



JANUARY

When skies are cold with wintry stars, and hills are white with yester-even's snow...

NOEL CLAYTON'S CHRISTMAS

NOEL CLAYTON was tall and gaunt, with clear, candid, blue eyes, and his white hands, small and nervous-looking, were as well kept as those of a woman.

He was broad-chested and muscular—by all rules—he should have been a soldier—he looked an "open air" man...

Sometimes he gave them pennies, but not always—small coins of the realm is not always available to authors—but the romps were huge, and he enjoyed them.

Of course there was a woman at the bottom of the tangle of the man's life, and women complicate things sometimes—he would have said "always."

The girl-wife had been very sweet, very lovable, very beautiful—and had married two lives. There should be a special place of torment for the person who deliberately comes between two people who love each other and smilingly warps two lives.

closed and Pearl and Baby had departed. Noel drifted for a little bit, the shock unmanned him terribly, but his pen was his sole source of income, and it had to be plied if body and soul were to be kept together...

One odd little trick Pearl had, and Noel remembered it this evening—and missed it. When his pen was working extra busy she used to lay the tips of her fingers upon his right hand—just where hand meets wrist.

He had been writing for half an hour since Chum had left him, and felt the old familiar touch on his wrist. It was imagination of course, he did not even turn his head, and then he was looking into blue eyes, in the round golden-curled framed face of a boy of four, who laughed up at him and presented a rosebud to be kissed.

He was just in the frame of mind to summon his landlady's children, but except for himself, the house was empty. There was a Christmas Eve party going on, and Mrs. Marsh and her progeny were attending it.

Neel felt like an Irish member of Parliament, for "no answer was given," but a wee form, full of hugs and kisses, got fast hold upon him, and said gravely, and yet with a sweet air of command:

Knocking as of yore beside him, blue eyes tea-dimmed, was Pearl. "I have returned, Noel," it was a quivering little voice, but it thrilled him. How like she was to their child.

eyes tea-dimmed, was Pearl. "I have returned, Noel," it was a quivering little voice, but it thrilled him. How like she was to their child. And then the bells clashed forth their message.

OLD CHRISTMAS SAYINGS. An old German saying is that between 11 and 12 o'clock on Christmas eve water can be turned into wine. A Montenegrin saying about Christmas eve is "To-night earth is blended with Paradise."

THE NEW LEAF Try to make this year and all the years to come better for yourself and for your neighbor.

A live coal should never be carried out of the house on Christmas eve. All children born at midnight on December 31 will become great and famous.

THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. "I am so glad to see you, my dear," she said, kissing him affectionately. "Why, I do believe you are grown, Alison; you are taller than I expected to see you, but you are looking pale."



Aunt Diana The Sunshine of the Family

CHAPTER IV. It was finally settled, Alison felt that duty called her home, and soon the day came when she had to part from Aunt Diana. It was a sad leave-taking, and the tears were in Alison's eyes long after the train steamed slowly into the Chester-ton station.

CHAPTER V. A cup of excellent tea was very restorative in its effects, and when Alison had freshened her tired face with cold water, and brushed her disheveled locks, and exchanged her traveling dress for a light, cool-looking, zephyr cloth costume, she felt less reluctance to present herself to the critical eyes of her father and Mabel.

CHAPTER VI. Alison tried to answer cheerfully, but her head was aching in earnest now; the tears were very near the surface again, but she battled with them bravely.

CHAPTER VII. Alison's first words were a peremptory order for Popple to put away her toys and go to bed. This led to a feeble protest on Miss Leigh's part.

afternoon's amusement to welcome her sister. Her father was busy as usual; probably he had forgotten her existence at this time.

CHAPTER VIII. Alison's face was a mixture of anxiety and indignation. "I am tired, and everything seems strange to-night, and I do miss Aunt Diana."

CHAPTER IX. Alison's face brightened in a moment, and she moved instantly to take Alison's hand; again Missie interposed.

CHAPTER X. Alison's face brightened in a moment, and she moved instantly to take Alison's hand; again Missie interposed.

CHAPTER XI. Alison's face brightened in a moment, and she moved instantly to take Alison's hand; again Missie interposed.

"I like the look of you very much," returned Alison. "Your hair is a little rough—and, oh! your boots are muddy. You have wanted me to keep you in order."

CHAPTER XII. Alison's face brightened in a moment, and she moved instantly to take Alison's hand; again Missie interposed.

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CHAPTER XIV. Alison's face brightened in a moment, and she moved instantly to take Alison's hand; again Missie interposed.

CHAPTER XV. Alison's face brightened in a moment, and she moved instantly to take Alison's hand; again Missie interposed.

Cancer of the stomach causes about 9,000 deaths a year in the United States and nearly 5,000 in England and Wales.