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**The Vision of a Dream.**

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.  
From The Illustrated Home Guest.  
CHAPTER II.

But after awhile I did open my eyes, and it was hard to make me believe that I had been lying on my couch for seven days; for it seemed to me that I had been traveling for a long, long while in the strangest way.

I thought that, as I sat weeping and saying to myself that all was over for me forever, I looked up and saw an angel standing near me. I called it an angel, for it was like the pictures of those beings, dressed in snowy robes, and with golden hair and great white wings.

"Rise up daughter," it said, "and come with me, and I will show you what will give you hope," and then I gave him my hand and I arose, and in a moment we were above the world, and I was floating as one may on the water by yielding to the touch of a good swimmer and doing nothing one's self; and all about us was a strange golden haze, like the sun shining through a morning mist, until suddenly we were hovering above an island where palms grew, and under one sat my husband. Near him crouched a naked savage, and a queer little boat lay below in the water. The savage seemed to be friendly, and was beckoning my husband toward the boat, and I saw him rise and walk toward it. He had a bandage about his head, and it was stained with blood.

"Frank!" I screamed—"Frank! I am here!" He paused and looked about him. I called his name again: "Frank!"

Then the golden mist was all about me again, and I was floating, floating, until some one said, "I saw her move!" and another, "She is opening her eyes!" But when I told them what I had seen, they said it was only delirium, and that in hoping that it meant that my Frank had been saved, I was making fresh woe for myself, for I should only suffer deeper disappointment.

In spite of that I did hope for a long, long while. It took two years to make me cry, one day: "No, no, no! It was all folly. My Frank went down with the wreck of the 'Dolly Fair,' as those said who saw him clinging to the mast—the last one left on board." Then I put on the widow's veil that I had refused to wear before.

Troubles never come singly. As though I had done some great wrong for which I was to be punished until I could bear no more, they fell on me in showers. My father, who had always been a careful, steady-going man, was persuaded to speculate. He risked his own money and my little all also in the hope of making me immensely rich. Instead of this he lost everything. The shame and misery this brought killed him. He dropped dead in the midst of his creditor's one day, and my mother never lifted her head again. In a little while I had lost both parents.

In the midst of grief for which I have no words, I was obliged to think of some means by which to support myself. I examined the advertisements, as people generally do under such circumstances, and finally resolved to apply for a place as companion with a lady who was about to sail for Europe. She desired the services of a lady who

could read well and was never seasick. I had often boasted of the latter fact as fitting me to be a sailor's wife, for some day I had hoped to sail with Frank wherever he might go, and they said I read charmingly.

And so it came to pass that I found myself upon the sea, pleasing the lady who employed me very well; but, oh, how miserable I was! I had thought that, loving the water as I always had, I should greatly enjoy a long voyage. But, alas! everything had changed; the voices of the sea eternally repeated, "It is we who robbed you of your lover—we who bear him in our arms;" and when I looked into the dark waters it was as though I looked into an open grave.

However, my fine lady cared little for her companion's feelings. When I looked well she merely expressed a hope that I had not been mistaken in the idea that I was never seasick. She had taken ladies' maids before, but they always were sick. She had hoped that I, being a lady, would not make rash statements. Happily I was not ill during the voyage. Not only does misery fail to kill, but it often leaves one in good physical health for a long while, if the constitution is originally good.

My lady was the wife of the American consul to ——. She was a spoiled beauty whom her husband believed perfection—a dignified, elderly person usually, but she ordered him about continually. He was forever employed in contributing to her comfort or vanity, and he seemed to like it.

Not long after our arrival he told

her in my presence that she was the most beautiful woman in Italy, and that he must have her portrait. A wonderful young artist who was very fashionable just then should paint it in full length. He was very expensive, but such a possession was valuable. The price did not matter, and so forth, and so on.

I could see that Mrs. — was delighted, but she demurred. Sitings bored her so, she could not endure them.

However, she would sit for the face, and then if Mrs. Fair would kindly wear her dress in the rest of the sittings, that would save her the fatigue.

I was hired to be useful, and I was too much of a woman not to know that my neck and arms were finer than Mrs. —'s. I knew that she knew it also. Mrs. — sat several times before she called on me to supply her place. Then it was because of certain rehearsals in the interests of some private theatricals in which she was to display her charms. She had taken a notion to the young artist, and, I could see, was rather sorry that she had made this arrangement. However, I merely obeyed orders without comment, costumed myself in madame's lace and brocade, threw her white opera cloak over my shoulders, and was driven to the artist's studio.

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