

The Doctor's Dilemma

By Hesba Stretton

CHAPTER VIII.

Awfully fast time sped away. It was the second week in March I passed in Sark; the second week in May came upon me as if borne by a whirlwind. It was only a month to the day so long fixed upon for our marriage. My mother began to fret about my going over to London to fit myself out with wedding clothes. Julia was going on fast to London; and my wedding suit I must, London; and my wedding suit I must.

But first there could be no hurry in running over to Sark to see Olivia once more. As soon as I was married I would tell Julia all about her. But if either arm or ankle went wrong for want of attention, I should never forgive myself.

It was the last time I could see Olivia before my marriage. Afterwards I should see much of her; for Julia would invite her to our house, and be a friend to her. I sat at a wretchedly sleepless night; and whenever I closed I saw Olivia before me, weeping bitterly, and refusing to be comforted.

From St. Sampson's we set sail straight for the Havre Gosselein. To my extreme surprise and chagrin, Captain Carey announced his intention of landing with me, and leaving the yacht in charge of his men to await our return.

"The ladder is excessively awkward," I objected, "and some of the rungs are loose. You don't mind running the risk of a plunge into the water?"

"Not in the least," he answered cheerfully; "for the matter of that, I plunge into it every morning at L'Ancresse. I want to see Tardif. He is one in a thousand, as you say; and one cannot see such a man every day of one's life."

There was no help for it, and I gave in, hoping some good luck awaited me. I led the way up the zig-zag path, and just as we reached the top I saw the slight, erect figure of Olivia seated upon the brow of a little grassy knoll at a short distance from us. Her back was towards us, so she was not aware of our vicinity; and I pointed towards her with an assumed air of indifference.

"I believe that is my patient yonder," I said; "I will just run across and speak to her, and then follow you to the farm."

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "there is a lovely view from that spot. I recollect it well. I will go with you. There will be time enough to see Tardif."

Did Captain Carey suspect anything? Or what reason could he have for wishing to see Olivia? Could it be merely that he wanted to see the view from that particular spot? I could not forbid him accompanying me, but I wished him at Jericho.

Olivia did not hear our footsteps upon the soft turf, though we approached her very nearly. The sun shone upon her glossy hair, every thread of which seemed to shine back again. She was reading aloud, apparently to herself, and the sounds of her sweet voice were wafted by the air towards us. Captain Carey's face became very thoughtful.

A few steps nearer brought us in view of Tardif, who had spread his nets on the grass, and was examining them narrowly for rents. Just at this moment he was down on his knees, not far from Olivia, gathering some broken meshes together, but listening to her, with an expression of huge contentment upon his haphazard face. A bitter pang shot through me. Could it be true by any possibility—that he had heard the last time I was in Sark?

"Good day, Tardif," shouted Captain Carey; and both Tardif and Olivia started. But both of their faces grew brighter at seeing us. Olivia's color had come back to her cheeks, and a sweeter face she never looked upon.

"I am very glad you are come once more," she said, putting her hand in mine; "you told me in your last letter you were going to England."

I glanced from the corner of my eye at Captain Carey. He looked very grave, but his eyes could not rest upon Olivia without admiring her, as she stood before us, bright-faced, slender, erect, with the folds of her coarse dress falling about her as gracefully as if they were of the richest material.

"This is my friend, Captain Carey, Miss Olivia," I said, "in whose yacht I have come to visit you."

"I am very glad to see any friend of Dr. Martin's," she answered as she held out her hand to him with a smile; "my doctor and I are great friends, Captain Carey."

"So I suppose," he said significantly, "or at least his tone and look seemed fraught with significance to me."

though there was so much beauty lying around us.

"Yes, it is a lovely place," she assented, a mischievous smile playing about her lips.

"Olivia," I said, taking my courage by both hands, "I have a month till my wedding day."

"Was I deceiving myself, or did she really grow paler? It was but for a moment if it were so. But how cold the air felt all in an instant! The shock was like that of a first plunge into chilly waters, and I was shivering through every fiber."

"I hope you will be happy," said Olivia, "very happy. It is a great risk to run. Marriage will make you either very happy or very wretched."

"Not at all," I answered, trying to speak gallily; "I do not look forward to my vast amount of rapture. Julia and I will go along very well together. I have no doubt, for we have known one another all our lives. I do not expect to be any happier than other men; and the married people I have known have not exactly dwelt in Paradise. Perhaps your experience has been different?"

"Oh, no!" she said, her hand trembling on my arm, and her face very downcast; "but I should have liked you to be very, very happy."

So softly spoken, with such a low, faltering voice! I could not trust myself to speak again. A stern sense of duty towards Julia kept me silent; and we moved on, though very slowly and languidly.

"You love her very much?" said the quiet voice at my side, not much louder than the voice of conscience.

"I esteem her more highly than any other woman, except my mother," I said, "Do you think she will like me?" asked Olivia, anxiously.

"No; she must love you," I said, with warmth; "and I, too, can be a more useful friend to you after my marriage than I am now. Perhaps then you will feel free to place perfect confidence in us."

She smiled faintly, without speaking; a smile which said plainly she could keep her own secret closely. It provoked me to do a thing I had no intention of doing, and which I regretted very much afterward. I opened my pocketbook and drew out the little slip of paper containing the advertisement.

"Read that," I said.

But I do not think she saw more than the first line, for her face went deadly white, and her eyes turned upon me with a wild, beseeching look—as Tardif described it, the look of a creature hunted and terrified. I thought she would have fallen, and I put my arm round her. She fastened both her hands about mine, and her lips moved, though I could not catch a word she was saying.

"Olivia," I cried, "Olivia! do you suppose I could do anything to hurt you? Do not be so frightened! Why, I am your friend truly. I wish to heaven I had not shown you the thing. Have more faith in me, and more courage."

"But they will find me, and force me away from here," she muttered.

"No," I said; "that advertisement was printed in the Times directly after your flight last October. They have not found you yet; and the longer you are hidden the less likely they are to find you. Good heavens! what a fool I was to show it to you!"

the indulgence of emotion of any kind. It was impossible for me to remain on the cliffs, bemoaning my unhappy fate. I strode on doggedly down the path, kicking the loose stones into the water as they came in my way. Captain Carey followed, whistling softly to himself. He continued doing so after we were aboard the yacht.

"I cannot leave you like this, Martin, my boy," he said, when we went ashore at St. Sampson's, and he put his arm through mine.

"You will keep my secret?" I said, my voice a key or two lower than usual.

"Martin," answered the good-hearted, clear-sighted old bachelor, "you must not do Julia the wrong of keeping this a secret from her."

"I must," I urged, "Olivia knows nothing of it; nobody guesses it but you, I must confess it."

"Martin," urged Captain Carey, "come up to Johanna, and tell her all about it." Johanna Carey was one of the powers in the island. Everybody knew her; and everybody went to her for comfort or counsel. She was, of course, related to us all. I had always been a favorite with her, and nothing could be more natural than this proposal, that I should go and tell her of my dilemma.

Johanna was standing at one of the windows, in a Quakerish dress of some grey stuff, and with a plain white cap over her white hair. She came down to the door as soon as she saw me, and received me with a motherly kiss.

"Johanna," said Captain Carey, "we have something to tell you."

"Come and sit here by me," she said, making room for me beside her on her sofa.

"Johanna," I replied, "I am in a terrible fix."

"Awful!" cried Captain Carey sympathetically; "but a glance from his sister put him to silence."

"What is it, my dear Martin?" asked her inquiring voice again.

"I will tell you frankly," I said, feeling I must have it out at once, like an aching tooth. "I love, with all my heart and soul, that girl in Sark; the one who has been my patient there."

"Martin," she cried, in a tone full of surprise and agitation, "Martin?"

"Yes; I know all you would urge. My honor, my affection for Julia, the claims she has upon me, the strongest claims possible; how good and worthy she is; what an impossibility it is even to look back now. I know it all, and feel how miserably binding it is upon me. Yet I love Olivia; and I shall never love Julia."

A long, dreary, colorless, wretched life stretched before me, with Julia my inseparable companion, and Olivia altogether lost to me. Captain Carey and Johanna, neither of whom had tasted the sweets and bitters of marriage, looked sorrowfully at me and shook their heads.

"You must tell Julia," said Johanna, after a long pause.

"Tell Julia!" I echoed. "I would not tell her for worlds!"

"You must tell her," she repeated; "it is your clear duty. I know it will be most painful to you both, but you have no right to marry her with this secret on your mind."

THE BATTLE-FIELDS.

OLD SOLDIERS TALK OVER ARMY EXPERIENCES.

The Blue and the Gray Review Incidents of the Late War, and in a Graphic and Interesting Manner Tell of Camp, March and Battle.



BEFORE the Civil War had turned into its second year the doors of the old school were closed. Ninety per cent of my boys enlisted. Eighty per cent were Confederates. At the beginning of the second year of the war there

was not a school in the town or county. I cannot describe to you my feeling at that time. I suppose the excitement and passion of the hour kept me from being lonely. My age, health and family responsibilities kept me out of the struggle.

The trying moments of the situation to me were those in which I saw some of my boys enlisting under one banner, some under the other. I knew the possibilities of their meeting in battle. For a year I carried this cross. I said nothing to any one, but I used to lie awake until I was exhausted thinking of my boys at war with one another.

At the end of the second year of the war those of us who stayed at home began realizing the meaning of war.

One night I was called into my library to meet a man whose appearance immediately suggested that he was in trouble. He had come in out of a storm. His clothes were ragged and a queer combination. His coat was of the United States cavalry uniform. His trousers, or what had been trousers, looked like a dilapidated quilt. His slouch hat was in tatters and almost hung upon his neck. He had but one arm.

Quicker than it has taken to me to give you this description, he had told me that he was one of my boys; that he was a spy sent by Gen. Sterling Price, the Confederate commander under whom he served. He had come to me for a few hours of rest and because he wanted to see me.

I knew the meaning of war after I had seen him and had heard him talk. In the old school on the hill this "spy" was known as the gallant of the crowd. He was our cavalier.

At the time of his visit to me the Federals held the town. The hills commanding the place had been converted into a military camp. It bristled with guns which poked their hungry mouths from bastions.

One of the officers in that fort was also one of my boys. And what a handsome fellow he was. His enlistment in the Union army, however, had cost him the friendship of most of his schoolmates. It had cost him his sweetheart, a spirited Southern girl.

My boy who called upon me as a "spy" told me his mission. I begged him to stop before he had said too much, but I knew when he left he was going to the Federal fort on the hill, as a spy; I did not tell him his old classmate was an officer there.

A few days later the Confederate spy was captured. He had succeeded in getting the information he wanted, and was leaving when he was taken as a suspicious person. When he stood before the commanding officer it was known from papers found that the prisoner was a spy.

One of the staff of the commanding officer was there. He recognized his old classmate, but not a word passed between them. The spy was confined, of course, at once, and it was the talk of the town, for this was the first incident of the sort in our place. And the spy was one of the old boys of the town—our cavalier.

My boy from the Federal fort hastened to see me to give me all the particulars. Of course my lips were sealed touching the visit of the "spy" to me before the capture.

Again did I realize the meaning of war! The incident was soon relegated to the events of yesterday by more important ones at the front. Once at the invitation of my boy in blue, I visited the one who belonged to the gray, although his uniform did not so indicate, and who was held as a spy. I messed with both.

After the spy had been a prisoner for nearly six weeks my Federal boy came to see me one night hurriedly, and told me in confidence that "the cavalier" had escaped.

"If he comes here," said the Federal officer, "you protect him until he can get through our lines."

of the "spy" was effected. I never had any doubt of it. Perhaps because I knew that before the war the girl was the sweetheart of the man whom she married after the war.—Chicago Tribune.



Oatmeal and Dyspepsia.

The Scotch, says the Healthful Home, are the greatest dyspeptics on earth, largely owing to their use of half-cooked oatmeal and soft bread. Next to the Scotch are the Americans, and no single thing has contributed more to American dyspepsia than half-cooked oatmeal mush for breakfast. In rural France, where dyspepsia is practically unknown, hard bread and vegetables, with a very moderate amount of meat, comprise the chief items of the bill of fare. Take the center out of a hot biscuit and roll it a minute in your hand, and it soon becomes a solid mass of dough, a "lead pill." That is the thing your stomach wrestles with when it attempts to digest hot bread or biscuit. A good deal of the cold bread is just about as bad. Such food may be nutritious for the chap in the circus who relishes ground glass and eats swords and ten-penny nails, but it shortens the lives of average people.

Wild Grape Jelly.

Gather some wild grapes while they are still green and hard. Pick them from the stems, place them in a kettle and add a little water. Cover and boil till soft, stirring them often; then inclose them in a bag, hang it up, and place a bowl underneath to receive the juice. When bag stops dripping, press out all the liquor, return it to the fire and boil without a cover thirty minutes. Then measure and add to each pint of liquor one pound of sugar; stir and cook till the sugar is dissolved; remove and finish as directed. This jelly is excellent served with roasted wheat and game.

Apple Pectin.

Two cups of tart cooking apples, chopped, a cup and a half of stony bread crumbs—baker's bread is the best; four heaping tablespoonsful of sugar, one generous tablespoonful of butter, and the grated rind of one lemon. Butter a pudding dish, divide the ingredients into four layers, beginning with apples and finishing with bread crumbs. Sprinkle the sugar and lemon over the apples and cut the butter into tiny lumps and scatter over the crumbs. Bake three-quarters of an hour in a moderate oven. Serve with cream or hard sauce.

Barley Broth.

Four even tablespoonsful of barley steeped over night and one small minced onion and two teaspoonsful of salt, and boil in two quarts of water until soft. Make a paste of a large tablespoonful of butter and half a teaspoonful of Indian meal heated in a saucen pan, moisten and thin it with the broth till thin enough to stir into the remainder; mix well, add a little chopped celery or celery seed, and serve.

Compote of Strawberries.

Press out the juice from one pint of large, ripe strawberries, and mix it with six tablespoonsful of sugar; shortly before serving wash and drain one and a half quarts of large, ripe strawberries, put them into a glass dish, sprinkle over three tablespoonsful of sugar, pour in half of the cold syrup, shake them up, pour over the other half, and serve at once.

Graham Gema.

Three-fourths of a pint of Graham or whole wheat flour, one and one-half teaspoonsful of baking powder, one-half teaspoonful of salt, one-fourth cupful of sugar. Mix together and add the following: One-half pint of milk, one egg, and lastly two tablespoonsful of melted butter. Bake in hessian hot gem forms twenty-five minutes.

For Supper.

Bake until done five large, smooth potatoes. With a sharp knife cut from the flat side an oblong piece of the skin. Scrape out all the potato, mash and season, adding a teaspoonful of finely chopped parsley. Put back into the skin, not returning the cover; place again in the oven until the potato in the opening is browned.

Pineapple Marmalade.

Peel the pineapples, remove the eyes and grate the fruit fine. Then weigh the pulp and place it in a kettle over the fire; boil twenty-five minutes and add to each pound of pineapple pulp three-quarters of a pound of sugar. Stir and boil ten minutes; then pour into the jars and finish as directed.

A Hint.

Almost any kind of plain cake can be turned into a good dessert dish. Cut the cake into squares, and cut a neat, small piece from the center of each square. Fill the cavity with jelly or marmalade and replace the piece that was removed. Cover the top with icing.

Currant Sherbet.

One pint of currant juice, one pint and a half of water, the juice of one lemon, one pint of sugar, one tablespoonful of gelatin. Soak the gelatin in cold water and dissolve it in half a pint of boiling water. Mix it with a pint of cold water with the sugar, lemon and currant juice and freeze.

Chicken Croquettes, Princess Style.

Chop the cold cooked meat of a chicken and mix with it half its quantity of chopped fresh mushrooms. Moisten with a little Madeira, dip in egg, in breadcrumbs and fry. No sauce with these croquettes. It would spoil the delicacy of their flavor.