

TWO SONGS.

So sweet, so sweet, she sang, is love,  
Lifting the cup to lips that laughed,  
Drinking the deep enchantment of  
Fire, spice, and honey in the draught.

So sad, so sad, she sighed, is love,  
Bitter the less, and black the art  
That from the deep enchantment brings  
A spell to break a woman's heart.  
—Harriet P. Spofford, in Harper.

FOUND AT DRURY'S BLUFF.

BY PHILIP JARVIS.

"Phil, my boy, wish me good luck! I'm going to ask Mildred Graves to marry me before I go."

My God! I wish him luck in winning the woman who was all the world to me! The one woman whom I had loved from my boyhood's days! All the savage in my nature was aroused into fury at the thought that he dared to aspire to what was mine, by the right of long years devotion. I could have throttled him as he stood there—so handsome and debonaire—so self-reliant and confident of success.

Yet what claims had I upon her affections? The hot blood grew cold; my fierce wrath died out. How could I be sure she might not love him best? Was he not finer-looking, more agreeable than I, a man in every respect better calculated to win a girl's fancy?

Mildred and I had been friends from our school days, the most intimate friends; and on my part that friendship had grown into a part of life itself. I had no hopes, no ambitions, which had not her happiness for their object. Yet no word or token of love had passed between us. I was shy and reticent on this one subject that lay so near my heart. I shrank from declaring myself her lover, doubtless feeling that if she could not return my love, I should destroy forever our friendly relations.

So matters stood between us, when she was twenty, and I twenty-one, in the fall of '60 when Carl Maxam came to our village. He and I were associated in business and soon became friends, as friendly intimacy goes between men. He was five years my senior, and had read and traveled much, and had acquired the ease and polish of a man of the world, while I was shy and reticent in society. I felt he had every advantage in his favor, in his intercourse with Mildred, but until to-day I had never had a jealous feeling.

In the spring of '61, came the fall of Sumner, and the declaration of war. We both enlisted, though in different regiments, and were ready to leave for Washington. We had returned to our homes for the final leave takings with friends, I in my plain suit with only a Sergeant's chevrons on my sleeve, he in the gilt and epaulettes of a Lieutenant, looking handsomer than ever in his fine uniform.

On the morrow we were to rejoin our regiments, and on this last afternoon had met for a final friendly chat. We had talked on other matters of mutual interest and at the last moment, as we stood at the gate, he had said:

"And now comes the toughest part of it. I'm going to ask Mildred Graves to marry me before I go. Phil, my boy, wish me good luck, can't you?"

Filled with surprise and anger I could make no reply; but it passed unnoticed as he went on without looking at me. "I have been half in love with her ever since I first met her, and long ago decided she should be my wife if I ever got ready to marry, that is, of course," with a nervous laugh, "if she'd have me. I don't know, she always seemed to like me, and I fancy I've the inside track there; at all events I'm going to make sure; I'm not going off for a year or two and leave her for some other fellow to win. If she'll promise to marry me, I can trust her to wait my return, if it were ever so long."

At that moment, to my great relief, the Captain of his company drove by and stopped to take Carl in.

"Well, good-by, old fellow, hope to see you later," and with a wave of his hand he was gone.

"He shall never have her," I said savagely to myself, as he was driving away; "at least, I will know first if there is any chance for me," and I hurried off to Mildred's home.

But when she in her presence—fool that I was—I talked of everything else, past, present and future, I'd save the one subject that lay nearest my heart; my tongue seemed tied whenever I approached that.

A half-hour passed, other visitors came and I rose to leave. Mildred followed me to the gate.

"I shall miss you so much," she said, as she held out her hand at parting. There were tears in her eyes, and a tremor in her voice. My heart leaped; surely she must love me a little, and the words I had tried so hard to utter came to my lips; but she added: "and I have always been a brother to me," and I felt as if a cup of cold water had been dashed in my face.

Ah! yes, a brother! she had never thought of me as a lover; could I declare myself one and lose all this friendly regard? I hesitated—others joined us, and the opportunity to speak was lost forever. I said "good-by," and went home, inwardly raging at my own stupidity.

But perhaps it is better so," I thought at last; "she would remember me as a friend, love me as such, which as a rejected lover, she could never do."

Then I thought of all her kindness during the long years of our intimate friendship; might it not be possible that underneath all this sisterly regard there might lie the germs of a deeper love? And could I not awaken it to life by long and careful wooing? I would be so patient if there was only one spark of hope that she would ever love me. I would, like Jacob of old, serve seven years, oh, so willingly, could I but win her. Was I not a coward, and all to yield my own chance of success to another, by not putting my fate to the test?

Under the influence of this feeling I dashed off an instant, impulsive letter.

All the love I could never speak, found expression now.

"Can you not, dearest Millie," I concluded, "find down deep in your heart, underneath all this sisterly regard you have given me, one spark of something dearer, sweeter than a sister's love? Will you not give me just one word of hope that, in time, you may learn to love me better than a brother or friend?"

I sent the letter by a sure messenger, and waited impatiently for a reply. Now it was done, and I had risked all on one throw of the dice, I felt all the gambler's unrest. My blood was alternately at fever heat or ice cold. The moments seemed hours. Hopes and fears alternately held sway, until I could scarcely endure the suspense. At last the answer came. Hurrying to my room, I tore open the envelope. There in Millie's handwriting, I had learned to love so well, were the words: "Dear Friend," a cold hand seemed to clutch my heart as I read: "Your letter was a great surprise to me. I have always regarded you as a friend, and as such, you will ever have my highest esteem, but my love has long been given to another. Forgive me if I give you pain by this avowal, and I pray God may bless and keep you, in the danger into which you are going. Sincerely your friend, Mildred Graves."

The letter fell from my hands, my head dropped upon the table beside me. The worst had come! All the hopes and fears, the sweet dreams of a lifetime were over. Carl had won her, and I had lost all that made life endurable.

The memory of every hour of sweet companionship—every gracious smile she had ever given me—every kindly word, came back with redoubled sweetness, now that she was lost to me forever. Through all the years of youth and manhood, she had been interwoven with every hope and plan; it seemed like giving up life itself to lose her. But it was over now, forever! If I met her again it must be as the betrothed, or the wife of another.

Could I live and bear that! Thank God, I could go away in a few hours, and perhaps death on the battlefield would end all this dreary heartache.

On the morrow I rejoined my regiment, and within twenty-four hours we were marched to the front.

In the change from home to the stirring scenes of army life I tried to forget; but by the camp-fire, on lonely picket duty, or in the rush and roar of battle, thoughts of Mildred would intrude. I shrank from no exposure, feared no danger. Men called me brave; I was simply reckless. I had no dread of death; why should I have? Life had lost all charm for me.

Months rolled away, one, two, nearly three years passed. I never heard from Mildred, except an occasional word in my mother's letters. She was still unmarried. I did not wonder at this for I knew Carl was in the army, and frequently near me. But I never sought him, even when our regiments were side by side. I no longer felt hatred toward him—I could not do that, if Mildred loved him; but I had not reached a point where I could meet him calmly, and I preferred not to see him at all; and, strange as it seemed to me at times, he never sought me.

Step by step I advanced in rank, until, when the battle of Drury's Bluff was fought, I held a Captain's commission.

All night we had lain on our arms, and with the first gray dawn the enemy were upon us. Our regiment was in the thickest of the fight.

Again and again the Confederates hurled their forces against us and were met by the fiercest resistance of our men. Charge succeeded charge, volley returned volley, repulse followed repulse; backward and forward surged the huge columns of men; broken, rallying, retreating, advancing, cheering for victory one moment, and beaten back by the foe the next.

The dead, the wounded, the dying lay in heaps. The wheels of the guns could not be moved until the windows of dead were removed. There were few wounded, nearly all were killed outright. Carefully we removed those few and bore them to the hospital tent in the rear. I was directing my men in the work, when suddenly from among the piles of dead, a face was upturned, a face I knew only too well. Carl Maxam and I had met at last.

He was horribly mangled, and I saw could only live a few moments unless the flow of blood was checked. For an instant the thought flashed across my brain, "If he died Millie would be free!" But I crushed back the traitorous thought, and hastily improvising tourniquets I stopped the bleeding arteries as best I could, and with the help of one of my men, bore him to the hospital tent.

He opened his eyes as we laid him down. One glance and I knew I was recognized. He raised his hand feebly, and tried to reach my pocket.

"A package—my pocket!" he gasped.

I slipped my hand into an inside breast pocket and drew forth a small package, carefully enclosed.

"Mildred," he said, with great effort, looking at me wistfully, and vainly trying to say more. His lips moved for a moment but no sound came from them; then the jaws relaxed, an ashen pallor spread over his face, and with a few short gasps he was dead.

I placed the package in my breast pocket, and just at that moment the call sounded to re-form in line of battle, and we were hurried away to another part of the field. In half an hour we were again in the thickest of the fight.

At the first charge a ball passed through my leg, and the battle of Drury's Bluff was over for me, and the war, also, it proved, for after several weeks in the hospital I was discharged from the service and returned home.

All this time I had carefully kept the package Carl had given me. I had a morbid desire to give it to Mildred in person, and waited my return home, which I knew from the first must soon come.

The day after my return I lay on the large, old fashioned lounge in the living room of my father's house when Mildred came to me. Wan and wasted with suf-

fering, with one leg gone, I was scarcely more than the wreck of my former self.

She had changed almost as much as I; all the girlish freshness and bloom had faded, and the grave, quiet manner seemed more befitting a woman of fifty than a girl of twenty-three; yet to me she seemed dearer and sweeter than ever.

"I am so glad to see you home once more!" she said, as she grasped my outstretched hand.

There were tears in her eyes, and her voice trembled.

How good it seemed to look into her face to hear the sound of her voice, and feel the pressure of her hand once more!

"Could she—could she care for me, now Carl was dead! I found myself so eager, even now, for her love, that I would be only too thankful for even a small part she had given him.

But Carl's letter must be delivered first, thought it might be the means of separating us still more widely.

I drew a few mutual inquiries and replies. After I read the package from my pocket. "I found Carl on the battle field of Drury's Bluff, and he gave me this for you as he was dying," I said, holding it out to her, and immediately turning away my head that I might not see her emotion.

"For me!" she said in tones of surprise. "I don't understand."

"It probably explains itself," I said, wondering why she should think it strange that Carl should send a dying message to her.

I heard the rustle of paper as she unfolded the package, and in another instant, with a strange cry, she dropped on her knees beside the lounge.

"O Philip, Philip! what does it mean!" she said, her face as white as the letter she held out to me with trembling hands.

I took it, and the first line brought me to a sitting position, with an astonishment great as her own. I read in her handwriting the words:

"DEAR PHIL: There is no need that you should teach me to love you. I learned that lesson long ago. You have been dearest of all in the world to me since our childhood's days. Come to me at eight this evening and you will find, your own love, MILDRED."

Faint and giddy with the surging tide of emotions that swept over me, I caught both her hands in mine.

"You wrote that, Millie, wrote it to me?" I said, scarcely believing such good news true.

"I wrote it in answer to your letter the day you went away; and you never came—I heard nothing from you until I knew you were gone next day. I could not understand it."

"But I received an answer," I said in bewilderment; "you wrote you had never thought of me except as a friend—that you loved another."

"Oh, no, no! I wrote that to Carl in answer to one I received from him at almost the same time as yours. And I must have enclosed them in the wrong envelopes. O Philip, to think of all these years of sorrow to us both, for such a stupid mistake! How can you ever forgive me?"

"There is nothing to forgive, if you only love me now," I said eagerly.

"I never loved any one else, I never could; you seemed a part of my life, and I've been so wretched, so very wretched! It's like heaven itself to have you back once more!"

"Oh, thank God! thank God!" was all I could say as I caught her in my arms. Oh, the delicious joy of the moment, after all those years of sorrow, to know she loved me, had always loved me; could heaven hold any rapture to equal this?

All the wretchedness of the past seemed to vanish as a dream, in the glad joy of the present. Then, suddenly there came a reaction of feeling. What was I now? Broken in health, crippled, helpless! What woman would take such a wreck of manhood as I?

"O Millie, darling!" I said, despairingly, "I've loved you, God only knows how well, but I'm only a wreck at best; I cannot ask you to marry me now."

"You need not ask me at all," she said archly, between smiles and tears. "I shall take you anyway. O Phil, you cannot think I love you less for this! So long as there is enough of the body left to hold the heart of my dear old Philip you'll be just the same to me. No, not the same, but a hundred fold dearer for all you have suffered. You will be strong and well soon, dear, and your lost leg is an honor, not a blemish."

Was not this the acme of all earthly joy! Shall I shame my manhood when I say the tears were running down my face, as I caught the dear girl to my heart, and thanked God for such a treasure.

After our emotions had calmed down somewhat, we examined the package more closely, and found a letter from Carl telling how he had received the note in answer to his letter, that he had rightly conjectured that in her agitation, Millie had misdirected the envelopes, that his must have been a rejection and had been sent me. In his chagrin and disappointment that I had been preferred to him, he had kept the note, hoping that the one sent me might have no name in it, and thinking I had been rejected I would leave without an explanation. Then followed an account of the upbraidings of conscience, the strivings of his better nature, until he had written this explanation to give me, in case of our meeting or of his death.

"I have been a coward and a villain," he wrote in conclusion, "not to have returned the note long ago. I cannot hope for your forgiveness."

But in the supreme happiness of our reunion we could find no room in our hearts for enmity toward the dead, even though he had wronged us so bitterly.—*Fansie Blade.*

THE MERRY SIDE OF LIFE.

STORIES THAT ARE TOLD BY THE FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

The Summer Picnic, Before and After—Most Likely—On a Perfect Equality—Hospitality—Etc., Etc.

O, joyous, gladsome picnic morn!  
How cool the air, the skies how bright.  
A thousand mental joys are born  
To fill the heart with wild delight.  
The incense from the tree-crowned hills,  
The babble of the woodland rills,  
The wild bird's song which grandly trills  
And all the forest arches fills;  
The mystic whisper of the trees,  
The drowsy hum of honey bees;  
A scene designed the gods to please,  
A dream of happiness and ease,  
That all our being thrills.

O, weary, dreadful picnic night!  
I almost wish that I were dead,  
I'm looking like a perfect fright,  
And filled with aches from foot to head.  
It's rained incessantly since morn,  
My clothes are wet and stained and torn,  
I'm feeling miserably forlorn,  
I can't now think why I was born.  
The woods were full of beggar's loaves,  
We drank rain water without ice;  
And dimmers full of ants aren't nice;  
Hereafter picnic devotees  
Will catch me—in a horn.

—*Omaha World.*

MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE.

They were in the conservatory at an evening party, and there, amid the perfume of the roses and posies, he had fervently declared his passion.

"Mr. Sampson, George," she responded, with womanly tenderness, "my heart has been wholly yours for months, and now," she went on, shyly taking his arm, "you may take me in to supper; I heard it announced when you first began those words of love which have so blissfully changed all the colors of my life."  
—*Bazar.*

CONCEIT ALL GONE.

Old Gentleman—"Let me see. Yes, I met your nephew five years ago, and if you must know the truth, I was disgusted with him—such a vain, conceited, insufferable puppy I never saw in my life."

Old Neighbor—"Oh, he's changed completely now. He's the most modest man you could find in a day's journey—he doesn't believe he knows anything."

"You don't say so! Well, now I think of it, when I met him he was a college sophomore."

"Yes, and now he's a graduate and trying to earn his own living."  
—*New York Weekly.*

THE SHIP WAS SAVED.

"Captain," reported the officer, as he came up from below, pale with fear, "the water is gaining on us. We must lighten the ship!"

With the presence of mind that distinguishes the true hero from the craven in the hour of peril the Captain instantly called all hands on deck.

"Men," he said, and his deep voice rang out, clear and strong, over the wild waste of waters that threatened to engulf the stately vessel, "throw those things overboard!"

The sailors went to work with the energy of despair. In less than an hour they had thrown over the side of the vessel the private baggage of a traveling actress and three fashionable canes, belonging to a London duke, and the gallant ship, with her leak now high above water, bounded on her course like a thing of life. Her commander had saved her.  
—*Chicago Tribune.*

A TRICK OF HIS TRADE.

It's strange," remarked Cora, "that the Baron De Fake never fell in love with any of the girls he used to call on. But still, it was my opinion that he always tried to conceal his feelings."

"I should say he did," replied Miss Snyder, "for he turns out to be a London pickpocket."  
—*Epoch.*

A LITERAL INTERPRETATION.

Miss Green (just returned from a Western tour)—"Oh, Mr. Noddy, we had a most delightful trip! The Yellowstone Park was beautiful, and the sunrise which I saw there was simply grand!"

Mr. Noddy—"Yaas! But—aw—excuse me—but I wasn't aware that the sun ever rose in the West."  
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AN URGENT CALL.

Valet (ringing up the doctor at 11:30 P. M.)—"Councilor M— sends his compliments and desires you to come to him at once."

Doctor (en dishabille)—"Good gracious! What is the matter with him?"

Valet—"He wants a fourth hand for a rubber of whist."  
—*Humoristische Blätter.*

HIS NECK IN THE TOKE.

Grafton—"Aw, Algy, where did you get that stunning collar you're wearing?"

"All the fellows 'ave spoken to me about it to-day, and I'll bet it'll be all the rage."

Baboon (whispering)—"Sh, Chotly! I wun short o' collars this evening, and baw Jove, to tell the truth, this is one o' my cuffs I've put on."  
—*Judge.*

NOT A PHYSIOGNOMIST.

Barber—"Wish any oil on your hair, sir?"

Customer (explosively)—"Nobody that has any sense uses hair oil nowadays. Do I look like a howling idiot?"

Barber (deferentially)—"No, sir; but I'm not a good judge of faces. I always ask the question anyhow."  
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Customer—"Say, are those trousers I ordered ready yet?"

Tailor—"No, sir, but soon will be."

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Tailor—"For what reason?"

Customer—"Because, I have not done growing yet, and am afraid by the time you have them finished they will be too short."  
—*Drake's Magazine.*

FOR THE PUBLIC WEAL.

"If you wish to live to any age at all," said the doctor, "you must give up those abominable cigarettes."

"But, doctor," argued the patient, "if you are so opposed to the use of tobacco, why are you always smoking yourself?"

"You see, my young friend," returned the doctor, "I so fully comprehend the great evil caused by tobacco that in my endeavor to benefit mankind I have made it my aim to smoke up as much of the vile weed as I possibly can."  
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A CRUEL REQUEST.

"No, George," she said, after listening to his impassioned utterances, "I could never be your wife. I do not love you as I should, to be the nearest and dearest to you."

"At least, Ethel, you will not turn me wholly from you. You will be a—"

"A sister, George? Yes, George, with all my heart."

"That isn't exactly what I mean, Ethel," he continued, "you were too hasty. I was about to ask you to be a mother to me."

THE BEGINNING OF THE TROUBLE.

"Did you see the beginning of this trouble?" asked the police judge of a witness against a man who had struck his wife.

"Yes, sir; I saw the very commencement of the difficulty. It was about two years ago."

"Two years ago?"

"Yes, sir. The minister said: 'Will you take this man to be your lawful husband,' and she said: 'I will.'"  
—*Merchant Traveler.*

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