

THE FAMILY STORY

FIVE * THOU'

MY dear girl, you'll have to let me off. I'm awfully sorry, but the Governor won't give way. I'm really fond of you, and I think you are of me, but—

"O! why didn't I want to marry a decent barrister, a doctor, or even a journalist, instead of an Earl's younger son?" said Miss Muriel Mallett, with a frown on her pretty face, and a tear or two in her large, limpid eyes—eyes which made all the men think wrongly, that she was poetical and sentimental. "But, seriously, can you give me up?"

The Hon. Bob Martindale looked at her. She was just his ideal—tall, well-built, but with a saucy face in which the big black eyes seemed out of place, if fascinating. There was in her countenance the strangeness which, according to Bacon, is necessary to great beauty. She affected a tailor-made gown and was always well groomed; yet, though her dress was a trifle mannish, in the brusque movements which showed that she was fidgety, glimpses of gossamer stocking and fine Valenciennes revealed themselves, and showed that she had a conscience in costume that would have delighted the hero of Gautier's novel with the famous preface.

"My dear girl, if it were a question of risking my life, or anything like that, I wouldn't hesitate; if it were even one of those affairs of fellows who, gladly die, I'd be there; but—but I can't be a cad. They have brought me up as a swell without any profession, and I'm a bit of a fool, and I couldn't live on your earnings as actress, so there you are."

Miss Muriel sighed. Bob was a handsome fellow and manly, and he would have the title and estates some day if two obstacles were to disappear.

"I did like you, Bob, and do, and you were always straight. I should like to have been your wife. If only we'd some money to run a theatrical company with!"

"Yes, if I hadn't been such a juggins as to blame the five thou, old Uncle Tom left me—I didn't know you then."

"Yes, if we'd the five thou," she started a little. "You will marry me if ever I have £5,000? O, you'd have to work, have to be my manager."

He nodded.

"It's a promise for two years?"

"Yes."

"Honor bright?"

"Yes, of course, if—"

"If I run straight? Well, look here, we've been engaged—honorably—and you want to break it off."

He lowered his head.

"I'm young, only 24 even at Somerset House. I'd like to have married you, and I should have been a good wife, too. However, some day I may want to marry some one else."

The man shuddered.

"A broken engagement isn't a certificate of good character; you must give me one. That's fair."

She got up and wheeled to him a little round table, on which was a crocodile-skin writing-pad, with silver edges. She opened it, took out writing paper, and found him pen and ink.

"Now, then, write this—"

"My Dear Miss Mallett: It is my painful duty to tell you that I have made fruitlessly a desperate effort to gain my father's consent to our marriage. He utterly refuses, saying that he is so old-fashioned as to object to have an actress as daughter-in-law. Therefore, I am compelled to break off my engagement with a woman whom I still love and esteem."

The Hon. Bob signed the letter sadly.

"Now, be off. I've to go to rehearsal. No, you mustn't drive me down. Once more, if within two years I have five thou, as capital, you promise you will marry me?"

"Yes, darling, on my word of honor!"

With a swift movement she threw her arms around his neck and kissed him passionately. A minute later he found himself in the street, sad and bewildered.

That evening there was rejoicing in the big mansion in Belgrave square, and the Earl of Hexham drank too much in honor of the return to respectability of the prodigal Bob.

"We'll soon find you a wife, my boy," he said, over the port, which he drank in honor of the affair and in defiance of gout and doctor's orders. "None of your rich American trash, but some one of decent family and the sort of solid, reasonable dowry that a younger son deserves."

Next morning at 12 o'clock, when the Earl was vainly trying to put on his boots without swearing at the pain, the Hon. Bob entered the library with a document in his hand. "I never thought she'd have done it, sir," he said.

"Done what?"

"Look: the beastly thing says, 'The plaintiff claims damages for breach of promise of marriage.'"

"Bring me my slippers!" shouted the Earl; "damn the horse! send round the bootman!"

O! he went to Lincoln's Inn Fields. "You'd better settle," said Mr. Ponder, the old family lawyer.

"Settle?" he shouted, "settle! I'll show up the baggage, the—! I'll put every detective in London on the job."

I'm not afraid of court, and when the jury hears what she really is—

"But the scandal?"

"Don't talk about scandal; enter an appearance, and leave the rest to me."

"My dear Governor," interrupted Bob, who had accompanied him, "be fair to the girl. I didn't think Muriel would have done it; but she's perfectly straight—I'd stake my life on it."

"Nonsense, Bob! You're a fool, and you'd better stay abroad till the affair's over. I'll attend to it. I'll show her how to fight." The Earl's eyes gleamed. "We'll teach her, won't we, Ponder, what litigation means?" Then he told a lengthy, state tale of his successful lawsuit about right-of-way—a success which added a new mortgage to the family collection.

"It's all very well," said Mr. Ponder, "but that was chancery, this is common law. I'm sure we should make a mess of it. One of my article clerks has set up in business in Bedford Row; he's a smart fellow, and will fight hard, and just suit you."

Bob went off to the Riviera, and lost all the money his father gave him. During his absence the old gentleman employed a detective—a fellow with splendid imagination, but very poor powers of observation—and the skirmishing was done under the Earl's supervision. Bob was to have staid away till after the trial; however, an urgent letter from a club friend of his father brought him home in a hurry. He arrived in the evening, and, going to the Carlton, learned that the case was in the list for next day. When he reached Belgrave Square and was shown into the library he found his father with Mr. Hicks, his Bedford Row solicitor. There was a row going on at a high pitch.

"Pray tell your father he must settle," said Mr. Hicks.

"Settle be damned!" interrupted the old boy.

"Settle, I say," rejoined the solicitor. "You see, Mr. Martindale, Sir Edward says he won't cross-examine the plaintiff as to her character. He suggests that the material is absurd, and he does not believe a word of the detective's story—he says he'd sooner return the brief."

"And the check?" gasped the Earl.

"Yes, and the check. He says there's no decent defense, and he won't try to support the detective's tissue of lies. Moreover, he insists that if he did he'd fall, and the damages and disgrace would be awful."

"What does it matter to me?" shouted the old gentleman. "It's not my case, it's my son's."

"That's a bit steep," observed the son.

"My retainer is from you, my lord," urged Mr. Hicks.

"O, I'll pay your confounded costs, but where will they get their damages from?"

Bob groaned.

"They've told me they'll make him bankrupt," replied Mr. Hicks, "and his discharge will be suspended for two years at least."

"What has that to do with me?" said the Earl grimly.

"Lord Salisbury has many claims on his patronage, and in my bankruptcy he'd find a decent excuse for leaving me out in the cold."

The Earl had no gout, but he managed without its help to use very vigorous language concerning sons, solicitors, advocates, and actresses.

"They will take £5,000 for damages, with a full apology and withdrawal in open court," said Mr. Hicks, "and £500 for costs."

"An apology! A withdrawal!"

"A withdrawal of all the charges on the record."

Next day, to the infinite disgust of the reporters and the crowded court, Sir Edward, in a graceful speech, made an apology of the most ample character, withdrew all imputations, and announced that £5,000 would be paid as compensation for the injury to the lady, together with her costs.

The Morning Post, on the morrow, announced that the Earl of Hexham had gone to Buxton.

When the honorable Robert, a day later, received a letter from Muriel, saying she was most anxious to see him, he took a cab to Brompton Crescent, and grew more and more perplexed every inch of the way.

Miss Muriel, looking very neat, natty, handsome, and pliant, with a prodigious glow of life in her eyes, shook hands with him warmly and made him sit down on the sofa by her side. For a quarter of an hour she stimulated his curiosity by talking about nothing in particular. At last his patience broke down.

"Look here, Ella," he said brusquely, "atow the cackle and come to cues. I'm delighted to see you, and don't bear malice; but what on earth put it into your pretty head to send for me?"

She laughed loud, long, and heartily—so loud, long, and heartily that at last he laughed with her.

"Well, you are a goose!" she said.

"I know it," he answered. "I dread Michaelmas."

"I think your brain is developing; you're growing witty. O, you haven't got there yet!"

"Well, but—"

"Listen to me. The Hon. Robert Talbot-Hesseus Clarence Martindale made a promise to Miss Muriel Mallett that

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

THE GOSPEL OF GOOD CHEER FOR THE SORROWING.

Rev. Dr. Talmage Draws Vivid Pictures of the Lengthening Shadows of Life—When Time Ends and Eternity Begins—The Light of Christ.

At the Close of Day.

Dr. Talmage's subject this week lights up the sorrows of this life and sounds the gospel of good cheer for all who will receive it. His text was Luke xxiv, 29, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening."

Two villagers, having concluded their errand in Jerusalem, have started out at the city gate and are on their way to Emmaus, the place of their residence. They go with a sad heart. Jesus, who had been basely massacred and entombed. As with sad face and broken heart they pass on their way, a stranger accosts them. They tell him their anxieties and bitterness of soul. He in turn talks to them, mightily expounding the Scriptures. He throws over them the fascination of intelligent conversation. They forget the time and notice not the objects they pass and before they are aware have come up in front of their house. They pause before the entrance and attempt to persuade the stranger to tarry with them. They press upon him their hospilities. Night is coming on, and he may meet a prowling wild beast or be obliged to be unsheltered from the dew. He cannot go much farther now. Why not stop here and continue their pleasant conversation? They take him by the arm and they insist upon his coming in, addressing him in the words, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening."

The candles are lighted, the table is spread, pleasant socialities are kindled. They rejoice in the presence of the stranger-guest. He asks a blessing upon the bread they eat, and he hands a piece of it to each. Suddenly and with overwhelming power the thought flashes upon the astonished people—it is the Lord! And as they sit in breathless wonder, looking upon the resurrected body of Jesus, he vanished. The interview ended. He was gone.

The Bright Day.

With many of us it is a bright, sunshiny day of prosperity. There is not a cloud in the sky, not a leaf rustling in the forest, no chill in the air. But we cannot expect all this to last. He is not an intelligent man who expects perpetual daylight of joy. The sun will set after awhile near the horizon. The shadows will lengthen. While I speak, many of us stand in the very hour described in the text, "for it is toward evening." The request of the text is appropriate for some before me. For with them it is toward the evening of old age. They have passed the meridian of life. They are sometimes startled to think how old they are. They do not, however, like to have others remark upon it. If others suggest their approximation toward venerable appearance, they say, "Why, I'm not so old after all." They do, indeed, notice that they cannot lift quite so much as once. They cannot read quite so well without spectacles. They cannot so easily recover from a cough or any occasional ailment. They have lost their taste for merriment. They are surprised at the quick passage of the year. They say that it only seems a little while ago that they were boys. They are going a little down hill. There is something in their health, something in their vision, something in their walk, something in their changing associations, something above, something beneath, something within, to remind them that it is toward evening.

The Great Want of all such is to have Jesus abide with them. It is a dismal thing to be getting old without the rejuvenating influence of religion. When we step on the downward grade of life and see that it dips to the verge of the cold river, we want to behold some one near who will help us across it. When the sight loses its power to glance and gather up, we need the faith that can illumine. When we feel the failure of the ear, we need the clear tones of that voice which in olden times broke up the silence of the deaf with cadence of mercy. When the axmen of death hew down whole forests of strength and beauty around us and we are left in solitude, we need the dove of divine mercy to sing in our branches. When the shadows begin to fall and we feel that the day is far spent, we need most of all to supplicate the strong beneficent Jesus in the prayer of the villagers, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening."

The Dark Night.

The request of the text is an appropriate exclamation for all those who are approached in the gloomy hour of temptation. There is nothing easier than to be good-natured when everything pleases, or to be humble when there is nothing to oppose us, or forgiving when we have been assailed, or honest when we have no inducement to fraud? But you have felt the grapple of some temptation. Your nature at some time quaked and groined under the infernal force. You felt that the devil was after you. You saw your Christian graces retreating. You feared that you would fall in the awful wrestle with sin and be thrown into the dust. The gloom thickened. The first indications of the night were seen in all the trembling of your soul. In all the infernal suggestions of Satan, in all the urging up of tumultuous passions and excitements, you felt with awful emphasis that it was toward evening. In the tempted hour you need to ask Jesus to abide with you. You can beat back the monster that would devour you. You can unhorse the sin that would ride you down. You can sharpen the battle-axe with which you split the head of helmeted abomination. Who helped Paul shake the brazen gated heart of Felix? Who acted like a good sailor when all the crew howled in the Mediterranean shipwreck? Who helped the martyrs to be firm when one word of recantation would have unfastened the wibes of the stake and put out the kindling fire? When the night of the soul came on and all the demons of darkness came riding upon the winds of perdition, who gave strength to the soul? Who gave calmness to the heart? Who broke the spell of infernal enchantment? Who heard the request of the villagers, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening?" One of the forts of France was attacked, and the outworks were taken before night. The besieging army lay down, thinking there was but little to do in the morning, and that the soldiers in the fort could be easily made to surrender. But during the night, through a back stair, they escaped into the country. In the

morning the besieging army sprang upon the battlements, but found that their prey was gone. So, when we are assailed in temptation, there is always some secret stair by which we might get off. God will not allow us to be tempted above what we are able, but with every temptation will bring a way of escape that we may be able to bear it.

The prayer of the text is appropriate for all who are anticipating sorrow. The greatest folly that ever grew on this planet is the tendency to borrow trouble. But there are times when approaching sorrow is so evident that we need to be making special preparation for its coming.

One of your children has lately become a favorite. The cry of that child strikes deeper into the heart than the cry of all the others. You think more about it. You give it more attention, not because it is any more of a treasure than the others, but because it is becoming frail. There is something in the cheek, in the eye and in the walk that makes you quite sure that the leaves of the flower are going to be scattered. The utmost nursing and medical attendance are ineffectual. The pulse becomes feeble, the complexion lighter, the step weaker, the laugh fainter. No more romping for that one through hall and parlor. The nursery is darkened by an approaching calamity. The heart feels with mournful anticipation that the sun is going down. Night speeds on. It is toward evening.

You have long rejoiced in the care of a mother. You have done everything to make her last days happy. You have run with quick feet to wait upon her every want. Her presence has been a perpetual blessing in the household. But the fruit gatherers are looking wistfully at that tree. Her soul is ripe for heaven. The gates are ready to flash open for her entrance. But your soul sinks at the thought of separation. You cannot bear to think that soon you will be called to take the last look at that face which from the first hour has looked upon you with affection unchangeable. But you see that life is ebbing and the grave will soon hide her from your sight. You sit quiet. You feel heavy-hearted. The light is fading from the sky. The air is chill. It is toward evening.

You had a considerable estate and felt independent. In five minutes on one fair balance sheet you could see just how you stood in the world. But there came complications. Something that you imagined impossible happened. The best friend you had proved a traitor to your interests. A sudden crash of national misfortunes prostrated your credit. You may to-day be going on in business, but you feel anxious about where you are standing and fear that the next turning of the wheel will bring you prostrate. You foresee what you consider certain defalcation. You think of the anguish of telling your friends you are not worth a dollar. You know not how you will ever bring your children home from school. You wonder how you will stand the selling of your library or the moving into a plainer house. The misfortunes of life have accumulated. You wonder what makes the sky so dark. It is toward evening.

Soothing the Soul.

Trouble is an apothecary that mixes a great many drafts, bitter and sour and nauseous, and you must drink some one of them. Trouble puts up a great many packs, and you must carry some one of them. There is no sandal so fragrant and crumbly that some thorn will strike through it. There is no sound so sweet but the undertaker's screwdriver grates through it. In this swift shuttle of the human heart some of the threads must break. The journey from Jerusalem to Emmaus will soon be ended. Our Bible, our common sense, our observation, reiterate in tones that we cannot mistake and ought not to disregard. It is toward evening.

Oh, then, for Jesus to abide with us. He sweetens the cup. He extracts the thorn. He wipes the tear. He hushes the tempest. He soothes the soul that flies to him for shelter. Let the night swoop and the euroclydon cross the sea. Let the thunder roar. Soon all will be well. Christ in the ship to soothe his friends. Christ on the sea to stop its tumult. Christ in the grave to scatter the darkness. Christ in the heavens to lead the way. Blessed all with his arms will enclose them, his grace comfort them, his light cheer them, his sacrifice free them, his glory exalt them. If earthly estate takes glory, he will be an incorruptible treasure. If friends die, he will be their resurrection. Standing with us in the morning of our joy and in the noonday of our prosperity, he will not forsake us when the lustre has faded and it is toward evening.

Listen to Paul's battle shout with misfortune. Hark to mounting Latimer's fire song. Look at the glory that has left the dungeon and filled the earth and heavens with the crash of the falling manacles of despotism. And then look at those who have tried to cure themselves by human prescriptions, attempting to heal gangrene with a patch of court plaster and to stop the plague of dying empires with the quackery of earthly wisdom. Nothing can speak peace to the soul, nothing can unstrap our crushing burdens, nothing can open our eyes to see the surrounding horses and chariots of salvation that fill all the mountains, but the voice and command of him who stopped one night at Emmaus.

The words of the text are pertinent to us all, from the fact that we are nearing the evening of death. I have heard it said that we ought to live as though each moment were to be our last. I do not believe that theory. As far as preparation is concerned we ought always to be ready, but we cannot always be thinking of death, for we have duties in life that demand our attention. When a man is selling goods, it is his business to think of the bargain he is making. When a man is pleading in the courts, it is his duty to think of the interests of his clients. When a clerk is adding up his accounts, it is his duty to keep his mind upon the column of figures. He who fills up his life with thoughts of death is far from being the highest style of Christian. I knew a man who used often to say at night, "I wish I might die before morning." He became an infidel.

From Darkness to Light.

But there are times when we can and ought to give ourselves to the contemplation of that solemn moment when to the soul time ends and eternity begins. We must go through that one pass. There is no roundabout way, no bypath, no circuitous route. Die we must, and it will be to us a shameful occurrence or a time of admirable behavior. Our friends may stretch out their hands to keep us back, but no imploration on their part can hinder us. They might offer large retainers, but death would not take the fee. The breath will fall, and the eyes will close, and the heart will stop. You may hang the couch with gorgeous tapestry, but what does death care for beautiful curtains? You may hang the room with the finest works of art, but what does death care for pictures? You may fill the house with the wailings of widowhood and orphanage—does death mind weeping?

This ought not to be a depressing theme. Who wants to live here forever? The world has always treated me well, and every day I feel less and less like scolding and complaining. But yet I would not want to make this my eternal residence. I love to watch the clouds and bathe my soul in the blue sea of heaven. But I expect when the firmament is rolled away as a scroll to see a new heaven, grander, higher and more glorious. You ought to be willing to exchange your body that has headaches and aches and weaknesses, innumerable, that lumps with the stone bruise, or festers with the thorn, or flames on the funeral pyre of fevers, for an incorruptible body and an eye that blinks not before the chamber gates and the great white throne. But between that and this there is an hour about which no man should be reckless or foolhardy. I doubt not your courage, but I tell you that you will want something better than a strong arm, a good aim and a trusty sword when you come to your last battle. You will need a better robe than any you have in your wardrobe to keep you warm in that place.

Circumstances do not make so much difference. It may be a bright day when you push off from the planet, or it may be a dark night and while the owl is hooting from the forest. It may be spring, and your soul may go out among the blossoms, apple orchards swinging their centers in the way. It may be winter and the earth in a snow shroud. It may be autumn, and the forests set on fire by the retreating year, dead nature laid out in state. It may be with your wife's hand in your hand or you may be in a strange hotel with a servant faithful to the last. It may be in the rail train, shot off the switch and tumbling in long reverberation down the embankment—crash, crash! I know not the time. I know not the mode. But the days of our life are being subtracted away and we shall come down to the time when we have but ten days left, then nine days, then eight days, then seven days, six days, five days, four days, three days, two days, one day. Then hours—three hours, two hours, one hour. Then only minutes left—five minutes, four minutes, three minutes, two minutes, one minute. Then only seconds left—four seconds, three seconds, two seconds, one second. Gone! The chapter of life ended! The book closed! The pulses at rest! The feet through with the journey! The hands closed from all work. No word on the lips. No breath in the nostrils. Hair combed back to lie undisheveled by any human hands. The muscles still. The nerves still. The lungs still. The tongue still. All still. You might put the stethoscope to the breast and hear no sound. You might put a speaking trumpet to the ear, but you could not wake the deafness. No motion. No throbs. No life. Still, still!

Sunset.

So death comes to the disciple. What if the sun of life is about to set? Jesus is the dayspring from on high; the perfumed morning of every ransomed spirit. What if the darkness comes? Jesus is the light of the world and of heaven. What though this earthly house of clay crumble? Jesus has prepared a house for many mansions. Jesus is the anchor that always holds. Jesus is the light that is never eclipsed. Jesus is the fountain that is never exhausted. Jesus is the evening star, hung up amid the gloom of the gathering night!

You are almost through with the abuse and blackbiting of enemies. They will call you no more by evil names. Your good deeds will no longer be misinterpreted nor your honor fished. The troubles of earth will end in the felicities! Toward evening! The bereavements of earth will soon be lifted. You will not much longer stand pouring your grief in the tomb, like Rachel weeping for her children or David mourning for Absalom. Broken hearts bound up. Wounds healed. Tears wiped away. Sorrows terminated. No more sounding of the dead march. Toward evening! Death will come, sweet as slumber to the eyelids of the babe, as full rations to a starved soldier, as evening honor to the exhausted workman. The sky will take on its sunset glow, every cloud a fire psalm, every lake a glassy mirror, the forests transfused, delicate mists climbing the air. Your friends will announce it; your pulses will beat it; your joys will ring it; your lips will whisper it. "Toward evening!"

Curious Shoes.

The Portuguese shoes has a wooden sole and heel, with a vamp made of patent leather fancifully showing the flesh side of the skin. The Persian footgear is a raised shoe, and is often a foot high. It is made of light wood, richly inlaid, with a strap extending over the instep. The Muscovite shoe is hand-woven, on a wooden frame, and but little attention is paid to the shape of the foot. Leather is sometimes used, but the sandal is generally made of silk cordage and woolen cloth.

The Siamese shoe has the form of an ancient canoe, with a gondola bow and an open toe. The sole is made of wood and the upper of inlaid wood and cloth, and the exterior is elaborately ornamented in colors with gold and silver.

The sandal worn by the Egyptians is composed of a sole made by sticking together three thicknesses of papyrus. This is held to the foot by passing a band across the instep. The sandal is beautifully stitched with thread of different colors.

Confederate Uniforms.

Though the regulation uniforms of the Confederate army were gray, the close of the war found nearly all of the men and some of the officers wearing homespun suits of various colors, or, at least, of various shades of gray. So-called "butternut" suits were greatly in vogue, whole regiments being thus uniformed. Some of the uniform cloth was got from England on, blockade runners; some was made at the woolen mills scattered here and there through the South, and a great deal was the product of hand looms, worked by the women of the South. There was a "cadet gray" cloth, very fine and soft, which was made at the Crenshaw woolen factory in Richmond.

Every joy which comes to us is only to strengthen us for some greater labor that is to succeed.—Fichte.