

Then, then, the longing heart that breaketh,  
Stealing the treasures one by one,  
I'll call Thee blessed when thou makest  
The parted — one.

### An Old-Fashioned Love.

The house was unpainted and one-sided. Down to the small-paned windows, with their thick green glass, sloped the roof, bearded at the eaves with moss and patched with yellow and gray lichens, and at one end rose a broad chimney, up which clambered a woodbine just feathering out with delicate new leaves. There was a stone step at the front door; it was worn hollow at the side where the lilacs grew, and formed a receptacle for the great drooping petals of the pink, old-fashioned roses as well as for the pale purple flowers. A gnarled and ancient cherry tree shaded the quaint dwelling, and all about it stood crooked, untrimmed apple and wild plum trees, and all along its irregular stone wall sprang currant bushes and blackberry runners that twisted and turned in and out between the great loose stones and stretched over the pathway.

The place was picturesque bit in the landscape. One could see it abruptly over a rise in the high road, and it was like an old-time vignette to a whole series of modern and magnificent country residences that formed the suburb of a large city. It had been occupied by generations of the same family, and so little had they varied in physical or mental traits that it was difficult to tell where sire left off and son began. Their small farming had contained from year to year without perceptible improvement or change — save that of the seasons — their ancestors descended by inheritance, and they eschewed all modern ideas of living or dying, and were at length laid in silent rows, side by side, in the old daisied graveyard on the hillside.

At the time of which I write there remained among the living of this family of Barnets but one widow and her granddaughter, Hetty, a girl of eighteen. A hired man attended to the farm duties, as had his father before him; he was faithful, simple and stubbornly set against all innovations.

Hetty Barnett — the last of the name — according to her neighbors, "a favored" her father wonderfully, and the Barnet men had been remarkable for fine physique — well developed, clean of blood and tall of stature. Hetty was a handsome girl, with a bright wild-rose complexion, clear brown eyes and a rich profusion of wavy chestnut hair. She moved with a serene young dignity, unruffled by the stern exigencies of fate, and looked out from under long lashes with a frank, innocent expression that was foreign to the modern coquetry. And yet, to the modern eye, she was an admirer, not a pleasant consciousness of the power to win them; nature, in her changing color, her sweet red lips and the fluttering dimple in her rounded, healthy cheek, did her coquetry for her, and many a wistful glance was cast under the cherry-boughs where, in the summer-time, she was wont to sit.

"Grandmother!" she called, one afternoon, as a dashing team ascended a not distant hill — "grandmother! who do you think is coming up the road? It is the Widow Campbell's son. What a display he makes with his black horses and handsome carriage!"

Old Mrs. Barnett put on her spectacles, smoothed her calico apron and came out from among the beehives near the garden gate.

"Well, I declare to't, he does!" exclaimed the astonished old lady. "It's a new turnout as sure as I'm Mehitabel Barnett! Before his father, Ebenezer Campbell, died, he didn't know scarce how to get his livin'. That's his Uncle John's money he's a-gallivantin' on now, Hetty, you may be sure of it."

"Why, grandmother, John Jay hasn't left him what's his own — yet." Hetty's mouth grew round as a puckered rosebud. "He isn't dead."

"Dead, child! Nobody said he was, or goin' to die either, but everybody knows there ain't no possible chance of his marryin', and young Campbell is dashin', I tell you, on his future chances. He ain't the kind to wait for a 'dead man's shoes'; he's just a-wearin' 'em while his uncle's a-livin'." Hetty's only likely heir, Hetty, to the big Jay property.

"But John Jay is not old, grandmother, returned the girl, vehemently. "His hair may have turned a bit, but he is not an old man."

"Not so, as you say, Hetty," the old lady looked sharply over her spectacles at her granddaughter. "But he has dandled you on his knee o'nough."

He only blushed, and devoted herself to her task of shelling peas, but Grandmother Barnett was diligently looking for insects on her favorite rosebush, and saw nothing.

"You see," she continued, "there was some kind of a disappointment about John's having had an unhappy moment some years ago. Leastways, it ain't

drive with me," he was saying, as Hetty admired the attractive turnout by the roadside. "Why not now, this lovely day?" he added, eagerly starting up. "It is splendid going, and we have three hours till dusk. We can go down the old mill road and get a look at the river."

Hetty's young heart filled with innocent anticipation. A drive behind such a team was a treat. But the proposition was a novel one to a Barnet. They were a primitive people, and whoever married into the family was sure of getting a wife whose thoughts were as fresh as the morning dew, and lips as fragrant and pure as wild roses. To accept "promiscuous" attention was unheard of. But this sudden temptation was ever strong, and old Grandmother Barnett, from all her Hetty's attractions, made no serious objections, and so the young couple drove gayly away in the golden sunlight. How delightful the drive was along the daisy-fringed country road, into a woodland path where the spicy hemlock branches drifted across their faces, and up to a height that overlooked the sleepy, winding river! It was an episode in the monotonous girl-life, and she surrendered herself to a keen enjoyment of it.

"Who do you think has been here, Hetty?" said her grandmother, as the girl appeared, with the first star, at the door. "John Jay."

Hetty drew a quick breath, and the light died suddenly out of her eyes.

"He asked most particular for you, child, as soon as he came in, and I told him you'd gone off to drive with my nephew. I thought perhaps he'd be glad the young man wasn't with worse company."

"And what did — he say, grandmother?" asked the girl, slowly.

"He said, 'Does she often go with him?'"

"And you told him —" Hetty paused with a choking breathlessness. The old lady deliberately took out her glasses, rubbed them carefully on the corner of her apron, and then placing them on her nose looked at her granddaughter reflectively as she responded: "Well, yes, child; I didn't see no reason for not telling him that young Campbell had been coming about here pretty regular."

"Oh, grandmother!" cried Hetty, with burning cheeks.

"Well, I did say this was the first downright set attention ever folks. And I told him, child, there wa'n't to be found nowhere a kinder girl than my Hetty, and young Campbell might count himself powerful lucky to get you. The Barnet was always a particular set, and I've no objection to John Jay knowing it. He don't want to throw his property away, it ain't at all likely, on a relation with a shiftless wife."

"Grandmother!" cried Hetty, again; "oh, grandmother, you never told him that!"

"Of course I did. The Barnets was always an outspoken family. John will have to settle the property onto somebody. It may as well be your husband as — Bless me, Hetty Barnett!"

"For the young girl broke suddenly into a passionate storm of sobs and tears."

"What on earth is the matter, child? You ain't got it into your head John Jay is going to die, have you? He looks amazin' well and young, considerin'. Don't get notions —"

Whatever ailed Hetty, she had disappeared, and had hidden herself from her loquacious grandmother behind the old well-sweep near the lilac bushes. There she sat until the stars grew brighter through the purple night, and the dew dampened the soft, disheveled hair that was already wet with tears. She heard the oncoming cry of the whip-poor-will from the distant meadow, and the sad call seemed to mock her own loneliness.

"Hetty!"

The girl started up with a bounding heart and outstretched hands to find them clasped in a pair of stronger ones. She was trembling like the slim poplar in the corner of the yard, and only found breath to say:

"I am glad to see you," and even to her own ears her voice sounded unnatural and formal. Her fingers were slowly loosened from the warm grasp and fell down cold and limp; the tall, bearded man at her side retreated and banded to lean heavily against the well-curb. Then he said, in a voice well under control:

"I am only in town for a few hours. I shall make another trip later to the Rocky mountains. Hetty," he added, after a moment's silence, "I believe I shall never come back again. It is the life that best suits me — this wandering one — and who should care now?"

Hetty's heart throbbled hard. He was only corroborating what so many declared — that he "never would marry," that desire for a love and home was dead within him.

She replied primly: "Your sister will miss you."

"She has her interests," returned John Jay, the glance seeking passionately up the sweet face in the setting

with you, and he was a good match. And then after John Jay deeded him his fine place, too —"

"Don't, grandmother, please don't talk over that affair," pleaded Hetty. "It is so long past now. Ten years ago, only think of it, and Mr. Campbell is married and has two children. I never loved him, grandmother. Would you have a Barnet marry for money or family?"

The old lady bridled with the dignity of her kind.

"No, never, child. You are right. The Lord will watch over you."

Hetty sighed softly and went on with her work. She had not changed much, this fair, healthsome woman; there was a calmer expression upon her brow, and a not infrequent look of yearning sadness in her eyes, but she was still the last "handsome Barnet."

Much had come to pass to fret her. The faithful servant-man had been "gathered to his fathers," and matters, consequently, gone wrong on the unproductive farm. There was a mortgage, too, upon the place that threatened her with trouble, and Hetty had no one with whom she might discuss business matters, so entirely had she and her grandmother lived to themselves.

The old lady loved for the quaint old house was as that of all her kindred, and she resolved in some way to live and die beneath its roof-tree. Day and night she turned the problem in her brain, and prayed for a speedy solution of it. Hetty had assisted her helpless grandmother to retire and then strolled down to her favorite seat on the low wall under the wild cherry tree.

A young moon curved its bow in the purple sky, the dew fell down like silver beads, and once again the lonely woman listened to the faint, far call of "whip-poor-will in the distant meadow. How the past returned to her!"

"At times," she whispered, softly, as memory broke within her past control, "I do believe John loved me. Why could I not have forgotten self, pride, shame, everything, and tried to understand? So much seems clear to me now. But we Barnets were ever taught to suffer in silence — and so he never told me he had loved me. I wonder where he has been all these years? He told me he'd never come back, but all he'd possessed him. His nephew proved how mistaken I was — how wrong were all the rest. Ten years! How long! How long!"

Hetty pressed her hands over her eyes, and the hot tears trickled through her fingers. She brushed them vehemently away.

"He never intended to marry. I know it. Nor do I. But it is a lonely life — a lonely life!"

Painfully came the cry of the bird. Hetty was alive with memories, and she shuddered.

"Just so the bird cried out when us said 'good-by.'"

Her head sank on her arm, and the shadowy night folded her in dad reveries.

"Hetty! Hetty!"

Softly, tenderly the voice, out of the long ago, penetrated her dream of lost love.

"John!"

A firm footstep sprang into the shadow, strong arms lifted her out of it into the starlight, and Hetty knew the hour of her joy was come.

"I have returned to find you!" cried her lover, triumphantly. "I dared not believe it until I saw you here alone. My nephew is married, thank God, and you — you, my only love, are free, and mine! Neither riches nor pride could tempt you. When I learned this, I dared to hope my earlier dreams had not misled me. And you have always loved me, Hetty?"

"I do not think a Barnet ever loves but once," said the happy woman, between smiles and tears.

"Ah," you remember, your grandmother gave me to understand —"

"Ah," interrupted Hetty, clasping her lover as though she might again lose him, "remember, also, that a Barnet never reveals her love unasked. Grandmother could not know the way of my heart."

What plans the stars and leaves were witnesses to that night one cannot know, but Hetty made no delay to wed with her first love, and the quaint house received another inmate.

Still picturesque and moss-roofed it stands beneath its gnarled old trees, and children's voices, that call Hetty mother, are heard merrily mocking the robins in the spring time.

Peace, plenty and happiness dwell therein, and one is fain to say: "There is no love like the old love."

The German translations from Long-fellow number 3: Dutch, 2; Swedish, 5; Danish, 2; French, 8; Italian, 9; Portuguese, 4; Spanish, 1; Polish, 3; Russian, Latin, Hebrew, Chinese and Sanskrit, each 1.

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