The Story of an African Farm

Continued from First Page

tured women will not be lovable, will not love.

"Do they see nothing, understand nothing? It is Tant' Sannie who buries husbands one after another and folds her hands resignedly—'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord'—and she looks for another. It is the hard headed, deep thinker who, when the wife who has thought and worked with him goes, can find no rest and lingers near her till he finds sleep beside her.

"A great soul draws and is drawn with a more fierce intensity than any small one. By every inch we grow in intellectual height our love strikes down its roots deeper and spreads out its arms wider. It is for love's sake yet more than for any other that we look for that new time." She had leaned her head against the stones and watched with her sad, soft eyes the retreating bird. "Then when that time comes," she said slowly, "when love is no more bought or sold, when it is not a means of making bread, when each woman's life is filled with earnest, independent labor, then love will come to her, a strange sudden sweetness breaking in upon her earnest work, not sought for, but found. Then, but not now"—

Waldo waited for her to finish the sentence, but she seemed to have forgotten him.

"Lyndall," he said, putting his hand upon her (she started), "if you think that that new time will be so great, so good, you who speak so easily"—

She interrupted him.

"Speak, speak!" she said. "The difficulty is not to speak. The difficulty is to keep silence."

"But why do you not try to bring that time?" he said, with pitiful simplicity. "When you speak, I believe all you say. Other people would listen to you also."

"I am not so sure of that," she said, with a smile.

Then over the small face came the weary look it had worn last night as it watched the shadow in the corner—ah, so weary!

"I, Waldo, I?" she said. "I will do nothing good for myself, nothing for the world, till some one wakes me. I am asleep, swathed, shut up in self. Till I have been delivered I will deliver no one."

He looked at her, wondering, but she was not looking at him.

"To see the good and the beautiful," she said, "and to have no strength to live it is only to be Moses on the mountain of Nebo, with the land at your feet and no power to enter. It would be better not to see it. Come," she said, looking up into his face and seeing its uncomprehending expression, "let us go. It is getting late. Doss is anxious for his breakfast also," she added, wheeling round and calling to the dog, who was endeavoring to unearth a mole, an occupation to which he had been zealously addicted from the third month, but to which he had never on any single occasion proved successful.

Waldo shouldered his bag, and Lyndall walked on before in silence, with the dog close at her side. Perhaps she thought of the narrowness of the limits within which a human soul may speak and be understood by its nearest of mental kin, of how soon it reaches that solitary land of the individual experience in which no fellow footfall is ever heard. Whatever her thoughts may have been, she was soon interrupted. Waldo came close to her and, standing still, produced with awkwardness from his breast pocket a small carved box.

"I made it for you," he said, holding it out.

"I like it," she said, examining it carefully.

The workmanship was better than that of the grave post. The flowers that covered it were delicate, and here and there small conical protuberances were let in among them. She turned it round critically. Waldo bent over it lovingly.

"There is one strange thing about it," he said earnestly, putting a finger on one little pyramid. "I made it without these, and I felt something was wrong. I tried many changes, and at last I let these in, and then it was right. But why was it? They are not beautiful in themselves."

"They relieve the monotony of the smooth leaves, I suppose."

He shook his head as over a weighty matter.

"The sky is monotonous," he said, "when it is blue, and yet it is beautiful. I have thought of that often. But it is not monotony and it is not variety makes beauty. What is it? The sky and your face and this box—the same thing is in them all, only more in the sky and in your face. But what is it?"

She smiled.

"So you are at your old work still. Why, why, why? What is the reason? It is enough for me," she said, "if I find out what is beautiful and what is ugly, what is real and what is not. Why it is there and over the final cause of things in general I don't trouble myself. There must be one, but what is it to me? If I howl to all eternity, I shall never get hold of it, and if I did I might be no better off. But you Germans are born with an appetite for burrowing. You can't help yourselves. You must sniff after reasons, just as that dog must after a mole. He knows perfectly well he will never catch it, but he's under the imperative necessity of digging for it."

"But he might find it."

"Might! But he never has and never will. Life is too short to run after mights. We must have certainties."

She tucked the box under her arm and was about to walk on when Gregory Rose, with shining spurs, an ostrich feather in his hat and a silver headed whip, careered past. He bowed gallantly as he went by. They waited till the dust of the horse's hoofs had laid.

"There," said Lyndall, "goes a true woman, one born for the sphere that some women have to fill without being born for it. How happy he would be sewing frills into his little girl's frocks, and how pretty he would look sitting in a parlor, with a rough man making love to him! Don't you think so?"

"I shall not stay here when he is master," Waldo answered, not able to connect any kind of beauty with Gregory Rose.

"I should imagine not. The rule of a woman is tyranny, but the rule of a man woman grinds fine. Where are you going?"

"Anywhere."

"What to do?"

"See—see everything."

"You will be disappointed."

"And were you?"

"Yes, and you will be more so. I want some things that men and the world give. You do not. If you have a few yards of earth to stand on and a bit of blue over you and something that you cannot see to dream about, you have all that you need, all that you know how to use. But I like to see real men. Let them be as disagreeable as they please, they are more interesting to me than flowers or trees or stars or any other thing under the sun. Sometimes," she added, walking on and shaking the dust daintily from her skirts, "when I am not too busy trying to find a new way of doing my hair that will show my little neck to better advantage or over other work of that kind—sometimes it amuses me intensely to trace out the resemblance between one man and another, to see how Tant' Sannie and I, you and Bonaparte, St. Simon on his pillar and the emperor dining off larks' tongues are one and the same compound, merely mixed in different proportions. What is microscopic in one is largely developed in another, what is a rudimentary in one man is an active organ in another, but all things are in all men, and one soul is the model of all. We shall find nothing new in human nature after we have once carefully dissected and analyzed the one being we ever shall truly know—ourself.

"The Kaffir girl threw some coffee on my arm in bed this morning. I felt displeased, but said nothing. Tant' Sannie would have thrown the saucer at her and sworn for an hour, but the feeling would be the same irritated displeasure. If a huge animated stomach like Bonaparte were put under a glass by a skillful mental microscopist, even he would be found to have an embryonic doubling somewhere indicative of a heart and rudimentary buddings that might have become conscience and sincerity. Let me take your arm, Waldo. How full you are of mealie dust! No; never mind. It will brush off. And sometimes what is more amusing still than tracing the likeness between man and man is to trace the analogy there always is between the progress and development of one individual and of a whole nation or, again, between a single nation and the entire human race. It is pleasant when it dawns on you that the one is just the other written out in large letters and very odd to find all the little follies and virtues and developments and retrogressions written out in the big world's book that you find in your little internal self. It is the most amusing thing I know of, but of course, being a woman, I have not often time for such amusements. Professional duties always first, you know. It takes a great deal of time and thought always to look perfectly exquisite, even for a pretty woman. Is the old buggy still in existence, Waldo?"

"Yes, but the harness is broken."

"Well, I wish you would mend it. You must teach me to drive. I must learn something while I am here. I got the Hottentot girl to show me how to make 'sarsarties' this morning and Tant' Sannie is going to teach me to make 'kapjes.' I will come and sit with you this afternoon while you mend the harness."

"Thank you."

"No; don't thank me. I come for my own pleasure. I never find any one I can talk to. Women bore me, and men I talk so to—'Going to the ball this evening? Nice little dog that of yours. Pretty little ears. So fond of pointer ups!' And they think me fascinating, charming! Men are like the earth, and we are the moon. We turn always one side to them, and they think there is no other because they don't see it, but there is."

They had reached the house now.

"Tell me when you set to work," she said and walked toward the door.

Waldo stood to look after her, and Doss stood at his side, a look of painful uncertainty depicted on his small countenance and one little foot poised in the air. Should he stay with his master or go? He looked at the figure with the wide straw hat moving toward the house, and he looked up at his master. Then he put down the little paw and went. Waldo watched them both in at the door and then walked away alone. He was satisfied that at least his dog was with her.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TANT' SANNIE HOLDS AN UPSITTING, AND GREGORY WRITES A LETTER.

It was just after sunset and Lyndall had not yet returned from her first driving lesson when the lean colored woman, standing at the corner of the house to enjoy the evening breeze, saw coming along the road a strange horseman. Very narrowly she surveyed him as he slowly approached. He was attired in the deepest mourning, the black crape round his tall hat totally concealing the black felt and nothing but a dazzling shirt front relieving the funereal tone of his attire. He rode much forward in his saddle, with his chin resting on the uppermost of his shirt studs, and there was an air of meek subjection to the will of heaven and to what might be in store for him that bespoke itself even in the way in which he gently urged his steed. He was evidently in no hurry to reach his destination, for the nearer he approached to it the slacker did his bridle hang. The colored woman, having duly inspected him, dashed into the dwelling.

"Here is another one," she cried, "a widower. I see it by his hat."

"Good Lord!" said Tant' Sannie. "It's the seventh I've had this month. But the men know where sheep and good looks and money in the bank are to be found," she added, winking knowingly. "How does he look?"

"Nineteen, weak eyes, white hair, little round nose," said the maid.

"Then it's he, then it's he," said Tant' Sannie, triumphantly. "Little Piet Vander Walt, whose wife died last month—two farms, 12,000 sheep. I've not seen him, but my sister-in-law told me about him, and I dreamed about him last night."

Here Piet's black hat appeared in the doorway, and the Boer woman drew herself up in dignified silence, extended the tips of her fingers and motioned solemnly to a chair. The young man seated himself, sticking his feet as far under it as they would go, and said mildly:

"I am Little Piet Vander Walt, and my father is Big Piet Vander Walt."

Tant' Sannie said solemnly, "Yes."

"Aunt," said the young man, starting up spasmodically, "can I off saddle?"

"Yes."

He seized his hat and disappeared with a rush through the door.

"I told you so! I knew it!" said Tant' Sannie. "The dear Lord doesn't send dreams for nothing. Didn't I tell you this morning that I dreamed of a great beast like a sheep, with red eyes, and I killed it? Wasn't the white wool his hair, and the red eyes his weak eyes, and my killing him meant marriage? Get supper ready quickly. The sheep's inside and roaster cakes. We shall sit up tonight."

To young Piet Vander Walt that supper was a period of intense torture. There was something overawing in that assembly of English people, with their incomprehensible speech and, moreover, it was his first courtship. His first wife had courted him, and ten months of severe domestic rule had not raised his spirit or courage. He ate little and when he raised a morsel to his lips glanced guiltily round to see if he were not observed. He had put three rings on his little finger, with the intention of sticking it out stiffly when he raised a coffee cup. Now the little finger was curled miserably among its fellows. It was small relief when the meal was over and Tant' Sannie and he repaired to the front room. Once seated there, he set his knees close together, stood his black hat upon them and wretchedly turned the brim up and down. But supper had cheered Tant' Sannie, who found it impossible longer to maintain that decorous silence and whose heart yearned over the youth.

"I was related to your Aunt Selena who died," said Tant' Sannie. "My mother's stepbrother's child was married to her father's brother's stepnephew's niece."

"Yes, aunt," said the young man. "I knew we were related."

"It was her cousin," said Tant' Sannie, now fairly on the flow, "who had the cancer cut out of her breast by the other doctor, who was not the right doctor they sent for, but who did it quite as well."

"Yes, aunt," said the young man.

"I've heard about it often," said Tant' Sannie. "And he was the son of the old doctor that they say died on Christmas day, but I don't know if that's true. People do tell such awful lies. Why should he die on Christmas day more than any other day?"

"Yes, aunt, why?" said the young man meekly.

"Did you ever have the toothache?" asked Tant' Sannie.

"No, aunt."

"Well, they say that doctor—not the son of the old doctor that died on Christmas day, the other that didn't come when he was sent for—he gave such good stuff for the toothache that if you opened the bottle in the room where any one was bad they got better directly. You could see it was good stuff," said Tant' Sannie. "It tasted horrid. That was a real doctor! He used to give a bottle so high," said the Boer woman, raising her hand a foot from the table. "You could drink at it for a month and it wouldn't get done, and the same medicine was good for all sorts of sicknesses—croup, measles, jaundice, dropsy. Now you have to buy a new kind for each sickness. The doctors aren't so good as they used to be."

"No, aunt," said the young man, who was trying to gain courage to stick out his legs and clink his spurs together. He did so at last.

Tant' Sannie had noticed the spurs before, but she thought it showed a nice, manly spirit, and her heart warmed yet more to the youth.

"Did you ever have convulsions when you were a baby?" asked Tant' Sannie.

"Yes," said the young man.

"Strange!" said Tant' Sannie. "I had convulsions too. Wonderful that we should be so much alike!"

"Aunt," said the young man explosively, "can we sit up tonight?"

Tant' Sannie hung her head and half closed her eyes; but, finding that her little wiles were thrown away, the young man staring fixedly at his hat, she simpered, "Yes," and went away to fetch candles.

In the dining room Em worked at her machine, and Gregory sat close beside her, his great blue eyes turned to the window where Lyndall leaned out talking to Waldo.

Tant' Sannie took two candles out of the cupboard and held them up triumphantly, winking all round the room.

"He's asked for them," she said.

"Does he want them for his horse's rubbed back?" asked Gregory, new to up country life.

"No," said Tant' Sannie indignantly; "we're going to sit up!" and she walked off in triumph with the candles.

Nevertheless, when all the rest of the house had retired, when the long candle was lighted, when the coffee kettle was filled, when she sat in the elbow chair, with her lover on a chair close beside her, and when the vigil of the night was fairly begun, she began to find it wearisome. The young man looked chilly and said nothing.

"Won't you put your feet on my stove?" said Tant' Sannie.

"No, thank you, aunt," said the young man, and both lapsed into silence.

At last Tant' Sannie, afraid of going to sleep, tapped a strong cup of coffee for herself and handed another to her lover. This visibly revived both.

"How long were you married, cousin?"

"Ten months, aunt."

"How old was your baby?"

"Three days when it died."

"It's very hard when we must give our husbands and wives to the Lord," said Tant' Sannie.

"Very," said the young man, "but it's the Lord's will."

"Yes," said Tant' Sannie and sighed.

"She was such a good wife, aunt. I've known her break a churn stick over a maid's head for only letting dust come on a milk cloth."

Tant' Sannie felt a twinge of jealousy. She had never broken a churn stick on a maid's head.

"I hope your wife made a good end," she said.

"Oh, beautiful, aunt! She said up a psalm and two hymns and a half before she died."

"Did she leave any messages?" asked Tant' Sannie.

"No," said the young man; "but the night before she died I was lying at the foot of her bed. I felt her foot kick me.

"'Piet,' she said.

"'Annie, my heart,' said I.

"'My little baby that died yesterday has been here, and it stood over the wagon box,' she said.

"'What did it say?' I asked.

"'It said that if I died you must marry a fat woman.'

"'I will,' I said, and I went to sleep again. Presently she woke me.

"'The baby has been here again, and it says you must marry a woman over 30 and who's had two husbands.'

"I didn't go to sleep after that for a long time, aunt; but when I did she woke me.

"'The baby has been here again,' she said, 'and it says you mustn't marry a woman with a mole.' I told her I wouldn't, and the next day she died."

"That was a vision from the Redeemer," said Tant' Sannie.

The young man nodded his head mournfully. He thought of a younger sister of his wife's who was not fat and who had a mole and of whom his wife had always been jealous, and he wished the little baby had liked better staying in heaven than coming and standing over the wagon chest.

"I suppose that's why you came to me?" said Tant' Sannie.

"Yes, aunt. And pa said I ought to get married before shearing time. It is bad if there's no one to see after things then, and the maids waste such a lot of fat."

"When do you want to get married?"

"Next month, aunt," said the young man in a tone of hopeless resignation. "May I kiss you, aunt?"

"Fy, fy!" said Tant' Sannie and then gave him a resounding kiss. "Come, draw your chair a little closer," she said, and, their elbows now touching, they sat on through the night.

The next morning at dawn, as Em passed through Tant' Sannie's bedroom, she found the Boer woman pulling off her boots preparatory to climbing into bed.

"Where is Piet Vander Walt?"

"Just gone," said Tant' Sannie, "and I am going to marry him this day four weeks. I am dead sleepy," she added. "The stupid thing doesn't know how to talk love talk at all." And she climbed into the four poster, clothes and all, and drew the quilt up to her chin.

* * * * * * * *

On the day preceding Tant' Sannie's wedding Gregory Rose sat in the bl[illegible]

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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O. R. & N.

Depart for	TIME SCHEDULE. From Portland	From
Fast mail 8 p. m.	Salt Lake, Denver, Ft. Worth, Omaha, Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago, & East.	Fast mail 6:45 p. m.
Spokane Flyer 3:35 p. m.	Walla Walla, Spokane, Minneapolis St. Paul, Duluth, Milwaukee, Chicago & east	Spokane Flyer 8:00 a. m.
8 p. m.	Ocean Steamships. For San Francisco sails every five days	4 p. m.
8 p. m. Ex Sunday Saturday 10 p. m.	Columbia River To Astoria and way Landings	4 p. m. ex. Sunday
6 a. m. Ex Sunday	Willamette River Oregon City, Newberg, Salem & way-landings.	4:30 p. m. ex. Sund
7 a. m. Tuesday Thursday and Satur	Willamette & Yamhill Rivers Oregon City, Dayton and way landings	3:30 p. m. Mon W and Frid
6 a. m. Tues Thur and Sat.	Willamette River Corvallis and way landings	4:30 p. m. Tues Th and Sa
Lv Riparia 1.20 Daily	Snake River Riparia to Lewiston	[illegible] 8:30 a.m.

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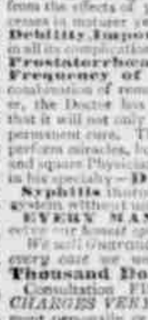

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