

Frances Hodgson Burnett

MISS DEFARGE

(A Woman's Will)



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MISS DEFARGE.

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CHAPTER I.

DESCENDING the staircase slowly, Miss Defarge glanced sharply about her, as she walked. Nothing escaped her eyes; the grandeur of proportion, the dilapidated yet once majestic ornamentation, the dust on the elaborate carvings of the black oak balustrades, the rust on the armor, the uncertain hanging of the pictures and trophies of the chase, the mouldy, neglected look of things in general, the shameful carelessness flaunting itself on every side; nothing, I think I may repeat, was lost upon the new arrival. She had even a glance of inspection for the park itself, when she passed the window upon the first landing; and this glance, which showed her neglect and waste again, caused her to shrug her shapely, young shoulders.

"The most miserable, broken-down, thriftless-looking place I have ever seen," she commented; "and I have seen many. It has the air of belonging to a race of outcasts."

A sound below attracting her attention, she turned her eyes downwards, and then half shrugged her shoulders again.

At the foot of the stairs, leaning against the newel-post, stood a boy of nine or ten years old, a handsome, stubborn-faced urchin, in an actually ragged suit of black velvet, who suspended his stringing of a bow to stare at her, as she approached.

"Are you the French girl?" he asked her, when she reached a lower step.

Terese Defarge answered his question with another, and put it rather sharply.

"Who are you?" she demanded.

He returned to his bow again, setting his knee against it, and replying with something of cavalierly disdain. It was evident that he was not accustomed to feminine decision.

"Hugh Dysart," said he.

But it became plain that he was not quite at ease, under the steady gaze he was favored with—the peculiar and significant gaze of the stranger's densely black eyes. He was obliged to look up, and speak again, in sheer self-defence.

"Are you the French girl?" he repeated.

Then matters were made somewhat clearer to him.

"I am Miss Defarge," said Terese. "And I am your governess. So you will be kind enough to speak to me respectfully."

His stare became one of sudden astonishment.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"If I stay here a month," said Terese Defarge, nodding at him in a style replete with meaning, "you will know."

She did not wait to hear his reply, but descended the last step, pushed him lightly aside, marched past him, and down the dirty hall, leaving him staring at her. The fact was, she had nearly lost her temper, and to lose control over herself was no joke with Terese Defarge; and knowing this, she was wise enough to hold herself in check, with a tight rein. Even as it was, her breath came quick, and she bit her lips with her strong, little, white teeth.

"The young cub!" she said to herself. "I could not have fancied it would be as bad as that. He is a fitting representative of the rest. And now for Lady Dysart."

She had never seen Lady Dysart, her engagement having been made entirely by letter, but she was not at all afraid of encountering her. Such a thing as timidity, as hesitancy, was entirely unknown to her. So her light summons upon the door of the room she was about to enter was quite a cool and steady one.

The apartment itself was as bad as the hall and staircase. Its proportions were as imposing, and its furnishings as dilapidated. Spindle-legged, gilded chairs, evidently brought from some other room, found a precarious existence among more massive articles. Embroidery and velvet were alike moth-eaten and threadbare. Everything was gloomy, grand and tarnished. Lady Dysart, who looked as grand, and gloomy, and tarnished as her surroundings, closed the volume of excellent sulphurous sermons she was reading, as the door opened, and half rose from the chair.

"Miss Defarge?" she said, with a peculiar, resigned air. "It is a relief to me to see you. Pray, take a seat, Miss Defarge."

She resumed her own, and leaning back in it, regarded Terese somewhat curiously. In fact, a less shrewd and practical person than this

young woman might have found the scrutiny trying. It was indeed a little suggestive of the idea that her ladyship was wondering if she had not discovered a new species.

"You do not look very strong, Miss Defarge," she said, at last.

She glanced at the lithesome figure, and delicate hands and wrists, unusually delicate little hands they were, and wrists slender to a fault.

Terese Defarge glanced at them, also, and smiled.

"But I am strong," she answered. "I never had a day's illness in my life."

"And you are used to the management of children."

"No. But, for the last seven years, I think I may say I have managed a class of fifteen or twenty girls, who were few of them younger than myself."

"Seven years?"

"I am twenty-two, and I began young. I was what you call a pupil teacher, at first. The head of the establishment was my aunt—the lady who wrote to you, Mademoiselle Ducloux."

"You have not seen the children yet, of course."

"I met Master Hugh Dysart at the foot of the staircase," with a half smile.

Lady Dysart raised her eyebrows.

"If you can manage him, you are a wonderful creature," she said. "And the girls are almost as bad. They are thorough Dysarts, and the Dysarts are not an amiable race. I suppose I do not understand children. I gave them up, years ago. Sir Roderick can manage them, but he is never at home. He has a system of his own. He swears at them, and strikes them with his whip, and frightens them half to death. He manages his dogs and horses in the same way, and it seems to succeed in both cases. I can neither swear, nor beat them, and consequently, they behave themselves like young savages. How do you like your prospects, Miss Defarge?"

The black eyes smiled as usual, and the even little teeth showed themselves.

"I do not think I am afraid, if I am to be left to myself."

"You will certainly be left to yourself," was the reply. "I never interfere. Choose your own mode of controlling them, even if it is Sir Roderick's. I will even warn you that, as a mild course does not succeed with his dogs, it is scarcely likely to succeed with his children."

"And if I choose I may swear at them, and beat them?" jostlingly.

Her ladyship scarcely seemed to regard the matter so lightly.

"If you make up your mind to beat them, I advise you to call in Roger—you would be likely to need assistance."

"Roger?" queried Terese. This was the first time she had heard of "Roger."

"He is their half brother. The first Lady Dysart died at his birth. I am the second, and I regard her as the more fortunate of the two. Her portrait is in one of the rooms—a girl of seventeen or eighteen, with a bird on her finger. Roger is like her, luckily."

"Luckily?" said Terese Defarge, in the quietest of voices.

Her ladyship's cold frankness seemed to know no reserve. She replied to the ghost of suggestion, without the least hesitancy.

"He is lucky in not being a Dysart. He is a headlong, passionate fellow, but his temper is all that hints at his drop of bad blood. I think, upon the whole, we are a little fond of each other—as might be. Poor Roger!" with a slight up-raising of her shoulders.

Terese Defarge regarded her with overpowering curiosity and interest. The study of character was a mild mania with her, and here she found something to attract her.

"I shall not find Dysart Court dull, I think," she was remarking, mentally, "even if Sir Roderick does not come home. But Sir Roderick would add to the loveliness, I have no doubt."

Her interest in Sir Roderick grew as she had leisure to scrutinize his wife more closely. Her ladyship was, upon the whole, a person of majestic mould. A woman, black-browed, and physically strong, and yet it was evident that Sir Roderick had got the better of her. She looked gloomy, sullen and indifferent; as much of her beauty as was perishable had perished; her once rich dress was faded and out of date. Miss Defarge, who was but a fragile and small-framed creature, began to feel the least possible tinge of contempt for Lady Dysart's superior physique.

"He could not have brought me to tarnished silk and mended lace," she thought. "Has he beaten her, too, I wonder?"

She heard nothing of her other two charges. In an hour or so an old man, in frayed livery, brought in tea, with a scanty accompaniment of bread and butter; and setting it upon the table, withdrew. Lady Dysart sat down, and poured out a cup of the decoction for her companion, and one for herself.

"I hope you like tea," she remarked, in her tolerating voice. "If you do not, it will be the worse for you. On my part, I hate it, but it ap-

pears upon the table with such regularity, that I begin to regard it as part of my fate."

The fact of the case was, that Miss Defarge hated it also, and added to this, she was absolutely hungry. Her journey had sharpened a naturally good appetite, and she had forgotten to provide herself with a luncheon; consequently, bad tea and indifferent bread and butter were hardly an agreeable prospect. She comforted herself like a stoic, however, making the best of the matter for the present, and having the hardihood to lay plans in secret for the future. If she remained in the house, she would alter its regulations, that was certain. It was evident that her ladyship did not condescend to interfere with anything, or anybody. A head, and a keen, fearless pair of eyes were needed. Sir Roderick might be reckless and improvident, and a poor man into the bargain; but with such an estate as this there need not be such bareness and mean economy. In truth, the far-sighted and business-like Terese decided that it was not economy at all, but a mixture of parsimony and extravagance. Born to rule, and accustomed to making her strength of will felt, she was not at all averse to the task before her. It would not be poor entertainment, she thought, to manœuvre boldly, until she held the reins of the household in her own hands, and tried what could be done.

Such prospects as these made even the tea bearable, and when it was over, she was almost in the frame of mind to begin work at once.

"If you will excuse me," she said to Lady Dysart, "I will take a stroll into the park. I have been in the habit of walking a great deal, and can hardly sleep without it."

"Go where you please, and when you please," said her ladyship. "In the house, or out of it. If you find anything to amuse you, all the better for you. I rarely ever leave my own room."

Plainly there was nothing to be feared from any interposition on the part of the mistress of the establishment. She took up her volume again, and bent her head slightly, in response to Miss Defarge's thanks.

"It is nothing," she said. "And I warn you there is nothing to be seen."

"I will find something," said Terese, half aloud, as she closed the door behind her. And she did. Instead of going out, she remained in the house, and explored the lower floor, and did not look for entertainment. She found the same forlorn aspect everywhere, and the same hints at past grandeur. Here and there she came upon various clues to the various hobbies or passions of dead and gone Dysarts. One little room, fancifully fitted up, and crowded with hideous or

beautiful cups, and bowls, and ungainly jars, and vases, and gods, told of a perished whim for old china. Another apartment, with quaint, weak daubs hung upon the walls, and filling the ancient albums on its tottering tables, caused the girl to smile, in half derisive pity.

"Thought she had a talent for painting in water-colors, poor creature," she commented. "And nobody has had the generosity to stow them away, or lock up the place."

There had been Dysarts who were book-worms, also, for there was a library, deserted to dust, and darkness, and mould. The very air of it struck a chill into the visitor's frame. The entertaining-rooms, which had evidently entertained nobody, for many a dismal year, were almost as bad. Discovering the suite from which the spindle-legged, gilded chairs had been taken, Miss Defarge took the liberty of opening the closed shutters, and drawing aside the curtains.

CHAPTER II.

THE light, streaming in, revealed much time-paled, amber satin, and time-darkened gilding, and then found its way to the only bright thing in the place—the youthful face of a girl, who, her head half turned over her shoulder, looked down from the wall at the intruder, with eyes whose blue matched the trailing cornflowers in her hair. She was so bright and life-like a creature, indeed, that at sight of her, Terese Defarge drew a long breath.

"Ah!" she said, "there she is. And I think Lady Dysart was right, upon the whole. She is the more fortunate of the two."

It did not seem an inconsistent view to take of the case. The blue bird, perched upon the slender forefinger, really appeared the most fitting of companions for the blooming creature who caressed it. The bright eyes had known no tears; the rosy cheeks none of the pallor of sorrow, or pain; the whole picture was suggestive of a bit of summer sky, taking blue dress, and bird, and eyes, and flowers together.

There was the strongest possible contrast between the sweet, care-free face, and the dark, intense one upturned to its pictured fairness. Terese Defarge felt this contrast herself.

"What a tall, black creature she makes of me," she said, and turned away, half petulantly. She did not over-estimate her own attractions, but it was not pleasant to feel herself forced to under-estimate them, through mere force of contrast.

There was a great clatter in the hall, as she moved; the clatter of some noisy entrance; the headlong dash of dogs, heavy feet, the throwing

down of several articles, the sound of a voice—that of a young man, who swore fluently at both dogs and down-throw. The dogs paid little attention, however, and dashed on through the opened door, to tumble over each other, in endeavoring to check their course, on finding themselves among the yellow satin and spindle-legged chairs and tables, in consequence of which defection from duty, the swearing drew nearer, and the swearer, following his animals, checked himself among the faded finery, as abruptly as they had done.

"The deuce!" he exclaimed, choicely, on seeing Terese; and then straightway bestowed a friendly kick upon the dogs, which sent them howling, out of the apartment.

"This," remarked Terese, with much mental composure and clearness of deduction, "this is 'Roger,' I suppose."

This being 'Roger,' she found him a big, young man, with more than his share of height and muscle; and with sea-blue eyes, and rough, fair hair, and a kind of bashful brusqueness and swagger of manner.

"Oh, I see!" he broke out, at last, "it is the governess, Miss Defarge."

Terese made him a little bow, partly acquiescence, partly satire.

"Lady Dysart gave me permission to amuse myself," she said. "And I have been amusing myself."

He would evidently have been glad to escape, but saw no way of doing so. Accordingly, he said, "Ah!" shortly; and lounging up to the nearest sofa, flung himself heavily against its amber satin cushions. This, no doubt, by way of proving himself at ease, and equal to the occasion.

"Who opened the place for you?" he asked.

"I opened it myself," answered Terese. "It was only a matter of unclosing the shutters of one window, and drawing aside its curtains; and I had Lady Dysart's permission, as I tell you."

"Ah! you have mine, too, for the matter of that," he returned. "It is one of our ways here, at Dysart, not to wait for permission. It wouldn't pay for the waste of time. Every man for himself, you know, and the deuce take the hindmost."

"So I see," commented Terese, drily.

He laughed, a rough, embarrassed laugh.

"You've found that out already, have you?" he said. "And you only came here, this afternoon?"

"Only this afternoon," she answered. "I hope it speaks well for me."

He laughed again, not used to personal sarcasm, it was plain.

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"Pretty well," he replied. "At any rate, it promises well for your future. You won't be disappointed."

"No," said Terese, "I do not think it is at all likely that I shall be disappointed."

"Have you seen the ousbs?" he enquired next.

"One of them, Master Hugh, and I thought his manners might be improved."

"Do you think you can improve them?"

"I intend to try. If I find I cannot—" with significance. "Well, that would be a disappointment to me."

The young man's interest in her evidently increased, as he marked the look in her eye, and a certain terseness which showed itself in her tall, upright figure at the moment. It was suggested to his mind that she was fairly eager to begin the battle. And yet he could not help giving her a sly touch of discouragement.

"We have had half a score of governesses before," he said. "They have generally stayed a month at farthest. Master Hugh, in a tantrum, is not unlike Sir Roderick. He is scarcely to be restrained by a fear of consequences. And the peculiarities of the young ladies are such that mild people become hysterical under their influence."

"Wait until they make me hysterical," said Terese. "Wait."

It was really exciting to see her nod her head, and then throw it backward a little. Roger Dysart, who was a man of dogs and horses, was reminded of a certain fierce young thorough-bred he had once tried to break in, and who had ended the matter by half killing him and wholly killing herself. He had always regretted this fiery little animal beyond every other loss he had ever sustained, from boyhood upward, and his liking for her had been principally based, not upon her beauty and fine points, but upon the unconquerable spirit which had finally proved fatal to her.

"Wait," said Miss Defarge, "until they make me hysterical. Wait."

"You don't look like one of the hysterical sort," commented Dysart, bluntly.

There was so little attempt at self-concealment or young lady-like bashfulness about her, that he began to feel less ill at ease. He had either hated or laughed at previous governesses; but this one he did not dislike yet, and certainly could not ridicule. Heretofore, Lady Dysart had captured only sentimental, elderly young women, or middle-aged widows, or spinsters, who were afraid of him, and regarded him with horror. This was a new species, and fairly attracted him.

"Well," he remarked, "I think you know the worst of what is before you. I know lady Dysart

has not glossed matters over, and since you have heard the worst, I should like to hear how you feel."

He was answered promptly enough:

"I feel—hungry."

"Hungry!" he repeated after her, and flushed to his forehead.

"I have had nothing substantial to eat since seven this morning, and now it is half-past six. Lady Dysart did not know that, of course; and tea and bread and butter—"

"Nothing but that beastly stuff," he exclaimed, springing from his seat, in an inconsistently hot temper. "What a set of infernal—"

Terese stopped him, in his headlong attempt to leave the room.

"Don't go and swear at them on my account," she said, "though I have not the least doubt they deserve it. But if I might have a trifle of supper in my room, before I go to bed, it would be anything but unacceptable."

He became calm as suddenly as he had grown hot. An idea seemed to come to him, which cooled his wrath.

"Upon the whole," he said, "it is likely enough that the poor beggars are not so much to blame, after all. I daresay they had nothing better to give you, until I came in. The trades-people are justly rather afraid of the Court custom—but if you like game—"

"I like it better than anything else."

"Then your supper is safe, at least," he ended. "And you will have no need to be hungry, unless my gun fails me."

"Dull!" said Terese Defarge, when he had left the room, evidently with the intention of providing for her wants. "Dull! On the contrary, Dysart Court promises to prove the most entertaining place it has yet been my good fortune to visit. There is an actual suggestion of possible excitement about this."

CHAPTER III.

"It is not every one—in fact, I believe there are very few people who would like it," she wrote to a special correspondent, late that night; "but I must confess I do. I like the novelty—and—well, the inconsistency and incongruousness. I like to keep my train at work, and have my hands full of some task, which is a little intricate and difficult. And Dysart Court, and Lady Dysart, and Sir Roderick, and his son, will not be easy to manage, I foresee. But you will see they will not beat me. If the state of affairs can be bettered, I intend to better it. The effort to do this will be my amusement, for some time to come. Dysart touches me. Her ladyship and

the heir interest me; and Sir Roderick fires me with a sort of rage. I wish he would come home, that I might try an experiment or so. At present he is on the continent, gambling and drinking and misbehaving himself generally, as I believe is his custom. Have you ever heard anything of him, and is he not what I have heard you call 'a blackleg?'"

She had gathered these last items from the woman who brought her supper to her room, and who was frank to the verge of impudence.

"You may think things look bad enough now," she said, "but they're nothing to what they would be if Sir Roderick took a freak to come home drinking, and raging, and bringing the trades-people about to quarrel—and not a month's wages paid on the place."

"Where is Sir Roderick?" asked Terese, measuring the woman with her eyes.

"Who knows?" was the succinct answer. "Not many, that's certain, or there's plenty would be after him. He's on the continent somewhere, folks says; and that's where he always is, when there's money to be made in his way. Wherever he is, he is making his living, none too honest, off horses and cards. A nice one he is for a gentleman and a baronet."

Terese answered her with a polite little indifferent smile.

"Thank you for the supper," she said.

"It looks very nice. I do not think I shall want anything else, so you can go now." And thus put an end to confidences she did not care to encourage.

"The supper was Master Roger's orders," said the woman, growing sullen under the check. "It wouldn't have been in the larder but for him. There's not much in it at the most of times." And so took her departure.

It is a fact, with a significance of its own, and therefore worthy of mention, that in her relative's "select establishment," at Geneva, Terese Defarge was, upon the whole, a favorite. Pupils, who disliked, or were indifferent to her at the outset, almost invariably came over to her, before any great lapse of time. Little girls, who came from England, homesick and frightened, had a habit of drifting to her side, and apparently derived comfort from the mere circumstance of being permitted to exist within her immediate society. Sentimental young persons who, had been sent from home to be cured of follies, seized upon her, and poured forth their complaints in her ears; and sometimes, having asked advice from her, went so far as to take it in due course of time. Unruly pupils did battle with her, and being, usually to their great astonishment, worsted

through some inexplicable cause, found it not so difficult or humiliating to be worsted as they had anticipated. There was not the slightest mystery about the antecedents of "Mademoiselle Terese," as she was called among them; yet the romantic ones derived great satisfaction from the cherishing of a mystery, which had existence solely in their own imagination. She had immense, dark eyes, she was an orphan, she dressed much in black, and there was a rumor that she was engaged to somebody, and this was quite enough material to build a mystery upon.

"She is like the heroine of a three-volumed novel," said one pretty little creature, who drew her mental sustenance from literature of that class, and of the order sensational. "Have you ever noticed how strong her wrists are? And as to her eyes, they are always widening, or contracting, or—flashing; and people with that kind of eyes have nearly always done something. I cannot help believing she has Done Something."

But though I present her to you, as my heroine, I may as well admit, that, notwithstanding such portentous speculations as these, "Mademoiselle Terese" had nothing on her conscience whatever, her great eyes and strong little wrists to the contrary. She had lived as innocent and uneventful a life as the most unsophisticated country squire's daughter among them, though being of different metal, the results in her case had been different.

From six to fifteen, she had learned lessons, and eaten thick bread and butter, with the rest, and then having, at fifteen, been initiated into long skirts and authority, she had become her aunt's assistant, and had proved herself quite equal to the tasks set before her. Not that she had not had her little episodes and breaks into the rather dull routine of this demure life. People were apt to "take fancies to her," as I have already intimated. Her vacations were rarely spent at the school. Big girls, and even little ones, invited her to their houses. She went to different parts of England, to France, to Germany, and even to Italy, which suited her the best of all. And her visits were seldom uneventful ones, especially when there were masculine members in the family. Sometimes, indeed, they were so full of exciting incident, that she was not sorry when they came to a termination: and one of them, an English visit, ended, as might have been expected, with some confusion and entanglement. People might admire her in an abstract fashion, and might write her to spend her holidays at their houses, when Adela, or Rose, or Lotta were importunate; but they did not intend that their sons and heirs

should fall madly in love with her, and make her rash, headstrong offers of their hearts and hands. This, I admit, that though the girl's conscience was quite clear of all sensational misdemeanors, she had had her little episode. Beyond this, no further explanation is necessary at present, save the trifling one that Mademoiselle Ducloux's retirement into private life had brought Terese to Dysart Court.

The material she found awaiting her in the schoolroom, the next morning, did not dismay her, notwithstanding its unpromising appearance. Master Hugh Dysart she had measured upon their first meeting; and the two girls were feminine copies of him; thin, black-eyed young savages, who stared at her, half in fear, half in defiance, from under their heavy, ill-kept manes. They were shamefully ill-dressed and neglected; they knew nothing, and were totally unused to any shadow of control. They even looked as if they were not well-fed, and though a keen perception might see in them a promise of future beauty, it was at present of a dark, meagre, and evil kind.

"The first thing I shall teach you," she said to them, "is to exercise your memories in one respect. You will remember that you are to obey me—to obey me." And as she lightly rapped the table, at each of these last words, the stares of the young barbarians were of a kind a trifle quelled, and a trifle also uncomfortably comprehensive.

On her way down stairs, after the morning was over, she met Roger, who was going out, and he paused, with a half laugh.

"Well?" he remarked, suggestively.

"It is not ill yet," she answered. "I have neither beaten, nor sworn at them, and they will not quite forget what I have said to them."

"Wait a while," returned he, with another laugh.

"That was what I said to you, yesterday," she responded. "Wait."

In the afternoon, she made a new acquaintance. She had been strolling about the grounds, and returning, went into the room generally occupied by Lady Dysart. But Lady Dysart was not there. On her first entrance, she imagined the parlor entirely deserted, but a second later the sound of an unmistakable little feminine yawn attracted her attention to a capacious easy-chair, which stood with its back towards her, and upon whose carmine top there rested lazily a pair of the loveliest arms she had even seen in her life—arms which were plainly thrown above somebody's head, and so folded in a very height of indolence.

They were such exquisite arms, indeed, that for a moment she could only stand, and look at them, regarding their large, white beauty with a species of wonder and admiration. Finally, however, some involuntary movement on her part disturbed their owner, who accordingly rose, without any unnecessary hurry, and turned round to confront her.

"Ah!" she said, with slow complacency. "I thought it must be Roger."

Certainly, she fairly fulfilled the promise the arms had given. She almost startled Terese with the grandeur of her curves, and the peculiarities of her style. She was, in fact, a creature of superb dimensions, and the long, white merino dress she wore, simply girded at the waist by a black velvet band, gave her quite a classical and goddess-like appearance. Otherwise, however, she was anything but a classical young lady. There was nothing severely correct about her. There was a bloom on her cheek, and a drowsiness in her heavenly-blue eyes, which suggested that she had been childishly fast asleep; her soft, loose, bright hair threatened to fall down ignominiously; in fact, altogether, she was a rather untidy and carelessly-attired beauty. And yet what a beauty she was!

"I thought it must be Roger," she repeated, half reproachfully, as if Roger's remissness might be Terese's fault. "I was waiting for him. He always keeps me waiting."

"Does he know you are here?" Terese asked her.

She settled down into her chair again, with an expression which might have been petulant on a different style of face, but which melted almost immediately into a slow, sweet, easy-going smile, as if she was not equal to the exertion of feeling out of humor.

"I don't know," she answered. "One never does know here. I told Jekyll to tell him, as soon as he came in, and I asked Hugh to look in the park."

"The park is rather a large place to look in," suggested Terese.

"Yes," quite unmovedly.

She let her eyes, which were of the blue of a convolvulus or a spring morning sky, rest upon Terese, with the greatest possible serenity, not seeming to trouble herself at all about her individuality.

"Won't you sit down?" she said, at last.

Terese sat down, and taking a piece of light work from her pocket, applied herself to it forthwith. She was curious, but content to wait patiently for further developments, feeling sure that this young lady would be no less frank

than Lady Dysart, though her frankness would arise from very different causes.

And so results proved.

"How fast you work," she remarked, after the lapse of a few seconds.

"Yes," said Terese.

"Is it tiresome?"

"Not at all—the easiest thing in the world."

"It would be tiresome to me—work of any kind always is. I think," with a gently speculative air, "that, perhaps, I am lazy."

Terese laughed outright.

"It is just possible," she said.

"Yes," smiling, but evidently more out of good nature, pure and simple, than from any sense of the whimsical. "Sometimes I think I must be lazy, I hate trouble so. I hate it so, that it keeps me from quarreling with people, and insisting on my rights. I believe I would rather exist without any rights at all than have rows about them."

"You must be a very delightful person to live with," observed Terese.

"I think I ought to be," smiling again; "but I am not sure that I am. People are so different in their notions, you see. Now there is my sister Barbara, and I don't know why, but she reminds me of you, though she is no more like you than a stick is like a damask rose bush. Barbara is energetic. She is always working, or scolding somebody for not working, and she always knows what everybody ought to do. If I was one of her poor people, and *could* hate any one, I believe I should hate her. She is charitable, you know, and she does so despise everybody. I am sure there is not a worm that crawls that she does not respect more than she respects me."

This statement of agreeable facts was made with so much guileless composure of manner, that Terese was fairly astounded, and worked faster than ever.

"Who is she?" she was saying, inwardly.

"Who can she belong to?"

She might have uttered the words aloud, for she received an indirect reply to them, the next moment.

"And there is Roger. I often say to him, when he is in one of his rages, particularly during warm weather, 'Cousin Roger, where is the use of getting into a fury, and making yourself hot. It only makes you hot, and ends in nothing else. I always try to keep as comfortable and cool as possible.' But he never listens, though he never flies into a fury at me, as he does at other people."

"You are Mr. Dysart's cousin?" suggested Terese.

"Yes, from the parsonage, you know. I spend a great deal of time here, and always have done, though papa does not approve of Sir Roderick, of course. Nobody does, you know—nobody respectable."

"I have never seen Sir Roderick," said Terese.

"Roger is not at all like him," with just a hint of readiness to defend Roger from any possible accusation of such unfortunate resemblance. "Roger is very much nicer, though he is not exactly proper, either. He is rough, and passionate, and not polite; but I like him. I have always liked him, ever since we were children together."

She wandered on, in this careless, amiable fashion, for nearly an hour, revealing all sorts of state secrets, without a shade of hesitation, and looking so simply majestic and beautiful all the time, despite her almost childish inconsequence, that Terese found it impossible not to feel a negative liking for her. She talked about "the parsonage," and "Barbara," and "papa," and the "children," and more than all the rest, of "Roger," seemingly quite unconscious that she had given no hint of her name, and did not know her companion's. "But it will come out in the end," was Terese's inward comment, as she listened.

She had walked over to see Roger about her horse—one he himself had given her, sometime ago, she said.

"I want him to come, and look at her foot; something is wrong with it. And I dare say he will be a little cross about it. He always is when anything is the matter with her. He scolds, and says it is my fault, because I don't take care of her. I wish he would come."

But he did not come, and at last, she could wait no longer. Barbara would be angry, if she kept dinner waiting, or worse still, would not let dinner wait at all, and then everything would be cold. So she got up, and made search for her hat, which was at last discovered under a side-table, and which being a picturesque, unconventional affair, turned up at one side with a red rose, proved very becoming indeed.

"You will tell Roger about Kitty," she said to Terese. "Please do! It is her left hind foot. And you will come to see us, won't you? The parsonage is old and tumble-down, but it is not as dreary as the Court. I always think the sun is warmer there; and there are such nice corners to lounge in. Barbara says I am always lounging in the sun, like an Italian beggar. I have always thought," with a sweet-tempered smile, "that I should like to have been an Italian beggar. Good-afternoon."

But before the door had fairly closed upon her, she opened it again, and looked in, gracious, unruffled and inconsistently statuesque as ever.

"Ah!" she said. "I forgot to tell you that I am Elizabeth Dysart." And forthwith took her departure.

Terese was attracted to the window, to watch Miss Dysart out of sight, and very soon saw her taking a short cut across the park, the long folds of her white dress trailing over the grass, as if stains were impossible, or indifferent affairs, the setting sun shining on the bright, loose, untidy hair, the faint breeze causing her wide, open sleeves to flutter softly in a wing-like fashion.

"She might be a stray goddess," said Terese, "but surely she cannot be going far in that dress, unless, perhaps, the villagers are accustomed to the sight of young women, who look as if they had just left pedestals. Perhaps she will meet 'Roger,' and tell him about Kitty's left hind foot herself."

When Roger returned, however, it appeared that she had not met him. He came into the room, looking tired and out of temper, and his first glance about him showed him the big chair pushed out of its place, and on the floor near it a few pink petals, which had fallen from the goddess' belt.

"Some one has been here," he said, a little sharply. "Who was it?"

Terese looked up from her work to answer him, with the ghost of a smile.

"Your cousin," she answered, "Miss Elizabeth Dysart."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

FOR AN ALBUM: ACROSTICAL.

BY JENNIE JOY.

I had such royal guests to make my summers fleet:
Love and her gorgeous train—I barred my heart 'gainst more.
You knocked, you called, your voice was heavenly sweet,
As with shy glance you stood at my heart's door.

I opened it a little way in doubt; and lo!
Love moved upon her flower-disk'd seat to give you room.
The others smiled assent—you entered: now I know
ANGELS find welcome ever, where Love has her home.

MISS DEFARGE.

BY FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 49.

CHAPTER IV.

"MISS ELIZABETH DYSART—" began Terese, as she sat with Lady Dysart, that evening.

Her ladyship interposed with a slight lifting of her dark brows.

"Elizabeth?" she said. "When did you see Elizabeth?"

"This afternoon," Terese answered. "Is it possible that you were not told?"

"Quite possible," returned my lady, drily. "Nobody stands on ceremony with Elizabeth. It is not her way to demand much attention. She comes and goes as the whim seizes her; and she certainly does not come to see me. It is always Roger she wants."

"She wanted Mr. Dysart, this afternoon," said Terese.

"She is not a bashful young lady," said Lady Dysart. "She is as candid in her exhibition of sentiment for Roger as if she was six instead of twenty. She wanders about after him with the most amiable calmness. Sometimes I almost like her for it, and sometimes I lose patience."

Naturally Miss Defarge was conscious of some slight curiosity, as to what order of sentiment this was, which Miss Elizabeth Dysart cherished for her cousin. It had seemed to her a very innocent and matter-of-fact one.

"But what a beautiful creature she is," she remarked, aloud.

"Beautiful!" echoed Lady Dysart. "She is more than beautiful. She is a wonder of good looks; and she either knows or cares nothing about them. She is beautiful because she cannot help it; and somehow she is always picturesque in untidy fashion. That white merino for instance—"

"She wore it this afternoon," said Terese.

"Of course she did. Roger once admired it in his unceremonious style, and she has worn it as often as possible ever since. And what a rag it would be upon any one else! It has been washed a score of times, but it falls about her in folds that are fairly classic; and absurdly out of date as it is, one cannot complain of it. It is comfortable, she says, and easy to put on, and so she will wear it as long as it will hold together, or until Roger tells her it is getting too yellow."

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"The Dysarts are all poor," said my lady. "The Reverend Eustace had made a love match, and then, having struggled against fate for a dozen years, had lost his beautiful, incapable wife, who had left him six children."

"She was like Elizabeth," added Lady Dysart, "and for that reason Eustace is secretly fonder of Elizabeth than of the rest. He likes to see her lounging in his study, when he is writing his sermons. As to Barbara—but you will know Barbara soon enough. I have no doubt she will call upon you, to-morrow, to see if you are orthodox."

And surely enough, the elder Miss Dysart presented herself the next day. She was as unlike her sister as was possible. Terese Defarge found her rather like a brown sparrow. Her eyes were brown, her hair was brown, and she was trimly attired in brown, from head to foot. She carried a neat note-book and a choice assortment of tracts, and evidently regarded Terese only in the light of so much possible parochial assistance.

"From a speech I heard Elizabeth make, I was led to hope we should have something in common," she said. "She told me you were fond of work."

And then she displayed the note-book, which was full of memoranda of visits to be made, and tracts to be delivered. "Take Forbes to task about his idleness," Terese saw at the head of one page. "Read portions of Job to Mrs. Feggs, the next time she complains of her rheumatism."

"If Elizabeth would help me," she said, "we might accomplish a great deal; but upon that point she is obstinate; and I will say that Elizabeth is not often obstinate. Indolence is her besetting sin, however, and the consequence is that the children are left to run wild. She is too lazy to attend to them—and I have not the time to do it. The parish cannot be neglected altogether."

"You are speaking of your father's children?" Terese hinted.

"Yes," producing a lead pencil. "There are six of us, and the four younger ones are the trial of my life—no regularity, you know, no sense of order; and Elizabeth, who might do almost anything with them—they are so unaccountably fond

of her—spends half the summer days in lying on the grass and telling them fairy tales. But may I put you down a list of calls to make?"

She was doomed to disappointment, however. Terese shook her head. She did not feel herself equal to Forbes and Mrs. Feggs just yet.

"I am afraid I should not select the right portions of Job," she said, smiling at Miss Dysart from under her eyelashes. "And I find there is a great deal to be done at the Court itself. You must excuse me for the present."

Her call ended, Barbara Dysart carried her memorandum-book away, with a slight sense of discomfiture. This was something worse than Elizabeth, she said to herself. Elizabeth was simply incapable, but this Miss Defarge, with her air of decision, would certainly have been a match for all sorts of parochial difficulties. Even Forbes must have stood before her in a respectful mood. Even Forbes, who was an idle vagabond of democratic tendencies, and prone to unpleasant frankness of speech and manner.

Of the young man Roger, Terese saw very little. He seemed to live a curious, aimless, vagabond life, going out and coming in at whatever hours he chose, and making his dogs and horses his sole companions. If he had others they never presented themselves at the Court. For the rest, he was usually silent, indifferent, and gloomy. Scarcely an addition to any circle, thought Terese, a little scornfully. In fact, he was something of a trial to her. He was the first of his species she had encountered, and when—as was not unfrequently the case—she found his eyes fixed upon her, the unceremonious candor of their stare more than half angered her.

"Why don't you go and see Elizabeth Dysart?" he broke out upon her, sharply, one evening. "What right have you to sit stitching in the house, and giving yourself no rest? I detest to see a woman sew."

"That is unfortunate," returned Terese. In fact, one of her first moves towards reform had been to attack her pupils' wardrobes boldly, and this labor she had been quick enough to observe, before this occasion, was regarded by the masculine looker-on with no small disfavor.

"You have no right to do that," he said, pointing to the work-basket at her side.

She merely shrugged her shoulders, prettily.

"It is no business of yours," becoming irritated and brusque.

Then, to his companion's surprise, he began to stride to and fro across the floor, angrily.

"We are a disgrace to our name," he said.

"We are always imposing on somebody, or cheating somebody, or lying to somebody. No—
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body is safe who comes within our walls. Don't the very tradespeople know us? Have we spared the poorest of them? Whom can we look in the face fairly?"

But there he stopped, just as suddenly as he had begun.

"What a fool I am," he said. "What can you know about it—or care? But go to the parsonage, to see Elizabeth Dysart. She told me to ask you." And immediately he marched out of the room, still flushed and fierce.

Terese found herself flushing, also, a little.

"He sees and feels, does he?" she said. "Well, it is a miserable state of affairs, that is true."

She went to the parsonage, that afternoon, and on her way from the gate to the house, was checked by the sound of voices, which drew her attention to a shady corner of the garden, and showed her that she had no need to go further. Elizabeth Dysart was lying upon the grass, with four children lounging around her, in eccentric but easy attitudes; and the first sentences Terese heard were these:

"If you fan one in that excitable fashion, Lucy, I shall certainly be obliged to stop the story. It makes me warm to look at you, and I cannot allow myself to be made warm—but immediately the Princess Graziella spoke to the Ogre, and said—Ah!" breaking off, as she caught sight of Terese, "there is Miss Defarge."

The four children all scrambled to their feet at once, and stared with four pairs of great eyes, very like Elizabeth's, and Elizabeth herself rose slowly, and stood up among the roses, smiling.

"Roger," she said, with comfortable composure, "Roger told me he would ask you to come."

She seemed beautifully unconscious of any irregularity or unceremoniousness in the proceedings, as she re-seated herself on the grass, in evident expectation that Terese would follow her example.

"Stand near Miss Defarge, and fan her, Lucy," she said to the tallest child, adding to her visitor. "Lucy is the best fanner among them, when she does her best, and it is her turn, this afternoon."

"Her turn?" echoed Terese.

"Yes," nodding. "They take it on turns to fan me; and I pay them in stories and cake. We are all fond of cake, you see, and I am the only one who dare take it without asking."

Actually, Terese Defarge found herself at a loss for something to say. For a few minutes, she could only remain passive under the fanning, and feel herself filled with wonder as to what would come next.

She had not long to wait. It was Roger who came next, throwing the gate open with a great

swing, and striding across the grass towards them, with the air of a visitor who knew where to find them, and was not at all used to standing upon ceremony.

Perhaps he had scarcely expected to see Terese there so soon. At all events, he colored a little as he touched his hat, and flung himself down at Elizabeth's feet.

"So you found your way here," he said.

"It was not a difficult matter," Terese answered.

Unconsciously, she began almost to stare at the two, as they sat there; he resting upon his elbow, and Elizabeth looking down at him, with a lazy, affectionate smile.

"Is he in love with her," Terese was asking herself, "or is she in love with him, or is it possible that each is in love with the other? I should not think so, and yet—"

And there her speculations stopped, because it was not easy to carry them further. Truly, it was rather a curious state of affairs. If there was any love-making, it was certainly the goddess who made it, and it was made in the most innocent of unromantic fashions. She unfurled a large fan, and fanned Roger with delicious regularity and gentleness. She bore two reproaches on the subject of Kitty's left hind-foot with penitent submission. She even went to the house, and brought back to him iced water, when he ungratefully complained of the heat, pouring it out, and standing before him, with a placidly sweet servility, wondrous to Terese Defarge, at least.

In fact, Miss Defarge grew somewhat impatient, but her impatience was rather against Roger Dysart than against Elizabeth. Her high spirit roused itself against his cool readiness to be served. She looked on, in silent scorn, and when she rose to take her departure, her tall, slight, black figure seemed to have drawn its swaying height to such an increase of tallness, that Roger Dysart's eye fell upon her in secret dissatisfaction and curiosity.

She had scarcely expected he would accompany her, but he did, rising almost immediately, and bestowing upon Elizabeth a cavalierly, curt farewell.

"I shall be over again, to-morrow, to look at Kitty's foot," he said, "and if that confounded fellow hasn't attended to her, I'll break his neck." Having made which gentlemanly observation, he strode up to Terese, and walked by her side.

For some time Miss Defarge remained silent. It was Roger who found himself obliged to speak first.

"Well," he said, with sardonic brusqueness, "what do you think of us?"

To tell the truth, her mode of reply rather startled, and took him aback. She suddenly stopped short, and looked him full in the face.

"Do you always conduct yourself towards Miss Elizabeth Dysart as you have done this afternoon?" she asked.

"Yes," he answered. "I suppose I do."

"Oh!" was her brief, ejaculatory comment; and she turned round and walked on.

He kept pace with her, cutting at the heads of the grass with the light switch he held in his hand. Presently he spoke, in Lady Dysart's own words:

"We don't stand on ceremony with Elizabeth," he said.

"That is very plain," returned Terese.

"Why should we?" he proceeded. "She does not care. She would not understand it if we did. If I were ceremonious and polite, she would think I was angry with her."

Terese said nothing.

"Don't make a mistake," he said, working himself up into his usual fiery humor. "I am not so blind as not to see that she is worth a dozen more exacting women. Don't suppose that I am an idiot. She is the best and truest friend I have ever had—she is the only friend I have ever had—Elizabeth Dysart."

"Lady Dysart is your friend," said Terese.

"Well, perhaps—but not as Elizabeth is. She has cared for me ever since she was a baby. She began to fetch and carry for me, when she was three years old, and she did it because she was sweet-tempered enough to like to do it. She is faithful and innocent. I like women who are faithful and innocent."

Again Terese said nothing, and so he went on:

"There are things she has done which I cannot forget. When my devil of a father used to beat and half-starve me, as was a pleasant habit of his, she was my only consolation. She used to wait among the trees in the park, with the food she had saved, until I came to her to rave out my rage, and tire myself out. And once, when Sir Roderick beat me with his hunting-whip, she ran in between us, and stood with her arms around my neck, until he was obliged to stop—not because she was a child and a girl, but because she was not one of his own chattels. She got one cut, too, the mark of which she bore for many a day. I hope," uttering the words through his teeth, "to pay Sir Roderick for that yet."

Then he suddenly lapsed into silence, and the rest of their walk was accomplished without the exchange of a word.

When they entered the house, however, he found something to say. He stopped short in the hall, and putting his hand in his pocket, produced a letter.

"That is yours," he said. "I forgot to give it to you this morning."

Terese took it, with a little frown. It was inconsistent and ungrateful in her, and she could not have told why she did it, but she did frown. And yet she knew as well what she should find inside the envelope, as if she had already opened it, and read the first words—words which she always found opening such epistles:

"My dearest and most precious Terese."

CHAPTER V.

"I really think," wrote Terese, a few days later, in answer to this letter, "that, however slow the process may at present appear, I shall in the end accomplish something. The two or three wretchedly, incapable, and utterly dishonest servants, who are on the place, are beginning to hate me, and I am encouraged by the fact. In time, they will be afraid of me—that is, if I give them time; but I hope that I shall not be obliged to do so. I have faced the lion in his den, or rather the lioness in hers, which figure represents a certain wicked, slippery, good-looking house-keeper, who carries Lady Dysart's keys, and robs her upon every occasion. I suppose there is, as I have said before, no real reason why I should interfere; but, somehow, the state of affairs rouses me, and then I have nothing else to do. I believe, also, that I have a kind of diplomatic business talent. I think I like to economize and manage things, and I have a faculty for doing so. That is the French phase of my character. My aunt, Mademoiselle Ducloux, used to admire it in me. The fact is, I admire it in myself—I pride myself upon it. I see at Dysart Court a riotous kind of penury, in which everything lies waste and goes to ruin, and then I see resources, and I can't help feeling meddlesome—as if I must do something. I have begun by trying to rouse Lady Dysart, and I have succeeded so far as to cause her to invest me with unlimited power over keys and cupboards. The bearding of the lioness was not pleasant. She was so furious, that I thought, once or twice, she would have eaten me if she had dared. It is my intention to remove her as soon as possible. As to the children, I have reached a climax with them, and do not think I shall have any more trouble. Yesterday, occurred my battle royal with Master Hugh Dysart, and it is my opinion—yes, I really think that, upon the whole, I

came off victor. He is a young savage, this Master Hugh Dysart, and from the first he has continually done all he dared to defy and annoy me. But, yesterday, the crisis arrived. He brought into the school-room a dog I hate, (and secretly stand in fear of); a big, fierce-looking creature, belonging to Sir Roderick, and he also brought a whip with which he teased it. I ordered the dog out, and told him to bring the whip to me. He told the dog to remain, and refused to bring me the whip. I am afraid of the dog, as I tell you, but my temper was stronger than my fear, so I went to the animal, and took it boldly by its collar, and led it out myself. Then I returned to my seat, and commanded my young Sir Roderick to come to me, as I had done before. The two girls dropped their books, and sat and stared at me. I really believe there was something in my face which frightened them. For fully two minutes the boy sat in his seat, laughing at me a horridly wicked laugh, and then a sudden passion of fury seemed to seize upon him. He sprang up, and ran towards me, all at once, and before I could touch him, his whip had struck me across my face.

"You cannot imagine, unless you have once received such a blow, what its effect was upon me. It is already agreed between us that my temper is not a cold one, and between the sting and the humiliation, and my perfect conviction that my time had come, I will confess it got the better of me. In two seconds, I had wrenched the whip from the little animal's hand, and held him with all my strength, and then I beat him—and beat him—and beat him! I beat him until I felt that even the amiable Sir Roderick might have considered that I had distinguished myself; after which exploit I flung him upon the floor, broke the whip into half-a-dozen pieces, and threw it at him where he lay.

"But really it is scarcely fair to fill your letter with such agreeable items; suppose, as a more pleasant subject, we turn to Major Ponsonley, etc., etc."

The little episode, above related, had indeed been an exciting one, and its result was by no means a bad one. Master Hugh Dysart had learned a lesson, and his governess profited by his acquisition of knowledge. He was conquered for the first time. He had been in the habit of laughing to scorn the meek spinsters and timorous widows who had heretofore vainly endeavored to guide the reins of government; but here was a combatant, who, insignificant as he had thought her, had wrists of steel, and a feminine fire of temper as fierce, when roused, as that of his sole subjugator, Sir Roderick.

Miss Defarge presented herself at dinner, that day, with a red mark showing itself across her clear, dark cheek, and when she caught Roger Dysart looking at it, she felt that she could well afford the delicious, melting smile she straightway bestowed upon him.

"I have had a little trouble in the school-room," she said to him, after the meal was over.

The blood leaped to his face, as she knew it would.

"If that young devil—" he broke forth.

"Ah," she said. "You have no need to be angry. I am not; and it is all over comfortably enough. I shall have no more trouble with Master Hugh Dysart, I think. From to-day he will begin to understand."

But Roger is as furious.

"You are not strong enough to have given him the thrashing he deserves," he said.

She looked up at him, laughing and nodding, with that significant little flash darting from under her lashes.

"Am I not?" she answered. "I think I have been, and at any rate it is all over."

It was all over, and as she had prophesied, she had no further trouble. The boy was obedient, if sullen, and it was evident that in secret he felt something akin to respect for her. She often found him watching her furtively, and after a week or so of perfect indifference of manner, she changed her tactics. She occasionally vouchsafed him some trifling extra attention, and at last went so far as to give him suddenly such a smile as she now and then bestowed upon very much older people. The young savage stared at her for a second or so, and then was affected, as the older ones were—he relented, and stared harder than ever, but with a new element of appreciation in his stare. He was a bold youngster, and a thorough Dysart, and consequently, even at eight years, feminine fascinations, incomprehensible though they appeared, were not wholly lost upon him.

That evening, after tea, Terese returned to the school-room. She had letters to write, and having written them, she went and seated herself at a large oriel window, which looked out upon the fast darkening park. She was in a somewhat fanciful humor, and wished to be alone, but before she had occupied her place very long, she became conscious of a presence near. She glanced round impatiently, and saw her pupil standing a few paces from her, his back against the wall, both his hands in his pockets, his black eyes fixed upon her, his evil, handsome, boy-face altogether suggestive of something a trifle uncanny.

For a minute or so he merely stared cavalierly as before, but at length he condescended a remark.

"Can you ride?"

"No," answered Terese, nonchalantly.

Another cool stare, and then:

"Are you afraid?"

"No."

He edged a little nearer, with a new and condescending expression of interest.

"Would you like to try?"

"Why do you ask?" said Terese.

"Because you would like it, and," as coolly as ever. "I could teach you."

"Do you think you could?" asked Terese, quite as coolly.

"Yes, and there is a horse that belongs to me in the stable. It's too gentle," with some scorn, "for anything but a woman to ride. Will you try it?"

Terese looked at him, somewhat curiously.

"Yes," she said, at last.

"When?"

"To-morrow."

"Very well." And after another pause, and another stare, he disappeared.

The next morning, in passing through the hall, Roger Dysart met Terese coming in, evidently from a ride. She held a whip in her hand, and wore a habit which she had borrowed from Lady Dysart, who had not mounted a horse for years.

"Where have you been?" he demanded.

"I have been taking a lesson in riding."

He glanced through the door-way, and saw Hugh disappearing down the avenue at a tearing pace, possibly finding it a relief from the monotony of a tamer one.

"What?" he exclaimed. "That imp! Do you want your neck broken? Why not let me teach you, if you care to learn?"

"You did not offer to do it, and he did," she replied, in some secret triumph.

"If you are inclined to trust yourself to a baby—" with rough resentment.

"He is not a baby," she answered. "And I wish I had as firm a seat. He is afraid of nothing. On the whole, I like it, and the fact is, I begin to like him." And she went upstairs, laughing.

Before many weeks had passed, her black-browed, lætumn, young barbarian followed her everywhere. That had suggested to her that she should accept his advances, and humor his whim, and the doing so had been a master stroke. In a silent, and non-effusive fashion, he attached himself to her, and made himself her attendant and servitor. His manners were by no means

of the best, but, at least, he showed a disposition to make himself useful, whenever the opportunity presented itself. He even followed her to the rectory, thereby creating great consternation among the inhabitants of that tranquil and indolent retreat.

"Is it Hugh you have with you?" said Elizabeth, opening her lovely eyes in horror. "What are you going to do with him? Do you know he will set the whole place by the ears, and terrify the children to death? He once broke Lucy's arm, and he half-killed Nina by riding over her with his pony."

"Nevertheless," said Terese, "I think you can trust him not to do so now."

"Then," said Elizabeth, "it must be true, as Roger says, that you have worked miracles."

And the miracles did not end here. The restless French blood in Terese Defarge's veins impelled her to deeds more daring still. In three months she had worked wonders in the household, and this also almost imperceptibly.

"Do what you like—anything you like—all you like," Lady Dysart had said, when she went to her, at the outset of her reforms. "If you think you can improve the state of affairs," with a shrug of her shoulders, "pray do so."

Even though she felt some secret admiration and respect for the girl, she had not the slightest faith in her ability to do battle with the difficulties which surrounded her on every side—the obstacles of poverty, and extravagance, sloth, and dishonesty.

"You will find Sir Roderick's servants more difficult to manage than his children," she remarked. "You cannot beat them, you know. For my part, if I was sufficiently interested to try to manage them—which I am not—I should be afraid to attempt it."

"When I cannot manage them, I shall discharge them," returned Terese.

Her ladyship raised her eyebrows, and half-laughed.

"They consider themselves Sir Roderick's private property."

"Then," answered Terese, smiling also, "I must account for them to Sir Roderick, when he comes."

"As you please," said my lady; "but, being his wife, I should not care to attempt that either. As you are not his wife, you may fare better than I should."

She was rather curious to see how Terese would conduct herself, on finding that she was beaten, and must relinquish her projects, with an ignominious sense of having been worsted, by such inferior and shallow combatants; but as

time went on, she saw no sign of her having been beaten at all. One morning, however, Terese came into the parlor, with an account book in her hand, and a bunch of keys hanging from her waist.

"I have sent the housekeeper away," she said.

"Lefton!" exclaimed Lady Dysart. "That was a bold stroke, indeed. May I ask how you paid her the arrears of her wages? To my certain knowledge she has had nothing for a year."

"I had some money of my own," said Terese, indifferently, "and I shall save it out of the household expenses in a month, holding the management in my own hands."

"Then you are going to manage the house, and the children, too. That is energetic and generous, but I think you will tire of it."

Terese shook her keys, knitting her forehead, reflectively.

"Not yet," she replied. "I am interested. It is like playing a difficult, close kind of game."

As she went out of the room, Lady Dysart stopped her for a moment.

"I have, however, one remark to make," she said. "I should not advise you to pay Sir Roderick's bills as a rule, or to let him know that you have ever done it. You would not find it remunerative."

In saying that she was interested, and that the undertaking was like playing a close kind of game, Terese had spoken truly. She had never confronted so much of difficulty before, and it interested and spurred her. She was a clever economist, and here was need for economy; she had a quick eye, and wonderful genius for controlling people. She kept her accounts strictly, and made a study of her resources. In three weeks she knew more of Dysart and its possibilities than Lady Dysart had learned during the whole of her married life. So, at last, after thinking the matter over, she matured mentally two or three very creditable plans, and carried them to no less a person than Roger.

"Why cannot you take charge of Dysart?" she said, with cool boldness.

"I?" he answered, sneering bitterly. "Do you want a new housekeeper?"

He had behaved himself rather badly about her assumption of unpaid labor, and they had accordingly not been on very good terms. His rebellion against fortune unfortunately took the form of general impoliteness and savagely brusque speech. He had even been rude to Lady Dysart, and to his credit be it spoken, it was his habit to behave well enough towards her.

"No," she returned, in too business-like a mood to lose her temper. "The one I employ at

present pleases me well enough. I mean the estate. There is no reason why you should not."

"No reason?" he burst out, tempestuously.

"Do you know what you are talking about?"

"In the abstract," with perfect gravity. "I know that there are such people as tenants, and that they are either good or bad, and I hear continually that your's are bad, and that they are spoiling your land."

"Did you ever hear that better farmers refuse to rent their farms from such a landlord as Sir Roderick?"

"I have heard that, too. It seems very easy," drily and indiscreetly, "to lay all the blame upon Sir Roderick."

"Do you think I am to blame? Is it my fault that we are a disgraced, beggarly lot?" fiery at once.

"It is not you who should say that," said Terese. "You are too young, and have too much of life before you. And if another person said it, you would not stand passive."

She gave him the outline of the plans she had pleased herself by forming, and bold though they were under the circumstances, there was a practical element and an air of probability about them. At least, Roger Dysart listened, and found his bitter lassitude stirred to some extent.

"We are going to be reformed," he said,

grimly, to Elizabeth, that afternoon, as he lay upon the grass at her feet. "A little leaven will leaven the whole lump."

"Reform!" said Elizabeth, shamelessly candid. "That reminds me of Barbara. And if there is one thing I hate, it is reform. Reform always means that you must give up something comfortable, or do something uncomfortable. Which is it in this case?"

He related the story of Terese Defarge's late movements, and ended, it is to be regretted, with something between a half-groan and a muttered oath. It was, however, one of his privileges to swear before Elizabeth—as he smoked in her presence, and was not restrained by it from flying into a rage.

"She is right enough," he said. "And a fellow cannot help liking her courage."

"Do you like it?" asked Elizabeth.

"Yes."

She leaved a rather long sigh, but not a sigh by any means indicative of distress of mind.

"So do I," she said. "I like to sit still, and watch her do things. Just imagine her having the courage to discharge servants, and add up bills. If she lived in France, Roger, and belonged to the lower orders, and had that kind of spirit, she would be a Communist."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LONG AGO.

BY LESLIE BURTON.

Yes, here is the rose, all withered and dry!
Yet once 'twas the daintiest rose that grew;
And, lifting its beautiful head to the sky,
Offered up incense pure and true.
And true and pure was the message it brought
Straight from a bosom that knew no guile;
True as the flash of a heaven-born thought,
And pure as the light of an angel's smile.

For this blest flower was chosen apart,
Most honor to know that might befall;
For Cicely placed it over her heart
That morn, as we sat by the garden wall.
But the rose was shamed, to such nearness brought,
And paled at the sight of a face so fair;
For the tint of the cheek's pure oval taught
What color a perfect rose should wear.

And she saw full well, with a strange surprise,
That the dewy gems on her bosom laid,
Grew dim at a glance from those radiant eyes,
Tho' fit for a kingly diadem made.
So she folded her petals and hung her head.
"Oh, why be so cruel, Cicely? See!
You have stolen the rose's bloom," I said,
"It is dying already—pray, give it me?"

At first for the rose, then, bolder grown,
I asked for a gift of greater grace,
Priceless and precious, and, courage flown,
Doubted and trembled a moment's space.
Then the dewy, dark eyes and the fair young face,
Bending above me—low at her feet—
Tenderer grew, as she took from its place
The rose, and gave it me; token meet

Of the sweet, warm love that was hers to know,
Hers to give, and to hold till death;
Sweet as the redolent sweets that blow
Out on the breeze with the rose's breath;
And warm as the kisses her full heart know,
As she woke in beauty to life and love,
Pure as her morn-given wreath of dew,
And sure as her life's law, written about.

Long, long ago! But a faint, sweet scent
Clings to the dry, dead petals yet,
Rousing my soul from its forced content,
And waking a sorrow's untold regret.
Wait patiently, Rose, yet a little time.
In the mystical future, perchance, somewhere,
We shall find our youth and the summer's prime,
Safe in her keeping, who waits us there.

MISS DEFARGE.

BY FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 130.

CHAPTER VI.

"WHAT is it?" said Lady Dysart to Terese, during the next week. "What is it that Roger is doing?"

Terese glanced up from her account book, which she was examining. It would have been impossible for her to have helped seeing that new events had been transpiring, and yet she scarcely cared to make it patent that she had observed them. So she merely smiled, and said, in a speculative tone:

"Doing? Mr. Dysart?"

"Some new whim has seized him," said Lady Dysart, "which rather surprises me, as it is not his way to be whimsical. He leaves his dogs and guns at home when he goes out, and yesterday he was looking over the books which ought to belong to a steward, but do not."

"Perhaps," answered Terese, "he has found out that they need looking over."

Her ladyship laughed, even a little maliciously.

"Do you know what condition they are in?" she asked.

"I can only guess."

"They are Sir Roderick's books," my lady proceeded, "and he has kept them, or not kept them, after a fashion of his own. There has been no steward of Dysart for ten years."

"Then," said Terese, "it is time that some one should undertake the office."

"What," returned Lady Dysart, "to save money, that Sir Roderick may spend it? That is what it would end in."

"If I were a man," said Terese, "that would not be reason sufficient to cause me to allow my heritage to go to ruin."

"True!" said her ladyship, somewhat coldly. "It is his heritage, after all."

This evening, after tea, Miss Defarge found something to be done in the pantry, and with her customary directness, she put on a grave-looking, white apron, and took the work into her own hands. The task was not heavy—nothing more weighty than the examination and arranging of various jars of preserves and condiments, which had emanated from her own genius; but Roger Dysart, who came in late, finding her busy

among them, stopped at the open door, with a rebellious air.

"Why are you doing that?" he demanded.

She drew a step backward from the shelves, and put her hands into the imposingly large pockets of her apron.

"For two reasons," she answered. "In the first place, it is necessary that it should be done, and no one else will do it so well; and in the second, because I like to do it. Possibly I ought to put that reason first, instead of last."

"It is a servant's work," he persisted.

"Yes," she assented, "but you see I chose to make it mine. I am not proud."

There was a momentary pause, in which she looked at her jars seriously, and then he spoke in a voice and manner entirely new to her.

"You know that it is galling to me," he said.

It was the newness of tone and manner which made her turn round to look at him. And having done so, she found a novel change in his expression, too. He leaned a little against the lintel of the door, and looked down at her, his face slightly flushed, and his eyes having in their depths a certain excitement which he seemed to be struggling against.

"You have no right to force me to feel humiliation," he said. "I have been trying to please you."

In her amazement at this unexpected suggestion of the possible approach of an unexpected crisis, she said nothing.

"I may as well admit it," he added, no more ceremoniously than ever, and with no better a grace. "My reason for doing the work I have been doing was, at the outset, the weak one that you advised me to do it."

"That," said Terese, "was a reason weak enough."

"Oh, I admit that, too," he replied.

With her hands thrust very deep into her apron pockets, and her figure very erect, Terese stood and met his glance unflinchingly. It had always, through the whole course of a rather large and varied experience, been her habit to carry herself unflinchingly, in any trying or threatening situation, and so she carried herself now.

"But I should like to know something about your progress nevertheless," she remarked, "if you don't mind telling me."

"Why should I mind telling you? There is very little to tell, that you do not know. Every thing is in disorder, every tenant is dissatisfied. There are difficulties where I had not thought of meeting them, and I see small chance of overcoming the greater part of them."

"But you will not give it up?" said Terese, quickly.

"No," he answered.

"You will become interested," she said, "in spite of yourself."

"If I do not, I shall not give it up."

"I should not, if I were in your place," she answered.

Her interest in her own undertakings increased day by day. Among the vagabond visitors in the servants' hall, she spread consternation. They were no longer left to their own desires, and allowed to perform their several duties, or neglect them, as they chose. Miss Defarge looked after them sharply, and delinquents trembled before her expressive eye. Not one of them could have explained the character of the emotions she inspired them with, and yet they were continually controlled by them. She discovered their peccadilloes, and put down their tendencies to covert impertinence. The appearance of the tall figure, with the large-pocketed apron, fastened about the straight, slender waist, was a signal for a general humility of demeanor, and a scattering of loiterers. Some extra labor was performed every day. The table linen was darned and kept in order; rooms long unclosed and deserted were thrown open to the light of day; the rust disappeared from the armor; the dust from the carvings of cabinets, chairs and balustrades; the library was no longer a musty prison for mould and cobwebs; the drawing-room was no longer tarnished traps for moths. Energy accomplished almost as much as money might have done. By the time winter set in, the inside of the house, at least, was as far renovated as was possible under the circumstances, and the log fires lighted in the huge old fire-place blazed with a suggestion of cheerfulness the place had not seen for twenty years. From regarding Terese with stolid awe and indifferent amazement her pupils developed more amiable sentiments. It was evident that they admired her, and considered her in a measure worthy of their obedience.

"We always hated the other women," said Hugh. "We don't hate you."

Privately, Terese prided herself upon their

docility. Perhaps her greatest vanity was a love of conquest; but she always desired that her conquests should be of an original order. She began to devote herself to the development of the trio, with quite a fine energy. When he spent his evenings at home, Roger generally found her reading aloud, or delivering spirited little lectures conducive to general improvement, to which harangues even Lady Dysart listened with some slight semblance of interest. The court had never before settled itself into the aspect of home-like comfort, it began, by this time, to wear. In fact, it actually attracted Elizabeth, who fell into the habit of paying more frequent and longer visits, appearing at various inconvenient hours, with the four children at her heels.

"They will come," she explained. "They say your stories are better than mine, and you never tell the same one twice, which I do. Basely ungrateful little animals children are, and they are always expecting you to exert yourself."

She never ceased to admire and wonder at the genius and energy displayed in Terese's handiwork. As the cold weather approached, she exchanged the white merino (which, it must be confessed, had become rather frayed,) for a resplendent, but much more worn, velvet of dark violet, equally absurd, and equally becoming to her statuesque charms; and lounging in a large chair, with the purple folds of this regal robe lying about her feet, she continually made such a picture of herself as was positively inspiring.

"You *are* are a genius, you know," she would say to Terese, "or you never could have accomplished such wonders. You have actually recovered these chairs, and mended some of them—with glue." (As if this was the climatic marvel, the application of glue being a task requiring superhuman effort.) "They do not totter at all when one sits down on them; and before you came, it really seemed like tempting Providence to sit down anywhere at Dysart. And as to the children—well, one wouldn't know them. They are positively civilized."

CHAPTER VII.

THERE was a change also in Roger Dysart. At this time, Terese began to notice it in secret. They saw but little of him, however, through the short winter days. Only when he made his appearance among them, he seemed in a new mood. His manner was preoccupied and feverish by turns, he spent hours over the steward's book and certain business-like blue papers, he even

grew thinner, and lost a tinge of the color which had before shown itself under his sunburnt fairness. Terese shrewdly conjectured that her prophecy had come true; that his undertaking had fascinated him at last; and that from indifference he had run into another extreme.

In the rides she still took with Hugh, she made occasional discoveries. There were new tenants upon some of the land, and on other portions of it the old tenants seemed to have bestirred themselves in an entirely new manner—some of them grumblingly, a few with remarkably good cheer.

“Mr. Roger,” she heard, “had taken a new turn, and had all at once begun to look sharp after them. He was working things round, and trying to make both ends meet; and a pretty stiffish bit of business he had of it, but he was sharper than any of them had thought for.”

Then it was, that, for the first time, Terese began to soften a little towards him. She did not find him, in these days, so objectionably big, nor so stupid; and she was not as severe as heretofore upon his derelictions from the path of good manners. She had been wont to be fastidious, and to resent bitterly in her acquaintances any tendency to ill-fitting clothes, or gloveless hands, or brusque speech; she had upon occasion even gone so far as to hate a man for a dress-coat with creases across the back; but in Roger Dysart's case she gradually slackened her taut rein of restriction. He was still a big, fair young man, with the general behavior of a Goth or a Vandal, but she unconsciously learned to tolerate and feel a faint shade of sympathy and respect for him.

“How should he know any better,” she said, “after twenty-six years of Dysart Court?”

On his part, professing to observe her but little, he observed her continually. He could not help it. In truth, they were always crossing each others path. She had too much to do to remain very long in one part of the house. So he met her at all sorts of unexpected times; on the stairs, going down to the servants' hall, with the white apron tied round her waist, and the keys in her hand; in the long-neglected kitchen gardens, which, with the help of a stout laborer who worked under her active direction, she was endeavoring to utilize; in the park, or on the moors, with the children following her; or at the parsonage with Elizabeth, who made no secret of the fact that she preferred her society to that of any other mortal existing. “Because,” as she explained, “she never requires me to be violently entertaining, or violently polite, and it is no trouble whatever to talk to her.” And possess-

ing, notwithstanding his lack of experience and his isolated life, a blunt tendency to observe, and a degree of success in observation, he made, as time went on, discoveries also. He saw that, despite her strong will and decision, she was not always wholly at ease. He had seen her irritated at times, when there was no outward cause for irritation; he had seen her break off in those admirable and instructive harangues to the children, and frown when there was no outward cause for frowning; he had seen her absent-minded; and now and then, he had seen her in undoubtedly low spirits, as if indeed she bore something upon her mind, whose ill-effects even her practical and rather stern philosophy could not counteract altogether. In fact, Elizabeth herself had verified him in certain of his conjectures.

“If it was possible for her to have done a thing, of which she repented, and which made her angry with herself,” she remarked, “I should say she had such a thing on her mind; but I should never think of accusing her of ever having been guilty of not knowing her own mind. That is her only fault, you know; she is so decided, that it disturbs one. Good gracious,” classically, “to think of always having one's mind made up!”

She was so seriously disturbed by this view of the case, that, in making one of her frequent visits to the court, that afternoon, she wandered off into a dissertation upon the subject, with a bland directness which caused Terese Defarge some mental disturbance.

They were sitting at opposite sides of the fire; Terese a slight, dark, erect figure in her high-backed, antique chair; Elizabeth fair, ample, languorous, her worn-out, imperial purple falling beautifully about her, her golden coils generally suggestive of a lack of hair-pins, as usual—two creatures who could not have been better foils for each other, or more fitting representatives of utterly distinct types.

“Were you ever,” said Elizabeth, “were you ever unable to make up your mind about anything, Terese?”

She asked the question with the perfectly unsuspecting serenity, which characterized all her inquiries, however unprecedented their nature, and consequently she had not expected to see her companion color, and look restive, which she did at once.

“About what kind of things?” Terese asked.

“Ah! the kind does not matter. Any kind would do as an example. It was Roger who made me think of it, in the first place. We were talking about you; and I said to him that I did

not think it would be possible for you to waver, or make a mistake about anything; that your mind seemed always in the condition to be made up at once, and that, in fact, that was my only objection to you."

For a moment or so, Terese looked at the fire, and she did not look away from it, when she made her reply.

"Then," she said, rather gloomily, "you can consider your only objection removed."

"Why?" demanded Elizabeth; "because you have done something you have repented, or because you have not done something, and have repented of that?"

"Both," said Terese, with sharp directness.

"Both," echoed the placid goddess. "That is better than I expected."

A less serene temperament might have felt and exhibited some excitable curiosity upon the matter, but Elizabeth did not. She merely smiled benignly, and changed her position, by so far exerting herself as to clasp her lovely hands behind her lovely head, and so to throw the weight of the classic coils against their support, while she rambled into the dissertation, still benignly smiling on.

"As I have said to Roger," sweetly erratic as ever, "I cannot understand people always being ready to know whether they intend to do things or not. For my part I never *intend* to do anything. Why not just let things happen? They will happen, if you leave them to themselves; as they won't happen, just as the case may be. And it saves so much worry. There is Barbara, for instance, who is always trying to *make* things happen. And she visits, and scolds, and puts things down in her memorandum book. And yet Forbes gets drunk, and Mrs. Teggs *will* complain about her rheumatism. And they hate her, into the bargain. And I am sure there is no reason why they shouldn't. I should."

"That is affectionate," commented Terese, still somewhat abstractedly.

"Affectionate," with amiable freedom of speech. "We don't profess to be affectionate, you know. Barbara is not an affectionate person, and really it is not our fault that we are so nearly related; and why should we conduct ourselves as if it had been a matter of choice, and we felt called upon to abide by it? I am sure we should both have protested, if we had been consulted."

She was quite safe, Terese thought, now that she had begun to talk languid nonsense; but suddenly her mind appeared to recur, without any particular reason, to the old subject. She

stopped, with a little yawn, and a smile even a trifle sweeter than usual.

"What was it you did that you have repented of?" she asked.

Terese almost started. She had not anticipated anything so coldly point blank just at this juncture. She was betrayed into reddening and hesitating; and even after the hesitation, she answered indiscreetly:

"Something very foolish," she said.

"Ah!" with another little yawn. "Any consequences?"

"Yes," rather sharply. "There always are consequences to a folly."

Miss Elizabeth Dysart commented with a shrug of her shoulders.

"Ah, well!" she remarked. "Leave things to themselves, and they will come all right—if they don't, you can't help it."

But on a future occasion she said to Roger:

"If I was a curious person, I should be curious about Terese Defarge. She has done something she repents of."

"How do you know?" asked Roger.

"She told me so. Perhaps—," sagaciously, "she has promised to marry somebody."

CHAPTER VIII.

"About this time of the year," said Lady Dysart, one dark, foggy, winter morning, "it is not unusual for Sir Roderick to come home."

As events went, this remark rather assumed the aspect of a prophesy, said prophesy being verified in the following manner:

Notwithstanding the fog, and general inclemency of the weather, Terese took her ride with her pupil this morning, as was her custom. She had been daring enough to humor the boy to the top of his bent, and as a consequence had become as fearless an expert as himself. On his part, the boy was passionately proud of her progress, and though by nature inclined to a disdainful order of taciturnity, was also passionate in his silent attachment to her.

"He is fond of me, I know," Terese had said. "And we understand each other. His silence is that of the noble savage."

So they took their long rides together, through fair or foul weather, and if neither was effusive of speech, they did not the less enjoy their rather fierce gallops across the country.

On her return, upon this occasion, Terese went into the dining-room, before going upstairs to remove her habit. She had intended to stand a few minutes before the fire, but when she opened the door and advanced into the room, she encountered an unexpected obstacle.

The dog she hated sat upon the hearth, with a couple of shaggy comrades stretched within a few feet of him; the room was in disorder; a large chair was drawn up among the dogs, and upon it sat a handsome, black-haired man of uncertain age and dissolute aspect, who thrust his feet forward and held his hands in his pockets.

"*Sacré bleu!*" he said, with a cool, wicked smile. "This is she, is it?"

Without moving his hands from his pockets, he pushed his chair round, that he might gain a more direct look at the newcomer, and having satisfied himself, he repeated his last words again.

"This is she, is it?" he said. "The Mademoiselle Defarge, who has done so much for us—who has set our house in order, and shamed us into energy and ambition. *Mon Dieu!* but after all, your aspect is not so bad, mademoiselle."

"Have I the honor," said Terese, with creditable calmness, "of addressing Sir Roderick Dysart?"

He bowed.

"That honor," he replied, sardonically. "I am Sir Roderick. I have returned from foreign lands, as you observe: I have taken possession. How do you like the prospect before you?"

But before she had time to speak, he began again, with a short laugh.

"Do you know," he said, "I have been wondering what you will do with *me*? Society in general, and my relatives in particular, usually find it so difficult to dispose of me; and I have heard so much of your prowess. Lady Dysart," taking one hand from his pocket to wave it with ironic grace, "has even condescended to inform me, in a style peculiarly her own, that you are the eighth wonder of the world. You are invincible, and I cannot help being curious as to what you intend doing with me, now you have me on your hands. People who are frank speak of me as a blasphemous, ill-conditioned scoundrel, totally unworthy my name and rank. I have disreputable comrades, who follow me to my house, and turn it into a pandemonium, and gamble, and drink, and hunt, and blaspheme. When I arrive at the court, there is a daily gathering of my creditors, who blaspheme also. I am the worst—as you have doubtless heard—of a bad lot. What are you going to do with *me*, Mademoiselle Dysart?"

"Is it important that I should do anything?" asked Terese, icily. "If not—" And she ended the sentence with a little gesture she had acquired across the chancel—a slight elevation of eyebrows and shoulders, and a slight, careless movement of the hands.

"What!" said Sir Roderick, "is it possible that you mean to neglect *me*? What a waste of opportunities! I can assure you, upon my sacred honor, that I am more vicious than Master Hugh, more objectionable than the housekeeper, and as ill-bred as my son and heir himself. My dear—"

At once Terese was fired. The flash of her eye betokened that she had been so indiscreet as to lose her fine temper.

"Don't call me 'my dear,'" she said, quite fiercely. "I won't bear it."

And she turned about, and beat a heated and undignified retreat.

On her way to her room, she encountered Roger.

"You have seen Sir Roderick," he said, looking at her angry face.

"Yes," she answered. "I have had that pleasure."

"Well," he returned, speaking with suppressed passion in his tone, "now you will see the worst."

And his words proved true. She did see the worst. They were spared nothing. Before a week had passed, the whole household was in confusion. As he had prophesied, Sir Roderick's friends followed him. One after another dropped in at the court, and was hospitably domiciled. There was a rascally German baron, and a villainous French count, two or three indescribables of various grades of disreputableness, and a couple of young braggarts of feeble mind, who were the dupes and tools of the rest. By way of amusement, they rioted and drank, played cards and hunted; their dogs held high carnival in the parlors; their horses were turned loose in the park.

After the first three days, Lady Dysart confined herself to her own rooms.

"You will find that you must do the same thing," she said to Terese. "When Sir Roderick's friends are in good spirits, it is hardly pleasant or discreet to confront them."

But Terese did not shut herself up. She kept the children in the schoolroom, and went about her usual round of duties, perhaps inspired thereto by a secret spirit not unmingled with defiance. She took her meals with Lady Dysart, and held a taut rein over her servitors below stairs, who naturally felt that the time for license had arrived. It is possible that she was more daring than wise. She felt no fear of the undisguised admiration of the indescribables, or the furtive glances of their more illustrious comrades. She passed them on the stairs, or in the corridor, with head erect, and cool indiffer-

ence; and there were few occasions upon which any of them would have felt it safe to address her. I will not say that her sense of security had not been added to from an outside source. On the evening upon which Lady Dysart had retired to her own apartment, she, in coming downstairs, had paused for a moment upon the staircase, to look down at the dining-room, where the company sat over their wine—or rather the fiery French brandy, which was the general taste.

The room was highly lighted, disorder reigned supreme. The two young braggarts of feeble mind smoked ill-flavored cigars, and rejoiced themselves with jokes as ill-flavored, at which the rest laughed, or jeered, as was their humor. Sir Roderick lounged against the mantel-piece, and sneered at the whole company, with equal impartiality. Roger Dysart, who had just come in, ate his dinner grimly, and with little attention from the others, at the end of the table.

Suddenly the count, who leaned forward upon a smaller table, and shuffled a handful of cards, with graceful dexterity, spoke to Sir Roderick.

"This handsome Defarge—you said Defarge, I think—keeps herself closely. There is no approaching her even when one encounters her. *Mon Dieu!* with what scorn and indifference she regards us all. It is trying to a man of gallantry to meet such a look as she gives one from her fine eyes."

Terese's wrath had scarcely time to flame up within her, before a different emotion took possession of her.

Roger Dysart pushed his chair from the table, and advanced to the group at the fire.

"If there is a man among you who cares to settle the matter with me," he said, "let him annoy her."

The count looked up rather uneasily.

"*Mon Dieu!*" he exclaimed again, "who would annoy her? Not I."

"That is well," returned Roger, not too politely, "if, as I said, you do not care to settle the matter with me."

"*Ma foi,*" said the count, shrugging his shoulders, as he surveyed the young man's powerful frame, "that I do not, since I should be sure to get the worst of it, if you settled it in your brutal English fashion."

"What," said Sir Roderick, with his diabolical half laugh, "is it my lady's governess, Roger? I thought it was Elizabeth Dysart."

"It is any woman," answered Roger, turning on his heel, "any woman I may choose to defend."

Terese waited for him, until he reached the

place where she stood, and then she spoke to him, all on fire with spirit.

"I heard it all," she said, in a hurried undertone. "Let me thank you for forcing them to respect me."

"What are you doing here?" he asked.

"I was on my way upstairs, and the light attracted me. I stopped to look at them, and then that man spoke."

"Don't stop to look at them again," he returned. "No woman has a right to be near them. Where is Lady Dysart?"

"She has shut herself up in the east wing. She refuses to come downstairs, until quiet is restored, which I suppose will be when Sir Roderick, or his visitors, go away."

"It is the best thing she could have done," he answered. "It would be the best thing you could do, too. It will not last long. Sir Roderick seldom graces the court with his presence for more than a few weeks at a time."

Terese frowned.

"I won't be beaten," she said. "They dare not interfere with me."

"There are times when they will dare anything," he replied, with gloomy dissatisfaction. "'Wine in, wit out,' and when they are drunk, they are a pack of devils. But if one of them should throw himself in your path to trouble you," in a sudden rage, "I would break every bone in his cursed body."

"I thank you," said Terese, with a softness rather incongruous, considering circumstances.

As her eyes met his, she was alarmed to find herself coloring, and her sweetly melting state smile dying out.

"I—I know you will protect me," she said, trying to recover herself gracefully, and holding out her hand to him.

They had reached the upper landing, by this time, and at this juncture each stopped. Dysart took her hand, and held it in a singular manner; as if, for a second, he did not know what to do with it. Then suddenly, the blood rushed to his face also; he snatched it to his lips, kissed it fiercely, and dropped it.

Terese felt herself change color again—this time she became pale.

"I did not expect you would do that," she said, trying to speak with cold hauteur.

"I did not expect that I should either," he answered. "I would not have done it, if I could have helped it, you may be sure. It was as much against my will as against yours." And he turned from her almost discourteously, and stalked away.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MISS DEFARGE.

BY FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 204.

CHAPTER IX.

"REALLY," said Elizabeth, "I must go and see Terese. It is impossible that I should deny myself any longer."

"You do not mean to say," protested Barbara, glancing up from her note-book, "that you are thinking of attempting to go to the Court."

Elizabeth rose from her sofa, and sauntering up to the mantel, began to arrange her hair, indolently, by the help of the pier-glass, touching up a stray, careless loop here and there.

"I am not only thinking of attempting to go," she replied, sweetly, "but I am thinking of going. I have not seen Terese since Sir Roderick came home."

"It is my opinion," said Barbara, severely, "it is my opinion, Elizabeth, that you are insane."

"Insane!" echoed Elizabeth. "Really insane now, Barbara; like that stout, red, old Mr. Cushing, who thought he was a young lady of seventeen, and insisted that he should have his waist laced in, and wear low-necked, gauze dresses! My dearest Barbara—"

"You are talking flippant nonsense," interposed Barbara. "And you know that Dysart Court is not the proper place for you, and that you are not the proper person to go there, under the circumstances."

"Under the circumstance, meaning when there is a crowd of men there, who will stare if they should see me. My dear Barbara, let them stare. I am used to it. People always do stare at me, though, for my part, I scarcely see why."

"Everybody else sees why," was the elder Miss Dysart's sharp rejoinder. "And you ought to know yourself—though I positively believe you don't—that it is because you are handsomer—than you deserve to be," with a jerk.

Elizabeth's response was prefaced with a serene laugh—a laugh without the faintest excitement of elation in its comfortable composure.

"Because I am handsome—and handsomer than I deserve to be," she answered. "I wonder how it is that Roger never tells me so." And she sailed out of the room, with the hat with the red rose set side-ways upon her beautiful head, and the purple robe dragging two feet behind her.

She took her usual short cut across the park, towards the tottering bridge, which had once been regarded as ornamental, it being her habit always to risk her neck in crossing this bridge, rather than go around, and enter by the gate at the end of the avenue. But upon this occasion, she encountered a peril she had never met with before, and which she certainly had not anticipated.

The stream over which the bridge was thrown was wide and rocky, though shallow—scarcely more, in fact, than a broad, rough bed, containing in winter a few feet, and in summer a few inches, of water.

"An ugly place for a fall, however," Roger had said to her, more than once. "And you had better go around than cross it. You are not a sylph, Elizabeth."

But she had never gone round yet, and she did not go around this morning.

"It looks a little shakier than ever," she said, with a sigh, as she stepped on to it. "I suppose I shall be *obliged* to go round, in course of time."

She had reached the centre, when she met with her adventure, and it came upon her with a suddenness which paralyzed her. She heard wild shouts beyond the incline, on the opposite side of the stream—drunken, frantic shouts, mingled with the clatter of horses' feet—and then there appeared, upon the summit of the rising ground, a drunken, frantic rider, urging to his highest speed his excited horse, and making his way furiously towards the narrow, crazy bridge.

Elizabeth started forward, crying out aloud, and losing all semblance of self-control and discretion.

"Go back!" she shrieked. "You are mad! It won't bear—it won't—"

She saw it was no use, and staggered backward, giving herself up for lost. In ten seconds the animal would have been upon her, had not a miracle occurred. A figure sprang up in the middle of the path, as if it had sprung up from the centre of the earth; the slight, well-knit, well-dressed figure of a man, who flung himself upon the horse's bridle, and clung to it with a strength astonishing to see, and sufficient to drive the beast back upon its haunches. A string of

oaths, French and English, thanked him. The rider, who was one of the youthful braggarts, naturally lost his balance, and falling off promptly, sat upon the ground, panting and raging.

"If you had broken your neck," said the miraculous stranger, in an angry, young tone, "it would have been less than you deserved. Be assured, I did not stop you, on your own account. Don't you see there is some one on the bridge?"

The fallen one picked himself up carefully, and tried to look majestic, but failed in consequence of a slight inability to stand upon his legs.

"No right er stop me," he protested. "Wasn't goin' er hurt young lady. Had er bet with f'ler behind; Sir Rod'rick D'sart. Said daren't ride ove' bri'ge. Said I could. Let young la'y stan' out er f'ler's way. King's highro'. I'll call yer rout."

The stranger put both his hands into his pockets, and regarded him with high contempt.

"I won't come out if you call me," he said. "I know nothing of you. You are a drunken cad, and ought to be cooling your heels in the county jail. Mount your horse, and go to the deuce." And he turned away, and advanced towards the bridge and Elizabeth.

"Call y'out for callin' me drunken cad," said the other. "Mush gen'leman's yerse'f. Visitor at Court. Sir Roderick callyerout. Baron callyerout—all family—callyerout—." And then all at once, as if stricken dumb at the sight of Elizabeth, who was coming forward, he stared a second or so, scrambled excitedly on to his horse again, and disappeared in manifest confusion and humiliation of spirit.

Elizabeth's eyes were wide with terror. She was red and white by turns. She tottered to the end of the bridge, and sat down upon a fallen tree, breaking forth into unconventional ejaculations.

"I will never cross it again!" she cried. "Never—never—never! Roger told me to go round, only I was too lazy. And he will be furious. And Barbara will say it served me right. Oh, how terribly the little wretch frightened me! I am trembling all over."

"I do not wonder that you were frightened," said her hero, standing before her with bared head, completely overwhelmed with the spasm of admiration, which had naturally seized upon him as soon as he saw her plainly. It is not every day that a young man rescues from death a young lady, who turns out to be a goddess, who is so deliriously earthy as to sit down helplessly at his feet, and look up at him with great, alarmed, amethystine eyes.

"Frightened?" said Elizabeth. "I feel as if I should never get over it. And they will be sure to scold me, and Barbara will be a little glad, too, I know, because she gave me such a lecture before I left home, and I only laughed at her."

If she had been less beautiful, the young man might have felt some amazement at the confidential nature of her communications; but as it was, he could only regard her with the deepest possible reverence.

"Surely," he said, "no one could be glad that you have met with such a hazardous adventure."

"Ah!" said Elizabeth, "you don't know Barbara." And she drew a long breath.

"No," replied the young gentleman, with becoming gravity and deference, "that is true. I do not."

Then Elizabeth awakened, to some extent, to a sense of her position. Her eyes softened, and she bestowed upon him a delicious smile.

"Oh, how stupid of me not to thank you!" she exclaimed. "I ought to have done it at first. But that is just like me. I do all the things I ought not to do, and leave undone all those things I ought to do—like the person in the church service. You ran a great risk for me. You might have been killed yourself."

"Pooh—no!" said her preserver. And then he added, with pointedly soft significance, and most delicate gallantry, "I am glad indeed that I was not."

"Glad?" cried the guileless goddess, entirely unsuspecting of the presence of a compliment. "Dear me, I should think so!" Then she added, having at last picked up a few of her threads of thought, "But where did you come from? You seemed to spring out of the earth."

"I was sitting almost exactly where you are sitting now," he replied, "but you were not in the position to see me. I was sitting there when you came within sight, and—the fact is, I was watching you."

"Ah!" commented Elizabeth, and immediately it occurred to her to ask another question: "Are you one of Sir Roderick's friends?"

"I have not that honor," was the polite reply.

"Ah!" said Elizabeth, "it isn't an honor, by any means. I am very glad you are not. It is nothing to be proud of. I am a relative of his myself, and I am not proud of it. My name is Elizabeth Dysart," she added. "I come from the parsonage, at the other side of the park."

"I," responded the young man, with equal frankness, "come from the 'Hand' in the village, where I arrived last night. My name is Basil Howth. I am of the Howths, of Huntingdonshire. I am on my way, this morning, to

the Court. By the way, perhaps you have seen Miss Defarge."

"Terese?" exclaimed Elizabeth. "She is the only friend I have in the world—if I don't count Roger—and I am going to see her now."

"So am I," said Mr. Basil Howth, and strange to say there was a sudden tinge of gloom in his hitherto charming manner.

But he soon got over it, when Elizabeth smiled again.

"I am so glad," she said. "Now I shall have some one to take care of me all the way. I might meet that tipsy little object again."

"If he dared to alarm you again," with a grand air of protection, "I would fling his miserable little carcass through the park gates myself."

"He is one of Sir Roderick's friends," said Elizabeth. "And the rest are like him. Barbara prophesied that I should have trouble with some of them. Now," rising to her feet, "let us go, and pay our visit to Terese."

Not very long after this, Terese, looking out of her school-room window, caught sight of two figures sauntering across the brown grass, and under the wintry, bare trees, with a leisurely air of good fellowship and enjoyment, which would better have suited balmy weather. One of these figures was Elizabeth Dysart's; and the sight of her companion caused Terese to start as if she had been stung.

"I might have known," she exclaimed, angrily. "I might have known he would come. And I have no right to complain, either. It is what I deserve, for my folly."

She was obliged to brace herself quite sternly to meet her difficulty. When her visitors sauntered complacently up to the hall door, and saw her standing ready to greet them, neither of them guessed, ever so faintly, at the extent of her mental perturbation, though Basil Howth observed at once that she was pale, and noticed, with some irritation, that her manner was somewhat cold.

"You looked," said Elizabeth, afterwards, "as if you were not very glad to see him. Were you?"

"No," answered Terese, frowning. "It would have been better for us both, if he had stayed in Huntingdonshire."

"Why?" placidly interested. "Is he in love with you?"

Terese turned about, and confronted her.

"What do you think?" she asked.

Then, for the first time in the course of their acquaintance, she saw Elizabeth Dysart look reflective.

"I will tell you what I think," was the reply she received. "I think it would not be quite so objectionable in him as it would be in other people. It always struck me as being rather stupid to have any one save your life, and be forced to think about the person who did it as your Preserver, with a capital P; but, somehow or other, though Mr. Howth has saved mine, I don't feel as ridiculous as I might, under the circumstances, and I am grateful accordingly."

CHAPTER X.

THE frame of mind in which Mr. Basil Howth had made his way to Devonshire, and Dysart Court, was by no means a pleasant one. It was an injured frame of mind, a dejected one, and, it must be confessed, also a somewhat resentful one. During the last year, he had gradually declined from the high estate of an unreasonably happy lover to that of an unreasonably unhappy one. Perhaps I should not, however, use the word, "unreasonable." At least, he felt that he had reasons sufficient for his dissatisfaction.

"Every letter you have written has been colder than the last," he had said to Terese.

"Were any of them ever very warm?" Terese had asked, inwardly disgusted with herself, and much pricked by conscience.

"No," he answered, bitterly. "You took care they should not be that."

"Did you come here to quarrel with me?" she demanded.

He looked at her a moment, in distrust and anger.

"Upon my soul," he broke forth, suddenly, "I do not know what I came for. Unless it was to make myself more miserable than I was before."

Almost immediately, however, he found himself relenting. The tears had rushed into her eyes, and she turned her head away, in an impatient gesture.

"You are not more miserable than I am," she said. "You have wronged no one; and I have."

"Yes," he could not help answering, despite his relenting. "I believe now that you have wronged me."

It was not a comfortable state of affairs. Even Elizabeth could see that, though she could only make random guesses at the truth. The folly which Terese regretted was plainly connected with this visitor of hers, who was evidently restive and out of humor when he was near her, and yet found it difficult to tear himself away. Nothing was as comfortable as it had been, Elizabeth complained. Sir Roderick and

his friends had thrown the Court into confusion; this excitable young man was a disturbing element; Terese was altogether unlike herself; and strange to say, even Roger was at his worst, and was moody, and savage, and ill-behaved, by turns.

"What is that fellow doing here?" he asked of Elizabeth.

"He is generally either making love to Terese or quarreling with her," she replied, without a shadow of hesitation. "And Terese does not like it."

"Why doesn't he go away then?" growled Roger. "A man must be a fool to force himself upon a woman."

"Oh!" responded Elizabeth. "You see they are engaged, or something, and I dare say it is only a kind of a row, and will be over in time." And she opened her blue eyes upon his darkened face, with unsuspecting tranquility.

"Everybody has rows," she observed. "We should have rows, if I was that kind of person—fiery and proud, like Terese. How thankful I am that I was born—as Barbara says—without a grain of decent self-respect about me."

But Roger did not seem to hear her. He sat astride his chair, his arms folded on its back, his eyes fixed on the floor, his lip bitten.

"Lizzie," he said at last, quite hoarsely, "do you think—does she care for the fellow?"

"Lizzie" was actually roused into sitting upright, and staring at him.

"Care?" she echoed. "What do you say?"

"I asked you," he said, in the same tone, "if she cared for him."

The flush which rose to Elizabeth Dysart's face, mounted even to her white forehead, and the roots of her hair; and then she sank slowly back into her chair, laughing a short, uncomfortable laugh.

"I don't know," she said. "Do you?"

"If I did, I should not have asked you," he returned, and said not another word, but relapsed into silence, and sat gnawing his moustache, and staring viciously at space.

From this time forward, the change touched Elizabeth also. There were signs in her manner of some slight mental perturbation. She ceased to goad Barbara with jocular remarks of a mild and easy nature. The children were reduced to one fairy story a day, and these of an inferior and tame class, utterly devoid of giants and dragons. Occasionally she appeared abstracted, and again more wide-awake than was her wont.

Mr. Basil Howth remained at the "Hand," in the village, and paid gloomy visits to the Court.

Now and then, also, he found his way to the

parsonage, and scandalized Barbara by sitting before the parlor fire with Elizabeth. In fact Elizabeth's mode of conducting herself towards him was unusually tolerant. When he was in a particularly bitter and dejected mood, she allowed him to be sardonic and misanthropic at his pleasure, and to any unlimited extent. It did not disturb her, and since he appeared to find some relief in giving this outlet to his feelings, she was amiably willing to listen.

And it is not to be supposed that such complaisance on her part could be other than satisfactory, to some extent, to the young man, however sardonic his mood. Is there not a suggestion of consolation even in the mere presence of a golden-haired goddess, whose amethystine eyes at least dwell upon one without frowning? The despair of youth may be a terrible thing at times, but I will confess that the despair of Mr. Basil Howth was not as heart-rending a sight as it might have been, if it had not been possible for him to pour out his wrath and misery in his confidential little interviews with Miss Elizabeth Dysart, over the parsonage parlor fire.

"Terese has trifled with me," he would say, with a dangerously becoming aspect of gloom. "She has robbed me of that which I can never regain."

And then, because she could think of nothing sympathetic to say, without a too trying exertion Elizabeth would sigh gently, and fix her beautiful eyes upon the fire, and secretly congratulate herself that it was not necessary to do anything involving intricacies of conversation and mental exercise.

"I have often wondered," said Mr. Basil Howth, upon one of these occasions, "I have often wondered why you have never asked me any questions."

Elizabeth paused a moment or so. She had never asked questions, because, in such cases as this—it had occurred to her—questions were troublesome things. It had struck her that there were questions which might be asked, and questions which might not, and it was too much trouble to decide before speaking which class of inquiries the one suggested to one's self belonged to. But she did not enter into this elaborate explanation.

"I don't often ask questions," she replied. "And if I had asked them you might not have cared to answer."

"You would never ask a question I could not answer," he said.

"I should be sure to, if I asked any at all," she returned, beaming at the fire, because it was a good one, and she felt luxuriously comfortable.

She was so wholly charming, that the soul of the luckless one warmed within him. He could not help regarding her almost tenderly, as he assumed a suitable expression of dark and impassioned melancholy.

"You know that I am wretched?" he said.

"I thought," replied the goddess, reflectively, "that perhaps you had had a kind of a—well, I was going to say 'row,' but perhaps that is hardly the word—I mean a kind of a—a—well, an unpleasantness with Terese. You always look at her as if you had, and she always looks at you in the same way, and so I concluded that must be it."

"It wasn't a row," said Basil, desperately. "I wish to the Lord it had been."

"Ah!" commented Elizabeth. "Not a row! What then? For my part, you see, I prefer anything to a row. Rows involve so much exertion, and always seem to privilege themselves so. What makes you wish it was a row?"

"Because I love her," burst forth the young fellow, "because I love her frantically, and if we had only quarreled, and she was only angry, I might hope the time would come when we could make it up, and—and be happy."

"Married, I suppose?" suggested Elizabeth.

He dropped his forehead upon his hands, and so sat, clutching his brown locks with his fingers.

"That was what I looked forward to," he groaned. "And now I should be an imbecile, if I did not see it was all over. But it serves me right. I was an imbecile, at the very outset. I ought to have known. And I half believe I did, though I tried to persuade myself out of the feeling."

"Why ought you to have known?" said Elizabeth.

"She did not care for me," he answered. "She had not even the grace to profess to," with rank injustice. "She was a teacher in a miserable school at Geneva, and she was not happy. My sister was fond of her, and brought her home to spend the holidays with us; and I fell madly in love with her. She refused me twice, but I would not give up, and then there was a row among my people. They considered that such a marriage would be a misalliance, and they told her so, and the insult roused her pride. Between us all, she was more than half bullied into it, and one day, after a scene with my idiot of an uncle, Major Ponsonby, she told me that she would marry me, and packed her trunks, and went back to Switzerland. She was in one of her high and mighty desperate moods. She said if I loved her so much that I wished to marry her, in spite of everything, I ought to be gratified."

"I don't wonder," sighed Elizabeth. "I should have done it myself. Imagine being mixed up in that kind of thing. Any body could marry me who persevered. But it is just like Terese to refuse you, because she did not love you; and then accept you, because she hated somebody else, and had struck fire against them. She is as proud as Lucifer."

Mr. Basil Howth was conscious of experiencing some slight, inconsistent, inward discontent. He forgot his woes, for a moment, in his involuntary objection to one of his companion's phrases.

"Any body could marry you," he quoted.

"I said anybody who persevered," answered the naïve Elizabeth.

"But 'any body,'" objected the despairing swain, with great indignation rife in his wounded bosom.

His tone was such, and his fine brown eyes were so full of reproach, that, quite unexpectedly to herself, Elizabeth blushed for the second time in this history of mine—which was a very extraordinary thing.

"Ah!" she said, "I meant, you know, that I hate rows—and—and, somehow, I always give in."

CHAPTER XI.

LADY DYSART looked up at her governess, with a gloomy, bitter smile.

"What should you suppose," she said, "that I am going to do?"

The whole room was in confusion. Wardrobes and drawers were open, and their contents strewn upon bed, and ottomans, and chairs—faded finery of every shade and material; dresses of silk, and satin, and gauze, some torn and frayed, some crushed and stained, all more or less out of date, and unavailable through fashion or cut. And Lady Dysart sat in the midst of the disorder, and smiled her gloomy, bitter smile, when Terese, entering the room, paused, and looked about her.

"What do you suppose," she repeated, "I am going to do?"

Terese shook her head.

"Unless you think there is something you might utilize—" she began.

The poor woman's dark cheek reddened, and she laughed as gloomily as she had smiled.

"I am trying to fit myself to do honor to one of Sir Roderick's select entertainments," she said.

"One of Sir Roderick's," Terese repeated, in amazement.

"A few years ago," said Lady Dysart, "he

was seized by a mad freak, during one of his visits to the Court. He gave an entertainment to his friends—filled the house for the night with his familiars, and turned it into Bedlam let loose; and now he is seized with the whim again, and I—I am to assist him to do the honors.”

The tone of the last few words was indescribable. She rose in a sudden passion of humiliation, and stood upright before Terese.

“I!” she repeated, and struck herself upon her breast.

“Do you know what order of people he will force me to receive?” she went on, in a suppressed, passionate voice. “Do you suppose there will be a gentleman or an honest woman among them? No, you know him too well for that. There is not a gentleman or honest woman, in the county, who would cross the threshold of Dysart Court when he is here; and they understand my wretchedness too thoroughly to come when he is not.”

Naturally one of her fine, indiscreet rages of feeling seized upon Miss Defarge. Her eyes flashed, and her breath came sharply.

“Why not refuse, and defy him to do his worst?” she cried. “I would suffer death itself—”

Lady Dysart settled at once into calm irony. She pointed to her surroundings.”

“If you were in my place, you would do as I am doing,” she said. “If I were to refuse, I would have Sir Roderick and his friends upon my hands for six months, and that is not a pleasant alternative. There is no need that he should threaten to murder me, though he would not hesitate, if it occurred to him as a happy method of disposing of a difficulty. He will not kill me—he knows too well how to manage me more easily.”

Her momentary passion had died out into the old defiant indifference. She even smiled again, as she looked round at her scattered wardrobe.

“Look at them,” she said. “The best of them belonged to my bridal trousseau. Some of them have been lying away for ten years. What is one to do with them? Those which are not too short are too narrow, and the rest—. You can see for yourself.”

Suddenly she bent down over some dresses lying upon the floor. One was a maize satin, and she picked it up, and held it up in her arms, regarding it with a half sneer.

“Would you believe,” she said, “that when this poor rag was new, I was passionately in love with the man downstairs? I made what is called a love-match. He was as villainous and poor then as he is now, but I was too young, and had

led too secluded a life, to understand or believe when I was told and warned. And the dress has worn better than the passion.” And she let it fall to the floor.

In her turn Terese picked it up.

“Give me this—and that,” she said, pointing to a black velvet dinner-dress. “And you shall at least have something to wear.”

She wore her determined air, and held her head high. She was capable, in such a humor, of any act of defiant daring. In one thing Lady Dysart had made a mistake. Terese would have braved the worst, and would scarcely have been conquered in the end. Secretly her ladyship was moved to strong admiration of her fire and courage, indiscreet though both might be.

“Take all you please,” she answered. “You may make something of them, though I doubt if any one else could.”

“Once I was called upon to dress myself on a hundred francs a year,” said Terese. “And it taught me a great deal.”

She turned over one article after another, in rapid examination. The task she was on the point of undertaking was by no means displeasing to her, particularly after she had made a discovery of black lace.

“Black lace and velvet and maize satin are by no means to be despised,” she said, knitting her brows, as she looked forward to the possible effect to be produced upon Sir Roderick. “He shall not sneer at her,” she was saying, mentally. “If she out-generals him, even in such a trifle as her dress, it will force him to feel a kind of respect for her.”

“It was from my wardrobe that Elizabeth got the purple velvet,” said Lady Dysart. “Its day was past for me, and she saw it, and admired it.”

“She is handsomer in that than she was in the white merino,” commented Terese. But she spoke mechanically. She was scarcely thinking of Elizabeth. A new idea had occurred to her. She stood with the maize satin and velvet upon her arm, hesitating, as it were, for a moment or so. At last she made up her mind.

“There is one thing I should like to ask of you,” she said.

It was plain that she might ask what she chose, and would not be refused.

“It is,” she added, “that I may help you to receive Sir Roderick’s friends.”

In her amazement Lady Dysart almost started.

“You!” she exclaimed. “You share the humiliation with me?”

She did not understand at all at first, but when she saw Miss Defarge’s delicate nostrils dilate,

and her eyes sparkle, she began dimly to comprehend the spirit which moved her.

"I am not afraid of them," said the girl, a little fiercely. "I don't know what fear is. I never did. They are more likely to be afraid of me than I of them. Ten to one, they are only coarse cowards, and one can force them into a kind of subjugation, if one faces them with a fire and spirit they are not used to. Sir Roderick may not be easy to manage; but I think we can subdue his friends, by defying them. Two well-dressed women, who do not deign to flinch before them, will hold them in check, at least."

"You are a bold girl," said Lady Dysart, frowning a little herself under the influence of her fearlessness. "You are bold enough not to fail, even in such a bold stroke as that. You may stand by me, if you choose."

Terese carried the velvet and satin away with her to her own room. She gave the children holiday, and for three days kept herself shut up, and applied herself to developing her material. She threw herself into her work with her whole soul, as was her habit, bringing actual genius to bear upon it. She cut, and shaped, and designed quite fiercely, contriving with an art wonderful to behold, frowning over her task, in the intensity of her interest in it, the snip of her sharp, gleaming, little scissors sounding fairly dangerous. On the fourth day, she finished her work, and took it to Lady Dysart. The black velvet, and lace, and maize satin had evolved themselves from scant dubiousness into an evening-dress a Parisian *modiste* need not have blushed at designing. Her ladyship almost blushed herself, with pleasure, at seeing it.

"I have not owned such a dress for fifteen years," she said.

"It is as I said," replied Terese. "Black velvet, and lace, and maize satin are not to be despised, if one has a passion for contriving to make ends meet."

On the eventful night, she made her way to Lady Dysart's dressing-room, fully prepared for action. She looked a creature all fire and nerve. Her dark hair, which was dressed high and wonderfully upon her head, made her half a foot taller, one would have fancied; her dress was thin, and black, and elaborate to a marvel, though its material was simplicity itself; starry trails of yellow jessamine fell from her hair and her bouquet.

"You are startling to look at," said Lady Dysart, "though there is no hint of color about you but your flowers."

Terese laid down her bouquet, and unfolded the great apron, which she had brought with her.

"Now I am going to dress *you*," she said. "That is what I came for."

A seven-year apprenticeship to miscellaneous hair-dressing, served in the Geneva boarding-school, had made her quite an adept, and in her ladyship's heavy black locks she had abundance of material. She labored steadily, for an hour, before she put the finishing touch to the massy coils and puffs, but the culmination of her effort was a work of art. My lady flushed faintly, as she regarded the image the glass reflected. She was a handsome woman, of a dark and rich-hued order, and when her toilet was complete, the result was an effect entirely new.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MEMORIES.

BY CLARA B. HEATH.

The morning is bright with sunbeams,
That have come to gladden the day;
But I marvel not at its beauty,
For my thoughts are far away.

The child at my side looks wistful
Without, at the birds, and bees;
Still full of a childish wonder
At all she hears and sees.

But I answer so at random,
That she lifts wide-growing eyes,
While the lips that seemed so tireless,
Grow mute with a strange surprise.

For the tide of thought sweeps onward,
Like a wild and troubled sea,
And I float away on the current,
Till the present is nought to me.

I am carried back to a morning,
And a sky as bright and blue,
When I battled, oh, so fiercely I
With the first great grief I knew.

Ah, me! How the sudden darkness
Enshrouded my youthful head,
For I only knew I was living,
And one that I loved was dead!

But a hand in mine is stealing,
And a bird-like voice so clear,
Recalls me from by-gone shadows,
Saying, "Mamma, I am here!"

Oh, the winning grace of childhood
Has a beauty all its own!
The dreams that tattle or darken,
Are still in the dim unknown.

MISS DEFARGE.

BY FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.

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CHAPTER XII.

UPON entering the drawing-room, an hour later, Sir Roderick stopped short upon the threshold. Instead of a solitary, wretched, ill-attired woman, waiting with morbid gloom among the faded satin and tarnished gilding, for his sneers, he found the long rooms well-lighted, and wearing almost a festive air, and upon the whole forming a by no means inartistic setting for the two well-dressed women, who confronted his gaze unflinchingly.

"*Ma foi*," he exclaimed, in an undertone. "What is it we have here?"

It was several seconds before he recovered himself. When he did, the usual diabolical half laugh broke from his lips, and he advanced towards the two. But the companionship of Terese, who stood erect and defiant at her side, and also the consciousness of the new effects in herself, sustained Lady Dysart, and kept her from the bitter quailing she knew so well, even when he approached them and spoke.

"This is new indeed," he said, shrugging his shoulders. "And you, too, Mademoiselle Defarge," with a mocking bow to Terese. "Truly, we are honored."

He leaned against the mantel, and glanced at his wife from head to foot, and in spite of his mood found nothing to deride.

"Gad," he said. "It is wonderful. One sees nothing to laugh at. You are a finer woman than I thought you, my lady; and your amber and black becomes you amazingly well. One feels almost at home. There is air and taste enough to be suggestive of Paris, and people much less respectable, and of far more wit than ourselves."

That he did not understand the secret of Terese's presence was evident. She found him regarding her slyly, with an air of much amusement. Her good looks and *hauteur* of carriage he admired boldly, but there was always a spice of ill feeling in the sentiment she inspired him with. It was not his way to be specially fond of people whom he could not intimidate, though it was his chief weakness to despise those whom he could.

It was not until his guests arrived, that his eyes were opened to the true state of affairs. The

over-dressed women, and dubious, loud-voiced men, who crowded into the rooms, seemed to lose their high and boisterous good spirits with remarkable suddenness. The two dark, statuesque figures, which confronted them, a few paces from the door, did not belong to their world. Terese Defarge, tall, in her black dress, and high coiffure, and with the faint odor of yellow jessamines about her, was a presence so incongruous in their midst as to be at once mysterious and alarming. A certain graceful and peculiar little bow she bestowed upon each new comer, fixing her sombre, handsome eyes upon his or her face, proved a serious check to hilarity.

"Look here!" commented a fascinating young lady, all white, and blue, and brilliant complexion, and abundant golden locks. "She is a regular swell you know—the young one in black and yellow. One doesn't often see such a swell out of London, and the season. And I say, surely the other isn't Dysart's wife: I always heard she was a regular guy."

They tried very hard to keep up the general hilarity, and not be cheated out of "the fun;" but it was not easy. There was an unconquerable little check upon them. No one could be sure that they would not find Miss Defarge's fine eye transfixing them in steady impassiveness, or Lady Dysart looking round with her calmly curious air. The women began to whisper among themselves, and the men to gather in astonishingly well-conducted and subdued little groups, and try to look at ease and indifferent. The majority of them, indeed, were openly guilty of the defection of casting admiring glances across the room, in the direction of their hostess and her companion.

"They are deuced fine women—that's what they are," commented a coarse hunting squire.

It was at this stage of the evening, that Lady Dysart touched Terese with her fan, and directed her attention towards the door.

"There is Roger," she said. "And he is coming to us."

Terese turned quickly. By this time she had begun, with however great reluctance, to understand why the unexpected appearance of Roger Dysart was always a little exciting to her—why

he could anger her, rouse her spirit, touch her, and fill her with rebellious impatience, as he continually did.

To-night, her pulses beat tempestuously. It was as if she saw another man. He was altered as greatly as Lady Dysart, and by the same means. Instead of the old velvet hunting suit, he wore the conventional evening costume, and it must be admitted that Terese was secretly amazed to see that he wore it well, with a certain freedom and grace, which robbed it of its stiffness and unpicturesque look. His great height and fine contour, his powerful build and savage ease of movement, made him a more original and less commonplace figure than a man in a black, evening coat usually is. His face was slightly flushed, with some excitement, and he advanced rapidly towards the two women.

"I am not usually invited to Sir Roderick's entertainments," he said. "And I was not invited to this one; but I am here, nevertheless. Why did you not tell me what you were going to do? I did not know, until I caught sight of you on your way down stairs. I don't understand what it all means now. I only know you have no right here alone—"

"Nevertheless," said Terese, "we have progressed reasonably well so far."

He turned angrily to Lady Dysart.

"Don't you know what manner of people these are?" he demanded. "Do you see them anywhere else but here?"

"I came because I could not help it," said Lady Dysart. "Do not you know that?"

"I came because I chose," said Terese, lifting her eyes to his face. "Don't you understand that? Look round the room, and see if our presence has been without effect."

He did look, and when he turned to her again, she saw that he began to understand. He drew close to her, and looked down at her, smiling a grave, little smile.

"I thought you were in a den of wild beasts," he said. "And they are not so bad, after all—though one never knows what may happen. I made up my mind that you would need defense, and I came to defend you. If you take care of the women, I will take care of the men."

The girl's delicate, dark cheek glowed, and she answered him, in a rapid, soft undertone—a tone new to him through its very softness.

"I am glad," she said, "glad that you are here."

"Roger," said Lady Dysart, touching his coat-sleeve, a short time after, "I never saw this before."

He regarded the garment dubiously.

"I did not want to look like a brute," he said, "so I mounted Dolores, and rode to Darrelworth for it."

"It is five miles to Darrelworth," commented Lady Dysart.

"Yes," he answered, "it is five miles."

He took up his position close to them, and remained there during the whole of the evening, creating no small sensation among the feminine portion of the guests, at least. His goodly proportions inspired them with emotions approaching respect, and even the men could not wholly despise him, since he confronted one and all with no pretence of occupying any other position than one coolly and boldly defensive. He was not of themselves, and did not profess to be, or even allow them to mistake him.

"The evening," remarked the count to Sir Roderick, showing an alarming array of narrow, white teeth, "the evening is scarcely what we expected. It is quite," with upraised shoulders, "of the nature of a little family gathering. Why are not the small children here—and their *bonne*."

The evil smile appeared, its charm added to by a suggestion of a possible evil scowl.

"Their governess is here," said Sir Roderick. "And that has been enough for us. The little devil has inspired my lady with a demon."

The count glanced across the room at Terese.

"She is not so little," he said. "She is taller than most women—and handsomer, *Pardieu!* And has more wit."

The next night, Sir Roderick went away, taking his friends with him. But before he went, he sought Terese out, and bade her farewell, after a fashion of his own.

"You are a sharp and courageous young person, Mademoiselle Defarge," he said. "And because you had cowards and fools to deal with, last night, you got the better of them, and of me, too, for once. But once is not always, and if I had not a little engagement to keep at Hamburg, which cannot be postponed, I would remain behind a while, and try again; and then—" with a nod, "then we should see."

CHAPTER XIII.

In three days the Court had returned to its old quiet. The rooms were reduced to order; Lady Dysart was downstairs again; the children resumed the usual routine of their lessons; and Elizabeth made a pilgrimage from the parsonage, whenever the whim seized her.

The whim seized her pretty frequently too. She came even oftener than ever—sometimes even twice or thrice a day. But in these days it was not Roger she came to see; it was Terese:

and gradually Terese's eyes were opened to the fact, that the old intimacy between the two was slackening wonderfully. Roger had applied himself again to his work, with the old feverish energy. He was rarely to be seen during the day, and when he came home at night he was always busy. He scarcely spoke, unless some one of them addressed him, and Terese found her own intercourse with him limited to a mere exchange of brief greetings. But there had been a time, when even such preoccupation as this, would not have been an obstacle in the path of the placid Elizabeth. Somehow or other, it would continually have happened that they met, and enjoyed their customary unconventional interviews. But remarkably enough, all this had ceased. Elizabeth's first question was no longer "Where is Roger?" She no longer strayed over to descant, with penitent pathos, upon the subject of Kitty's left hind-foot. She did not ride Kitty at all, and when she encountered Roger, she rarely did more than smile, with much tranquility; enquire amiably how he did; and then subside into silence, or her usual erratic style of conversation with Terese. If her own frame of mind had been other than it was, Terese might have felt it her duty to inquire into the matter; but as it was, she felt it safer to be silent. It was a weakness of hers to be bitterly resentful of her own shortcomings. It was horrible to her to be moved to self-contempt, and just at this juncture, she was full of it. She had allowed her vanity and temper to betray her into the most despicable of follies, and now she was bearing the consequences of it. "The most despicable of follies," that was how she put it. She would employ no milder term. Truth to tell, she had less mercy upon Terese Defarge than she would have had upon any other woman.

"It was the poorest revenge that the poorest vanity could have forced me into," she said, in her frequent mental colloquies. "The weakest of vain creatures might be ashamed of doing such a thing. And I have always prided myself upon my strength. Why need I have cared to resent their stupid pride and insolence? I deserve all—all—all."

And this word "all" had a wide significance. Through the slowest of processes, she had arrived at a strange climax—one which startled and stung her, as it might have done even a woman of far less high and impetuous spirit. She had rebelled indignantly at the feeling, which had so gradually and insidiously taken possession of her; she had resented its first approach, with a quick contempt, quite uncalled for; she had been angry with herself, and even alarmed.

Again and again she had seen men love her vainly, and had regarded their unsought passions with contempt. And now—*now!*

She was too unhappy to be very just. She was not exactly just to Basil Howth, who was foolish enough to linger in the village, and wander to and from the "Hand" to the Court, and from the Court to the "Hand," and to throw himself in her path at all times—in her walks, and drives, and church-goings with the children—until his feelings were too much for him, and he was obliged to seek refuge with Elizabeth, who could not have roused herself to be disdainful, if she would, and would not if she could.

Elizabeth, however, had ceased to prophesy, generously, that all would be right in time. She had ceased to prophesy at all. She listened, with as serene a patience as before, to the young man's eloquent complaints, and constant practice had rendered the gentle sigh a perfection of sighs, of which she was privately a little proud. But she knew better than to say now that the prospect ahead need not discourage him. She was not as utterly inane or indifferent, this fair Elizabeth, as surface-judging people might have imagined. In due time, Terese made this discovery, with some alarm and inward discomfiture.

"For my part," said, Elizabeth, one day, rousing from a fit of abstraction, which had fallen upon her, as she sat with Terese, "for my part, you know, I should tell him to go."

Terese started and frowned.

"Tell who to go?" she asked.

She met Elizabeth's blue eyes, with a strong sense of discomfort. Elizabeth was unmoved.

"Basil Howth," she answered.

Terese frowned more impatiently than ever. It was not her habit to make confidences, and she had held her own counsel concerning Basil Howth, very sternly.

"What do you mean?" she said.

"Oh!" explained the goddess, her frank composure perfectly astounding, "of course, I know all about it, though we have not talked to each other. I couldn't help seeing that you were both abominably uncomfortable. I should have seen that much, and guessed the rest from it, even if he had not told me. It is such a transparent thing, that you would hate him, if you felt free to do it."

"You are saying some remarkable things," was Terese's cold rejoinder.

She felt icily uncomfortable. If Elizabeth had seen this much, what else might she not have seen? What might she not carry concealed, under that indifferent, wholly careless air of hers?

"Am I?" said Elizabeth, "Why remarkable? One can't help using one's eyes, you know."

And she yawned—the most nonchalant possible little yawn.

"And it is not fair either," she went on. "See how wretched he is—and how wretched you are yourself—"

"Elizabeth," interposed Terese, in a sharp, eager voice, "do you mean to say that I *look* wretched?"

Elizabeth's eyes rested on her, with the most trying quiet.

"Of course you do," she said, at last. "Your eyes have a kind of bright, impatient, feverish look, and you are never at ease."

"Never at ease!" echoed Terese.

"Never at ease," repeated Elizabeth. "You are hot and cold by turns. You are high and mighty with Roger, and unpleasant to Basil. I am the only one of the three you treat decently, and you would snub me now and then, if I was of enough consequence."

Terese got up, and began to walk up and down the room. Elizabeth took the trouble to turn her head slowly over her shoulder, that she might be able to watch her with greater ease.

"And as I say," she proceeded, "though it is not pleasant—though it's an awful bore, in fact, to have to bring matters to a crisis—still, when you must either do it or have to exert yourself constantly, to face worse things—bother, you know, and worry, and people nagging at you in a sentimental way—it occurs to me it would be better to have it over. Why not," propounding the query with angelic amiability. "Why not resign yourself to one colossal row and have it over?"

Terese stopped short, and stood before her, angry, humiliated, proud, and trying to be cold.

"Elizabeth," she said, "what do you mean?"

But Elizabeth was not at all disturbed.

"I mean," she answered, "that in your place, I think I should tell Basil *Howth* I was not going to marry him if I wasn't. And I don't think you are."

Terese uttered a low, impassioned, little exclamation.

"I—I despise myself!" she cried.

"I don't object to that," answered Elizabeth, "though I should say it was scarcely to be encouraged, for the sake of one's peace of mind. But I would advise you to put an end to the other. That was the folly you repented, wasn't it?"

"Yes."

"Ah! I thought so," her manner somewhat self-congratulatory. "I told Roger so."

She remained to dine with them that day, but

Roger did not appear at the table. He had taken his gun and dog, and gone out early, Jekyl informed them, and he had not yet returned. He had not returned, when Elizabeth went home, nor even at their ten o'clock supper.

"I don't quite understand it," said my lady. "Such a thing never occurred before."

"Perhaps," suggested Terese, "he has gone to Darrelworth."

"He would not be likely to remain there all night," returned Lady Dysart.

CHAPTER XIV.

INDEED, as it became later, her manner was a little uneasy. It was so unlike Roger, to be absent at such an hour, that she could not help at last confessing to some anxiety.

After her first suggestion, Terese said very little. The restlessness, which seized upon her as the night advanced, alarmed her. She was full of miserable perturbation, and could only strive to maintain a decent aspect of composure. She was almost glad, despite her secret fever of apprehension, when Lady Dysart gave the matter up for the night.

"We will console ourselves by saying that he has gone to Darrelworth," she said. "He never did such a thing before, but then he never had anything like business to do, until lately."

Terese went to her room and to bed, but not to sleep. Darkness and silence made her additionally restless. She lay, with eyes wide open, until the dawn, and then got up and dressed.

"There must be a reason for this miserable anxiety," she said to herself. "Something—something is wrong."

She drew aside the window curtains, and looked out. It was a damp, misty morning, with a dull, gray sky. During the night it had rained, and everything was wet with the penetrating drizzle.

"There is no possible excuse for my going out," she said. "And yet I must go. I cannot stay in," she added, in a breathless voice.

She was in the frame of mind to be desperately careless of consequences. She did not confess to herself that her sole object in going out in the fog and damp, would be that she might have some slight chance of seeing, or hearing, of Roger Dysart. She did not confess that she had been kept awake, all night, by fevered imaginings of evil which might have befallen him; and yet such was the case. She had had no confidence in her suggestion of Darrelworth, as an explanation of his absence, even when she had made it; and the more she argued the point, the less foundation she found for belief in it. He would not have gone to Darrelworth without mentioning it; he

would not have taken dogs and gun with him; and he had no business there, which could possibly have detained him all night.

"Something has happened," she said, over and over again. "Something has happened—something has happened, and we have let the night pass, without trying to find out what."

She made her way down stairs, and out into the open air, without encountering anyone. Once having left the park gates behind her, she turned towards the moors and walked rapidly. The turf was moist and spongy under her feet, and the rain began to fall drizzlingly again; but she scarcely noticed it, save through an increased sense of eagerness and discomfort. She was governed only by the most indefinite of plans. The wide, unbroken stretch of furze and heather seemed the only place to go to.

So she made her way through mist and rain, furze and heather. The moorland spread out monotonously on every side, and she could not see far through the damp, gray atmosphere. She did not even know exactly what she expected to see, and yet now and then she paused, and looked anxiously from right to left.

"There may be nothing to see," she said, more than once, a kind of anger against herself conquering her fear. "And what right have I to be here—why should I be here—I instead of Elizabeth?"

But she went on—on until she had left Dysart far behind, and she stood in the midst of the heather—checked at last by an indistinct something she saw ahead—the indistinct outline of something lying outstretched upon the ground.

"It is a man," she said, sharp dread seizing upon her. "No man would be lying there, in such weather as this, unless he had been badly hurt."

Almost at the same instant, she heard a groan, and though its sound was by no means pleasant, as it fell upon the desolate air, she experienced a slight sense of relief, and advanced with greater composure.

The next moment she was standing above the prostrate form of Roger Dysart, who had opened his closed eyes, with a start.

"Good God!" he exclaimed. "Is it you? I thought—I thought no one would ever come."

He spoke faintly and exhaustedly, and she saw that his clothes were dank and sodden with rain, and that the green of his velveteen shooting-coat was stained with a darker color, here and there. As for him—he saw, bending over him, a face, pale, excited, fearful, and so moved by some new inward feeling, that, weak as he was, it set his pulse astir.

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"Where are you hurt?" she asked. "How did it happen?"

"I scarcely know," he answered. "I think I caught my foot against a clump of heath—I stumbled, and as I fell, the gun went off, and I received the charge in my shoulder. I have lost blood. I must have been deucedly awkward. I feel as if I had broken my ankle, too. I cannot move. I have been lying here all night."

He closed his eyes again, almost as if the mere exertion of speaking had been too much for him.

"That was the worst of it," he added, in a low, uneven tone, "the lying here so long. It has seemed so confoundedly long. And I think I must have been a little light-headed. I don't remember distinctly what I have been doing—only I remember trying to get up, and falling; and the pain of the fall—and the chill and darkness. It was like being out of the world. Even the dogs left me—ungrateful beggars!"

Terese knelt down by him, shaken both inwardly and outwardly. It fairly startled her to think what the night must have been to him.

"You are chilled and stiff with cold," she said. "And your clothes are wet through."

"Yes," he answered, "I am stiff and wet enough. I have not moved for many an hour."

Neither said very much, as she chafed his hands, and tried to bring back to him something like warmth. Reluctant as he was to allow himself to be conquered, he was too faint and weak to be able to combat against feeling long.

"Don't take the trouble to do that," he said. "You should not be kneeling here, on the wet ground. If you will just go to the nearest cottage, and send some one—"

"I do not like to leave you," said Terese; "but suppose I must. There is no other way."

She stood up, and began to unbuckle the belt at her waist.

"What are you going to do?" he asked.

"This is a water-proof cloak," she replied, touching her long outer wrap of dark gray. "I am going to fold it over you."

"I do not want it," he protested. "Keep it on. Do you think I would take it, and let you make your way through this drizzling mist without it?"

She said nothing, but slipped out of the garment, looking rather obstinate; and then knelt again, and folded it closely around him, despite his angry objections. Then she rose.

"I will walk as quickly as possible," she said. "It will not be long before you are safe at home."

She had turned, and taken two or three steps, when he called her back, suddenly.

"Wait," he said, "one moment."

She stopped, and turned towards him again. "I want to know," he said, "what time it is." She took out her watch, and looked at it. "It is just six," she answered. A flash of color started to his face. "Six!" he echoed. "You are out early." "Yes," she replied, "I am out early."

Then she was gone—had disappeared in the fog, and he was lying alone, the heather stretching around him, the dull, gray sky above, and he broke into a restive groan of wretchedness, mental and physical.

"It was no thought of me that brought her here," he said. "What a miserable devil I am."

CHAPTER XV.

Even a handful of shot in one's body, and a sprained ankle, are not trifles to bear, either when borne alone or together; but it was neither of these misfortunes which was productive of the greatest annoyance to Roger Dysart. The night spent, lying among the heather, under a penetrating rain, had done for him what nothing less trying would have done—brought on the only serious illness he had ever experienced. For several weeks he was confined to his room, and even after this lapse of time, emerged from it pale and hollow-eyed, rebelling irritably against his own weakness, and even while bent on defying it, obliged to succumb, and submit to giving up all action, and lying upon a sofa, day after day, and even week after week.

Upon the whole, he was scarcely an agreeable patient, particularly during the slow, convalescent stage. Nothing short of Elizabeth's placidity could have borne with him, and held him in check. Contrary to the ordinary custom of heroines, Miss Defarge had taken little part in the general attendance upon him. She had left that to Lady Dysart and Elizabeth, and had gone on the even tenor of her way. But Elizabeth had earned lays and laurels innumerable. She had established herself in the sick-room, and comported herself with a faithfulness, as marvelous as it was unexpected.

"No one has as good a right to care for him as I have," she had said, with novel warmth, to Terese. "I couldn't stay at home, and let some one else do this kind of thing for him."

In a comfortable, slow-moving fashion, she did wonderful things in the sick chamber. She was never in a hurry, she never got excited, and she never lost her temper or patience. She could sit by the fire, night after night, her hands thrown behind her head, and her eyes wide open, actually appearing to enjoy herself, without wanting to go to sleep. She had an excellent

appetite, and equable spirits, and when Roger raved and protested against remedies, she was not to be disturbed. In his penitent moods, which occurred frequently, the invalid more than once burst forth into protestations of gratitude.

"What a faithful creature you are, Lizzie," he would cry. "You always stand by a fellow, no matter what he does or says."

Once, as she stood by him, he caught her hand, and laid it against his haggard cheek, with a repentant groan.

"You are a good girl, Lizzie," he said. "You are worthy of more than a poor devil of a Dysart can give you."

"Am I?" she answered, and laughed a little, and stood amiably still, apparently without the slightest regard for the sentiment of her position, allowing him to hold her hand passively.

In fact, for some time, Elizabeth had been rather a mystery to him. It had never been her style to indulge in sentiment, and so he could not say that anything of sentiment was lost in her manner. She was certainly not less frank, or less free of speech; she talked as much tranquil nonsense as ever, when they were thrown together; and yet, notwithstanding this, and the utter incomprehensibility of the thing, he found her a new Elizabeth—an Elizabeth utterly different, and standing wholly apart from the goddess, who had fanned him in the summer, and worn the classic white merino, because he had said he liked it, and prostrated herself in dust before him under his reproaches, on the subject of Kitty's left hind-foot.

While he lay ill, he pondered over the change often, and wondered wherein it lay; but he never found himself any nearer a solution of the problem. His love for another woman was too passionate to allow of his comprehending Elizabeth, as thoroughly as he might have done, under some circumstances. He was too fond of her, in a cool, unimpassioned way, to find significance in her actions—at least, significance of any special importance. To his detriment though it be, I must confess that it had never been his wont to disturb himself greatly, on the score of Elizabeth. It was only Elizabeth, after all—Elizabeth handsome, amiable, easy-going, inconsequential; Elizabeth whom he had liked, and lost temper with, and even bullied a little at times, and who had always been submissive, and careless, and free from any feminine frailties.

He pondered over the matter, as I have said, but he never lost sleep or peace of mind through it, he never fretted, and raged, and suffered sharply, and despised himself for his folly, as he did, when he thought of Terese Defarge.

Just for one moment—that one moment, when, as he lay on the damp heath, he had called her back to ask the time—just for that one brief moment, he had been roused by a passionate stir of hope. It had leaped to his breast against the will of his cooler reasoning. And the next instant it had died down, and he had felt a species of hard contempt against himself for his folly. Whatever else she had wandered to the spot for, whatever incomprehensible whim had brought her there, it had not been to look for him.

During the time that he was confined to his room, he scarcely saw her at all. She had not seemed to trouble herself about him. She had spent the usual number of hours in the school-room, teaching the children; she had performed the customary round of her self-assumed duties in the household; but she had not shown any particular anxiety concerning him. He had heard from Elizabeth that Mr. Basil Howth had disappeared from the "Hand," and the village, and was seen no more; and this fact had consoled him.

"Perhaps Terese has sent him back to Huntingdonshire," Elizabeth had startled him by saying, one night. "It was time she did, as she had made up her mind not to marry him."

"Did she," he faltered with feverish eagerness, "did she tell you she had done that?"

"There was no need that she should tell me," responded the goddess. "I knew that, without being told. It was easy enough to see she almost hated him, though there was not the least reason for it in the world. She would have liked him well enough, if he had not wanted to marry her. He was the kind of person to like. I liked him."

"I—I don't believe it," he muttered, tossing fretfully on the pillow.

"What?" inquired Elizabeth.

"I don't believe she did not intend to marry him—or disliked him. It is not her way to stand on ceremony."

"She would not stand on ceremony with you," said Elizabeth, "but—did I ever," turning her

head as calmly over her shoulder to look at him, as if she was propounding the most indifferent of queries, "did I ever tell you how it happened—the engagement, you know?"

Of course not, he fretted. What did it matter? What was it to either of them? Why should they care?

But Elizabeth did not seem to hear. She went on, imperturbably, telling the story, and told it from beginning to end, with leisurely comments of her own; while Roger, listening, almost glared at her from his pillows, his hollow eyes and haggard face, eager, skeptical, agitated.

"Pooh!" terminated the goddess, with large philosophy, "it is only natural, after all. Do people like her ever fall in love with the person you expect them to? No, they don't. They are too impassioned and original. They give you surprises. They always marry the last man, or woman, on earth, you would think them suited to. They have whims and fancies, we commonplace ones know nothing of. Terese will marry some one incredible, or not marry at all."

When next she went down stairs, and saw her friend, Elizabeth "dropped upon" her unexpectedly.

"Did you send him back to Huntingdonshire?" she inquired.

"No," answered Terese, with some sharpness of tone. "I did not. I know nothing of him." Whereupon Elizabeth fell into grave musing.

So the matter stood, when Roger dragged himself down stairs, a gaunt shadow of his former strength, to lie upon the sofa in the room below.

But even then Elizabeth did not desert him. She appeared to as great an advantage as ever, and preserved her equanimity as beautifully. She even went to the length of selecting books from the library, and reading aloud, which was an exercise her soul abhorred.

"But if it makes him go to sleep, or forget himself, what does it matter?" she remarked.

"One must amuse him, somehow."

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]

CAN I FORGET? .

BY ALEXANDER A. IRVINE.

WHEN you are lying still and cold,
From out my grave I'll rise,
And on your face, look, as of old,—
But with what diff'rent eyes.

With me will come my murdered years,
My home left desolate,

The wrongs on wrongs, that prayers, nor tears,
Nor death can expiate.

For mem'ry lives, and right is right.
Here, in my grave, you're yet
The same false trait'ress in my sight—
No! I can not forget.

MISS DEFARGE.

BY FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.

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CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 371.

CHAPTER XVI.

It is not to be wondered at, that such sacrifices as these had their effect. The effect they produced upon Roger Dysart was a constantly disturbing one. No day passed without his pondering remorsefully and bitterly over the past months. After all, was it not Elizabeth who was true, and unselfish, and generous? He had said that he liked women who were faithful and innocent, and she was the woman who was both, and who had roused herself from her natural indolence to care for him and bear with him. He had many a folly to reproach himself with, as he lay and wearied of the lengthening days, but he told himself that the worst folly of all was his past underrating of the good that was his own. He scarcely knew how it had come about, that he had learned to consider Elizabeth Dysart his own property; it had been a process so gradual—extending through childhood and boyhood, over many a year. There had been no actual love-making between them; they had never been an effusive, or sentimental couple; Elizabeth at twenty had borne with his Dysart humors as she had done at ten; she had demanded nothing but a continuance of his high-handed patronage and protection, and had been quite content with these favors. And yet, somehow, there had been a kind of general understanding between them. If he should marry, he had begun by saying, he would marry Elizabeth. And as he grew older, it had become an indistinct sort of fact, that in some more propitious future, Elizabeth was to be his wife. Naturally, too, there had been times when he had warmed a little, under the influence of the wonderful beauty, to whose power she herself had been so indifferent; and once he had quite startled her, one day when he lay upon the grass at her feet, by exclaiming, without any prelude whatever,

"By my soul, Lizzie, you are the handsomest woman in the county, and I am glad of it!"

He knew she had been fond of him in her way, and the nature of his own feeling was such, that her equable, unexact affection had suited him well enough. But of late the whole world had seemed to change. He had been scorched by a

fire, whose existence he had never before known. He had been aroused to passion, and longing, and regret. He had suffered keenly—and to no end—he told himself. He had suddenly awakened to find that he had lost every thing, and gained nothing. And after all it was Elizabeth who was true, notwithstanding that he had been false.

"If she had not been what she is," he said, moodily, "she would have seen and resented; but she is not like other women."

So, one night, when they were alone together, Elizabeth sitting on a low seat in the firelight, dubious, picturesque, and beautiful, in the faithful purple, with a book open on her knees, he made up his mind to go back to the old, undisturbed serenity, and spoke accordingly.

"Lizzie," he began, with a secret feeling of gloom, "I wish you would oblige me with your attention."

Elizabeth turned towards him rather quickly. Oddly enough, she also seemed somewhat reflective. She had been regarding the fire in silence, for at least ten minutes, but she aroused herself promptly.

"What is the matter?" she asked.

"Nothing," was his answer, "only I want to talk to you."

"But why—," she exclaimed.

He interrupted her.

"I am going to talk sentiment," he said, with incongruous bitterness. "It is a long time since I talked sentiment, Lizzie." And his bitterness wore, as he uttered these last words, almost an air of reproach. He tried to take her hand.

It was something of a check to him to see her turn quietly to the fire again.

"Talk sentiment, if you like," she said, "but never mind my hand. You will get along better without it."

He was so far checked that for a moment he regarded her fixedly. But when its momentary influence had passed, the very check served to give him fresh impetus.

"Lizzie," he broke out, "something is wrong. What is it?"

But she only smiled benignly at the fire.

"Is this sentiment," she murmured, "if it is—"

"Ah!" he cried, in a fret. "I am not going to be put off." I mean what I say. Do you think I have not seen—?"

She interposed, quite in her old manner, with her deliciously idle, inconsequent air.

"Why get excited?" she said. "I don't, and it will only tire you. I never could understand why you always would get excited, Roger."

"Tell me what you mean!" he exclaimed, "I want to know."

She pushed the book off her knee, and rose slowly to her beautiful height, and stood looking down at his fevered, bewildered face, in smiling calm.

"Do you think I have not seen too?" she asked.

It was like an electric shock to him. All at once—in a single instant—he saw that a climax had arrived, towards which he had never even glanced in his dreams of possibilities. It was Elizabeth who stood before him—Elizabeth wholly candid and careless, and startlingly point-blank as was her custom—but Elizabeth in an unexpected mood, and assuming an entirely unexpected position. He saw it at his first glance.

"As to anything being wrong," she went on, "that's all nonsense. Was there ever anything wrong between us? And as to my meaning anything, what could I mean, but that it is not me you should talk sentiment to, but Terese."

He uttered a sharp exclamation, but it did not appear to disturb her equanimity, in the least.

"We have never had rows," she proceeded. "It was not our way to have rows, any more than it was our way to be sentimental; and we were never that, you know. For my part, I don't see how we ever rambled on, into that feeble-minded kind of belief, that we were going to marry each other."

She stopped a moment, looking more coolly amicable than ever.

"I don't tire you too much, do I?" she asked, with friendly consideration. "We can talk it over some other time, if I do. It isn't of any particular consequence, you know."

"So it seems," he answered, savagely, "but I should like to hear the worst."

"Ah! it isn't very bad," she returned. "There is no 'worst' about it. I shouldn't mention it, if I didn't think we might as well set matters to rights. I could not help seeing, you know. Do you remember the day you asked me if Terese cared for Basil Howth? Well, I began to see from that day. You were in love with her, and you were never in love with me, and it has occurred to

me, once or twice, that—that you might be held back by some remembrance of—well, of me."

"You did not care yourself?" he said. "You are indifferent enough, on my soul, Lizzie!"

There was one second's silence, and then she made her reply.

"It would be a new thing for me to be sentimental," she said. "Emotions don't suit me."

"Why did you come and nurse me?" he cried, with actual resentment.

"Because I was fond of you," she returned, "because I was always fond of you, and always shall be. You don't suppose"—quickly—"that I mean that I am less fond of you now, or that I want you to be less fond of me."

"I don't know," he muttered, impatiently.

"Yes, you do," with something almost approaching firmness. "You know that what I mean is this—that it is not Elizabeth Dysart you should marry, if you ever do marry; that there is nothing between us, that is not too slight a thread to bind us together; that we are only reasonably fond of each other; and that all the rest is over as it should be—though it was nothing from the first."

"And you never cared—"

"Did you ask me to care very much?" she interrupted him. "And even if I had the kind of grand passion for you, which is not at all in my line, do you suppose I would tell you of it now? No, I am only Elizabeth"—lifting her head with a grand air, which was so remarkable and novel a development of her resources, that it fairly amazed him—"only Elizabeth, and of no consequence whatever, but I am too proud a Dysart for that."

There is no knowing what further revelations might have been made. Certainly, each was in a curious mood enough; and Elizabeth, with head uplifted, and eyes aglow with something which might even have been pain, was a revelation in herself. But at this very crisis their solitude was broken in upon. There was a ringing at the hall door bell, and a sudden development of some excitement outside; and in less than three minutes, Lady Dysart came into the room, pale and shaken with some strange agitation, and holding a slip of paper in her hand.

Both turned towards her, and Roger started from his cushions into a sitting posture.

"What is it?" he cried. "What has happened? What have you there?"

"It is a telegram," answered her ladyship. "It is from Sir Roderick's lawyer in London. Sir Roderick—"

Roger flung himself backward with a bitter ejaculation.

"Nothing but Sir Roderick," he exclaimed.

My lady handed him the paper, answering him, in a voice as rigid as her pale face.

"He is dead," she said. "He was shot at a gaming table at Homburg."

CHAPTER XVII.

As he had lived, so Sir Roderick Dysart had died. An extraordinary, and rather suspicious run of good luck, accompanying his play with a hot-headed young Parisian, had given rise to an exchange of complimentary phrases, which had terminated in an exchange of bullets over the card table. The Parisian had escaped with a flesh wound, but that ornament to society, the Baronet himself, had not been so lucky.

"But bad as it was," said society, in general, "no one has blamed the Parisian greatly. He was a scoundrel, and a blackleg, that Dysart; and the world is well rid of him and his rascalities."

Going into my lady's room, the night the news arrived, Terese found her sitting in the dark, before her dying fire, holding in her hand the telegram, and bearing upon her face the traces of a deep and bitter misery; and she met the girl's glance with the shadow of a smile, half scorn, half hopelessness.

"You do not understand, do you?" she said. "You are wondering why I should look so desolate. Well, I will tell you. It is not my husband I am mourning, as I sit here—it is something else. It is something far more bitter. It is this. Once there was a time when I loved him, with all a girl's passionate, weak folly—and to-night, knowing that he is dead, I can only be glad—glad!"

This was her only direct reference to the subject. When Terese seated herself near her, she began to talk of Roger and his future. "Sir Roger," she said, with a faint smile.

"He will have a chance to retrieve the honor of his name," she said. "There is a little money, which could not be altogether wasted, and now it will come to him. The principal could not be broken in upon. The time may come, perhaps, when to be a Dysart may not sound so very bad, after all."

Naturally there could be no waste of sentiment, downstairs. There had not been much talk. Elizabeth had subsided into speculative silence, and Roger had lain, for the remainder of the evening, with fevered brain and beating heart. When they had been left once more to themselves, Elizabeth's dramatic mood had died down with her usual ease of manner. Unconsciously she had echoed Lady Dysart's own thought.

"The worst part of it is," she said, "that there is no use in pretending to be sorry. We couldn't be, if we tried." Which was quite true.

When they parted for the night, Roger had been guilty of an exhibition of weakness, which even I, his chronicler, fail clearly to comprehend, and can only account for on the score of the natural perversity of mankind. He had made one more feeble effort to involve himself in fresh difficulties and entanglements.

"You had better forget and forgive, and—be Lady Dysart, Lizzie," he had said.

But Elizabeth had remained cheerfully unmoved.

"I don't want to forget," she said. "And there is nothing to forgive; but I shall never be Lady Dysart. Thanks, all the same! We should not enjoy each other's society half so well, if we were married. It would be sure to result in rows."

So Roger Dysart arose from his sick bed, a few weeks later, and went out into the world, a free man, in more senses than one; and yet bound by a new ambition and a secret chain.

"My life begins late," he said to Terese, "but it begins at last."

Outwardly they were as far apart from each other as ever, but inwardly each felt that a change had taken place.

"The lover has not come back," Roger said to himself. "I wonder why?"

And Terese, noting every day some subtle difference in Elizabeth's careless display of affection, wondered also.

"They are as good friends as ever," she said. "And yet—"

Still each went their separate way in silence. Gradually the county awakened to a recognition of the fact, that Sir Roger Dysart was a different man from his father. They had been in the habit of regarding him as a fine, stalwart numskull, with possible bad blood in him, which ought to be expected to show itself at any time; and even in a better case simply a numskull, who rode fearlessly, and was a good shot, and by no means a bad judge of horseflesh. But to the general amazement, the numskull developed singular tastes of an entirely different class. He plunged into the hardest possible work, and did it astonishingly well; he attacked evils at their root; he wove every slight thread of circumstance or chance into a web of his own; he lost sight of no resource; he rented his lands on novel terms, and accepted labor as an equivalent. He had a whole life of another man's ill-doing to retrieve, and he did not flinch before it, and left no stone unturned.

He labored so hard and so incessantly, and struggled with such desperate courage against entanglement and obstacle, that he became less stalwart. There were times when his worn look and his loss of color secretly touched Terese with a sharp pain.

"Don't—don't work too hard," she once admonished him by saying.

He made her no reply, but he carried the words in his heart, for many a day, nevertheless. She had hesitated, too, and spoken with a novel gentleness, and this he remembered also.

Thus for a month or so again, and then one delicious day in the spring, Basil Howth suddenly made his appearance. He came to the Court, one evening, and demanded Miss Defarge, and Miss Defarge went to him. She found him rather pale also, and evidently by no means at his best, either mentally or physically. He looked as if his unaccountable absence had not passed very happily; and yet, after her first glance, Terese understood that he had passed all stages of indecision, and reached a crisis, to be equal to which he had braced himself firmly.

"Don't begin by feeling angry," were his first words, as she favored him with her hand. "I have not come to annoy you with the old story. I have not been silent so long that I might end with that. I went away to try if I could not make a man of myself."

They had a long interview, in which he conducted himself wonderfully to his credit, and succeeded in rousing, within Terese's previously well steeled bosom, a sentiment of respect, which was quite a new and unexpected emotion. He had made a man of himself, and accordingly she began to feel guilty, and ill at ease. He did not blame her, as he might well have done, and he took a stoical stand, which was quite chivalrous:

"I ought to have known better, I suppose," he said, in the end. "You always told me you had nothing to give, and I have no right to complain, because you have proved that you only spoke the truth."

He was a little startled, as was quite natural, when he saw that Terese had softened sufficiently, to be guilty of the weakness of suddenly beginning to shed tears, as if she had been a young lady of spirit and will much less indomitable. He had never before seen her approach, in the most distant manner, any such youthful display of emotion.

"I treated you infamously," she cried. "And it is not you who should suffer. You had some excuse for making a mistake, but I had none—nothing but my despicable vanity!"

"I have never seen anything despicable in you

yet," he said, with quiet feeling. "I couldn't, you know. I—I am so fond of you yet, that I should like to prove that a man may be a woman's friend, even after he has been her lover."

"Oh!" said Terese, with a humility quite pathetic in its novelty, "do let us try." And she held out her hand, with no inconsiderable emotion.

"Elizabeth—" began the young man, a few moments later.

Terese started slightly. In fact, she did not know as much as might have been expected of those interviews over the parsonage parlor-fire, when Mr. Basil Howth had been gloomy, and sardonic, and Byronic; and Elizabeth had gazed at the glowing coals, and sighed.

"Elizabeth?" she echoed.

"I mean Miss Elizabeth Dysart," answered Basil, somewhat confusedly. "The fact is, we—we became very good friends, when I was here before. She is very kind-hearted, you know, and she used to—to listen, when I was in lower spirits than usual."

Most incomprehensibly Terese suddenly found her own spirits improve their tone. She could not help privately calling up a tableau, in which Elizabeth, golden-haired, picturesque, and gracious was the centre figure. It was not a trifle for her disconsolate lover to have been "listened to" by Elizabeth.

This had been an eventful day for her. That very morning she had heard, from Lady Dysart's lips, a piece of news, which had had a startling effect upon her.

"Did you know," asked her ladyship, in a most matter of fact tone, "that that foolish engagement between Roger and Elizabeth had been broken so long?"

"I did not know," replied Terese, "that it had been broken at all."

"Nor I, until yesterday," said my lady, musingly. "But of course it is by far the best. It was an absurd affair from first to last. For my part, I never could understand how it originated. And now—"

"Do you know," asked Terese, "how it came to an end?"

Her ladyship laughed.

"According to Elizabeth, it was a mutual agreement. They found it fatiguing, she says, and besides Roger was developing a kind of energy she was not equal to. 'He is actually beginning to make plans and have theories,' she said. 'And you know I could never marry a man in that frame of mind. He would expect me to be interested, and how could I be interested—especially in warm weather.'"

When Basil Howth left the Court, the sun was setting; and Terese, having watched him out of sight, went to her room, and made preparations for a walk. She was in too excited a mood to feel that she could remain in the house and sit still.

"The fresh air will cool me down, and make me feel quieter," she said.

Since the spring had set in, she had taken many a walk across the heather, and this evening she turned her steps towards the moorland, principally because she had fallen into the habit of doing so. She walked rapidly, and when she stopped, she was stopped by a remembrance. She found herself standing upon the very spot, upon which she had stood, the morning she had found Roger Dysart lying wounded in the rain.

"It is the very place," she said. "I remember that desolate looking tree."

She sat down among the rough, purple and yellow heather, half to rest, half because she wanted to gain time to recover herself altogether, before going back to the Court. There was quiet enough here, with the silence of the wide-spread heath around, and the high arch of the clear, tender-tinted sky above. So she sat there, for some time.

But just as she was rousing herself to the effort of making up her mind to rise, she was disturbed. Her wandering eyes caught sight of an approaching figure, a stalwart figure, bearing a gun over its shoulder, and nearing her plainly with no other intention than that of joining her. A little glow of embarrassment and discomfort ran over her. It was Roger Dysart, and it was not exactly here that she cared to encounter him.

But there was no help for it. He came on steadily, trampling down heath and long grasses, in his remorselessly direct course, and when at last he found himself in front of her, he grounded his gun, and stood leaning on it.

"I thought it was you," he said. "I knew your figure as soon as I caught sight of it, half a mile away."

Terese sat, and looked up at him.

"You have good eyes," she remarked. "I was just thinking of going home again."

His reply rather alarmed her.

"Don't go yet," he said. "I followed you here, because I had something to say."

She had gathered a handful of heath bells and ferns, and she began to put them together, with a coolness and steadiness of touch, which certainly belied her inward condition.

"After all, it is not very late," she said to herself. "And we are beginning to have such long twilights."

She waited through what seemed to be to her

a terribly long pause, during which Dysart, leaning upon his gun, still looked down at her. Finally his voice broke in upon the stillness, as if with an effort.

"I followed you," he said, "because I can have neither rest, nor peace, until I have asked you if—at some future time, it does not matter how far distant—you will be my wife?"

It was a master stroke. Nothing that he could have said, or done, with whatever prelude, or passion, would have thrown aside the barriers existing between them, and reached her at once, and as utterly, as did this unexpected resolution.

She said not a word. She thought that he must hear the beating of her heart. She dropped the heath and ferns, into her lap, and sat silent, with trembling hands.

"I found out only a short time ago," he proceeded, "that there is no longer any obstacle between us, beyond such as may exist in your own feelings. I only wanted to know that I did not know that the world held such love as I feel for you to-day. If I had never seen you, I think I should never have known of its existence. You have awakened me as if it were from a dream. You have aroused me to effort and ambition. You know what lies before me—what work and effort to retrieve the miserable past of my race. I have nothing to offer, but the feeling I have for you, and the name I have sworn to make honorable. But you can give me a power nothing else could give me. You can help me to finish what you yourself began—what began through my love for you. Will you do it? Will you say that you will marry me?"

For a few moments she remained silent, not because she would not, but because she could not speak. Then she ceased to trifle with her flowers, and pushed them aside with an odd, abrupt gesture.

"Do you know," she said, in a tremulous, half whisper, "do you know why I came—that morning—when I found you here?"

He started forward quickly.

"Tell me?" he said.

"It was because—because I could not rest," she answered slowly, "because something told me you were in danger. I came—to find you. I came because—though I would not tell myself so—I loved you a little—even then."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THAT, after his interview with Terese, Basil Howth's thoughts should wander towards the parsonage, was certainly no more than natural. Feeling a little sore at heart, it was to be expected that his youth should long for some balm of

consolation. Such wounds as his, he had of course told himself, were not to be healed; the flesh, he had said, with much poetic despondency, would always throb beneath the scar. And yet, notwithstanding this melancholy fact, there was something just a little soothing in the thought of Elizabeth—Elizabeth, who was always exquisite, and urbane, and who, to judge from her gentle sighs, was plainly full of the most charmingly sympathetic feeling.

"Not that she ever says very much about it," he remarked, as he strolled across the park; "but then, if she never said a word, a man could sit and look at her, and not feel a dearth of conversation much."

He did not go around through the gates, but turned towards the bridge. It was a shorter way, and he was not in the mood to be particularly anxious concerning personal safety. Even if he broke his neck, it would not matter very much. There was no one who would care—unless some one, who had proved otherwise somewhat stony of heart, should be touched by the calamity.

He was really deriving some little secret consolation from this speculation, when he reached the top of the rising ground, down which Sir Roderick's amiable young friend had pushed his frightened horse, the day Elizabeth had crossed the bridge, for the last time, as she had declared. She had kept her word. Consequently, he was rather surprised, on looking down from the summit of the incline, to catch sight of the well-known, celestial figure, in the well-known gown of royal purple, leaning, in an attitude of some dejection, against the crazy, rustic balustrading of the bridge.

"By George!" he exclaimed. "She looks as if she was not quite up to the mark either; and it is not like her to be low-spirited."

She was so much absorbed in her contemplation of the water, running below, that she did not hear his approach, and only looked up, when he stood close at her side. Then, aroused by his immediate presence, she started slightly, and turned around; and he saw in her face an appearance so altogether remarkable and amazing, that he was quite dumbfounded, and taken aback, the said appearance being nothing less extraordinary than a suggestion of tears, which might either have fallen, or be about to fall.

But notwithstanding this, her greeting was by no means a pathetic one.

"You see I crossed again, after all," she said. "How are you?" And she shook hands with him, with much friendliness.

Possibly his private convictions betrayed them-

selves in his face, and that from this fact arose her extreme composure of manner and quickness of speech. At all events, her air was very easy indeed, as she leaned on the balustrading again.

"You have been away, a long time, haven't you?" she asked. "I mean, under the circumstances."

"Yes," he replied, following her example, by leaning on the rail also, and looking down into the water.

"Been to the Court?" she enquired next.

"Just came from there," lugubriously.

"Ah!" rather abstractedly. "I thought so."

A pause, and then Basil himself began.

"You can guess why I went?" he said.

"Yes. I think I can."

She still spoke abstractedly, but a minute later she began to laugh, and said,

"It is a little odd that we should meet here."

"Why?" he asked.

Her cheeks were warm with a peculiar, excited color, and her eyes had a queer look, hard to define.

"Ah," she said, "because it is like a kind of duet of farewells. You are saying good-bye to Terese, and I am saying good-bye to—to the bridge."

"The bridge," he echoed.

Then, even while she laughed again, she drew her hand across her eyes.

"It is to be pulled down, to-morrow," she said. "And—and I am sorry. It is unsafe, and it is one of Roger's fearfully energetic repairing whims. He is reconstructing everything, from himself downwards. And the bridge goes with the rest. I've been crying a little over it. I dare say, I look as if I had, don't I?"

But the next moment she wore her old scrupulous smile of tranquil satisfaction.

"A place where one has risked one's neck so often, naturally endears itself to one, in course of time," she added.

It could not be otherwise than that, at this moment, a happy thought should occur to her companion, despite his dejection.

"It was here that I saw you, for the first time," he said. "So I should be sorry too."

"Yes, it was here," returned Elizabeth. And then she added, reflectively, "What a tipsy little brute that was!"

It was not easy to pay her compliments, and yet he found her as satisfactory as ever. She could say, or do nothing, however careless, which a man could soon forget; she could fall into no posture, make no idle gesture, which might not fairly have been immortalized on canvas. And yet, she was so unconscious of her power, and so

indifferent, even when something of its existence forced itself upon her.

And her mood, too, suited his own, wonderfully well this evening. She made no more Elizabeth-like speeches, after this last. Somehow, she was not quite herself. When, at length, his emotions got the better of him, and he began to tell her his story, she listened in a new way. She did not sigh, but she listened, with a kind of gravity he had never seen in her face before, and when he had finished, there was a mist in her blue eyes again.

"You did the best thing you could have done," she said. "It must be a bad thing for two people to marry, when one, or the other, does not—does not care as they should. It must turn out a bad thing for both of them. One could not live with a man—or woman—who did not love one, without being horribly wretched. Terese will always like you better for what you have done. She will like you even—even after she has married Roger."

"Roger!" he cried, with a start. "Does she—will she marry Sir Roger?" And a little tremor fell upon him.

Elizabeth turned, upon his pale face, eyes full of pity.

"Didn't you know?" she said, in a softened voice. "I thought you did. I—I have known it from the first. Yes, she will marry Roger."

He stared at her, in amazement.

"But I thought—I heard—some one said it was you—"

"No," she answered. "It was not me. He never cared for me at all, in that way. We were only friends."

But he saw that there was something behind, which he could not understand, and it did not add to his peace of mind. For a while he was miserable enough. It was hard to lose; but it was worse to feel, that some one else had won; and he had been so blind.

He could not speak for a long time. Both were silent, and it is possible that the bridge bore a reasonably heavy weight of feeling. But at last, he was aroused from his reverie.

For she moved. Mr. Basil Howth moved also. He stood up, and looked at her, even then taking in her wonderful beauty, in a bewildered way.

"I suppose I ought to go away?" he said. "Do you think I ought? We have been good friends, and—it is rather hard on a man to lose all at once."

They looked at each other, and Elizabeth hesitated. She had not thought of his going before, and she became gradually conscious of a faint regret. The bridge would be pulled down, to-morrow, and all would be over, and different. She held out her hand, with a little, desolate, half smile.

"Yes," she said. "We have been good friends. And we are rather a lonely couple. Don't go."

Having remarked that he did not go just at that time, or in fact for several weeks, there is really small need to say much more to an intelligent public. But this I will add, that, after Terese Defarge had been Lady Dysart for a year, on the occasion of a dinner-party, given in the much-improved rooms at the Court, the goddess was present, wondrous in her ladyship's gifts of black velvet and pearls, and attended by Mr. Basil Howth.

"There is in Elizabeth," said the younger Lady Dysart to her husband, "a kind of moon-like splendor—white, slow-moving, and stately. She is wonderful to look at. And did I tell you, Roger, that she is going to marry Basil Howth, and that Major Pomsonby approves, because she is 'a young person of family,' which I, you know, was not?" with a smile.

[THE END.]

A WOMAN'S FAITH.

BY ELLA WHEELER.

Across the miles that stretch between,
Through days of gloom or glad sunlight,
I see a face I have not seen,
That yet doth make my world more bright.

He may be near, he may be far,
How near, how far, I cannot see;
But faithful as the morning star,
He yet shall rise and come to me.

What though fate leads us separate ways?
The world is round, and time is fleet.
A journey of a few brief days—
And face to face we two shall meet.

Shall meet beneath God's arching skies,
While suns shall blaze, or stars shall gleam,
And looking in each other's eyes,
Shall know the past was but a dream.

And round, and perfect, and complete,
Life like a star shall climb the height,
As we two press with willing feet,
Together toward the infinite.

And still behind the space between,
As back of dawns the sunbeams play,
There shines the face I have not seen,
Whose smile shall wake my world to-day.