you. You know you have grown very deaf since he went away, and he would have trouble making you hear."

"No," protested the old man. "I'm not so deaf that I can't hear people who speak plain. Sam won't have to raise his voice at all if he doesn't mumble his words."

But the supposed Sam objected. He said that it was a long story he had to tell and he was tired. He would tell it to Ethel and she could repeat as much of it as she liked to their father. The old man, opposed by both his children, was obliged to give up and left them together. As soon as he had gone Ethel closed the door and looked inquiringly at the stranger.

"I was trying to begin," he said, "the delivery of a message from your late brother. He was my partner in business in a western city, and I regret to say that I come to announce his death."

Ethel sighed. It was rather that a hoped-for support would not materialize than grief, for she scarcely remembered her brother. But the stranger, who gave his name as George Mason, assured her that her brother's interest in the business would be sufficient to make her father and herself quite comfortable. The story of Sam Bartlet's career was, as Mason had said, a long one, and after giving it to her the question came up as to what course to pursue in the matter of breaking the news of Sam's death to the father.

Ethel could not make up her mind to tell the old man that his son, in stead of having returned to him, was dead. At any rate, she felt that it must be put off. But she invited Mr. Mason to remain in the house—indeed, her father would misunderstand her not doing so—until he returned to the west. The old man was informed that Sam was in business in the west and must return there, but possibly he might take his father and sister with him. George Mason before leaving his business had taken in one of his clerks as a partner, and there was no hurry for his return. He remained with the Bartlets as a prodigal son, Ethel taking care to inform her friends and acquaintances as to the true state of the case.

Several weeks passed, and Mason made no move to return to business. Ethel was beginning to fear that some stupid person might let the cat out of the bag to her father. Besides this, playing brother and sister by two persons who were not related was not likely to go on without criticism. To guard against any such issue George Mason told Ethel that they had better announce that they were engaged, which was his way of proposing. Ethel didn't quite like that way of doing it, but she acquiesced.

Every day it became more risky to disabuse the old man and confess the deception. He was falling rapidly, and it was feared that the shock of knowing that his son had not returned to him, but was dead, would kill him. Mason and Ethel, who were very much in love with each other, wished to be married, and it was necessary that Mason should return to his business. It would not do to leave the old man behind, and if they took him with them, blind as he was, they could not live together as man and wife without his knowledge of their relationship. The puzzle seemed insoluble.

However, though Mr. Bartlet would not solve it by dying he grew so blind that the young couple decided to be married and take him west with them without letting him know the secret. The ceremony was performed privately, where he would know nothing about it, and the three departed the same day for their new home.

Months passed, and although Mr. Bartlet's ears and eyes got no better his health was no worse. The difficulty of keeping the situation from him was trifling compared with the absurdity of his talking about the relationship that he supposed to exist between his two children.

"When Sam first came home," he said to a friend, "I feared Ethel would not forgive him for all the trouble he had given us, but now she acts toward him just like a bride and he like a young husband. They kiss when he goes down to business in the morning and when he comes home in the evening. I never saw such a loving brother and sister."

While the old man was content to live, as he supposed, with his children, he often wished that one or the other would marry that he might have a little grandson to love him and cheer him in his old age. But to gain this he must give up a part of what he already enjoyed. An outsider must be introduced into the house, and this he knew would endanger the family peace and comfort. The thought of bringing in another woman appalled him, for he

had a theory that no woman could come into a house without sooner or later taking over its management. But he saw no difficulty in introducing an other man. So he occasionally hinted to his daughter that she should marry.

"I have no wish to marry, father," she would say. "I am perfectly contented as I am. Why do you wish me to marry?"

"Well, you see, I'm lonely during the long days when Sam is at business, and I'd like to have a child for company."

Finally about a year after the marriage the old man gave out. One day he took to his bed, which he never again left. His supposed son's absence all day at his business was a great trial to the invalid. From the time Mason went away in the morning till his return in the evening the patient would wait and watch for him.

At last when the candle of life was flickering low the dying man heard a child's cry.

"What's that?" he asked, starting up.

"Father," said Ethel, "that's little Sam, named for you, the third of the line."

Fortunately there was no time for any more lies. The grandfather dropped back dead.

Right and Wrong.

The fool said one day in the king's presence, "I am the king!" And the king laughed, for he knew that his fool was wrong.

A week later the king was angry because of an error he had committed and exclaimed, "I am a fool!" And the fool laughed, for he knew that his king was right.—Smart Set.

MEASURED THE GUN.

After the Englishman Got Through, the American Had His Turn.

In connection with the ordnance inventions of an admiral in the United States navy, now deceased, there is told a story of how a young naval officer, a lieutenant, frustrated the scheme of a British naval officer to get the plan of the new gun, just then a matter of extreme interest to other nations.

The lieutenant had been detailed by the government to inspect the making of the new guns at one of our naval establishments. One day the American officer received a visit from the Englishman, who made no bones of asking for a look at the drawings. The American regretted extremely that they were locked up in the iron safe and that the officer having supervision of the establishment alone had the combination. The British officer was very inquisitive and was evidently taking mental notes.

After awhile the lieutenant was called out to the machine shop. When he got back to the office he found that the Englishman had gone. The American hastened to the foundry, where he discovered the foreigner very busily measuring the diameters of the eleven inch pattern. The instrument he used for this operation was a white grapevine stick he carried. He desisted, however, as the American officer approached, and then he was "started out of the works."

It was late in the afternoon, and the lieutenant accompanied him back to the city and introduced him at the club. There the wide awake American secured that remarkable stick and upon examination discovered four distinct notches. These the lieutenant carefully pared off with a knife and notched a like number about four inches farther down. "That will be a wonderful gun to go on a bust with," grimly said the young American, "if the Britisher ever causes one to be made according to the dimensions I gave him."—Army and Navy.

Futility.

"What does 'futility' mean?" said the young girl to her sweetheart.

"It means—er—well, let me give you an example. Have you pencil and paper?"

"Yes."

"Well, multiply 3,946 by 741."

The maiden struggled with the figures and at last produced an answer.

"2,845,066," said she.

"Divide that by two."

"1,422,533."

"Right. Now add three to that and subtract it from 1,422,536."

"The result is nothing," said the maiden.

"Correct," said her sweetheart. "That's what I call futility. You've covered a sheet of paper with figures all to no purpose."

Then he wondered why she returned him his ring.

IN TOUCH WITH FRIENDS and RELATIVES



A GRAND-MOTHER may not be as spry as she used to be, but she is in close touch with her world for all that.

The telephone enables her to make many calls as she pleases, and in all sorts of weather.

Formal gatherings have their place, but it is the many little intimate visits over the telephone that keep people young and interested.

Grand-mother's telephone visits do no stop with her own town. The Long Distance Service of the Bell Telephone takes her to other towns, and allows relatives and friends to chat with her although hundreds of miles away.

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned, Eliza E. Hawley, has been duly appointed by the County Court of the state of Oregon for Polk County executrix of the estate of John H. Hawley, deceased, and has qualified.

All persons having claims against the said estate are hereby required to present them duly verified with the proper vouchers within six months from the date of this notice to the said executrix at her residence in the city of Monmouth, in Polk County, state of Oregon.

Dated and first published September 29, 1911.

ELIZA E. HAWLEY,
Executrix of the estate of John H. Hawley, deceased.
OSCAR HAYTER, Attorney.

NO. 10,071.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT.

Office of the Comptroller of the Currency
Washington, D. C., August 24th, 1911.

Whereas by satisfactory evidence presented to the undersigned, it has been made to appear that,

"THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK of Monmouth, in the town of Monmouth in the County of Polk, and State of Oregon has complied with all the provisions of the statutes of the United States, required to be complied with before an association shall be authorized to commence the business of banking,

Now therefore I, Lawrence O. Murry, Comptroller of the Currency, do hereby certify that

The First National Bank of Monmouth, in the town of Monmouth, in the County of Polk, and State of Oregon, is authorized to commence the business of banking as provided in Section fifty one hundred and sixty nine of the Revised Statutes of the United States.

Conversion of the Polk County Bank, Monmouth, Oregon.

In testimony whereof witness my hand and seal of office this twenty-fourth day of August 1911.

LAWRENCE O. MURRY,
Comptroller of the Currency.

(Seal)

HAIR SWITCHES made from combs. Enquire at this office.

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