

THE PATH OF HONOR, OR ABOVE THE THORN THE HORN.

BY MARY SADGOLM. CHAPTER V. CHESTER TEALE RETURNS.

When the spring came the widow busied herself with all the usual beloved schemes of her husband about the grand place, and grew calmer in her grief with her occupation.

Three years had passed, one October day, when Chester Teale fled from the carriage and entered again the spacious hall which he never thought to revisit. The servant failed to recognize the handsome stranger who asked to see his mistress. The three years of heroic loneliness had left their marks in the graying hair of this young man. But breadth had also come to the fine shoulders. The sea bronze was in his face. His curling beard was different. Yet one glance of the entering hostess told her who he was. Her heart gave a spring as she cried:

"Oh, Chester! Mr. Teale! Is it you? It is almost like seeing Bradford to meet you again!"

When they talked with tender recollections of the departed one mixed in between, the man realized how he was not alone in having suffered life's darkening.

"They sat at tea. He noticed that while the lines of beauty were finer, yet she had not grown old. She was far more beautiful than ever."

How softly the autumnal morning came. It wooed them to their old rides again. And now there was no disapproving conscience. They had obeyed God, even in their secret thoughts; and now God was to reward the obedient and the honorable.

Was it wrong that she laid aside some of her widow's weeds that day? No. Marriage is "till death do us part." But—oh, that the mismatched and intriguing would remember it—how utterly impossible would their present peace and hope have been had they ever by look or cherished thought, been false in the past with the dead.

Watching her white fingers at their needle-work, at length, he said:

"Mrs. Morse, I sat here over three years ago, as I do now, and watched you with God's law forbidding my love."

"Love?" Looking up half frightened.

"Yes, I love you."

A scarlet flush stole over her neck and cheek. The wedding ring, on which she looked down, did not warn him away now.

"It is, I believe, God's law that I may say this to you now," and he reached out and took her two hands.

Her arched lip quivered. Her hands trembled in his own.

"If it were not wrong. Oh, if it were not wrong! I have been so lonely!"

"What can there be that is wrong?"

"Can you think of any?"

"I can think of nothing. Yet I will go, if you say so, and never return."

"Oh, don't go! You seemed, when you came, like the return of summer after such a long, long winter."

Chester Teale waited for no more. He drew the fair head close to his strong heart, yet throbbing with its mingled hope and fear.

"Will you, then, have faith in me?"

"Yes, always faith in you, you soul of honor!"

"He showered kisses upon her cheek, and stroked the rippling waves of her fond head."

"I thank heaven for this hour! You have shared a heart that never knew a rival—my hope, my helper, my own wife!"

And to this day there is no happier home than the one where Chester and Grace Teale dispense a regal hospitality and enjoy their vast estates. Nor had ever a child of the dead more loving care than Bradford Morse's amid Chester Teale's.

Friend—"I hear you have met with misfortune."

Bobson (sadly)—"Indeed I have. Lost \$500, in cash and bonds; negotiable bonds too—good as gold every one of them. It's a terrible blow!"

Friend—"But I hear your wife stooped with another man."

Bobson—"Yes, she's the one that took the money."

WHICH WAS TO BLAME.

Paul and Gracie parted at the gate. "He loves me and will be true to me," said Grace.

"She loves me and will wait for me," said Paul, as he stepped on board the train, that bore him far away from his home and the scenes of his boyhood.

Paul Mayo and Gracie King had known each other ever since they knew anything in this, to them, bright world. They had romped together from two years of age to twelve; sung, danced, and walked together from twelve to twenty—they were both of an age; and now being separated for the first time, they knew their first sorrow.

Paul went to the city to practice medicine with a famous doctor, preparatory to setting up for himself.

"In two years," he soliloquized, "I shall be independent, and then I will go for Gracie, my sis—No, my betrothed, my darling."

Paul applied himself assiduously to study, as well as practice, gained the good will of the old doctor, and the good patients he was trusted with, besides having the entire of course of the first families in the city.

Dr. Justin Parker, a young physician, just fledged, and all ready to be located "somewhere," used to drop in on Paul often of an evening to have a quiet chat.

"I wish I were located," said he, "in some place, or it ever so humble, 'in the city,'" said Paul.

"No, I prefer a country town."

"There is an opening in my native jungle, Dr. Parker. One of our doctors is superannated, and you would find that a splendid chance to oust up a practice."

"Perhaps you think of locating there yourself when out of your time?"

"No, I prefer the city, I think—for a few years, anyway."

"Will you give me letters of introduction to some of the families there?"

"Certainly, Doctor."

Three months from that time Dr. Justin Parker's sign in blue and gold shone resplendent over his little office in the pretty town of Maryville.

"A new doctor, young and unmarried; isn't it splendid, girls!" cried Jane Porter, when she called on her friend, Gracie King, who was entertaining another mutual friend, Susie Brown. "And, Gracie, acquainted with your affianced, too. Won't it flirt?"

"Have you seen him, Jane?" said Gracie.

"No, have you? If you have, tell me how the biped looks before I expire with impatience."

"Yes, he attended father in his last attack, and I must say I admire him. In fact he is my beauideal of a gentleman, and a charming man."

"What a rigmorole for an engaged maiden. Why, Paul Mayo must look to his laurels."

In the meantime Paul was expected to escort Dr. Gorman's fair and only daughter "here, there, and everywhere," as all the doctor's assistants had done before him.

She was a sweet young lady, shy, yet unaffected, and a mutual liking sprang up between the two young people thrown so much together. Liking ripened into love before either was aware of it, and poor Paul awoke only to the true state of his heart when a sister asked the old doctor for the hand of fair Mary.

Then it was that he felt he had never loved before.

"Gracie seems like a sister to me," he would say to himself. "Fool that I was not to know the difference, but we know nothing until we are taught, and Mary has been too sweet a teacher."

Paul was honest, and meant to marry Gracie; but he would write and tell her the whole truth. Then if, under the circumstances, she him to his promise there would be married just after his time was out.

The next morning, after his letter was dispatched, Paul sat in the office trying, in an absent-minded manner to learn his Latin lesson from a French grammar, when the maid brought him a letter.

(To be continued.)

Mr. Sumpster (after a decided refusal)—"I know what the matter is. It's because I'm poor. You would marry me if I were rich."

Miss Gailie (thoughtfully)—"Perhaps so, but you would have to be very, very rich."

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