

Deaver & Gephart

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DO NOT BLAME HER.

Mark saw it before I did. I have wondered to-day, looking back, if I could have controlled myself sufficiently to prepare him for the shock, if I had read the newspaper first this morning.

I was passing Mar.'s cup of coffee to sign the waiter-girl, when I caught rigid his face. It was white and his eyes shined in his coffin, and to see... dila in a stare horrible.

'Mark! I see dear. Are you in terror, what is it, I was beside him.

that his eyes were fixated, and saw place in the paper he had a certain Then I, too, read the fatal reading. Only a few lines, but full of horror.

'Do not blame her!' he said in whisper, shuddering as he spoke. 'Oh, Bessie! Bessie! My heart is broken!'

I put my arms around him and drew his head down upon my breast, where it had so often lain in childhood, when my orphaned brother came to sister Bessie to be comforted in boyish woes.

He was my only brother, though I was sixteen years the elder.

Little graves in the cemetery marked the sorrows of my childhood, as one after another my brothers and sisters had dropped and died, until only Mark was left. And he was but four years old when our parents both died.

We were not poor, owing to our own handsome home, and a comfortable income; so Mark had every advantage of education, studied law, and gradually won his way to a position in his profession.

And I had married, lost my husband, and returned, after an absence of only three short months, to resume my place as my brother's housekeeper, only my widow's dress to tell strangers I had ever been away.

It was just after Mark had finished his studies and been admitted to the bar that he had met Alice Arnold.

She had come to Claymont to visit her aunt, a near neighbor and old friend of ours, and we called to welcome her amongst us.

She was about eighteen years old then, and her beauty won its way to my heart as surely as it did to Mark's. She was the most timid, gentle creature I ever saw, her color flitting if you spoke to her, her shy blue eyes drooping, and her voice low and almost plaintive in its timidity.

Miss Arnold, a strong, energetic old maid, seemed to actually terrify her by her short, brisk manner, but she clung to me from the first hour of our friendship.

Children generally like me, and she was little more than a child. Yet, when she became more intimate, and came often to pass whole days with me, I found that below the frightened, timid manner there was a clear brain, an intellect that had been carefully cultivated and a sweet womanly nature.

She was an enthusiastic musician and a fine pianist, but could not sing. Nothing delighted her more than to play for Mark and myself to sing duets, or if I was tired or busy, to hear Mark sing in his rich baritone voice the music he loved.

I asked myself, after she had ended her summer visit, if she was a coquette, a cruel, heartless flirt, who would win a man's heart only to cast it aside. And, in my bitterness then, I thought this was.

In later years I acquitted her of the crime. I believe she had no suspicion that Mark loved her.

He was always grave and reserved, and, although he was but twenty-three at that time, had the air and bearing of a much older man. And I being really so much her senior, I think Alice looked upon us both as rather elderly people, and was far more free and confidential than she would have been if she had looked upon Mark as a young man and lover.

But Mark, who had never cared before for any of our girl-friends, gave to Alice Arnold all the story of love his heart could ever offer.

I knew it, for Mark had made me his confidential friend all his life, and seeing her shy pleasure in his presence, the interest she took in all his pursuits, her gentle acceptance of his grave attentions, I thought his love was returned, and I was happy in the expectation of a nearer, closer tie between the sweet, loving girl and myself.

But just before she left Claymont, Mark, telling her his love, was answered by the tidings that she was engaged to be married.

She was dreadfully distressed, coming to me to sob out her regret that Mark loved her, but loyally asserting her own love for her betrothed.

After she left us Miss Arnold took me into confidence.

She told me that her niece was an heiress, and her mother was a fool. I am quoting Miss Arnold. She said that Henry Parker, the man who had

won Alice's childish love, was a showy, handsome fellow, of whom the family knew nothing, but who was distrusted by all of them except the mother, who should have been the girl's protector, but who was completely fascinated by the lover's attentions to herself.

Mark said but little to me, but I know that he suffered keenly. He made some enquiries in the city about Henry Parker and was convinced that he was an adventurer.

I think my brother could have borne his own burden better if Alice had chosen a man worthy of her love, but he feared for her future happiness, thinking her betrothed had dazzled her imagination rather than won her heart.

When we received cards for the wedding I thought of refusing to attend, but Mark decided to go, and we went our wedding-gift, and went up to the city to be at the ceremony in the church the dress reception afterwards.

My father not wonder when I saw Henry Parker had won Alice's love, the winningly handsome, and had change her manner calculated to love.

And he took the opportunity to betray both, to change the trust shuddering horror, the true love to a shivering fear.

Little by little the poor girl to the fact that her husband despised the very gentleness he had so often praised, and that the charm of a full purse was the one that had attracted him to his wife.

Probably a father or a guardian would have protected Alice's fortune after marriage, but it was under her own control, her mother being her only guardian.

And Henry Parker spent it freely; at first in a profuse style of living, in luxuries his wife could share, but later in gambling and low vice, traveling the downward path with fearful rapidity.

Six years after his marriage he deserted his wife, who returned to her mother, and a year later the newspapers gave the account of his death in a bar-room, where he was shot in a scuffle.

It was after a year of widowhood that Alice came once more to Claymont, her sweet face pale and sad, and her blue eyes often dreamily mournful.

She was but little changed, though older and graver than in her girlhood for her timidity was, if changed at all, only increased by the trials of her married life. She was so nervous that an unexpected sound made her start in positive terror, and where the pretty flitting color had been in her cheeks there was only an added pallor when she was startled.

The free country life, the pure air and quiet, seemed to help her in regaining something of her cheerfulness, and Miss Arnold astonished us all by her tenderness.

She treated her niece like a sick baby anticipating her wants, coaxing her appetite, and bringing her cur sentences, that were usually like pistol-shots, down to tones of coaxing gentleness.

'The poor darling!' she said to me, with tears in her hard eyes. 'How could anyone have the heart to say a rough word to her? I could as soon strike an infant as trouble her, the pretty dove!'

But what was the best medicine for Alice was soon apparent to me. She had learned to value such love as Mark's and she understood at last what his attentions meant.

For seven years he had kept her image in his heart, and when once more he could honorably woo her he made no secret of his devotion.

She brightened visibly, the shy, blue eyes looking more frankly into Mark's than they had ever done, the sweet musical voice losing its quiver when she spoke to him.

Very gladly did I hear that my brother had won the heart he coveted, and very sure was I that it was all his own, with a far truer, more womanly love than Alice had given in her girlish infatuation to Henry Parker.

And I, who knew Mark so well, knew that each year would but add to his affection, and that Alice need never know again what it was to fear her husband.

The long, bright summer passed happily, and in September Alice was to return to her mother to prepare for a quiet wedding and an extended tour.

It was the evening before she was to leave us that Miss Arnold invited Mark and myself to tea. We were all in the parlor, early in the evening, when a gentleman asked for Mrs. Parker, and Alice turned very white as she introduced Mr. George Parker.

'My husband's brother,' she said aside to me. 'He was always very kind to me.'

For a few moments after this introduction Mr. Parker sat in embarrassed silence. Then he said very suddenly: 'I do not know whether my news will be good news or bad news to you, Alice, I came to tell you, as soon as

possible after fearing it myself, that Harry is not dead.'

'Alice did not faint or scream. White as death, she said, steadily: 'Why did he conceal it from me?'

'He did not, intentionally. He was left for dead and so reported, after the trouble in St. Louis, but he was only horribly wounded. Somebody took him to a hospital, but he got better in other ways, the doctors found his brain was weakened. He was sent to an insane asylum, and it was only two weeks ago that he recovered his sanity enough to send for me. I went to him at once and brought him to my house. He asks for you every hour, but I ought to warn you that he is still very queer. The doctors say he is harmless, and as he wanted very much to come to me I took him out. I should not have left him in a pauper asylum any time, but I very much fear he will have to go to a private insane hospital before long. He is strong and well and may live for years.'

'Yes, I shall go to my mother's tomorrow,' Alice said. 'Will you bring him to look at some lace?'

There seemed no question of her duty in her pure heart, but the hopeless misery of her fair face was heart-breaking to witness. Mr. Parker left in an early return train to the city, and Miss Arnold took me to her own room to look at some lace.

'Let them be alone,' she said to me. 'It is the shrinking, gentle manner will do,' strong martyr spirit, and she poor child, 'the poor child!'

And we broke into bitter weeping together, for as deep as she grieved for Alice, did I grieve for my brother.

I did not see Alice again. Mark met me in the hall, and said, to Miss Arnold: 'Go to her! Comfort her if you can!' he drew my hand through his arm and led me out of the house.

That was just one week ago. To-day we read in the city papers this paragraph: 'Mrs. Henry Parker, residing at 232 Street, was found dead in her room from the effects of an overdose of chloral. The dose was probably taken accidentally, as Mrs. Parker was suffering from insomnia, and using chloral to produce sleep.'

Mark is locked in his room, and even I dare not intrude upon him, or ask the question that haunts me. Was the overdose taken by accident, or in a moment of utter despair?

TELL YOUR WIFE.

The following advice from a correspondent of the Country Gentleman is well worthy of acceptance, but we would add a little more to it in the form of a suggestion, that in case you are a farmer and have no wife—Get one.

'If you are in any trouble or quandary, tell your wife—that is if you have one—all about it at once. Ten to one her invention will solve your difficulty sooner than all your logic. The wit of woman has been raised, but her instincts are quicker and keener than her reason. Counsel with your wife, your mother, or your sister, and be assured light will flash upon your darkness. Women are too commonly adjudged verdant in all but purely womanish affairs. No philosophical students of the sex thus judged them. Their intuitions, or insights, are the most subtle, and if they cannot see a cat in the meal, there is no cat there. I advise a man to keep none of his affairs a secret from his wife. Many a home has been happily saved, and many a fortune retrieved by a man's full confidence in his wife. Woman is far more a seer and prophet than man, if she is given a fair chance. As a general rule, wives confide the minutest of their plans and thoughts to their husbands. Why not reciprocate, if but for the pleasure of meeting confidence with confidence? I am certain no man succeeds so well in the world as he who, taking a partner for life makes her the partner of his purposes and hopes. What is wrong of his impulse or judgement, she will check and set right with her almost universally right instincts. And what she most craves and most deserves is confidence, without which love is never free from a shadow.'

A LADY of charitable disposition asked a tramp if she could not assist him by mending his clothes. 'Yes, madam,' he said, 'I have a button, and if you will sew a shirt on it I will be greatly obliged.'

—SUBSCRIBE FOR THE JOURNAL.

THE OLDEST MAN.

AN EX-SLAVE NEAR DETROIT CLAIMS THAT DISTINCTION.

He is Said to be 127 Years Old and Remembers the Revolutionary War.

When old "Dad" Freeman was buried across the river in Windsor a short time ago, says a Detroit (Mich.) letter to the New York Herald, it was believed that the oldest man in the world had been laid to rest. "Dad" was 122 years old, as conclusively proved before his death, and left 138 descendants. Since Freeman was buried some relic hunters have brought forward a man whose authentic record fixes his age at the remarkable figure of 127 years.

The proof furnished leaves no room for doubt. The name of this man is Andrew Lucas. He is the father of Mr. P. A. Lucas, who for nine years past has kept a barber shop in Detroit. Mr. Lucas was born a slave under the father of General Jackson, he of "eternal" fame, and was a grown man when the General succeeded to the paternal estate. He remembers the Revolutionary War distinctly and recalls many very interesting incidents of the second war between this country and Great Britain. He declares that it is as distinct to him as yesterday when General Jackson went to New Orleans during that very memorable struggle, when he accompanied the General as his body servant. He describes the cotton bales piled up as a temporary fortification.

Soon after this, at a time when the General was away, Lucas was whipped for some reason and ran away. He remembers very well why he was whipped, but does not give the reason. He worked his way slowly north and crossed into Canada at Black Rock, on the Niagara River. Andrew Kirby, then customs collector at Fort Erie, sheltered him and helped him across into the Kingdom of Great Britain. Lucas found employment in the family of General Brock, who was killed in the War of 1812 at Queenstown Heights. Next he ran on the Niagara River, under Captain John Clinch, for whom he worked nine years, and was then discharged by his employer because the latter considered him too old to be useful. Lucas was then sixty-two years of age.

Lucas soon found employment again, this time at Kingston, Ont., where he married his second wife. His slave wife had borne him seven children. His second and free wife had borne him seventeen. One daughter by this union is now living at East Saginaw, Mich. Her name is Mrs. Williams, and she is seventy-one years old. Fifty years ago Lucas removed to Brantford, Ont. There he got work from the father of Judge Stevenson, of Cayuga. The Judge, though now an old man himself, remembers Lucas as a man about seventy years old when he, as a boy, was going to school.

For twenty-nine years Lucas was a driver for the express company at Brantford and resigned the place ten years ago for the reason that he was getting along in years and felt the need of rest. He has the frame of a once powerful man and stands six feet three inches in his stockings. A year ago he sawed and split twenty-five cords of wood for William E. Walling, of Brantford. Up to three years ago he never wore spectacles, and during the summer of 1883, when visiting his son in Detroit, Mr. Lucas read the City Hall clock from in front of the Kirkwood House, across the Campus Martius. He then walked without the assistance of a cane, being 124 years old!

This is a most remarkable case of longevity. Lucas is certainly as old as stated, and from his appearance to-day promises to hang on for some time to come. This man is probably the oldest person living. He has witnessed the development of the most wonderful era in the world's history, and has personal recollection of all the many great events in the career of this nation.

'How many times must I tell you,' remarked the managing editor of a Chicago paper as he slowly filled up the waste basket with the funny man's 'copy,' 'not to use the word "paraphraser"?' There is no such word in the language. 'Paraphraser' is the proper term.

'Paraphraser' is the better word, warmly contended the funny man.

'That doesn't make any difference; it's not in the dictionary. You don't place yourself above Webster, do you?'

'In many things I do not,' frankly acknowledged the Western humorist; 'but I know more about writing paragraphs in a minute than Daniel Webster ever knew in his whole course of senatorial career. He can call it what he chooses. I call it paraphraser, and if this isn't satisfactory to the alleged managing editor of this journal, I will throw up my position if I have to go somewhere and work for a living.'

This so alarmed the managing editor that he remarked a mother-in-law joke of the Elizabethan era to be double leaded.

ONE SORT O' HOUSEKEEPIN'.

It's menny a long year now gone by since me and Sarah Ann commenced housekeepin'. We've allers lived right here where we do this day, and I guess we'll continue to stay here under the old roof until some day when one or 't'her of us 'll hev to go, and the old church bell 'll toll and the 'narrow house' the poets tell about will open its door, and one or 't'her of us 'll hev to go in, and the door 'll be closed, and we'll go to our long-time rest. Mebbe it won't be so very long apart we'll go, 'cause did you ever notice, how the old folks who hev lived and loved together for menny a year, go a-way sometimes almost together—even the Dark River don't separate 'em long, they loved each other so.

And now friends, do you want ter know why I begun this letter so, and why Sarah Ann and me hev allers got on so well together? Well, it won't take long ter tell. It's because we've both of us had a little common-sense (if I do say it), and Sarah Ann hev used to use mine in providin' things as kom fortible-like es I could and 'lowin' her to do the housekeepin' part herself 'bout es she wanted ter.

I've lived long enough to diskliver some things, and one is that there's two kinds of housekeepin'—sensible and foolish. The sensible kind bes things neat, and orderly and pleasant about the house, jist as a matter of course. It don't take any frettin' an' foam'n' to hev it so—it sort o' has itself that way. And the foolish kind is where the woman goes about the house with a double-barreled microscope, as it was, lookin' fur the least appearance of dirt, and with a dust-rag in one hand and a dust broom in the other she goes around makin' herself and everybody else miserable. She meets the children when they come from school, with a smile? Not much—if it's muddy, or dusty or even sunny? 'Don't you come in here with those muddy feet onto my clean carpets,' is the first thing said, even if they come into the most back door in the house and the clean carpet is natin' but an old rag heim-loom full of holes and greasy. Such a woman never goes nowhere, never has enny time. The stove wants black'n', the knives want scourin', the chamber wants sweepin', the cellar wants cleanin' the winders wants washin' or the mopboards wants scrubbin'. She can't leave the dish-cloth and the dust-rag long enough to go to missionary meetin', and es fur enny charitable or neighborly work she does outside—it don't amount to a thimble-ful, don't get time. She's a housekeepin' slave bound down with dish-rags and dusters till she can't move, and she's so nice and neat she makes enny ordinary person feel like a miserable slattern if she calls on her and sits down for jist a five minutes' coyersation.

Of course I believe in hev'n' things neat and nice, but not over neat and over-ice. I believe in noslovenly sort o' housekeepin', but I don't bleeve in woman's makin' a eternal drudge of herself. What sort of earthly good dus it do? Ain't there nothin' higher in jivin' than keepin' the dust off of things? Ain't there enny duties that a woman owes to her family, and to society, too, that she should attend to, or should she narrow down her mind to the scrubbin' of the four walls surroundin' her? It don't take long for a sensible, common-sense woman to answer these questions. But there's menny a woman who'll read these lines that's doin' the very thing I'm objectin' against, and because she's doin' it is why I write, hopin' that this year will see a change in her method of housekeepin'.

I've read this over to Sarah Ann, Mr. Editor, and she agrees with me—probably largely because she knows, as I do, that her housekeepin' is of the sensible kind. UNCLE HEZEKIAH.

A Cleveland speculator sent his son to Wisconsin to buy hops, telling him to keep his eyes open for any other speculation. After a few days a dispatch came, saying: "A widow has got a corner on the hop market of this State. Shall I marry her?" "Certainly," was the reply sent over the wires. Twelve hours later the son announced: "Got the hops, the widow, and seven step-children, and shall go to Chicago to-morrow to see about a divorce."

"What are you waiting for, little boy?" inquired a kindly old gentleman of a street urchin who was watching each passer-by intently. "Waitin' for a long-whiskered gent smokin' a cigar. Then I'll foller him an' get the stub."

"Do long-whiskered men smoke better cigars?" "Naw, but dey don't smoke 'em so short."

A Brooklyn woman is keeping in a book a list of things she ought to purchase, but cannot afford to wear. She calls the book her ought-to-buy-ography.

The Man With a Mission.

"Am Pickles Smith in de hall to-night?" anxiously inquired the president as the notes of the triangle died away.

"Yes, sah," was the prompt response. "You will please step forward; I hev a few words to say to you."

"Brudder Smith, it am come to my knowledge dat you believe you has a mission on airth. You believe it am your solemn dooty to be on hand at ebery funeral in your neighborhood, whether friends or strangers, an' offer your services an' consolation. You stand ready to knock off work in de day time, an' to rout out of bed at night, an' it seems a long week to you when somebody isn't on his dyin' bed or on de move to 'rds de graveyard."

"Brudder Smith, you am one of our oldest an' best members, an' I doan' want to hurt yer feelin's. Since you took up dat mishun your woodpile has run short, your rent gone behind, an' your family looks 'r'n down. If I were you I'd drop it. I'd bring myself to believe dat de mishun of a mar'd man was to take good keer of his family and lay by a few dollars fur a rainy day. Pull de stockin' off de feet of a woman wid a mission an' you'll find holes in de heels. Go into de home of a man wid a mishun an' you'll find a sufferin' wife, half-fed children an' a hat full of lunnin' letters. Brudder Smith, you may return to your seat."—Linn-Klin Club.

A Capricious Composer.

If the stories told of him are true, Hans Von Bulow is getting crankier day by day. It is related that during his last concert tour, as he was about to take his seat at the piano, he saw some very plain woman seated near the platform. At that he walked off the stage, and to his manager's inquiries and entreaties said:

"Until those ugly women are removed I will not play a note; so you may do as you please about it."

The manager stepped up on the stage, announced that Herr Von Bulow had become suddenly indisposed, and the orchestra would play a symphony which was to have been played later in the evening. While the audience looked on in wonder he had a number of palms and shrubs from the conservatory near the concert room placed between the platform and the audience. Then calling Bulow to the wing the manager asked if the view suited him.

"Oh, yes, that's all right," quietly said the great musician, "as long as I don't behold those monsters of ugliness I am quite indifferent to my surroundings." And without any more ado, the capricious composer went on the platform and performed his share of the programme.—New York Sun.

No Help Wanted.

A young man who said he had left the farm to strike a job in the city, and who added that if he could only secure a place somewhere he felt certain of laying the foundations of a fortune, imperturbed a business house on Jefferson avenue until the chief clerk finally played a joke to get rid of him. He gave him the street and number of the County Jail and advised him to call and ask for the place of the last man sent to Jackson.

Half an hour later the young man pulled the sheriff's bell and said to that official:

"I am in search of a situation. I am twenty-two years old, never sick and—"

"I have nothing for you," replied the sheriff.

"I'll work mighty cheap. I can bring you twenty testimonials that I don't swear, drink, chew or gamble. If you'll—"

"Sorry, but I have no vacancies." "Didn't a man leave here for Jackson a few days ago?" asked the young man.

"Oh, yes—half a dozen of them." "Then give me one of my boards. I'll work the first month for my board and clothes."

"They didn't even get that much," said the sheriff, as he began to tumble to the racket.

"Well, I've got to make a beginning, and I'll furnish my own clothes."

"I should like to aid you, but really I have no vacancies at present."

"Oh, come, now—give me a show." "Can't do it."

"Can't; eh! All right for you. I'll find one somewhere, and don't you forget it, and the day'll come when I'll make you powerful sorry that you gave me the cold shoulder on a cold day!"—Detroit Free Press.

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