

# The Planter's Daughter

## OR FATE'S REVENGE

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### CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

In spite of care, trouble and privation the lady bore the undeniable stamp of having once been a beauty, and not very many years ago either. She was tall and slender, still graceful, and in every movement a thorough lady. Her plain, cheap attire could not conceal the fact that she had not only seen better days, but had kept that memory alive in her heart, which is more than many, who are forced to descend the ladder, are wise enough to do.

With a wan smile that spoke of physical weakness and repressed anxiety, Mrs. Burgess crossed the kitchen to Martha and placed the basket in the hands of her faithful domestic.

"How is Miss Claire?" asked the woman, eagerly.

"She seems to be asleep when I looked in upon her a moment ago," replied the lady.

"Asleep at this hour!" exclaimed Martha. "Then she must have been up writing again last night!"

"I fear so," rejoined Mrs. Burgess, sinking wearily into a chair beside the table; "oh, Martha, Martha, what can this journal contain that she keeps so mysteriously to herself? I must know!"

"So you shall some day, be sure;" then to turn her thoughts into another channel Martha added, "but what does this basket contain?"

"A few trifles for my husband's breakfast. Open it and see."

The good woman removed the lid of the basket and started back in amazement.

"Oh, what extravagance, ma'am!" she cried; "however could you afford it?"

"Don't scold me, Martha," answered Mrs. Burgess, with a wan smile; "it is so long since my poor husband has had a respectable repast. Men cannot bear privation as we women can. Besides, I wished to surprise him; it is his birthday."

In a burst of generous enthusiasm, Martha caught her mistress's hand, and was about to press it fervently to her lips when she suddenly recoiled a step as she exclaimed:

"Your ring, Mistress! Where is it? The one with the pearl—your engagement ring? Have you sold it?" whispered Martha, with dismay depicted upon every feature.

"No, it is only—only pawned."

"Yes, as are your jewels, your silver, your lace, everything—even to the mattress off your bed! Oh, that miserable pawnbroker!"

"Hush, Martha," interrupted the lady; "speak no ill of him, for he is the only friend from whom one can borrow without a blush."

"And for whom?" cried Martha, forgetting her position in her indignation; "for one who never asks what it has cost you to raise the money, so long as he has it to waste?"

In an instant Mrs. Burgess was upon her feet, dignity breathing in every attitude.

"Martha!" she exclaimed, warningly. "I beg your pardon, Mistress," the woman returned submissively; "Mr. Burgess has been a good master to me, and you know that I would die for him, but it makes me angry to see you so anxious, while he remains calm and indifferent! It is you, Mistress, who bears all the burden. Why does not Mr. Burgess borrow of his friends?"

"Because of a sense of pride, Martha, which you cannot understand."

Mrs. Burgess laid her hand gently, caressingly upon the arm of her faithful friend, and with tears in her eyes, turned abruptly and left the kitchen. As she entered the little dining room, where a snow-white cloth covered the table which awaited such repast as Chance might offer, Mrs. Burgess found her husband standing by the window, gazing abstractedly down into the sunlit street.

Philip Burgess was still a handsome man, though many years the senior of his wife, and long past the prime of life. He was dressed with that scrupulous care that bespeaks the gentleman, and there was none of the haggard anxiety in his cheery face that had prematurely aged his wife. As she entered he turned, and coming to her, took her hands in his.

"Your eyes are red!" he exclaimed.

"And you are paler than usual! When was Dr. Gresham here last?"

"Yesterday, and he agrees with me, that it is not so much a positive illness as some secret grief that is preying upon Claire's mind."

"A secret grief!" rejoined the gentleman; "our poverty, perhaps?"

"No; Claire is too noble, too proud for that; it is not for our lost fortune that she weeps; a deeper grief weighs upon her heart. Our poor child is most unfortunate, since she is in love, and loves in vain!"

Philip Burgess started in amazement. "I have divined her secret. I should have respected it, had I not seen that the hopeless tears she shed were shortening the few days that remain to her in this world. She consecrates almost every night to writing, and seems to take a little comfort in inscribing her thoughts, hopes and fears. I have been able to gain possession of one or two pages of this mysterious manuscript, written with a trembling hand, and blotted with tears. Thus I have discovered," continued the lady, "that Claire loves, but loves in vain."

"Loves—whom?"

"I do not know, but rest assured that I shall discover soon. Hark! she is coming. Not another word."

The next instant Claire Burgess stood before them. Had it not been for her excessive pallor, which the hectic flush upon her wan cheeks heightened, Claire Burgess might have been considered a rarely beautiful girl. To her slender, stately figure was added an exquisite grace, while her face, of a delicate oval, was classic in mould, and shaded by masses of rich golden-brown hair, which were gathered into a heavy coil at the back of her slender neck. Her full, gray eyes were wonderful in their size and brilliancy, seeming to embody all the life which, at her age, she should have been enjoying. At sight of her parents she paused a moment; then, advancing a step, exclaimed:

"Why do you look so sad! Mother, there are tears in your eyes?" And with a deep-drawn sigh, she added: "Ah, I understand; you were speaking of me."

"My dear child, we are going to save you; Dr. Gresham has assured us that—"

"Yes," interrupted Claire, "he told me yesterday not to despair, but that is the word they use when they cannot say hope."

"What folly, Claire!" cried her father, with a suspicious tremor in his voice; "why, my dear, I should have gone to the dogs long ago, if I had not kept a brave heart in my breast. No, no; have courage; brighter days are in store for us."

"Do you think so, father?" she asked.

"I know so! Am ready to swear it. Hark! There is the bell ringing! Who shall say that it is not Dame Fortune at our door?"

And an instant later, Martha put her head in the door.

"A lady to see you!" she announced.

"A lady?" exclaimed Philip Burgess, gaily; "what did I tell you! Show her in here, Martha."

And ere either Claire or her mother could escape, the door was thrown open to admit a lady, closely veiled.

### CHAPTER XI.

The veiled lady was none other than Sylphide Courtlandt, or Sylphide Courmont, as a cruel fate had decreed that she should henceforth be known; and she had come to this humble home to see with her own eyes the woman who was destined to take her place and become the mother of her child.

So anxious and excited was she to satisfy herself that Dr. Gresham had not led her into a trap, that her first movement was to snatch the veil from before her face and rivet her eyes upon Claire. A little amazed himself at this strange proceeding, Philip Burgess advanced and demanded, politely:

"May I ask, madam, to what we owe the honor of this visit?"

"I will tell you with pleasure, sir—only I am not well—and so many flights of stairs—"

"I beg your pardon, madam," exclaimed the gentleman, quickly offering the most comfortable chair that the room afforded; "will you be seated?"

Sylphide bowed and sank into the chair, glancing about her with the mental ejaculation:

"What misery! I wish I had brought five hundred dollars instead of one!"

While Burgess, whose eyes were not yet blind to the beautiful, thought:

"What a remarkably fine woman!"

"I do not live so far away as not to be considered a neighbor, and I have often heard your family spoken of—your former affluence and present distress."

Drawing himself up proudly, Philip Burgess replied:

"Then you have been informed, madam—"

"Of how nobly you bear this distress," said Sylphide; and with a glance at Mrs. Burgess, "and you, also—Mrs. Burgess, I suppose? And this is your daughter?"

"Yes, I am Claire Burgess," replied the young girl, with such unwonted firmness that her father glanced quickly at her. "Will you be good enough to inform us whom we have the honor of receiving?"

"My name is Hastings—Mrs. Hastings—I am connected with a charitable institution."

She did not dare to raise her glance to the three pairs of eyes that were fixed upon her until the voice of Philip Burgess broke the silence.

"Ah! A charitable institution," he said; "then I presume you came, madam—"

Quickly opening the silken bag which hung upon her arm, Sylphide interrupted the speaker with:

"I am making my usual rounds; I have received my share this morning, and am now distributing it."

"And although I am unable to do so to-day," continued Sylphide, under the same painful repression, "I can at least—"

"Mother!" gasped Claire, in sudden dismay, checking her visitor's words; and as Sylphide turned from one to the other in astonishment, Philip Burgess advanced.

"You are fulfilling a noble mission, madam," he said, with haughty promptness, "and we regret that we are unable to contribute to it as liberally as we might have in the past."

"Contribute!" cried Sylphide, recoiling a step.

"You must see that our circumstances are somewhat cramped," continued the gentleman, without heeding her amazement; "yet you must permit us to contribute our mite to your collection," and as he spoke he drew from his pocket a one dollar bill, the last cent he possessed in the world, and with a courteous bow, placed it in the silken bag.

A crimson flush dyed Sylphide Courmont's beautiful face to the very roots of her black hair.

"I thank you, sir," she stammered, faintly; and turning abruptly, she left the room.

She was completely dumbfounded, stifling with mortification, and not until she reached the landing was she able to regain her breath.

The figure of a man came lightly up the stairs and confronted her, and, too late to conceal her identity, she found herself face to face with Dr. Gresham.

"You—here!" he exclaimed, starting back in surprise.

"Silence!" she breathed, passionately; "I never witnessed such pride and misery! But the girl is dying—you may safely marry her to my—Lucian!"

While this brief but significant interview was taking place upon the stairs beyond the closed door a scene of hysterical relief was being enacted. The moment their routed benefactress had disappeared, Philip Burgess exclaimed, proudly:

"You see! I am not such a spendthrift after all. I have kept a dollar by me, and though it was the last, it has saved us from a great humiliation!"

Throwing her arms about his neck, Claire cried, with a sob in her voice:

"It was your noble heart, dear father, that has saved us!"

"Go to your rooms, both of you!" exclaimed Mr. Burgess; "she may return, and if so, she shall not depart until she has satisfied my suspicions!"

Scarcely had Claire and her mother vanished when the door opened to admit Dr. Gresham. With an exclamation of surprise and pleasure, Philip Burgess turned to the scarcely closed door.

"Where are you going?" demanded Gresham, abruptly.

"To call the ladies back," replied Mr. Burgess; "they have just left me."

"Do nothing of the kind! It is you whom I wish to see first of all, upon a matter of the utmost importance—to your daughter. I have already informed you that I fear that all that can be done for Claire is to render her declining days comfortable. Stay! hear me out. She requires other quarters than this miserable tenement; she needs luxuries, attention, a carriage, and you have only to accept them."

"What do you mean? What must I do? Command me!"

"Do you recall a friend of former days of the name of Russell Courtlandt?"

"Certainly I do; he died some six years since."

"Leaving a widow and one son. For a while their property was depreciated, but recently it has come into value, and Lucian Courtlandt is one of the wealthiest young men in the city."

"Well, well—go on!" urged Burgess, eagerly.

"Unfortunately, Lucian became fascinated by a young woman in the South, and hastily married her. It now transpired that his supposed wife is the daughter of a slave, is no wife at all. Consequently he has come to his senses, and is looking for a wife in his own station in life. He has commissioned me to ask the hand of your daughter in marriage. It is also understood that unless he hears from me within an hour he will present himself here during the morning, and the wedding can be arranged to take place within a fortnight."

Philip Burgess rose like one roused from a dazed dream.

"Are you mad, or making sport of me?" he muttered. "You cannot have forgotten that even in my abasement I am still a gentleman! Do you speak the truth? Why does he demand the hand of a dying woman?"

"Because he has a son who cannot bear his name, since its mother is a slave."

"I understand," retorted Burgess, with withering sarcasm; "since the present Mrs. Courtlandt has the prospect of being freed some day from slavery, her husband does not wish to be too long hampered with a second wife, and he has commissioned you to select a wife for him from among your most hopeless patients, and you have chosen us because we are dying of hunger. Well, my dear sir, go to Mr. Courtlandt and tell him that I am his servant, but that, though my poor child may be lost to me, she is not to be sold!"

"My good friend," said the doctor, calmly, "I do not doubt you have the right to condemn yourself to misery, but I question your justice in condemning your family to death. I offer you renewed health for your wife and peace and comfort for your daughter, who is already spent by the privations which she has suffered."

"All of which I reject in the name of my wife and daughter," cried the old man, excitedly; "stay! here is my wife—ask her if she has the courage to accept the terms!"

(To be continued.)

### The Dollar.

"She's as bright as a dollar."  
"Isn't she a bit forward at times?"  
"Well, you know, a dollar goes farther, these days, than it did when we were girls."

## Spring Medicine

There is no other season when good medicine is so much needed as in the Spring.

The blood is impure, weak and impoverished—a condition indicated by pimples and other eruptions on the face and body, by deficient vitality, loss of appetite, lack of strength, and want of animation.

## Hood's Sarsaparilla and Pills

Make the blood pure, vigorous and rich, create appetite, give vitality, strength and animation, and cure all eruptions. Have the whole family begin to take them today.

"Hood's Sarsaparilla has been used in our family for some time, and always with good results. Last spring I was all run down and got a bottle of it, and as usual received great benefit." Miss BRULAN Boyce, Stowe, Vt.

Hood's Sarsaparilla promises to cure and keeps the promise.

### Electric Light and Public Speaking.

Singers, actors and public performers generally are able to speak with much greater ease and comfort in a building lighted with electricity than in one where gaslight is used. In the former case the temperature of the whole building is more equal and the risk of catching cold is consequently diminished. The speaker is cooler, does not perspire, his throat is not parched, and his voice is less liable to get husky. It is said that since the introduction of electric light public performers are in much better voice than they were before.

### Opinion Wanted.

He—You are an authority on flowers. I am told.

She—Well, not exactly an authority, but I have made a study of them.

He—What is your opinion of that blooming idiot over there talking to the society bud?

### In the Spring.

Lowndes, Mo., April 4th.—Mrs. H. C. Harty of this place, says:—

"For years I was in very bad health. Every spring I would get so low that I was unable to do my own work. I seemed to be worse in the spring than any other time of the year. I was very weak and miserable and had much pain in my back and head. I saw Dodd's Kidney Pills advertised last spring and began treatment of them and they have certainly done me more good than anything I have ever used."

"I was all right last spring and felt better than I have for over ten years. I am fifty years of age and am stronger today than I have been for many years and I give Dodd's Kidney Pills credit for the wonderful improvement."

The statement of Mrs. Harty is only one of a great many where Dodd's Kidney Pills have proven themselves to be the very best spring medicine. They are unsurpassed as a tonic and are the only medicine used in thousands of families.

During leap year every eligible young man should be equipped with a chaperon.

# RHEUMATISM

## NOT A SKIN DISEASE.

It is natural to rub the spot that hurts, and when rheumatic pains are shooting through the joints and muscles and they are inflamed and sore, the sufferer is apt to turn to liniments and plasters for relief; and while such treatment may quiet the pain temporarily, no amount of rubbing or blistering can cure Rheumatism, because it is not a skin disease, but is in the blood and all through the system, and every time you are exposed to the same conditions that caused the first attack, you are going to have another, and Rheumatism will last just as long as the poison is in the blood, no matter what you apply externally. Too much acid in the blood is one cause of Rheumatism; stomach troubles, bad digestion, weak kidneys and torpid liver are other causes which bring on this painful disease, because the blood becomes tainted with the poisonous matter which these organs fail to carry out of the system. Certain secret diseases will produce Rheumatism, and of all forms this is the most stubborn and severe, for it seems to affect every bone and muscle in the body. The blood is the medium by which the poisons and acids are carried through the system, and it doesn't matter what kind of Rheumatism you have, it must be treated through the blood, or you can never get permanently rid of it. As a cure for rheumatic troubles S. S. S. has never been equalled. It doesn't inflame the stomach and ruin the digestion like Potash, Alkalies and other strong drugs, but tones up the general health, gently stimulates the sluggish organs, and at the same time antidotes and filters out of the blood all poisonous acids and effete matter of every kind; and when S. S. S. has restored the blood to its natural condition, the painful, feverish joints and the sore and tender muscles are immediately relieved.

Our special book on Rheumatism will be mailed free to those desiring it. Our physicians will cheerfully answer all letters asking for special information or advice, for which no charge is made.

# SSS

THE SWIFT SPECIFIC CO., ATLANTA, GA

### CAT CANNOT SUCK BREATH.

Old Superstition Is Unset by the Highest Medical Authorities. Can a cat really suck the breath of a child?

We have always heard that it could. Away back in early childhood we distinctly remember of frequent warnings to look out for the cat. Do not allow the cat to get into bed with the baby, as it is liable to suck the baby's breath, which would cause the baby to die.

Is there any foundation for such a notion as this? We never could discover any real meaning to the belief that a cat can suck the breath of a child. Indeed, the sentence is totally unintelligible.

What is meant by sucking the breath? It may be true that the cat, attracted by the breath of a child who had recently been nursing, might attempt to interfere in some manner with the child's mouth. In young cats the impulse to nurse might be excited by the smell of the child's breath. It is barely possible that the cat might be seized with a desire to bite or to devour the child's lips or tongue, lured on by the smell of milk. We are not in a position to deny these possibilities. Maybe they are true.

But not any of these suppositions furnish a basis for the statement that the cat is liable to suck the child's breath. We have always heard this statement with a shudder of horror. It seems to convey some weird, horrible tragedy that can hardly be imagined. But it is a mere fancy, the origin of which is hard to explain.

Yet we would advise mothers to be careful about leaving the infant with a cat. We do not favor the idea of cats sleeping with children. Nor do we favor the practice of children playing with cats, handling them, mopping them around the floor, fondling them, dressing them up as dolls. It is not good for the cat. It is not good for the child. Neither cats nor dogs ought to be treated in this manner. They are all right in their place, but they are not fit for playthings.

If the superstition that a cat can suck a child's breath has operated as a preventive to mothers allowing their children to play with cats it has served a very good purpose, but such childish notions are hardly compatible with mature reflection. It is one of the old wives' fables which may have served a good purpose, but it is too ridiculous for repetition. There are other and better reasons why the cat and baby should not be left together than the vague, unintelligible fear that the cat will suck the child's breath.—Medical Talk.

### Adding Fuel to the Flame.

"See here, you old addle-pated duffer," exclaimed the irate individual, as he entered the editorial sanctum of a village weekly. "I am told that you called me a loafer in your last issue."

"Sir," replied the editor, calmly, "you have been misinformed. We print only the latest news."

### His Limit.

Her Father—Young man, is your financial condition such as will enable you to support a family?

Young Man (timidly)—Why, I—e—that is, I was—er—only figuring on supporting Jennie. I—er—supposed you would continue to support the rest of the family.