

MY LOVER.

Years ago, in my days of youth, I married a man for aye; I never asked if my love would last...

LITTLE MISTISS.

Measured by years it was a long time ago; bridged by my thoughts it seemed only yesterday...

The master, called "ole massa," with ever varying inflection and undulation of the glib tongues of his sable satellites...

The young maiden had not been consulted; Papa and mamma would arrange that. Where was she now, for when the wedding wreath was blossoming...

You may hear the merry young voice, although yet you do not get a glimpse of the slim figure extended full length in supine grace upon an inviting table...

"Now look ye heed, honey. Ise fixed t'ellin' yo'bout a mussin' up dem clean close—and ole massa's fine sheets, too! Goody Lawd, chile, looky heah, now what yo's done to dem fine camberick handkerchiefs of your ma's!..."

"And, as for old Mr. Roberts, I don't care one bit for him, and papa wines and dines him and pays him every courtesy, and the young men are afraid to come here, with a pathetic sigh she ended."

"Bress my heart, chile, s'pose Mammy Sukey tell yo a sekreet she done fine out." "A sekreet! a real sekreet! what about, Mammy!" "Boutin' you, chile, an' it's 'bout marryin', as I done tole yo' afoh!" "Peste et miseriel! I thought you meant a real sekreet, such as Claire and Cora and I had at that chere old convent!..."

ashy gray locks, old Sukey's voice is heard reverberating along the columned arches with the long, sing-song chant of "Yo Aggy—oh yo Aggy—yo' eum heah dis minit;..."

What pleading cadences the old slave voices were capable of! "Little mistiss" kicked up her heels a trifle higher, made a naughty moo at the old woman and said with severe deliberation: "Aunt Sukey, look here now, I'm not going to budge from here—no, I won't—until you tell me where you get all that rigmarole about my not going back to the Sacre Coeur, and my being old enough to put on long dresses and wear my hair 'en coiffe."...

"Little mistiss" was too idle and too insouciant to be very observant of these marked tones. "Pshaw—tiens donc, old Sukey Blue Skin, you needn't think I'm going to bother much about smoothing my hair, and I'm not going to change my dress at all; who's coming, anyhow? Only that old Mr. Roberts from 'Last Retreat,' and he comes to see papa every day, either morning, noon or evening; he is always here, sometimes twice a day, and how they do tramp up and down, up and down, it is a wonder that gallery floor don't fall in, or the planks wear out, or something! But, dear me, with a bright smile lurking in the corners of the bluish gray eyes, 'if only some of the young men would be invited to dinner, but papa is droll, very. He thinks I am too young for beaux and—and—amusements; and I never shall forget how badly papa treated that poor timid Oscar when he called to see me the week after I came home. Poor Oscar! He did not linger long before he said, 'Bon soir! And all for what? Just because papa found—oh, long ago—during my last vacancess some poor little verses Oscar wrote me; such innocent verses, no harm in them. This is what I remember of them: 'If you love me as I love you, no knife can cut our love in two.' There was a billet doux above these lines, but I paid no attention to those fine French compliments, so I've forgotten all about the billet doux, but I remember those English lines, all owing to papa's conduct too, because papa saw the note some where lying about, and, ma foi! but he was vexed! He scolded me a'horreur! and stormed out, 'Par exemple, he would show the young gamine he had something that would cut that love in two, by the eternal! my bowie knife! Grand Dieu! but papa was furious, let me tell you. Poor cher Oscar! I never see him now, and papa is ever talking against the young men hereabouts—some are vauriens, others are ces petits gens la, and again counter hoppers! As for me, although it seems papa means it all for me, every word for me, I would not glance twice at a counter hopper—no yard sticks and tape measures for me!"

And thus the monologue continued in the fresh, vibrant young voice, and Sukey, forgetting all about the woeful "camberick handkerchiefs" put to soak in the round little blue tub, was standing arms akimbo looking at her little "mistiss" with a queer smile beaming over her old, fat, jolly face, and her sides quite shaky with suppressed laughter; and Aggy's agile form had stopped on its way kitchenward, and was now partially hidden behind the latticed Jairy, whence she could see and hear everything, her perfect oval features relaxed from their wonted sadness of expression (all mulattoes have sad faces, I think), and were radiant with fun and bright expectancy; little mistiss was not astonished at this change of base in her audience. She was accustomed to these treacheries in her loved home servants. When she talked she might sway and move them to laughter or to tears, and when she spoke of papa's moods—why, then! they were vastly amused, because she could gesticulate just like papa, and she could put on his heavy frown and ring out his "Sacre milletonnerres," etc.

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And me a little school girl only 18, and in short frocks, too, and moreover—no—no—I would never think of his wanting to marry me, he is so dignified and grave! And, ma foi, I am sure—quite sure—I shall never marry him! But if ever I do marry it will be some young man of my choice, not an old friend of papa's!"

Just here something happened, the maiden seemed in distress; she had cried out, "Bon Dieu, Seigneur," and seemed in wild excitement. Aunt Sukey laughed until she was "mos nigh droppin' onto de yearth," as she afterwards related.

Aggy danced with glee, and the de flant mademoiselle was laughing and crying and choking and protesting, with her face smothered among the damp, rolled up clothes, whilst Mr. Roberts, aged 30, with a few premature gray threads sprinkled through his brown hair, and an amused smile lighting up his fine face, declared he should so hold the bonny head until she retracted her cruel words.

mean a real sekreet, such as Claire and Cora and I had at that chere old convent! Something about a lover, and nobody was to know but we three girls and—somebody else. And here you go with your old tale 'you done tole me so.' "Now listen, honey, would yo b'lieve old Sukey if she tole yo, yo is got a beau o' a loyva—a tall, hansum gunimun, and he's done axed yo pa fer yo hand! and ole miss, she done cried over it fer pain and joy—cos why! He's sperier gentlun, none o' yo po wite trash, but he's got money and land and niggas, and his wite fokes up nor is quality, I tell yo!"

"Oh, mammy, is all that true! Who, who is he! What's his name, Sukey!" "Lawd, chile, yo eyes done blaze up like de stars, an dey makes yo look puzatly like Miss Genie when she gets egarited bout sump'n. Lor, chile, ain't yo got no spishun bout all dat's been agwin on heahabout!" And the old woman chuckled and mouthed and was mightily pleased at something.

"Yo is got ter know it some time or yudda, and I feels mos bleeged to tell yo now, secin as how egzited yo done got, an tain't no use a palaverin longy aboutin it nudda—yo beau—and yo is gwine ter marry him too, afoh dis yeah be out." The young lady's head was lifted defiantly and with an air of protest, yet with pleasant excitement and deep interest aquiver in every expressive feature. "His name," continued Sukey, "is Massa Roberts, and he wants a purty little wite to set at his Krissmiss dinnah table dis yeah, God willin'!"

"Mr. Rob—Roberts!" and a peal of laughter choked her utterance; "why, he is old enough to be my father! And me a little school girl only 18, and in short frocks, too, and moreover—no—no—I would never think of his wanting to marry me, he is so dignified and grave! And, ma foi, I am sure—quite sure—I shall never marry him! But if ever I do marry it will be some young man of my choice, not an old friend of papa's!"

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This little down stairs scene ended in a joyous wedding, of course, after the lapse of several months, and many were the pleasant family reunions at both homes before the young bride presided at the Christmas dinner table of her happy husband.—E. S. G. in New Orleans Picayune.

Moses smote the rock and the pent up waters gushed forth. The song of a canary made Louis Spohr a musician. His father was played on the flute, his mother was a pianist and a singer, so that the boy lived in an atmosphere of music.

One day, when he was four years of age, a thunder storm so impressed him that he retired to a corner of the room, sat down on the floor, and looked in mournful silence straight before him. Suddenly the roof of clouds that had darkened the sky was rent asunder by a sunbeam, which as it entered the room fell upon the cage of a canary hanging before the window.

The bird turned its little head up to the beam, hopped from one perch to the other, and then warbled a joyous song. The boy, awakened by the bird's trills from his semi-stupor, listened with passionate rapture. The tones touched nerve and brain; his heart throbbled in musical pulsations, and at that moment all his world opened before him.

He never ceased to hear that canary's ringing trills, which then and there revealed to him his vocation.—Youth's Companion.

How Sheridan Saved a Cadet. A recent graduate of West Point gives a pleasant account of his last sight of Gen. Sheridan. That illustrious soldier was making the inspection rounds of the Military academy with the commandant. Sheridan lingered awhile in the quarters of my informant, whose father was the general's friend of long standing. Before leaving, "Little Phil" stepped to the open fireplace, and bending, looked up the chimney, making a thrust with his sword worthy of a professional sweep. Rattletybang, crash, came a whole assortment of bottles, flasks and cigar boxes. The cadet said he stood against, with the death sweat on him. Gen. Sheridan froze him with a stern glance, and then turning to the inspector, said: "Do not report this case; I have taken an unfair advantage of — I will remember the old hiding place of my own cadetship."—Chicago America.

A New German Decoration. By the German emperor's special command all the royal princes who entered the army during the reign of William I, and all the old emperor's adjutants and aids-de-camp, will henceforth wear, in memory of William I, a new and specially created order, both with their uniform and with their ordinary dress. The order is of the size of a German five mark piece, and is inscribed with the name of William I, round which a laurel wreath is wound. For William II, the prince, and the adjutant general, the order is of gold, the rest of the wearers of silver.—Pall Mail Gazette.

Though he has reached his three-score years and ten, Firth, the painter, very naturally complains of the highly anticipatory action of the South Kensington museum authorities in labeling one of his pictures with his name, the date of his birth and a blank for that of his death.

Severe. A fop's affectations of modesty sometimes meet with an even worse reception than his open vanities. "Aw, you know," said one of this fraternity, "I—aw—weally, I believe I was just going to say something quite stupid!" "Why don't you say simply that you were going to speak!" asked a bystander.—Youth's Companion.

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