

"IF YOU LOVE ME."

Eager lips grow soft and dumb,
When youth's ardors have departed,
And alas! too quickly come
Days when love is hungry-hearted.

THE SILENCE OF SIMEON SAYLES.

"I wish to goodness, Simeon Sayles, that you would shut up and keep shut up!" said Myra Sayles, in a weary tone, and speaking as if the words were forced from her against her will.

"You do, hey?" replied her brother Simeon, sharply and irritably.

He had been scolding about some trifling matter for nearly half an hour, and his sister Myra has listened in patient silence.

Now she spoke because he had said something peculiarly annoying, and when he had replied so sharply, she said:

"Yes, I mean it, Simeon Sayles. I get so sick and tired of your eternal scolding and blaming that I just wish sometimes you'd shut your mouth and never open it again while you live."

"You do, hey?"

"Yes, I do."

There was sudden silence in the room for three or four minutes; the wrinkles on Simeon's brow deepened and his lips were pressed more and more tightly together.

Suddenly he opened them with a snap and a defiant look of the head.

"Very well, Myra Sayles, I will 'shut up,' and I'll stay 'shut up,' and you'll see how you like it."

"I'll have some peace, then," replied Myra, shortly. Yet she looked at her brother curiously.

The Sayleses were noted in the country roundabout for rigidly adhering to every resolution they made. The thought now came into Myra's mind, "Will he do it?"

She had not meant him to take her remark literally. Simeon was as iron-willed as any of the family, and yet Myra felt that he could not keep such a vow long. It was necessary for him to talk. So she said:

"I guess you'll be gabbling away fast enough before night. There's no such good luck as your keeping still very long."

Simeon made no reply, but took his old straw hat from a nail behind the door and went out into the barnyard, walking very erect, but with little jerks, indicating that the Sayles temper was high in him.

"Now he'll go out to the barn and putch around out there awhile, and maybe putch all evening in the house, and then talk a blue streak all day to-morrow to make up for the time he's lost keeping still. I declare, if the men folks can't be the trying-est!"

She stretched away steadily on the sheet she was turning until the clock struck six, when she jumped up hastily.

"Mercy," she exclaimed, "I'd no idea it was so late! I hope to goodness the fire hasn't gone out. I must get the kettle on and supper ready, and I don't intend making some of the flannel cakes Simeon likes so much, to put him in a good humor, but I don't believe I shall have time now."

Nevertheless, there was a plate of steaming hot flannel cakes, and a bowl of maple syrup before Simeon's plate when he came in to supper that evening.

He ate the cakes in stammering silence.

"Are you going over to Seth Badger's after supper," Myra asked, "to see him about helping you cut that grass to-morrow?"

"After waiting in vain for the answer, Myra said:

"I want to know if you do go, because I want to send Mrs. Badger a waist pattern of hers I borrowed last week."

"No reply from Simeon. His sister gave her head an impatient toss, and they finished the meal in silence. When it was done Simeon went to a little table in a corner of the room, pulled out the drawer, and took from it a scrap of blank paper and a stub of a lead pencil.

Myra took the supper dishes into the kitchen; when she came into the room Simeon handed her the scrap of paper. On it was written:

"I'm a-going over to Badger's now."

Myra dropped the bit of paper to the floor and stared hard at her brother.

never seemed quite like other men. No matter how true this may have been, his sister Myra was a thoroughly well-balanced woman, with a large fund of strong common sense, and her brother's freak caused her great secret mortification and distress, although she had declared at the beginning of it: "It will be an actual rest to me to get rid of your eternal scolding!"

"But Simeon had not scolded 'eternally,' as Myra felt obliged to confess to herself in her reflective moments. He was, indeed, somewhat infirm of temper, and sometimes gave himself up to prolonged fits of petulance, but there had been days and even weeks at a time when Simeon had been as serene of mind and as companionable as any man.

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He wandered round the house and yard until the time drew near for Myra's return with Hope and little Grace. Then he went down the road to meet them. He had gone perhaps a quarter of a mile when he sat down by the wayside to wait until they should drive around a turn in the road a hundred yards or more distant.

He had waited not more than five minutes when he heard the sound of wheels and voices round the curve in the road. He heard the sudden, sweet laugh of a child, and was on his feet in an instant.

At that same instant a man on a bicycle dashed past him. Myra and Hope were still an almost unheard-of thing in that part of the country. Simeon had never seen but three or four of them, and the appearance of this one whirling along at such speed startled him.

His rider sent it flying on down the road, and he whirled around the curve to the surprise of Miss Myra and to the terror of old Hector, the horse she was driving. The reins were lying loosely in Myra's hands, and before she could gather them up old Hector jumped aside, rearing and plunging, and the next instant he was racing about the track in a mad, reckless way, dragging the ground on either side of him, while Hope clung to little Grace and screamed.

"Whoa! Whoa, Hector!" cried Myra, in a voice so awful with terror that it frightened old Hector the more.

"Whoa, Hector, whoa!" he called, and he whirled around the curve to the surprise of Miss Myra and to the terror of old Hector, the horse she was driving. The reins were lying loosely in Myra's hands, and before she could gather them up old Hector jumped aside, rearing and plunging, and the next instant he was racing about the track in a mad, reckless way, dragging the ground on either side of him, while Hope clung to little Grace and screamed.

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Oom Paul at Close Range.

Daily Habits of the President of the Transvaal. A Simple Minded Millionaire. Kruger is a Devoted Husband and Father, and a Democrat of the Most Pronounced Type.

It will be interesting at this time to know something of the personality and daily habits of Paul Kruger, president of the Transvaal, whose words at this critical hour decide the destiny of his country for weal or for woe.

I first met Kruger at Pretoria in 1879. He was then 54 years of age, but as strong, lithe, erect and robust as the average man at 25. Kruger was then a poor man; in fact, at times he had had to work for his food from the door of his large family. He was suspicious of every person who spoke the English language as his native tongue.

At that time the Boers were chafing under the restrictions of British rule. It was only after being assured that I was an American that Kruger became talkative. On that occasion General Joubert and others were with him formulating plans for an uprising against the British, which took place the following year and resulted in the Boers securing their independence in 1881.

The next time I met Kruger was in 1894, at Pretoria. This time I had letters of introduction to the Transvaal President. I recalled to him the first time we met. He invited me to become the guest of his household, and during the three days that I remained at his home, he had an excellent opportunity of studying the inner life of the Chief Executive of the Boers. Though he was the highest gift at the hands of his countrymen and is reputed to be worth about \$5,000,000, I found Kruger to be the same simple man that he was in 1879, when he was a poor man and unknown to fame.

His home is always a very permanent institution in the land as it is to the highest official. If anything, Kruger better enjoys a chat with the cronies of