"I WILL IF YOU WILL."

THE Kay House is a pleasant little hotel, standing half way up the side of the mountain in New Hampshire.

In the parlor there, one July evening, were four people—Mrs. St. John and her daughter Elly, Miss Emily May and Mr. Millburn. As Elly St. John went to the piano, these two last slipped out on the balcony, and stood listening as Elly sung:

"Could we forget, could we forget!
Oh that Lethe were running yet,
The past should fade like a morning dream,
In a single drop of the holy stream.
Ah! we know what you would say,
But we are too tired to hope or pray;
For, hurt with carelessness jar and fret,
Body and soul cannot forget.

"Can they forget, will they forget
When they shall reach the boundary set,—
When with the final pang and strain
They are parted never to meet again?
Ever to them shall rest be given,
Senseless in earth, or happy in Heaven?
That which has been it might be yet
If we could only learn to forget;
But the stars shall cease to rise and set,
And fall from Heaven ere we forget."

Elly sung with an intensity and pathos which borrowed none of its force from within, for she was a good-natured, inconsequent sort of girl, who had never had a trouble in her life. The gift of musical expression is often quite independent of feeling or experience. Elly's music hurt Emily cruelly, and stirred and roused the old sorrow which had but just begun to fall asleep for a little. She had loved deeply and fondly a man who had grown tired of her and left her, because he was greatly her inferior.

Much as she suffered, I rejoiced when her engagement with Lewis Leighton was broken. I had known Lewis from his earliest childhood, and I had always disliked him as a selfish, conceited prig. The last I heard of him, he had turned Catholic, and joined the Jesuits; and I only hope he got well snubbed during his novitiate. Had Miss May married him, her disappointment would have been unspeakably greater than it was. As she leaned over the balcony while Elly sung, and looked out into shadows and starlight, her heart was wrung as with the first anguish of loss, the sickening sense of her own blind infatuation. "Oh God!" she said to herself, "when will the bitterness of this death be past?" Then she became conscious that Mr. Millburn was speaking to her; but he had more than half finished what he had to say before she realized that he was asking her to be his wife.

He spoke at a very unfortunate moment. He and Emily had been very good friends that summer. They had wandered in the woods, ascended Mount Washington, and been to Glen Ellis together. She had liked him, but she never dreamed of him as a lover, and when he presented himself in that light she was shocked, and statled, and a little provoked.

"Oh hush!" she said sharply. "I never can be—never!"

"Do you then dislike me so much?" said Evert Millburn, trying very hard to speak very quietly.

"No," she said making an effort to collect her thoughts. "I have liked you—you have been good to me; but all the love I had to give is dead and buried, and there is no resurrection."

He made no answer; but she felt that she had hurt him.

"I am very sorry," she faltered; "I never meant—"

"I understand," he said quickly. "It is no one's fault but my own. Good-night." And they touched hands and parted.

Evert went up to his own room, where his friend, Dick Bush, was sitting in the dark. Dick was a boy of nineteen. He had been trying to work his way through college, and had worn himself out in the effort, and Mr. Millburn had brought him to the mountains for his vacation. Dick made a hero of Evert, and he had been mortally jealous of Emily May.

"Dick," said Mr. Millburn, after a little, "we will go over to the Glen to-morrow."

And then Dick understood the case, and mentally abused Miss May as "a cold-hearted flirt," which epithet she did not in the least deserve.

Evert and Dick went away early in the morning. Emily heard the stage drive away, and turned her face to her pillow, and thought bitterly of the horrible perverseness of things in this world.

She knew that Evert was good, and manly, and sensible. He was in a fair way to win reputation at the bar, and, if not just handsome, was attractive and gentlemanly.

"There are dozens who would be proud and happy to accept his love; and nothing would do but that he must throw it away on me," thought Emily impatiently. "But it's never worth while to pity men very much. They mostly get over their troubles very easily, if there is no money lost." From which it may be inferred that Miss May was perhaps a bit of a cynic.

Emily May lived with her mother, in an inland town in New York. She had a little property of her own, and, with what she could earn by her pen, she managed to dress herself, pay for a summer's journey now and then, and keep her own house over her head.

It was her way to look after her sick neighbors, poor or not; to visit, now and then, at the hospital and the county house, and do what her hand found to do. She made no fuss, and laid down no rules, and was under no ecclesiastical "direction" in particular; but I am inclined to think she was as useful and far more agreeable, than if she had made herself hideous in a poke bonnet, and committed mental suicide.

When her holiday was over that summer, she came home, and settled quietly down to her work.

She was busy at her desk, one day in October, when a carriage drove rapidly up the street, and stopped at the door, and Dick Bush jumped hurriedly out, and rang the bell. Emily went to the door herself, upon which Dick's hurry seemed suddenly to subside; and when he came into the parlor, he appeared to find great difficulty in expressing himself, and Emily, greatly wondering, asked after his friend Mr. Millburn.

Dick's tongue was loosed.

"Oh, Miss May," he said, with a shaking voice, Evert is dying."

"Where? How?" said Emily, startled, and sincerely sorry.

Now Dick had been rather melodramatically inclined. He had meant to act like a hero of a lady's novel, and administer a severely inflexible reproof to the woman who had trifled with Evert; but in Miss Mays presence he found this plan impracticable, and wisely refrained.

"He went out shooting with a fool of a boy, and he, the boy, fired wild, and Evert was badly hurt, and fever set in; and oh! Miss May he keeps asking for you, and he won't be quiet; and the doctor said, if you could you ought to come, for it might make a difference. There's his note, and Mrs. Millburn's."

The doctor wrote, succinctly, that, considering the state of the case, Miss May's presence might possibly keep the patient quieter, which was all important. Mrs. Millburn's note was an incoherent blotted epistle, begging this unknown young lady to come and save her boy.

Emily could not refuse; her mother hurried her off, and in two hours she was seated beside Dick, on her way to Springfield. Her reflections were not pleasant. Every one would talk, and suppose there was a romance. Elly St. John would be sure to know about it, and Elly was such a little chatter-box; and to try to make a mystery of the matter would be still worse.

Then she said "nothing to wear." And how should she get along with Evert's mother and sister? And who would take the Bible class on Sunday? And what was to become of her little book promised for "the spring trade?"

"I dare say its all nonsense his wanting me," she thought. "People never mean what they say in fever. I remember Pat Murphy insisting that he would have a hippopotamus "handy in the house;" and if Mr. Millburn comes to himself, how horrible embarrassing it will be!"

On the whole, Miss May's feelings were rather those of vexation than of romance.

They rode all night, and when Emily reached the door of the handsome old-fashioned house in Springfield, she was conscious of "looking like a fright," and wished herself anywhere else.

The door was no sooner opened than she was embraced by a little old lady in black, and a pretty girl in an elegant morning dress. Both were in tears, and had evidently been for some time on the verge of hysterics; and Emily at once set them down as "the sort of women who are never of any use."

"Oh, my dear! It is so good of you! So very good of you!" said Mrs. Millburn.

"I am sure you will be his guardian angel," said sentimental Hatty.

"Not at all. Mr. Millburn and I were very good friends, and I shall be very glad if I can do him any good," said Emily, in a very matter-of-course tone and then the doctor made his appearance, and begged her to come up stairs.

"If he could be kept quiet, there might be a chance for him," said the doctor; "but so much depends on nursing"—and the doctor ended with an expressive silence. Evert was moaning and sobbing, and begging that some one would send Emily May with "one drop of water."

The nurse, who, to Emily's critical eyes looked anything but capable, was fussing over him in a way that was enough in itself to drive a sane person mad. Emily poured out a goblet of water with a steady hand, and as the ice tinkled against the side of the glass she held it to his lips.

"There is water," she said, in her ordinary sweet, cheery voice. "Now if you will try to be quiet, I will stay with you.

She could not tell whether he recognized her or not, but the nervous, feverish distress and excitement seemed in some measure to subside; and, after a time, he was comparatively quiet.

Now nursing a wounded man in a fever sounds very romantic in a novel; but, in its real details, it is anything but a romantic business.

Emily May, at Evert Millburn's bedside, felt herself in an entirely false position; but she took care of him, for there was nothing else to be done. The nurse went off in a huff with Miss May and the doctor, and Mrs. Millburn and Hatty could only cry and rustle about, and overset things with their dresses. Evert would grow restless as soon as Emily left him, so that the charge, in spite of herself, fell into her hands.

Happily Mrs. Millburn and Hatty were not jealous. On the contrary, they admired Emily extremely, and were very grateful and affectionate.

Before the end of the week, Evert came to himself.

"I have dreamed you were here," he said, with a faint smile. "Now I see it is you, and no phantom."

The delirum had gone, but the doctor said nothing encouraging. Evert insisted on hearing the exact truth; and learned at last that he might possibly live a few days, but not longer.

Then, to Emily's wonder and dismay, Evert entreated that, for the little time there was remaining, she would take his name. His heart was set on this idea, and he pleaded, for what seemed such a useless boon, with a vehemence that seemed likely to hasten the last moments. Mrs. Millburn and Hatty seconded the petition with tears, and were sure that "darling Emily" would not refuse dear Evert's last request.

Emily did what nine women out of ten would have done in the same case, and consented.

"What harm can it do?" she thought, "it is only a mere form, but it gives me the right to be with him to the end, and will prevent any talk; and he is so good, and has loved me so well; and if it comforts him now to think that my name will be Millburn instead of May, why should I refuse?" And then it crossed her mind that a widow's cap would be very becoming to her, and she hated herself because this silly notion had come to her unbidden, and twisted up her hair tight and plain, and went to meet the clergyman in her old black mohair, which had become considerably spotted down the front in the course of her nursing.

The rite was made as short as possible, and then Mrs. Millburn sent every one away, and for two days the bride stood over the bridegroom, and fought against death till she was ready to faint.

The doctor gave up the patient entirely, and ceased to do anything; and, as sometimes happens in like cases, he took a turn for the better; and slowly the balance trembled, the scale inclined, and life had won.

"I'll tell you what it is," said the doctor "your wife has saved your life."

Evert turned his head on the pillow, and looked for Emily; but she had slipped away into the next room, where she sat down, feeling, for the first time, with a strange shock, that she was actually married.—What should she do? What could she say? How could she tell Evert, after all, that she had only come to him as she would have gone to Pat Murphy, if he had sent for her, and consented to that marriage rite as she had lent her silver candlesticks to hold Father Flanagan's blessed candles when Judy Murphy died?

The doctor went down stairs; and presently Mrs. Millburn and Hatty came to her, and forewhelmed her with embraces and gratitude, and a *point applique* set, and fragmentary talk about her "things," and proposals to send for her mother, all mingled together. Emily resolutely put away thought for the time, but she could not help feeling, in an odd surprised way, that she was not unhappy, and despised herself for having a sort of ashamed, furtive interest in those "things," which Mrs. Millburn and Hatty were longing to provide.

A week after that day, Evert was allowed to sit up in his easy chair, white and wan enough, but with a look of returning health and life. Emily was sitting almost with her back to him, looking out into the tossing leafeless branches of the great elm.

"Emily," said Mr. Millburn, at last.

"Yes," she answered quietly, but she did not turn her head.

"Emily, I did not mean to get well."

No answer from Mrs. Millburn.

"I know how much you must feel what has happened. Believe me, I will take no advantage of your goodness; I will set you free as soon as I can. My only wish is to spare you trouble; I will take all blame on myself. I know you are longing to be away; and why should I delay what must come at last? I dare say Dick and Mrs. Macy, the nurse, can do all I need."

"Oh, if you prefer Mrs. Macy's attendance, I am sure it is nothing to me," said Emily, in a remarkably cross manner.

"You are angry with me, but there need be no difficulty, dear. You came away from home so hurriedly that it would be perfectly natural for you to return to your mother now."

But here, to Evert's dismay, Emily hid her face, and began to cry in quite a passionate and petulant fashion. Evert rose with difficulty, and went to her,—it was not more than three steps.

"Do you want to kill yourself?" she said through her sobs, and she took hold of him and made sit down, and then turned away, and laid her head on the window seat.

"What can I do?" he said, distressed.

"It's too bad! Oh, it's *too* bad!" she said in the most unreasonable way.

"I know it Emily. You are as free as though no word had ever passed between us. Do you want to go to-day? I will make it easy for you with mother and Hatty," he said, with a pang.

She went on crying, and then in a minute she said, in a most incoherent fashion.

"I—I *didn't* think I was so *very* disagreeable." The words dropped out one by one between her sobs. "But, of course, if you don't want me.—"

"Emily! What do you mean? *Will* you stay? Will you really try to care for me?" he asked, with a sudden light in his eyes.

"I don't know. I—did think—as matters are, we might try to make the best of it," she said in the faintest whisper, while the color ran to her fingers' end.

"You will?"

"I will if you will," said Mrs. Millburn, with a sweet, shy smile.

And she kept her word.—*From the Aldine for April.*

Turpentine Groves.

The turpentine forests of North Carolina are not dark and gloomy, but on the other hand so thinly wooded as to afford scarcely any shade. The tree from which the turpentine is obtained is known as the long leaved pines, in Georgia, Alabama, and some of the other Southern States; but is only found where the original forest has not been removed. When once cut down it never grows again. If the land is allowed to fall out of cultivation it is followed by a growth of oak, and this in turn is replaced by a pine of an inferior kind. The turpentine pine is tall and straight, from three to five feet in diameter, to a height of forty or fifty feet.

It is without branches except at the top. The turpentine, in its crude state, is obtained by tapping. About a foot from and parallel to the ground a cutting is made with an axe, at the side of the tree, to the depth of six or eight inches high at the outside. In the shelf a pocket is scooped out, capable of containing a quart or two, and the gum is made to collect in it by scarifying the bark triangularly, with a single pointing to the pocket. On large trees as many as three or even four of these cuttings are made, it being found that a strip of bark three inches between them will keep the tree alive.

Each successive year more and more of the bark has to be removed, but even thus a tree lasts usually from fifteen to twenty years. When the pocket has become full of gum, it is barreled and carried away to be distilled.

The turpentine continues a uniform quality through the life of the tree, but the resin, which is the residum after distillation, rapidly deteriorates. The first year's resin is far the best, and is known as 'pale' or "windowglass." The second and third years' is known as "yellow dip."

Common or dark resin is the product of trees worked four years or more. The work of attending the trees is done entirely by negroes, one negro taking charge of a "crop," that is of 10,000 pockets, for which the wages, since the war, have been usually fifteen to twenty dollars per month without board. This year wages have been as high as twenty-five to thirty dollars. "A crop" is estimated to yield about 200 barrels of crude turpentine in a season.

The rent of a crop varies from 150 to 200 dollars. The negroes prefer working in the turpentine woods to any kind of agricultural labor, as the work is better paid, and is more agreeable in itself.

The Doom of a Traitor.

One of the most beautiful examples of highmindedness in duelling was that of the Earl of Balcarras, in his duel with Benedict Arnold the traitor. It will be recollected that part of the reward of that wretched man's treachery was the rank of General in the British army; yet, few, if any, of the officers would associate with him. One day King George II., with Arnold beside him, addressed Lord Balcarras, and asked him if he was not acquainted with General Arnold.

"What, Arnold the traitor?" replied the high-spirited Tory. "No, may it please your Majesty; nor have I any desire to know him."

So crushing an affront could not be passed by in those days. Arnold sent Balcarras a challenge, and, as he held a commission in the army, the nobleman felt that he could not refuse to meet him. They met, and, when the word was given, Arnold fired; but the Earl stood motionless, looking contemptuously at his opponent, whose ball had grazed his cheek.

"My lord," cried Arnold, at length, "are you not going to fire?"

Balcarras elevated his pistol, discharged it in the air, hurled it towards his adversary, with the memorable reply, "No, sir; I leave traitors to the public executioner."

As his lordship had received Arnold's fire without returning it, no further satisfaction could be demanded, according to the rules of duelling which then existed.

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