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I. PEARLMAN.

## WAVERLAND.

A TALE OF OUR COMING LANDLORDS.

BY SARAH MARIE BRIGHAM.

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Yes, Loyd, this is Annie.

I had not enough ambition to care to fix up the old place, but would roam about in an absent, thoughtless way with my dogs and companions, or at Annie's side, as of old. I was just as exacting with her now as then, and she was just as patient with my restless moods as when she was a child. Gradually the old house took a different look. The old hall door swung open without the aid of two or three servants. The windows too could let in the sunlight, for sliding panes of glass had taken the place of boards and rags. One evening coming home I found the drawing-room door open. I entered, and what a sensation of pleasure came over me! The old moth-eaten furniture had been cleaned and brightened, the tapestry had been through the same ordeal and was newly arranged. The old neglected piano was open and on the rack were several sheets of music. The room had such a cosy, homelike appearance that I bounded away to call my mother, that she might enjoy it with me. Taking her in my arms I carried her down stairs and placed her in one of the easy chairs, then I went back to the door to take a survey. While I stood there silently enjoying the scene, Miss Everett stepped from the window seat, where she had been concealed by the drapery, saying:

"Well, Sir Loyd, how do you like it?"  
"It is fine! We owe you a thousand thanks for this pleasant surprise," I said, going toward her, but she turned away, saying:  
"I only let the sunshine in," and left the room.

"What a strange girl she is," I said. "Her active brain has planned and her busy hands have guided all this work."

"Yes, she is a strange girl," said my mother. "She has given me new life since she came, bringing in the sunshine, as she says; not only into our rooms but into our hearts as well."

"O, mamma, how came you down stairs?" asked Myrtle, as she came dancing into the room. "How nice it is! O, mamma, stay here always!"

It did seem like home. A bright room and my mother's gentle presence! Then began a happy home life. The evenings were passed with music and pleasant conversation, and the dreary old house was full of joy and sunshine. One evening not long after, as I entered my mother's room, she said:

"What do you think, my son, Miss Everett has asked permission to control the household?"  
"I think she can do it, mother, judging from what she has done. You gave her permission, I'm sure."

"Yes, but I told her she would soon tire of it; that Lord Waverland's servants were hard to manage. She only laughed at my fears, saying it was like a difficult problem that she was very much interested in. I believe she is interested, for Myrtle is learning many useful things besides her studies. She is delighted with Miss Everett."

"When I left my mother I went to the drawing-room. It was still early, and the summer sun made the room a pleasant one. As I went toward one of the window seats, I saw Miss Everett seated in it busy sewing. It annoyed me, and in a tone of vexation I said:

"What right have you to sit working away all the time, never taking any rest?"  
She raised her clear brown eyes to mine for a moment, as though asking what I meant, then said:

"It is a case of necessity, Sir Loyd, as I find your sister's wardrobe in great disorder."

"Well," I said, "you have no right to do that," pointing to the work that lay in her lap.

"She only shrugged her shoulders and went on with the sewing. It made me more vexed to be defied in this manner by a slight girl, and I commenced pacing the floor, saying:

"We are a disgrace to our name, a disgrace to mankind! No one ever comes here without being imposed upon. Here you must be compelled to be seamstress to your pupil. But what a fool I am! What do you know about it?"

"The quick, keen glance she gave me as I tried to leave the room said as plainly as words could say that she did know and care. Her active life was a constant rebuke to my idle one. I had never felt the need of a purpose in life, and had followed a listless, thoughtless existence until her coming had stirred a new impulse; but as yet I was not willing to follow it."

One morning I was passing through the kitchen, when to my surprise and astonishment I saw Miss Everett with a big white apron on and a bunch of keys at her side, giving directions to the servants for dinner. I was vexed.

"Miss Everett," I said in no pleasant tone, "I thought that was the duty of the housekeeper!"

"Making me a comic bow, she said, 'I am the only housekeeper this establishment has at present.'"

"Why, where is Mrs. Ingram?" I asked, amazed. "She has been our housekeeper ever since I can remember, and I thought she was a fixture."

"She left a few days ago," said Miss Everett, coolly.

"Left?" I said, "why, she has not been paid for years."

"Beg pardon, Sir Loyd, she has been paid. I paid her myself," said she archly.

"Well, Miss Everett, how soon are you going to take charge of the estate? That needs attention next," I said, in an impatient tone.

She made me no answer for a few moments, but stood tapping the floor with her little foot in a nervous fashion; then, turning toward me with a thoughtful expression, she said:

"Sir Loyd, if I were you I would not let my inheritance go to waste!"

Confused and humiliated I left the room. My inheritance! I had never thought of it as mine. But sometime, no doubt, it would belong to me. I sought the library; there I began to think, yes, actually think! Here I was, a young man, strong of limb and sound in mind, but thinking and working were things new in my life. I saw something for me to do. Here was a vast estate, with tenants good and bad. Men, women and children living in want and degradation, that I might help to a more prosperous existence.

I went out over the estate and found trouble and difficulties at every step. The tenants were in rebellion at the high rents, and the most bitter complaints were made. Want and filth greeted me everywhere. Could it be that I was to blame for the terrible misery I saw? Clearly, some one was greatly to blame: for here were men, women and children living in hovels so small and filthy that I would blush to put my horses into them. Here were large families living and paying exorbitant rents for those old hovels and a few acres of land, while the constant fear that they would be turned out kept them in anxiety.

All the time I was listening to the clear ringing words, "If I were you I would not let my inheritance go to waste!"

But what could I do? I went home discouraged, though not without a purpose. I had been aroused at last, I had something to do in life. The dream of my childhood would try to realize. From that day to this, I have tried to work for the good of the poor, despised, down-trodden people that we call tenants.

CHAPTER IV.—THE HEARTLESS LANDLORD.

Going home one evening after a wearisome day, I found the house in unusual commotion. The servants were running here and there, and things were in disorder generally. On the stairs I met Miss Everett. Her cheeks were red, and her eyes had a new fire in them.

"What is it?"  
"Lord Waverland has come," she answered in a hoarse whisper, passing on.

"Then you have seen him," I said, as she passed.

Her looks betrayed feelings of deep indignation, as she said:

"Yes, he is in the drawing-room."  
Miss Stella Everett had seen my father, and from her manner, I knew that he had said something to offend her. He could say or do almost anything. I went to the drawing-room. There, seated in an easy chair before the fire (it was a damp, cold day in September), surrounded by his dogs, sat my father. His fine, manly form seemed as erect as ever, and his dark, curly hair had few threads of grey. As I opened the door he turned his face toward me. It

showed evidences of dissipation.

"This seems like home, but the little mix that rules here has plenty of fire in her small body," he remarked, without changing his position to greet me in any way.

"She has courage to defend herself, at least," I replied, not very politely.

"Ah! Ah! so it is my lady's governess, instead of Annie Wren? I thought she was the chosen one," said he in derision.

The dinner bell sounded. Lord Waverland left the drawing-room to meet the friends he had brought with him. When they were seated at dinner Lord Waverland said:

"It seems the fairy genie of the place has been in the kitchen, too, for here we have a well cooked meal decently served."

There was now a merry party at Waverland. The ladies remained in their rooms when Lord Waverland and his guests were at home; for they were a wild, reckless class and became very noisy under the influence of their evening potations. How my heart rebelled against this! There could be no pleasant hours in the drawing-room now enlivened with music, as had been our habit. Miss Everett was quite a musician and Annie and I would join her in singing, while my mother and Sir Wren enjoyed a quiet game of whist. But now this rude, boisterous crowd of counts and braggarts that composed Lord Waverland's party had taken possession of the house. The sheriff, with his band of armed soldiers, was in constant demand, evicting tenants who would not or could not pay the rent. That band of rough, roystering fellows made themselves very familiar about the place.

Many of the tenants could not pay, and some of them were afraid of incurring the displeasure of the Land League and Lord Waverland. He would not lower his rents so when the warrant was read it was a severe struggle of eviction. Men were sent out without work, or any means of saving their families from starvation.

During the month that Lord Waverland was at home, as I afterward learned, more than two hundred families were made homeless. Some tenants were more afraid of eviction than of the Land League and paid no rent. One tenant, Patrick O'Neil, who had a large holding on my father's estate, paid his rent. A few days after his saw that the rack-rent demanded by Lord Waverland. He would not lower his rents so when the warrant was read it was a severe struggle of eviction. Men were sent out without work, or any means of saving their families from starvation.

"What is the matter, Pat?" I asked.

"Och, and it's a bad cold I have."

"That will never do, Pat. Let me see your ears!"

After some demurring I persuaded him to take off the kerchief, when, as I had been told, he had lost both his ears.

"How did it happen, Pat?" I asked, sorry for the poor man.

"Yez see, the rule is, if one pays the rent that is too high, some one is shure to find it out; and then ye've have to pay the penalty. But what is a man to do? He will be turned out if he does not pay and he will lose his ears if he does. I thought I had rather keep my home and lose my ears."

"It's a bad state of affairs when a man must choose between the two," I said, feeling very much grieved for the poor tenant.

"But," said Pat, "the worst was when our baby, that was sick at the time, died. Not one of our friends, not even my father and mother, durst come to see us. But for the wate lady at the house, no one would have come to wash and dress our dear dead baby."

"Who did you say came?" I asked, for I could not think of any one at Waverland that would care for the poor tenant's sorrow.

"Why, the young lady in black."  
"Miss Everett?" I asked in astonishment.

"Yes, she always knows when any of us are in trouble, and comes to help us if she can."

"Did no one come to help bury your child?"

"No one but the priest. They durst not."

"These things are hard to bear," I said, soliloquizing to myself.

"Yez may well say so, sorr. I could stand my own part of it. But one is not alone," said Pat, tears rolling down his rough face. "There's me wife and children that are dearer to me than my own life. I cannot sorr, bear the thought of seeing them starving and freezing by the roadside. I have given up my ears to save them. Do you blame me, sorr?"

"No, Pat," I said taking his hand in mine. "You are a noble man to sacrifice so much for your family. May you receive a just reward."

Not long after my visit with Pat, Lord Waverland gave a grand reception. The suite of rooms opening into each other were brilliantly lighted. My mother, assisted by Miss Everett, came into the drawing-room to receive the guests. My mother had on a black velvet dress trimmed with rich old lace, and wore the family diamonds. Miss Everett, also, was dressed in black, but her only ornaments were a few flowers. The guests were received and passed on to the hall.

When Lord Waverland entered the room with two or three of his companions, he stood and gazed at my mother and Miss Everett a moment, then said:

"Mon Dieu! whom have we here?" making a mocking bow to them. My mother did not quail beneath his scornful look, but remained calm. His scorn changed to admiration.

"Why, Lady Waverland, you are indeed a beauty! Where did you get your fine toilet?" he asked, as he stood carelessly leaning against the broad mantel, looking at my mother and Miss Everett with bold admiring eyes.

"From my wardrobe, sir," said my mother, inspired with some of the independence of Miss Everett's courage.

"Where is the infant?" asked Lord Waverland, as he went to my mother's side.

"I see her governess is here!"

"I came to assist Lady Waverland, sir," said Miss Everett, as she took a step nearer to my mother's side.

Lord Waverland turned and walked away, but it was evident that he had been defeated in something which he had intended. As he turned away I followed. He passed to the club room with his friends. As they entered the door the count said:

"She is a rare beauty when roused."  
"Yes, and she has given my lady some of her overbearing nature. But I'll bring her to time yet. See if I don't! This being cowed in my own house by a woman is more than I will stand."

But those wild, reckless fellows were quiet and well behaved throughout the evening. The old hall so long unused was bright with light and fragrant as the summer air with flowers and verdure. The assembled guests were in a cheerful mood. The strident instruments sent forth their sweet melodious strains that wake the impulses to new life. With hurrying feet that longed to echo back the melody of music, youths and maidens sought their places, swaying to and fro in the glad ecstasy of joy and tenderness.

Sir Wren, with a beautiful lady on his arm, formed part of the brilliant throng. When the dance ended he came to where I stood with Annie by my side.

"My niece, Lady Irving," said Sir Wren as he presented the lady.

"I will leave her to your care," he said, politely, and walked away. Johnny O'Leary, a young man from a neighboring estate, came to claim his promised dance with Annie. Lady Irving begged to rest awhile; so we returned to the drawing-room to join my mother and Miss Everett.

After a little general conversation I asked Lady Irving to play for us.

She seated herself at the piano and gave us some grand music. While she was playing I watched Miss Everett's expressive face. The love of music was a passion with her, and when, as now, she heard good music, it seemed to thrill her very soul.

Soon Lady Irving was claimed as a partner, and was led back to the hall. I went to Miss Everett, who refused all partners and had remained by my mother's side during the evening. But seeing her deep emotion I said:

"You seem charmed with music."  
"Yes, Sir Loyd, if I could always hear such sweet strains of music I could banish evil thoughts and be content."

"Why are you ever troubled with unpleasant thoughts?" I asked. "You always seem so happy?"

"Yes, sir, I have temptations hard to overcome. I have often thought that people were like books. Some charm, others vex and annoy. I think Lady Irving would always charm me," she said, looking toward the hall where youth and beauty were making a most attractive scene.

"Will you dance with me?" I asked, offering her my arm.

"I have never danced anything but the simple country dances," she said, placing her hand upon my arm. As we were passing through the crowd I heard some one say—

"There she is now! Fine airs she puts on for a governess! I wonder if she thinks she can associate with gentlefolks because her mistress is kind to her!" I looked at my companion's face. The glad light had faded from her eye; her lips trembled with a childish quiver. So self-reliant and firm, I thought, yet so keenly sensitive. We turned to the conservatory, which was bright with light and flowers.

"You remain here, Miss Everett," I said, "while I seek some refreshments for us."

As I left the conservatory I met Lady Irving, and led her to Miss Everett. I left them visiting like old acquaintances. They talked of Dickens, Thackeray and Scott. They seemed familiar with the whole world of authors, and were at home in each other's presence. When I returned with ices and cake they were laughing and chatting like old acquaintances.

Far away in the night, when the dawn began to break, the house was left alone. When the last guest had departed, I found Miss Everett, and said:

"How did you like your new book?"  
"O, you mean Lady Irving! She is de-

lightful! I wish she could always be my friend— She is a widow, and expects to spend a few years traveling," said Miss Everett with a suppressed sigh.

"Why that weary sigh?" I asked.

"I was thinking how nice it would be to be like Lady Irving," she said, looking down and making a little impatient movement with her foot.

"And travel?" she said. "I long to see something of the great world that I have read and heard so much about. Sometimes I long for wings to fly away from this weary plodding life. Nay, I am sick at heart to-night, and will not vex you with my discontent."

"You said? Our sunlight hid behind a cloud!" I said, stepping toward her, and would have taken her hand, but she turned away, bidding me good night.

What was there in her clear brown eyes and low, sweet voice that had such a charm for me? This question was often in my thoughts.

CHAPTER V.—MY NEW RESPONSIBILITIES.

One evening not long after the reception, when Lord Waverland and his friends were enjoying a game of billiards, a shout, wild and terrific, rang out upon the air. It filled the house with a strange, weird sound. From every room the inmates in their alarm hastened to the hall. It was bright from the light made by the burning tables. All round the house and yard a throng of people crowding and shouting in great excitement, were calling loudly for Lord Waverland.

The party left the billiard hall and Lord Waverland sat cowered down in a corner of the room, trembling with fear. His face was haggard with a terrible dread. His conscience told him, but too truly, what this midnight visit meant. Hoarse voices thundered up stairs below: "Bring him out, or we'll burn him out!"

Every face in the room was white with terror. What could be done? I went to the window and threw open the sash, as I did so a ball came whizzing and lodged in the window casing. I dodged, but there was no time to quail. The men below were carrying large torches of blazing fagots.

"What will you do if Lord Waverland answers your call?" I asked.

"Make him promise to reduce our rents and relieve our wants, or we'll show him a big blaze!" replied a voice from the crowd.

"Bring him out, or we'll burn him out!" again thundered up from the desperate people, and they began throwing logs against the doors. Something must be done, for there was no way of escaping from the house. We all went to Lord Waverland and urged and entreated him to go to the window. He sat glum and made no reply to our pleadings. At last Miss Everett went to him and said:

"Sir, if you do not answer we must all perish."

He sat for a moment undecided, then rising, he took her by the hand and led her to the window. I made a movement to keep her back, but she waved me off with a motion of her hand. I followed them, and when they reached the open window, she called out in her clear sweet voice:

"Here is Lord Waverland!" In a moment the hoarse cry changed to a triumphant shout for the "Swate Lady!" For some moments the cheering continued. When there was a lull she called out again:

"Lord Waverland will speak to you!"  
"What do you want?" he asked in a trembling voice.

"We want our rent reduced, our homes restored and a promise of protection!" cried a voice from below.

"Come to me in the morning, and I will grant you anything and everything, only spare us now!" he said trembling, his teeth chattering as with an ague fit.

"O, yes, you can plude for mercy now, but when we pled for our wives and children what mercy did yez grant?" called out a voice.

The men gathered in a group and held a short consultation. Then left the yard shouting, "Ireland and liberty forever!"

With a thankful heart I went to Miss Everett, and taking her hand I said, "We owe you a debt of gratitude, my dear friend. But for you our home would have been in ashes, and all of us either murdered or burned alive." A shudder ran through her frame at the terrible thought, but she permitted me to still retain her hand.

The guests all gathered around her to offer their thanks. Even Lord Waverland came to her, saying:

"What am I to do next, Miss Everett? you seem to know."

"Do as you have promised. Give those men the justice they demand of you," she said, in a calm, clear tone, that added force to her words.

"What would you let those miserable wretches know that they have frightened me into submission?"

"Lord Waverland, I would show them that I valued my word far more than my wealth or my pride!" As she uttered these words she looked a very goddess of justice in her quiet dignity.

"Well, we'll see," he said, and left the room.

After Lord Waverland and his friends had retired, leaving my mother, Miss Everett, myself and a few servants in the great empty hall, mother said:

"How terrible to think that men are driven to seek such revenge!"

"I was just thinking what a change from the last time we were in this room. Then all was light, warmth and beauty," I said, going to the window and looking out at the burning pile.

"I cannot blame them," said Miss Everett. "They have suffered beyond the power of endurance."

Seeing how exhausted my mother looked, I took her in my arms and carried her to her room.

When I reached my room I could not sleep. The timbers of the stable were yet burning, and cast a weird light into my window. I fancied I could see the blackened forms of all the horses and cattle on the place, as they probably lay roasting in their stalls. Then I remembered by whose aid we had been saved from a terrible death. So complete had been the arrangements of the mob, that not a door or window had been left unguarded. The order was given to fire on any one who should attempt to escape. That was the reason of the shot that came whizzing past my head as I opened the window.

I almost unconsciously to myself, Miss Everett had become very dear to me. Her quiet ways and pleasant face had not only brought sunshine into the house, but into my heart as well. I felt glad that to her we were indebted. But what would be the result of this night's work? was an oft-returning thought. Would Lord Waverland listen to reason and humble himself enough to make terms with his outraged tenants? or would his proud heart bring further calamities on his family?

[Continued Tomorrow.]

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