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Aunt Diana

The Sunshine of the Family

CHAPTER XXII.—(Continued.)

"Oh, there is the river!" exclaimed Allison, in a tone of ecstasy. "Look, Roger; you can just catch a gleam through the trees—oh, the dear place! How I do love it!" her voice rising into a perfect crescendo, of which the top note was complete satisfaction.

"It is just a year since you have seen it," observed Greville. "Miss Allison, what made you steal a march on me in that fashion? I was quite hurt that you never gave me a hint of your intention of going home."

He spoke in a low tone that Roger could not hear.

The quick, sensitive color rushed into Allison's face; there was such implied reproach in Greville's voice. Had he really been hurt?

"Oh, you must not feel like that about it," she returned, with a sweet, candid look. "We had talked of the possibility, Aunt Diana and I, but nothing had been settled. I had put it out of my mind. I was so naughty, I could not bear the idea of going home and doing my duty. I should never have gone at all if Aunt Diana had not helped me."

"You did not think how I should feel when I came back and found you gone," retorted Greville, in a boyish, injured voice, that reached Roger and made him smile, only Allison grew a little gray.

"I left a message with your grandfather," she said, quietly. "What could I do? Aunt Diana said it was my duty to go, and that it was no good putting one's hand to the plow and looking backward. What is the use of lingering over a difficult task when it has to be done?"

"That is true, but—"

"Please don't talk of last summer," she interrupted him, "it makes me sad, only to think about it." And he could see there were tears in her eyes as she spoke. "I made myself so miserable over it; I could not bear leaving Aunt Diana, and I missed every one so."

"Miss Allison, please do not look and over it," said Greville, earnestly. "What a clumsy fellow I am! I have alienated the nearest of my friends by my own fault, referring to Roger's speech. 'Come, I know you will forgive me, and look chirpy again, when I tell you I have passed muster and come off with flying colors.'"

"Oh, I am so glad!" exclaimed Allison, her smiles returning again. "Then you must have worked hard. How pleased Mr. Moore must be!"

"To hear grandfather talk," returned Greville, calmly, "you would think I was the Admiral Crichton, at least. The dear old man makes no end of fuss, bless him! I tell him it is all your doing; you gave me such a terrible lecture that Wednesday."

"Oh, no," replied Allison, blushing; "it was your own good sense."

"I shall go in for 'Great' next year, so I shall have to grind pretty hard. I am to have a coach down here this summer. Chayne, of Balliol, is at the Crays with his people, and he is a rare fellow for that. I have to work all my mornings," he continued, rather dolorously, "but I shall have my afternoons and evenings free. Miss Allison, you are not listening to me."

"Oh, yes I am!" she cried, joyously. "but I can not hear any more just now, though I am very glad to hear it all. Roger, do look! There is Moss-side—you know you have forgotten it—and there is Aunt Di in the porch."

"Allie, you have eyes like a hawk. I see nothing but greenery and sunshine." Nevertheless, Roger did perceive, a moment afterward, a tall figure in myrtle-green standing under a trellis of roses.

Miss Carrington had evidently heard the wheels of the dog cart, and had come out to look. When they stopped she had the little gate open and was helping Allison to alight.

"How are you, my dear child?" she said, as Allison put her arms around her; "actually not tired, Allie? And you, Roger? Welcome to Moss-side, my boy!"

"Aren't you going to welcome me, too, Miss Carrington?" asked Greville, half jokingly, but he looked a little wistfully at the group.

"No, not to-night," she returned, decidedly. "I must have my belongings to myself for this one evening; you may come in to breakfast, if you like."

And, knowing of old that Miss Carrington's decisions allowed of no appeal, Greville lifted his hat and wished them good evening, and turned his mare's head in the direction of the Fernleigh stables, not without a backward glance at the slim, dark-eyed girl looking affectionately in Miss Carrington's face.

"Now, Allie, go to your old room and get rid of the dust, while I show Roger upstairs," observed Aunt Diana, in a brisk voice. "You will find me in the studio when you are ready."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Her old room! Allison gave a happy little sigh as she trod on the threshold. What a green little bowler it looked, and, oh, the roses!—roses in the quaint old china bowls that Aunt Diana so much affected; roses in the slender Venetian glasses on the mantelpiece and toilet table; roses clambering into the window and pressing their pink faces against the swinging lattice; and on the window sill, dropped by some thoughtful hand, a glorious Gloire de Dijon, with a background of maidenhair fern, such as Allison loved to wear in her white gown. She stood for a moment looking out

thoughtfully. The long shady lawn of Moss-side and Fernleigh lay beneath her, and through the fresh foliage of the willows and acacias was the silvery gleam of the lovely river. Something in the Sabbathlike stillness, in the beauty of the scene, in the peaceful satisfaction of her heart, moved Allison to kneel down among the roses, and breathe a brief thanksgiving for the duties she had been strengthened to perform, for the fatherly goodness that brought her back to the home of her adoption, and for the human love that was but a dim reflection of the Divine.

She did not hurry to go down, though her luggage had not yet arrived, and there was no possibility of changing her traveling dress. But when she had brushed her brown hair, and put on her best knot of roses, she looked trim as ever, and her bright, smiling face, as she opened the studio door, brought the name "Sunny" to Miss Carrington's mind, for she looked as all young faces should look—the very essence of a sunbeam.

"Oh, Aunt Di, the dear, lovely room! And, oh, that is the new picture," springing to the easel to gaze delightedly on golden cornfields, with scarlet poppies struggling among the wheat, like gaudy promises never to ripen into fruit, and under the hedge a little brown baby sleeping, with its dimpled hand full of weeds, and a sheep dog watching its slumbers.

"Do you like the picture, Allie? It is sold already. Lady Franklin fell in love with it, but I want it to hang in next year's Academy. The baby is painted from life; the original belongs to Harby, an old servant."

"Aunt Di, it is perfectly beautiful! Roger, come here and tell me if you do not think so."

"Nonsense, Allie; Roger is far too hungry for art criticism at present. Come away, you foolish child, and let me give you something more satisfying than painted canvases. The chickens came from Harby's farm, with the strawberries and this jug of delicious cream."

Allison looked round rather bewildered, for none of these tempting viands were in sight; but Miss Carrington, who knew her love for meals à la fresco, had laid the supper table laid in the wide veranda, and not only chickens and strawberries, but other delicacies were provided for the hungry travelers.

"This is better than your tea table under the limes at home, Allie," exclaimed Roger, as he carved for the ladies. "No wonder she was spoiled, Aunt Diana, and did not take kindly to the sooty ivy and the music of the crane."

"Roger, I shall impose a forfeit if either you or Allie mention the mill," observed Miss Carrington, as she handed him a cup of coffee enriched with Harby's yellow cream. "I want you two young things to forget everything but how you are to amuse yourselves. Allie, shall we have our breakfast here, as we did last year, while the blackbirds and thrushes take their tea?"

Roger looked as if he wanted to live in the open air. Do you know you have got this dear boy?"

"Never mind that, Aunt Diana; there is no fear of rusting, that is one blessing—work never hurt man or woman yet."

"No," she said, thoughtfully, "but 'moderation in all things' was an apostle's maxim; but you are right in principle, Roger. Now for the home news. What is really your father's condition? Letters are so unsatisfactory, and they never say half enough."

"Dr. Greenwood is delighted with the progress he has made, Aunt Diana; he gets across the room quite nicely on crutches, though he is not to do more at present. Of course, the long confinement has made him look pale and delicate, but his spirits are first rate. Dr. Greenwood told me the other day that in another year or so he might hope to be as well as ever. He says he is an excellent patient."

"And how does the book go on?"

"Very well, I believe; he manages to write without difficulty with the help of a sloping board."

"That was Roger's clever contrivance," interrupted Allison.

"Aunt Diana does not want to know that; you have broken the thread of my discourse. Father does seem happier lying there with all his books round him than he did at the mill."

"And a very good idea, too," observed Miss Carrington, looking at her nephew with decided approbation. "How does Murdoch fulfill his duties?"

"Admirably; he is a very steady fellow."

"Then Allie's plan will answer," she returned in her practical way. "There is no reason, Roger, why you should not carry on the business, and leave your father free for his literary pursuits. He was never fitted for a business man; he is too dreamy and impractical. Believe me, he will be far happier and less irritable if circumstances allow him to follow his own particular bent."

"I am quite sure of it, Aunt Diana," returned Roger, quietly; "and now I have worked alone all these months, I feel more competent to carry on the business single handed. It has been a hard pull—Ferguson had done so much mischief, but things are righting themselves now, and with Murdoch's help we shall get on capitally."

"That is well," replied Miss Carrington, heartily, "and now, how does Missie go on?"

This time Allison answered.

"Her arm is quite right, but she still looks rather thin and delicate. Mrs. Hardwick—Mrs. Forbes, I mean—wants to take her to Torquay, in October, for two months; she says she will be such a nice companion for Anna. Papa insists that she is to go."

"And how does my little friend Anna get on with her stepfather?"

"He is very kind to her, Aunt Di. Roger is rather pleased with him on the whole."

"Dr. Forbes is one of those men whose bark is worse than their bite," observed Roger; "he rather prides himself on being a bear, but I think Miss Anna has proved there is a soft spot in his heart."

"I am glad to hear this. Then the poor little girl is happy on the whole?"

"I don't think Anna is to be pitied. Aunt Di," returned Allison, in rather a peculiar tone; "she looks extremely happy." And something in Allison's manner made Miss Carrington change the subject; it certainly did not appear to interest Roger, for he seemed absorbed in his strawberries all at once, and his criticism on Dr. Forbes was given in rather a constrained voice.

"Miss Leigh tells me that Missie is wonderfully improved since her illness," observed Aunt Diana, after a pause, which no one seemed anxious to break.

"Indeed she is," returned Allison, with quick enthusiasm. "I have never seen any one so changed; she is so much quieter in dress and manners, and so much more tolerant of Rudel. Poppie likes to be with her now, and Miss Leigh can not say enough in her praise. It is easy to see how she tries to break herself of her faults, and it is so much harder for her than for us, as she has not naturally a good temper."

"Neither had I, Allie. Many a girl has a sore fight to go through life as well as Missie; it is so easy to contract bad habits, and so difficult to subdue them. I believe nothing but grace can enable one to overcome a really bad temper."

And so saying, Miss Carrington rose from the table, and proposed that Roger should go down to the river while she and Allison disposed of the unpacking.

CHAPTER XXIV.

There was a merry breakfast on the veranda next morning, and Allison, in her white dress, with some dewy roses as a breast knot, looked the picture of happiness as she poured out the coffee.

Directly it was over, Greville took her and Roger to see his grandfather.

Mr. Moore was eagerly expecting them; even before Allison's foot had passed over the threshold his sightless eyes were turned to the window, and his "Welcome, Sunny," reached her ears.

In another moment Allison was occupying her old footstool at his feet, and his fine wrinkled hand, a little more trembling than of old, was placed on her hair, with a half audible blessing.

"Dear Mr. Moore, I am so glad to see you again."

"Have you missed us, little one? Not half as much as we have missed Sunny. And as she pressed her lips to his hand in mute contradiction of this, he said, half sadly: "Child, I never thought to have heard your sweet voice again, but the good God would have it otherwise. Before the message reached me it was recalled; the gates were almost closed in my face."

"Thank God for that," she whispered; "but they never told me that you were ill until you were well again."

"Ah, Miss Carrington is a wise woman; she thinks it wrong to burden young spirits with sorrows that do not belong to them. My boy there nearly broke his heart about the old man; can you believe it, Sunny?"

"You are like his own father," she returned, softly. "He is outside on the veranda with Roger. Are you well enough to speak to Roger?"

"Ay, ready and willing; he has grown a fine lad, I hear. And as Allison beckoned to the two young men came in through the window, and Roger sat down by the old man's side.

(To be continued.)

A Lawyer's Son-in-law.

Speaking of son-in-laws, the anecdote which Lord Eldon related of the eminent English lawyer, John Dunning, afterward Lord Ashburton, will bear repeating. "I had," says Lord Eldon, "very early after I was called to the bar a brief as junior to Mr. Dunning. He began the argument and appeared to me to be reasoning very powerfully against our client. Waiting till I was quite convinced that he had mistaken for what party he was retained, I then touched his arm, and upon his turning his head toward me I whispered to him that he must have misunderstood by whom he was employed, as he was reasoning against our client."

"He gave me a very rough and rude reprimand for not having sooner set him right and then proceeded to state that what he had addressed to the court was all that could be stated against his client, and that he had put the case as unfavorably as it was possible in order that the court might see how very satisfactorily the case against him could be answered, and accordingly very powerfully answered what he had before stated."

Paradoxical.

"You seem overheated, my lad," said the gentleman behind the scenes in the melodrama theater.

"Yes, boss," responded the youngster, as he mopped the perspiration from his brow, "I have the hottest part in the show."

"Indeed! And what is the part?"

"Why, I have to get 'way up in the flies an' tear up paper for de snow storm in de blizzard scene."

Jenious of Jack.

Dick—Did you enjoy yourself down at the masque ball last night?

Edna—Indeed, I did. And coming home through the chilly night Jack Frost kicked my cheeks.

Dick—Lucky Jack! The next time I am going disguised as Jack Frost myself!

EVENTS OF THE DAY

Newsy Items Gathered from All Parts of the World.

PREPARED FOR THE BUSY READER

Less Important but Not Less Interesting Happenings from Points Outside the State.

Parts of Mexico are suffering from severe drouth.

The senate has defeated local option in California by a vote of 12 to 25.

Bryan hopes never again to run for president, but may run for senator.

The Louisiana Supreme court has decided that the anti-betting law is valid.

Tabulated figures show that Chicago has 710 inspectors of different kinds on the payroll.

The Standard Oil company has been fined \$20,000 in New York for accepting rebates and a new trial refused.

Los Angeles again has a mayor, the council having elected William D. Stephens to hold until the special election March 26.

Harriman says great railroad improvements will be made if congress legalizes pooling and plans a great transcontinental merger.

The Krupp, of Germany, will at once begin the manufacture of gunpowder in Mexico. The government will lend much assistance.

Chicago's new charter proposes to give the people a recall system.

Servia is buying gunpowder and Germany is uneasy over the situation.

Three Chicago boys ran away to join Roosevelt on his trip to Africa.

Persia is again the scene of internal strife and Russia is sending troops.

The government only awaits word from Mexico to intervene in Central America.

General W. T. Palmer, founder of Colorado Springs and a great railroad builder, is dead.

Dr. Starr, of Chicago university, declares that Roosevelt will not survive his trip to Africa.

The speaker of the Texas lower house has been compelled to resign on account of charges of graft.

The California legislature has passed a bill requiring railroads to have three brakemen on freight trains of over 50 cars.

Indians in Northern Canada have suffered greatly from cold this winter and many have frozen to death. Their supplies are also nearly exhausted.

A Milwaukee grand jury has found a plumbers' trust.

Seismographs at Manila recorded a heavy earthquake.

Lawyers in the Calhoun trial are still battling over jurors.

Civic chaos has followed the resignation of Mayor Harper at Los Angeles.

Anthracite miners and operators have disagreed and the conference adjourned.

Secretaries Ballinger and Wilson will personally inspect irrigation and forest work.

CONVICT TOO FAT.

Missouri Warden Has No Accommodations for Prisoner.

Jefferson City, Mo., March 16.—Matt W. Hall, warden of the penitentiary, admits that he has a hard problem to discover some means of handling Louis Decker, of St. Louis, a former member of the house of delegates, who was prosecuted and convicted of bootlegging and sentenced to the penitentiary for five years.

Decker came here last Thursday and surrendered. That evening he was delivered to the warden of the penitentiary. Then the trouble started for the warden.

It was discovered that there was not a suit of clothes in the prison large enough to fit the prisoner, and that the cell doors were too small to admit him. Decker tips the scales at 320 pounds, and is by far the heaviest prisoner ever received at the penitentiary.

Prison Physician Chaastain was called in for counsel. He said he believed a place could be fixed up in the hospital building where Decker could be kept. The warden at once accepted the proposition and Decker was taken there and has been confined there since.

PLOT TO FORCE INTERVENTION.

Returned Traveler Says Federation of States is Object.

City of Mexico, March 16.—According to J. H. Graham, an American traveler who has recently returned here after visiting the Central American capitals, the trouble fomented by President Zelaya, of Nicaragua, is the result of a definite program to enforce the intervention of the United States.

Both Honduras and Salvador have already appealed to Washington to intervene, and Zelaya is co-operating with them, according to this authority.

Zelaya and the other Central American executives cannot retire, as that might mean a forfeiture of life. If intervention will bring about the federation of the five republics, allowing the present rulers to step down and enjoy peacefully the fortunes they all have amassed, the purpose of Zelaya and his allies will have been accomplished, according to Mr. Graham.

SERBIA PREPARES FOR WAR.

Expected to Have 250,000 Men Ready for Field by April.

Vienna, March 16.—According to information from the best of sources, Servia's military preparations are being pushed with haste and energy which strongly belie the protestations of the late memorandum as to the desire of the country to remain at peace.

Beginning in February, the entire first line of reserve was placed on a war footing and it has been drilled for three weeks. At the end of January 30,000 recruits were called up, as compared with the usual number of 15,000. In the last few months the second reserve has been called out for two weeks' exercise.

Beginning in April, Servia counts on being able to place 250,000 men in the field.

Austria-Hungary is fully prepared for action and is inclined to force an immediate solution of the present crisis.

Ship Sinks, 20 Drowned.

Rotterdam, March 16.—The Norwegian steamer Mascot, for Sunderland, collided today with the German ship Margretha, from Iquique, for Hamburg, about 20 miles west of Maas lightship. The Margretha sank almost immediately. Twenty of the 26 members of the crew were drowned. The Mascot returned here with a big hole in her bow. The Margretha was commanded by Captain Woethre.

Coal Strike is Predicted.

Philadelphia, March 16.—"The anthracite miners will strike," Secretary Hartline, of District No. 9, of the United Mine Workers of America, made this statement last night in discussing the union's agreement with the mine owners. He based the prediction upon the apparent inability of the opposing sides to get together.

Morse Fortune All Gone.

New York, March 16.—Mrs. Charles W. Morse, wife of the former bank and ice company promoter, tonight confirmed the report that her husband's fortune had been entirely dissipated and that she had to sell her furniture and jewels to meet the obligations incurred by him in his recent trial.

Plan Timber Pickling Plant.

Anaconda, Mont., March 16.—E. F. Sherman, chief of the timber preservation division of the forestry bureau, has closed contracts in this city for the installation of a timber pickling plant southeast of this city. By the pickling process the government hopes to be able to preserve the life of the timbers.

Wreck Hurts Seventeen.

San Antonio, Tex., March 16.—Seventeen passengers were injured, some seriously, and two perhaps fatally, in the collision last night of a Southern Pacific passenger train and a switch engine at Sanderson, Tex.

TELEGRAPHERS QUIT

French System Under Postoffice Department Is Demoralized.

TELEPHONE SERVICE CRIPPLED

Electricians May Follow Operators and Go Out—Strike Is Protest Against Director.

Paris, March 16.—A general strike of the telegraphers of the postoffice department was declared tonight, following a meeting of the general association of post telegraph employees, at which 5,000 were present. A resolution to strike was voted without a single dissenting voice and orders were issued for the withdrawal of all operators employed in the department.

The resolution says the strike is ordered as a protest against the arbitrary administration, and that the decision was precipitated by an insult addressed by M. Simyan, under secretary of posts and telegraph, to the association officials.

The government put forth every effort to preserve international communication, but the central telegraph station was demoralized today and practically out of communication. The Bourse station, however, was almost normal and there was not much interference with the telephone service.

M. Palsud, secretary of the Electricians' union, who had openly threatened to call out the electricians, made no move to do so.

Both telegraphic and telephonic communication with London was greatly interrupted, not so much on account of the strike, however, but because of a fierce storm which prevailed during the night. Some of the London correspondents are sending their dispatches by way of New York, to which both land lines of the cable remain open.

SHIP YET AGROUND.

Four Steamers Fail to Haul Transport Logan from Reef.

Honolulu, March 16.—With engines running at full speed, and assisted by the winches and propellers of the vessel they sought to aid, the British cruiser Cambrian, the light house tender Kukui and the tug Iroquois and Intrepid strained for three hours this morning in the effort to drag the stranded transport Logan off the reef on which she had driven 25 feet of her bow while maneuvering to enter her slip last Saturday night.

Several hawsers were snapped by the strain put upon them, but when the position of the troopship was ascertained by measurement it was found that she had been moved only six feet, and the attempt to refloat her was abandoned until high tide comes again tonight.

Many shipping men believe that it will be necessary to lighten the Logan of her cargo before she can be freed from the reef. If the effort in which the Cambrian and the three tugs join at high tide proves fruitless, it is probable that the work of hoisting out cargo will be begun tomorrow morning.

SERBIA PLAYS FOX.

Evades Direct Issue in Austro-Hungary Dispute.

London, March 16.—It cannot be said that the relations between Austria-Hungary and Servia have yet reached a point where an outbreak of hostilities is probable. Throughout the negotiations in connection with the delicate Balkan situation the Austrian idea has been to force Servia first to acknowledge that the question of annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina had passed beyond the stage where it could be made subject to a rearrangement; and, second, to take effective steps for demobilizing the troops.

The unsatisfactory side of Servia's reply to Count Forgach's note, referring the Austro-Hungarian government to Servia's previous communication to the powers, is the fact that it purposely evaded these issues, thus tacitly implying that the matter has been left in the hands of the signatories of the Berlin treaty.

Massacre Stir Persia.

St. Petersburg, March 16.—A dispatch to the Novoe Vremya from Julfa on the frontier between Persia and Russia, says that 1,000 Persian government horsemen and 500 infantrymen were marching on Julfa from the Persian bank of the Araxes river, devastating the villages in their path and shooting down the people.

Revive Three-Cent Fare.

Chicago, March 16.—The resumption of a 3-cent passenger rate in Missouri on April 10 to replace the present 2-cent rate, declared confiscated upon Judge McPherson, was decided upon today at a meeting here of executive and traffic officials of the interested roads.