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A Woman's Sacrifice.

THE boating and fishing at Washahasset, were excellent, while it was convenient to the city of Boston. Therefore it was not surprising that a pleasant and select party were there assembled to pass the summer. Among the ladies who call for special notice were Cecil Dare and Flora Maxwell, the latter being as mischievous a girl as one would wish to find, while the former was remarkable for her beauty, and dignity of character. Among the young men who were of the party that summer, we need only mention Percie Lennox and Clive Harold, and both of these were striving to win the favor of Cecil. The evening on which our story opens there had been a charade, and after one of the acts, Percie had found Miss Dare in the little dark room used as a dressing room by those taking part in the performance and had taken that opportunity to make known his feelings. But all unknown to the lovers in a dark corner of that darkened room a pale eager face watched the unsuspecting pair with stealthy fierceness, and Clive Harold muttered under his breath: "Pity to spoil your heroes, *beau monsieur*, but the slender hair that upheld the sword of Damocles is parting fast; you shall feel my vengeance before another sun sets!"

The charades and tableaux were voted a grand success by the Washahasset audience, and the actors wound up with a jolly little supper in the dining-room. But Cecil was so tired, and yet so excited and happy, that she hardly closed her eyes before dawn, and therefore, when she did fall asleep, slumbered calmly on until almost dinner-time.

"At last!" Flora called out, merrily, as Cecil made her appearance on the piazza when the dinner-bell rang: "You were sleeping so nicely that I would not wake you. Mr. Lennox, where are Cecil's letters?"

"Here," said Percie, giving his hand with the letters; "don't mind us; read them, please." Cecil felt herself flushing as she opened them.

"Father is in Montreal, Flora," said she as she read, "going to make the trip of the Thousand Isles, leaving mother at Toronto. His leave lasts three weeks longer, and we must meet him at Niagara on the 30th."

"I shall meet the Commodore—perhaps?" was whispered in her ear as Percie stooped to pick up her fan. But she only laughed a little in reply, as they walked out to dinner together.

Percie told her during the meal that he must leave her this afternoon and sail over to Patchongue to send a business telegram.

"I shall return as soon as I can, but the breeze is light, and I doubt if I reach home much before tea. After that will you go up to the lighthouse with me? You've been talking of it for some days."

"Yes indeed; can't we go alone without the others?"

"I'll manage it," said he, smiling—"Come down to the pier and see the 'Monarch' go off."

"Where away?" said Flora, as they passed her, standing in the door with Harold.

"I'm off for Patchongue, and Miss Cecil is going to the pier. Harold, will you come with us for the sail? I'll be happy to take you on board, or if you prefer it, we might have another race between the 'Monarch' and the 'Una.'"

"Thank you, neither," said Harold. "I have been beaten once too often by 'scarlet and white' to risk another trial, until I put a new reef in the 'fair Una's' sails."

"Very ungallant," said Flora, ready for mischief; "that is, if your 'Monarch,' Mr. Lennox, stands in the same relation to the

'fair Una' that Spenser's King of Beasts did."

"Don't be vindictive, Miss Flora," laughed Percie, seeing the angry flush on Harold's face. Then, as he stepped on the deck of his yacht, "You'll measure speed better next time, Harold. *Au revoir*, ladies."

They stood on the pier and watched the graceful yacht for a few moments, and then Flora announced that she was going to take the nap which Cecil enjoyed in the morning.

"Will you take a walk on the beach with me?" said Harold, as Flora left them.—"You promised me one several days ago; perhaps I shall not have it at all, unless I improve my opportunity."

Cecil's eyes fell and her color rose at his tone.

"You evidently have not much faith in my promises," said she, wrapping her berous closer as the fresh sea-breeze blew past them. "I should like to go down and see the tide come in. How did you like the charades last night?"

She had taken his arm, and they were going down the plank walk that led to the shore. He did not answer her question, but asked one instead:

"Miss Cecil, are you *clairvoyante*?"

"I? What an odd fancy? Why do you ask?"

"Because I was wondering whether—if you have not done it already—you would care to take a look into that inscrutable thing, a man's heart."

An unaccountable shiver shook Cecil from head to foot.

"Some one is walking over my grave," said she lightly, in answer to his surprised look. "What an odd saying that is; so weird and ghostly."

"There are some feet that could not walk over my grave without calling its ashes to life," he said, with sudden passion. But Cecil would not understand.

"O, what a magnificent breaker!" she said, as they reached the beach. "Can't we sit down on the sand and watch them?"

He threw his travelling plaid down and arranged it carefully for her to sit on, and then, before she could begin common-places, he stooped down and looked full in her eyes and said, "Cecil Dare, I love you!"

The words were spoken low, but with such intensity that Cecil sat absolutely speechless, half terrified, and turning pale as he went on.

"It's no new thing for you to hear. I know that men have gone mad for your fair face before to-day. I have seen other women who were as beautiful—none who carried your restless charm for winning hearts. Do you think it was because of her hazel eyes and lovely smile that Mary Stuart wound her fetters around the souls of Darnley and Rothwell, Rizzio and Chastelar? I am not a skillful wooer, Cecil, but I offer you a princely home and fortune, a proud old name, and a heart that loves you more madly than you will ever be loved again. You may think that I am placing the advantages of position and name before my love; that is only *commerce* in our day, and I woo you as a proud Dare is best won—by her latent ambition."

"You seem to be assured of your success, sir," she said, coldly, repressing all sign of the indignant pride he had roused. "You certainly bear away the palm for audacity in offering to barter 'position and an establishment' for my hand. I conclude that my heart has nothing to do with the bargain."

"No! for it is not mine. But I will make you love me if I can have but fair field to your favor."

She bit her lips impatiently at the arrogant tone.

"There is no need of further discussion, Mr. Harold. Your rejection would have been more courteous had you seen fit to be less insolent."

A strange gray pallor spread over Harold's face at the scornful words.

"Is this final?" he asked, after a brief pause.

"It is," Cecil glanced again at him, and angry as she was, her woman's heart bade her add, more gently, "We were good friends before this—don't force me to break it all thus."

He turned with a smouldering smile.

"You did not know that the little dark room had another occupant last night, and that the pretty tableau, where you played the part of Juliet to a tender Romeo, had a select and appreciative audience—of one!"

She looked at him, her eyes dilating with wonderment, and then rose, gathering her berous about her in cold silence. She

thought he must be intoxicated; it was the only explanation for such ungentlemanly conduct.

"Wait, Cecil!" And he laid an imperious hand on her arm. "I have a warning to give you. You are very happy, perhaps in feeling that handsome, courtly Percie Lennox has asked for your hand. It's just possible that Commodore Dare may not appreciate the honor quite as highly when he finds that his son-in-law in prospective is a forger!"

Cecil turned suddenly—her face lit with passion, her delicate features quivering with disdain. "Go, sir! It is unnecessary to add slander and falsehood to your lordly and chivalrous manner of asking favors."

"My poor Cecil," he said, passing from imperiousness to an affectation of pity that was doubly galling, "it is hard to believe that so gallant a 'Hotspur' would stoop to such an action—the aristocratic Lennox place himself on a par with John Jones, the common felon. But I always bring proofs in cases of this sort; do you know that hand and crest?"

Cecil took the papers he held towards her. One was a French draft for six thousand francs, and signed "Jasper Harold;" the other, a note of six lines, with the well-known "H. Percie Lennox" as signature, and on the seal the lion rampant, the unmistakable Lennox crest. She read the note over twice.

"MY DEAR CLIVE,—God knows, I thank you and your uncle for your mercy! I can trust to your generosity to destroy the fatal check, and I enclose herewith my own, for the balance due you. If my American draft had come one steamer earlier I should never have been tempted to commit the crime."

Even then the trusting, brave girl refused to entertain so monstrous a charge against her lover. Cecil thrust the papers into Harold's hand with a gesture that was almost queenly.

"Your story?" she said briefly.

"Not a very long one," he said, carelessly. "We were abroad together, two years ago, you know, and Lennox lived *en prince* in Paris for six months. That was nothing, but he gambled atrociously. My uncle, who lived in Paris at that time, was in the habit of receiving Percie's American drafts, which Mrs. Lennox sent subject to Jasper Harold's endorsement. One evening Percie lost at the gaming table seven thousand francs to a young French duc, and having but a thousand in his note-book, came to my uncle for the balance. We were aware of Lennox's excesses, and by my advice Uncle Jasper refused to advance such a sum until he received advices from America. Lennox flung himself out of the house in one of his furious rages, and two days after, my uncle's banker sent him that precious bit of paper I had the honor of giving you. There was some slight irregularity in it, which induced them to bring it for inspection. Uncle Jasper passed the check and paid the amount, and when I called on Lennox he admitted, with great appearance of penitence, that he had drawn the forged check. He sent me the note afterward, foolish boy, with the money for my uncle."

Harold paused; Cecil sat motionless and pallid as marble.

"And now you will ask me, doubtless, why I take the thankless task of making myself his accuser by reviving the scandal. I am slow to form a determination, but when once formed, you might as well try to stop yonder foaming breaker with your slender hand as to stem my will. That fair-haired boy has crossed my path, and won the love of the only woman I ever desired to possess; but, by heavens! he shall cross me no more. Accept my offer, Cecil, and I will tear up these evidences of guilt and throw them into the ocean; refuse me and I'll blast his reputation forever! It makes little difference that the sin was condoned—that he committed it will be enough to stain the haughty Lennox name."

"Have you no pity?" she said, in a faint agonized whisper.

"Not where winning you is concerned, my queenly, beautiful Cecil!"

She drew her hand away from him as if the touch stung her; not for herself would she ask mercy at his hands, but Percie—her own young lover!

"What harm has he ever done you? Spare him this, and ask of me—what you will!"

The last words were almost inaudible. With a gesture of exultation Harold bent his evil face close to hers, but he was too haughty in his triumph. Had she, Cecil Dare, fallen so low as this? And with the

thought she struck his lips with her slender hand and sprang to her feet. Slowly the flashing light came back to her great soft eyes, and her voice gathered its strength and clearness as she spoke:

"I have asked you for pity, I have implored mercy from a stone, but you may carry out your worst vengeance before I will stoop to the ignominy of your caress. You gave me your ultimatum—now hear mine. Spare Percie Lennox, let that disgraceful secret lie buried in the oblivion from which your fiendlike malice has snatched it, and I pledge you my word of honor that I will never marry him. But in the same breath I tell you boldly that your presumptuous hand shall never fetter me, nor will I ever owe home or name to so pitiful a traitor. Shame upon you that you betrayed a heart that trusted to your generosity to destroy the proofs you have hoarded! Wait!—for he burst into a savage oath—"you have not heard me out. If you are not satisfied with making my life desolate, and declare, in your baffled rage, that unless I wed you the story will be proclaimed to the world, then I answer that, so surely as you blast my lover's name with crime, I take my place by his side and suffer with him, caring for no humiliation, with my hand in his!"

Harold's fierce eyes glittered with mingled hatred and admiration at this scornful defiance rang out above the noise of the breaking waves. He had played his cards with consummate skill and daring, but he counted too surely upon girlish cowardice and a woman's plastic will. He knew nothing of the gallant spirit that had descended from the proud old Norman knights, and throbbed so hotly now in Cecil's bosom; he thought to terrify and subdue her, and he had almost succeeded. Perhaps he had never loved her so madly as at the moment when he thought he had lost her, for he knew that the last was no empty boast; that, as she said, if his act drove her to extremity, she would cling to her lover through all.

I might add that he never loved her so intensely, for, notwithstanding his unscrupulous method of using all means to carry out his plans, there was a chord of bold hardihood in the man that compelled him to admire Cecil's dauntless resolution, and for a moment he faltered in his cruel purpose; for a moment he half resolved to let her conquer, were it only to see the soft eyes smile gratefully upon him, and feel the little hand clasp his in friendship again. But the brief impulse passed as he saw a look of hope on her face.

"You are a grand creature," he said with reluctant justice. "And I have lost all! So be it; as long as you and Lennox are separated, he is safe from me. But what warrant have I that at some future time you may—"

"My word is passed," she interrupted, hotly. "Our conversation is ended."

"When will you—" he half hesitated at the additional cruelty. She became white as death. She drove back the bitter tears, determined that her enemy should not see her weep.

"Enough! Leave that to me; and O Clive Harold, may God deal with you as you keep faith with me this day!" And, turning away, she left him standing on the beach.

Cecil clenched her hands till the rosy nails bruised the fair white palms, and wished, for one brief second, that she could plunge down into the blue smiling ocean, away from the cruel sunlight. In that short half hour she had buried her sunny girlhood, and now there lay before her a woman's path of trial. How could she ever tell Percie! Could she ever look up in his face and tell him that she knew his dishonor? No, the sacrifice must be all her own; it would be but an additional pang for him to know this afternoon's history. The swift fiery blood that gave him his name of "Hotspur" would hold Harold's life poor revenge for having stained his honor in her sight. Better that he should think her false, fickle! and the first moan that had passed Cecil Dare's lips shook them then, as she thought how another might come to fill her place in Percie's heart. She went up to her own room, and locked the door upon Flora and her aunt, looking at her watch as she sat down on the floor and laid her head against the cushion of a chair. Two hours before Percie would be back—two hours in which to bury her love and hope. Was it years since she had lain on this bed with a happy joyous heart? Many women have seen fond dreams sink down into darkness, but few made so little moan as Cecil. The torture was as keen, but the wound bled

inwardly; the only outward sign of her agony was her colorless lips and the mute anguish of her eyes. She even smoothed the brown braids, and chose another cravat before going down stairs. Women do such things mechanically, and a silken bodice has often been neatly laced over a breaking heart, and will continue to be so to the end of time, no doubt.

Upon coming up from the pier, Percie found Cecil sitting on the piazza with Flora.

"Late, am I not?" said he, gayly. "There is so little wind that I thought the sun would be down before we landed. Are you ready, Miss Cecil?"

"Where are you going?" asked Flora.

"Up to see the sun set and the lamps lit in the lighthouse. Miss Cecil, I don't wish to hurry you, but unless you get across that soft sand at a more rapid rate than usual, we shall not be half way up before old Sol sinks into darkness."

"Had you a pleasant sail?" said she, as they hurried along toward the lighthouse, trying to make her voice sound as free and blithe as usual.

"Rather, but I was wishing myself back with you. You look a little pale and weary; is anything the matter, darling?"

Cecil was thankful that the appearance of the lighthouse-keeper prevented her answering.

"Come long said the man; 'you've got 'bout five minutes to travel up them stairs. Do ye think ye can do it young lady?'"

Cecil smiled.

"Let me help you; that primitive specimen has enough to do in taking care of his lantern." And Percie slipped an arm around Cecil's waist cleverly, and half lifted her up the stairs. Her heart swelled almost to bursting, and a sob escaped her.

"Are you ill?" with some alarm. She shook her head, but he paused for a few seconds to caress her hair and brow, and that delay cost them the sunset; for when they reached the top the keeper was lighting the lamps, and the sun shedding its last ruddy beams on the water. The view was beautiful, and they stood for a few moments looking at it silently.

"I am going down to eat my supper," said the keeper, addressing Percie, "and if you and the young lady want to stay awhile longer, I'm agreeable, only jest holler out to me when you come down."

"All right," said Percie; "here's a chair for you, Cecil, and a cushion for me," throwing it down at her feet, and stretching his graceful figure lazily at full length.

Cecil tried to steady her whirling brain; then she essayed to speak, and her courage failed her. Better do it suddenly, perhaps. Continued.

A Child Eaten by Rats.

An infant child, whose parents live in a house on the corner of Gold and Wells streets, was left alone by its mother for a few minutes. During her absence the child was attacked by rats, which inflicted various bites upon its head, face, mouth and arms. One mouthful, a choice bit, had been bitten out of the child's gums; evidences of nibbling around the lips, and other parts of the face, were plenty. In places the rat or rats had evidently sucked hard on the flesh, as was disclosed by the red and swollen spots with marks of teeth in the middle. Rats appear to abound in the house where this occurred. The family, who rushed in alarm for a surgeon, told him that the rats or his wife have to get up two or three times every night to drive off these marauders, who come in troops and legions, and render sleeping uncomfortable, if not actually unsafe.—*Hartford Times.*

A Singular Incident.

A short time ago a tube for a well was being sunk on the farm of Jacob Young, in Noble county, Ind., on the highest point of land between Chicago and Toledo. When it had reached a depth of fifty-three feet a test was made for water, but instead of water a current of pure air rushed out from the tube and continued with a steady flow for five days, with such force that the noise made by it could be heard at a distance of several rods. It then ceased, and the air began to flow into the tube with equal velocity. While the current was issuing from the tube fire dropped to the bottom of it continued to burn brightly.

Dr. Deems authorizes the announcement that Commodore Vanderbilt has given five hundred thousand dollars to Bishop M'Tyre of the Southern Methodist Church to establish a University in Tennessee.