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THE ETERNITY OF THE STARS.

Eternal stars, bright orbs of night,
In heaven's broad arch above,
You shine afar with trembling light
As lasting as God's love.

You greet our gaze like gleams that glance
From holy angels' eyes;
Forever fair, you glisten there
Within the tranquil skies.

God's form and features are unknown,
His works are wisely planned;
He sits on His tremendous throne
And guides you with His hand.

While babes are born, while strong men die,
While kings and thrones decay,
While centuries go gliding by,
On their forgotten way;

Yet still, by night, as bright and fair
The wandering planets roam
As when God's hand first placed them there,
In their eternal home.

Traditions disappear of fields
Where furious armies trod,
How insignificant is man,
How great and good is God!

With mystic light your splendor fell
On Adam while he dreamed,
Upon the world's destroying flood
And Babel's tower you beamed.

You saw old Abram's hopeful face,
And Sarah as she smiled,
When Hagar to the desert place
Was driven with her child.

On Pharaoh's host, on Israel's camp,
On Sinai's height you shone,
When God descended to declare
And make His mandates known.

You saw the wealth of Solomon,
And Babylon forlorn,
The shepherds when they watched their flocks
The night that Christ was born.

—*Eugene J. Hall, in Inter Ocean.*

THE LAWYER'S SECRET.

By B. L. Farjeon, Author of "Bread, Cheese and Kisses."

CHAPTER I.

IN A LAWYER'S OFFICE.

"It is the most provoking clause that was ever invented to annul the advantages of a testament," said the lady.

"It is a condition which must be fulfilled, or you lose the fortune," replied the gentleman.

Whereupon the gentleman began to drum a martial air with the slender tips of his white fingers upon the morocco-covered office table, while the lady beat time with the point of her narrow foot.

For the gentleman was out of temper, and the lady was out of temper, also. I am sorry to have to say it of her, for she was very young and very handsome, and though the angry light in her dark gray eyes had a certain vixenish beauty, it was a species of beauty rather alarming to a man of a nervous temperament.

She was very handsome. Her hair was of the darkest brown, and clustered about her head in rich, waving masses, that fell into extemporary curls under her elegant Parisian bonnet. Her eyes, as I have said, were gray—those large, gray eyes, fringed with long black lashes, which are more dangerous than all other eyes ever invented for the perdition of honest men. They looked like deep pools of shining water, bordered by dark and shadowy rushes; they looked like stray stars in an inky sky; but they were so beautiful that, like the signal lamp which announces the advent of an express upon the heels of a luggage train, they seemed to say "Danger!" Her nose was aquiline; her mouth small, clearly cut and very determined in expression; her complexion brunette, and rather pale. For the rest, she was tall, her head set with a haughty grace upon her sloping shoulders, her hands and feet small, and delicately shaped.

The gentleman was ten or fifteen years her senior. He, too, was handsome, eminently handsome; but there was a languid indifference about his manner, which communicated itself even to his face, and seemed to overshadow the very beauty of that face with a dark veil of weary listlessness, that extinguished the light of his eyes and blotted out the smile upon his lips.

That any one so gifted by nature as he seemed gifted, could be as weary of life as he appeared was, in itself, so much a mystery that one learned to look at him as a man under whose quiet outward bearing lay some deep and stormy secret, unrevealable to common eyes.

He was dark and pale, with massively cut features, thoughtful brown eyes, which rarely looked up from under the heavy eyelids that shrouded them. The mouth was spiritual in expression, the lips thin; but the face was wanting in one quality, lacking which, it lacked the power which is the highest form of manly beauty; and that quality was determination.

He sat drumming with his white, taper fingers upon the table, and looking down, with a gloomy shade upon his handsome forehead.

The scene was a lawyer's office in Gray's Inn. There was a third person present, an elderly lady, rather a faded beauty in appearance, and very much dressed. She took no part in the conversation, but sat in an easy chair by the blazing fire, turning over the crisp sheets of the *Times* newspaper, which, every time she moved them, emitted a sharp, crackling sound, unpleasant to the nervous temperaments of the younger lady and the gentleman.

The gentleman was a solicitor, Horace Margrave, the guardian of the young lady, and executor of her uncle's will. Her name was Ellinor Arden; she was sole heiress and residuary legatee to her uncle, John Arden, of the park and village of Arden, in Northamptonshire; and she had this very day come of age. Mr. Margrave had been the trusted and valued friend of her father, dead ten years before, and of her uncle, only lately dead; and Ellinor Arden had been brought up to think that if there were truth, honesty or friendship upon earth, those three attributes were centered in the person of Horace Margrave, solicitor, of Gray's Inn.

He is to-day endeavoring to explain and to reconcile her to the conditions of her uncle's will, which are rather peculiar.

"In the first place, my dear Ellinor," he says, still drumming on the table, still looking at his desk and not at her, "you had no particular right to expect to be your uncle, John Arden, of Arden's, heiress."

"I was his nearest relation," she said.

"Granted; but there was no reason why you should be dear to him. Your father and he, after the amiable fashion of brotherly love in this very Christian country, were almost strangers to each other for the best part of their lives. You, your uncle never saw, for your father lived on his wife's small property in the north of Scotland, and you were brought up in that remote region until you were sent to Paris, to be there educated under the surveillance of your aunt, and you therefore never made the acquaintance of John Arden, of Arden, your father's only brother."

"My father had such a horror of being misinterpreted; had he sought to make his daughter known to his rich brother it might have been thought"——

"That he wanted to get that rich brother's money, it might have been thought? My dear girl, it would have been thought! Your father acted with the pride of the Northamptonshire Ardens; he acted like a high-minded English gentleman; and he acted, in the eyes of the world, like a fool. You never, then, expected to inherit your uncle's money?"

"Never! Nor did I ever wish it. My mother's little fortune would have been enough for me."

"I wish to heaven you had never had a penny beyond it!"

As Horace Margrave said these few words, the listless shadows on his face swept away for a moment, and revealed a settled gloom, painful to look upon.

He so rarely spoke on any subject whatever in a tone of real earnestness that Ellinor Arden, startled by the change in his manner, looked up at him suddenly and searchingly. But the vail of weariness had fallen over his face once more, and he continued, with his old indifference:

"To the surprise of everyone, your uncle bequeathed to you, and to you alone, his entire fortune. Stranger as you were to him, this was an act, not of love to you, but of duty to his dead brother. But the person he really loved was unconnected with him by the ties of kindred, and he no doubt considered that it would be an injustice to disinherit his only niece in favor of a stranger. This stranger, this *protege* of your uncle's, is the son of a lady who once was beloved by him, but who loved another, poor and humbler than Squire Arden, of Arden, and who told him so, candidly, but tenderly, as a good woman should tell a man of that which she knows may shiver the whole fabric of his life. She married this poorer suitor, George Dalton, a young surgeon in a small country town. She married him, and three years after her marriage she died, leaving an only child, a boy. This boy, on the death of his father, which happened when he was only four years old, was adopted by your uncle. He never married, but devoted himself to the education of the son of the woman who had rejected him. He did not, however, bring up the boy to look upon himself as his heir; but he educated him as a man ought to be educated who has his own path to make in life. He had him called to the bar, and Henry Dalton had pleaded his first cause a year before your uncle's death. He did not leave him one farthing."

"But"——

"But he left his entire fortune to you, on condition that you should marry Henry Dalton within a year of your majority."

"And if I marry anyone else, or refuse to marry this apothecary's son, I lose the fortune?"

"Every farthing of it."

A beautiful light flashed from her eyes, as she rose hurriedly from her chair, and, crossing the room, laid her hand lightly upon Horace Margrave's shoulder.

"So be it," she said, with a smile. "I will forfeit the fortune. I have a hundred a year from my mother's estate—enough for any woman. I will forfeit the fortune, and" —— she paused for a moment, "and marry the man I love."

We have said that Horace Margrave had a pale complexion; but as Ellinor Arden said these words, his face changed from its ordinary dark pallor to a deadly ashen hue, and his head sank forward upon his chest, while his strongly-marked black eyebrows contracted painfully over his half-closed eyes.

She stood a little behind his chair, with her small gloved hand resting lightly on his shoulder, so she did not see the change in his face. She waited a minute or two, to hear what he would say to her determination; and, on his not speaking, she moved away from him impatiently, and resumed her seat on the other side of the large office table.

Nothing could have been more complete in its indifference than Mr. Margrave's manner, as he looked lazily up at her, and said:

"My poor romantic child! Throw away a fortune of three thousand a year, to say nothing of Arden Hall, and the broad lands thereto appertaining, and marry the man you love?" My sweet, poetical Ellinor, may I venture to ask who is the fortunate man whom you love?"

It seemed a very simple and straightforward question, emanating, as it did, from a man of business, many years her senior, her dead father's old friend, and her own guardian and trustee, but, for all that, Ellinor Arden appeared utterly unable to endure it. A dark flush spread itself over her handsome face; her eyelids fell over her flashing eyes; and her lips quivered with an agitation she was powerless to repress. She was silent for some minutes, during which Horace Margrave played carelessly with a penknife, opening and shutting it absently, and not once looking at his beautiful ward. The elderly lady by the fire-place turned the crackling sheets of the *Times* more than once during the short silence, which seemed so long.

Horace Margrave was the first to speak.

"My dear Ellinor, as your guardian, till this very day possessed of full power to control your actions—after to-day, I trust, still possessed of the privilege, though, perhaps, not the right, to advise them—I have, I hope, some claim on your confidence. Tell me, then, candidly, as you may tell a middle-aged old lawyer, like myself, who is it you love? Who is it you would rather marry than Henry Dalton, the adopted son of your uncle?"

For once he looked at her as he spoke, she looking full at him; so it was that their eyes met; a long, earnest, reproachful, sad look was in hers; in his a darkness of gloomy sorrow, beyond all power of description.

His eyes were the first to fall; he went on playing with the handle of the penknife, and said;

"You are so long in giving me a candid and straightforward answer, my dear girl, that I begin to think this hero is of rather a mythic order, and that your heart is, after all, perhaps, free. Tell me, Ellinor, is it not so? You have met so few people—have passed so much of your time in the utter seclusion of a Parisian convent—and when away from the convent you have been so protected by the Argus-like guardianship of your respected aunt—that I really cannot see how you can have lost that dear, generous heart of yours. I suspect that you are only trying to mystify me. Once for all, then, my ward, is there any one whom you love?"

He looked at her as he asked this decisive question, with a shrinking upward glance under his dark eyelashes—something like the glance of a man who looks up, expecting a blow, and knows that he must shiver and close his eyes when that blow falls.

The crimson flush passed away from her face, and left her deadly pale, as she said, with a firm voice:

"No."

"No one?"

"No one."

Horace Margrave sighed a sigh of deep relief, and proceeded in his former tone—entirely the tone of a man of business.

"Very well, then, my dear Ellinor, seeing that you have formed no prior attachment, that it is your uncle's earnest request, nay, solemn prayer, that this marriage should take place; seeing also, that Henry Dalton is a very good young man"——

"I hate good young men!" she said, impatiently. "Dreadfully perfect beings, with light hair and fresh-colored cheeks; dressed in pepper-and-salt suits, and double-soled boots! I detest them!"

"My dear Ellinor! My dear Ellinor! Life is neither a stage play nor a three-volume novel; and, rely upon it, the happiness of a wife depends very little on the color of her husband's hair, or the cut of his coat. If he neglects you, will you be happier, lonely and deserted at home, in remembering the dark waving curls clustering round his head, at that very moment, perhaps, drooping over the green cloth of a hazard table in St. James' street? If he wrings your heart with the racking tortures of jealousy, will it console you to recall the flashing glances of his hazel eyes, whose gaze no longer meets your own? No, no, Ellinor! dispossess yourself of the school-girl's notion of Byronic heroes, with turn-down collars, and deficient moral region. Marry Henry Dalton; he is so good, honored and sensible, that you must ultimately learn to esteem him. Out of that esteem will grow, bye-and-bye, love; and, believe me, paradoxical as it may sound, you will love him better from not loving him too much."

"As you will, my dear guardian," she said. "Henry Dalton, by all means, then, and the fortune. I should be very sorry not to follow your excellent, sensible and business-like advice."

She tries to say this with his own indifference; but she says it with a sneering emphasis, and, in spite of herself, she betrays considerable agitation.

"If we are to dine at six," interposed the faded lady by the fire-place, who had been looking over the top of the newspaper every three minutes, hopelessly awaiting a break in the conversation.

"We must go home directly," said Ellinor. "You are right, my dear Mrs. Morrison; I am most inattentive to you. Pray forgive me; remember the happiness of a life," she looked not at Mrs. Morrison, but at Mr. Margrave, who had risen and stood lounging—tall, graceful and indifferent—against the mantelpiece, "the happiness of a life, perhaps, trembled on the interview of to-day. I have made my decision, at the advice of my kind guardian. A decision must, no doubt, result in the happiness of every one concerned. I am quite at your service, Mrs. Morrison."

Horace Margrave laid his hand on the bell by his side.

"Your carriage will be at the entrance to the Inn in three minutes, Ellinor. I will see you to it. Believe me, you have acted wisely; how wisely, you may never know."

He himself conducted them down the broad paneled staircase, and putting on his hat, led his ward through the quiet Inn gardens to her carriage. She was grave and silent, and he did not speak to her till she was seated with her elderly companion and chaperone in her roomy clarence, when he leaned his hand on the carriage door, and said:

"I shall bring Henry Dalton to Hertford street this evening, to introduce him to his future wife."

"Pray do so," she said. "Adieu!"

"Only till eight o'clock."

He lifted his hat, and stood watching the carriage as it drove away, then walking slowly back to his chambers, flung himself into a luxurious easy chair, took a cigar from a costly little Venetian casket, standing on a tiny table at his side, lit it, wheeled his chair close to the fire, stretched his feet out against the polished steel of the low grate, and prepared for a lazy half hour before dinner.

As he smoked the cigar, he looked gloomily into the blaze at his feet and said:

"Horace Lionel Welmorden Margrave, if you had only been an honest man!"

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH A SECRET IS REVEALED, BUT NOT TO THE READER.

The hands of the ormolu clock, in the little drawing-room in Hertford street, occupied by Ellinor Arden and her companion, protectress and dependent, Mrs. Morrison, pointed to a quarter past eight, as Horace Margrave's quiet brougham rolled up to her door.

Horace Margrave's professional position was no inconsiderable one. His practice was large and eminently respectable; lying principally amongst railway companies, and involving transactions of a very extensive kind. He was a man of excellent family, a perfect gentleman, elegant, clever, and accomplished; too good for a lawyer, as everybody said, but a very good lawyer for all that, as his clients constantly repeated. At five-and-thirty he was still unmarried; why, no one could guess; as many a great heiress, and many a pretty woman, would have been only to oproud to say "Yes" to a matrimonial proposition from Horace Margrave, of Gray's Inn, Fir Grove, Stanlydale, Berkshire. But the handsome lawyer evidently preferred his free bachelor life; for if his heart had been very susceptible to womanly graces, he would most inevitably have lost it in the society of his lovely ward, Ellinor Arden.

Ellinor had been only a few weeks resident in London; she had left the guardianship of her aunt in Paris, to launch herself upon the whirlpool of English society, sheltered only by the ample wing of an elderly lady, duly selected and chartered by her aunt and Mr. Margrave. The world was new to her, and she came from the narrow circle of the convent in which she had been educated, and the quiet coteries of the Faubourg Saint Germains, in which her aunt delighted, to take her position at once in London, as the sole heiress of Mr. Arden, of Arden.

It was then to Horace Margrave—to Horce Margrave, whom she remembered in her happy youth among the Scottish mountains, a young man on a shooting expedition, visiting at her father's house—Horace who had visited her aunt, from time to time, in Paris, and who had exhibited towards her all the tender friendship and respectful devotion of an elder brother—to nim, and him alone, did she look for counsel and guidance; and she submitted as entirely to his influence as if he had indeed been that guardian and father whom he by law represented.

Her cheek flushed as the carriage wheels stopped below the window.

"Now, Mrs. Morrison," she said, with a sneer; "now for my incomparable *futur*. Now for the light hair and the thick boots."

"It will be very impertinent of him if he comes in thick boots," replied her matter-of-fact protectress. "Mr. Margrave says he is such an excellent young person."

"Exactly, my dear Mrs. Morrison—a young person. He is described in one word, a 'person.'"

"Oh, my dream! my dream!" she murmured, under her breath.

Remember, she had but this day passed wisdom's Rubicon, and she was new to the hither bank. She was still very romantic and, perhaps, very foolish.

The servant announced "Mr. Margrave and Mr. Dalton."

In spite of herself, Ellinor Arden looked up with some curiosity to see this young man, for whom she entertained so profound a contempt and so unmerited an aversion. He was about three years her senior; of average height, neither tall or short. His hair was, as she had prophesied, light; but it was by no means an ugly color, and it clustered in short curls, round a broad, low, but massive forehead. His features were sufficiently regular; his eyes dark blue. The general expression of his face was grave, and it was only on rare occasions that a quiet smile played round his firmly-molded lips. Standing side by side with Horace Margrave, he appeared anything but a handsome man; but, to the physiognomist, his face was superior in the very qualities in which the dark beauty of the lawyer was deficient; force, determination, self-reliance, perseverance; all those attributes, in short, which go to make a great man.

"Mr. Dalton has been anxiously awaiting the hour that should bring him to your side, Miss Arden," said Horace Margrave. "He has been for a long time acquainted with those articles in your uncle's will which you only learned to-day."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

—The age of the circus joke has at last been statistically determined. The first circus "started out" in 1827.

RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL.

—When the Rev. John Hall, of New York, begins his sermon, the doors of his church are locked, and are not opened until the benediction has fallen upon the congregation.—*N. Y. Graphic.*

—The Connecticut Legislature has provided that School Boards, on the petition of twelve adult residents, may order instruction in the public schools concerning the effect of intoxicating beverages.

—In the first decade of the Methodist Episcopal Church there was one minister to every 190 members; in the fifth decade the proportion was one to 284. The present proportion is one minister to 147 members, against 142 in the ninth and tenth decades.

—At Cambridge University Miss Helen Magill, Ph. D., who was a student there, declares that a woman can now do almost all that a man can in all departments, classical and scientific. Almost all the university and a number of the college lectures are open to women.

—Bellewood Seminary is a Presbyterian institution for girls near Louisville. The faculty forbade the students to make any acquaintance with the young men of the neighborhood, who have retaliated by a night raid on the seminary. The ruffianly invaders removed the shutters from the house for a bonfire, and smeared all the accessible rooms and furniture with tar.—*Detroit Post.*

—In concluding a late lecture on telephonic communication Colonel Webber said that there was a great social aspect of this new industry which will materially affect the body politic, namely, the question of public order, and the preservation of the peace. Power of communication between a number of householders means rapid combination against disorder, rapine or burglary, which no police regulations could ever supply; and comparative aid and security will be afforded in thousands of cases for which there is now hardly any provision.—*American Register.*

—The calendar for 1881–1882 of the University of Michigan is a large pamphlet of 188 pages and gives complete information regarding the institution. The total number of students in attendance is 1,534, divided as follows among the various departments. Department of Literature, Science and the Arts, 513; of Medicine and Surgery, 380; of Law, 395; of Pharmacy, 100; the Homœopathic Medical College, 71; and the College of Dental Surgery, 75. The faculty numbers 87, under the presidency of James B. Angell, LL. D.—*N. Y. Independent.*

—To make a potato patch out of part of the Lewis College grounds is undertaken by Perley Belknap, a prominent citizen of Northfield Vt., who asserts a claim to the grounds on account of work done when the buildings were erected in 1866. The students set out a hundred or more trees a few weeks since, some of which interfered with his plants and were pulled up. The next morning Mr. Belknap's newly-planted potatoes were found on top of the ground, and the students had the patch thoroughly harrowed. The trees were replaced and the field seeded and rolled. Mr. Belknap was hanged in effigy the other night from a tree on the common and buried the following day with muffled drum.—*N. Y. Post.*

Discouraging the Truth.

He had a stub of a pencil in one hand and a sheet of paper in the other, and he walked up to a citizen who was about to go aboard a ferry boat, and said:

"I have a document here for you to sign."

"But I never sign any petitions," was the speedy reply.

"This is no petition. This is an agreement to the effect that none whose names are signed below will either swear while fishing or lie about the size or number of the fish afterwards. Please write your name on the blue line there."

"But I never go fishing."

"Well, you can't tell when you may. Besides, I want the influence of your name."

"I guess I won't sign."

"Let me hope that you will. Are you not willing to eschew profanity for an hour or two once or twice a year?"

"I never swear, anyhow."

"But perhaps you lie! If so I only ask you to tell the truth in just this one instance."

"I'm in a hurry to catch this boat."

"Never mind the boat. Isn't your soul of more consequence than a ferry-boat. Please sign right there."

"I won't do it."

"You won't, eh? You refuse to bind yourself not to rip and cuss and jaw and howl because you don't get a bite. You refuse to enter into an agreement not to come home and lie like a trooper and lose your soul for the sake of making somebody believe you caught a bass weighing six pounds! That's the kind of a Detroiter you are, is it?"

"I've a good mind to spoil your nose," growled the passenger.

"Of course you have. Just because I want to bind you not to lie and swear you want my heart's blood. If I had asked you to agree not to cheat and steal and burn buildings you'd have wanted to cut my throat. Go on, sir! Take your old ferry boat and go to Windsor with it!"

"I'll see you again!"

"That's it—more threats. But you have tackled the wrong man, sir! I'll have an eye on you for the next ten years, and the first time I know of your going out to fish I'll follow you. Yes, sir; I'll be on your track, and if you utter one profane word or tell one single lie I'll put you behind the cross-bars of the cooler. Go hence, marked man!"—*Detroit Free Press.*