

... A ... Sailor Lover

By MARGARET DELAND.

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CHAPTER II.
The day after the big three-master, with Donald as mate, dropped down the river, Mary drove down to Mrs. Hayes' with her little cowkin trunk strapped into the back of the buggy. "I'll stay a week," she told her father. But at the end of a week Donald's mother was ill, and somehow the week lengthened into a month. And then Mrs. Hayes said she felt the loneliness more than usual, and if Mary would stay—"just a week or two longer," she pleaded. A week or two meant a month or two; and after that, well, Donald was coming home the middle of December, so what was the use of leaving his mother?

So time went by placidly, without happiness, but with peace; and on Mary's part, with the deepening love which is the strange gift that death sometimes bestows on those whom he robs. Although there had been no words that bound her, she knew that she was bound; and it seemed to her that all the world—her world must know it, too. So when, one winter afternoon, as they were walking down the river road, Dick Wheeler spoke out, and asked her to marry him, her refusal was full of outraged love.

"Perhaps you don't know it, but Donald Hayes and I"—she said, the color hot in her face, her eyes threatening him with a straight look. "Oh," said Dick, blankly; and was silent for a moment, looking with absent eyes at a big cooler coming up the river to the wharves; she was being towed by three dories, and Mary said, nervously, something about its being hard work. Dick did not seem to hear her.



On the River Road.

was somehow an assurance that there had been no heavy storms anywhere else. But Christmas Day came and went; and the old year slipped into the new, and the Samuel P. Jones had not come. Explanations and excuses multiplied; declarations that all was well grew more insistent; instances of delay were repeated over and over; but it was the first of February before news came.

Wrecked off the Azores; it was feared all hands were lost.

"Feared," not known. That was what Mrs. Hayes and Mary said to each other. Everybody knew a dozen instances of sailors picked up in open boats; of desert islands; of drifting rafts. Nor the idea that Don was dead could not be accepted; there are some people one cannot associate with death; it is not appropriate. So Don's mother and sweetheart held on to hope.

Those awful, breathless days of despair, and refusing to despair, and then despair again, were filled to Mary with intense and immediate anxiety about Donald's mother. Mrs. Hayes was very frail at best, and it seemed as if this must kill her; indeed, if Mary had not kept on hoping for her, the whole story died. But little by little she came back to life, and to the acceptance of the fact that Don was dead; and then one day, six months later, hope sprang again into sudden vigor and certainty; a sailor in Plymouth, who had known him, was told by a man who had just come in a merchant steamer, that her had seen Donald Hayes in the street in Calcutta. He had not spoken to him, for he had lost sight of him again, but he had seen him. Through one mouth and another this news came to Seaport, and was brought down to the gray house on the rocks. Mary was just afterward that when she heard it it seemed to her that she should die of joy. Then came the waiting for the letter from Don which must, of course, be on its way. These two, who loved him, guessed with the instinct of women bred by the sea, the whole story of the wreck; the rescue on an outward-bound vessel; the long voyage; the first port Calcutta, and the instant dispatch of letters to them.

"We may hear any day," Mary said; the color had crept back into her face and the light to her eyes; and she was waiting, and waiting, and waiting for Don's letter, light and color waned again. It was months before she whispered to Don's mother the ghastly thought that the sailor had been mistaken, and that Don had not been seen. She said it to be contradicted. And at first it was contradicted sturdily and cheerfully. But by and by they both

grew too wise for self delusion, and dully took up the burden of living again. Fortunately there was no complication of poverty to make Mrs. Hayes more wretched; she had enough money for a decent standard of living; Don's earnings had never been relied upon; they were uncertain at best, and had mostly been put into the Samuel P. Jones. Still, things had to be managed for the old woman, and it came to be a matter of course for Mary to live with her.

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"No," he said, in a low tone, "I didn't know that there was anything settled between you and Don. But, anyhow, its nearly two years since then, and—"

"Do you think that makes any difference?" she flashed out. "Do you think I'm that kind of a girl? If it was twenty years, it would be just the same!"

And poor Dick, abashed, began to say that it would be different if there was any chance, but Mary knew there wasn't; and perhaps, sometime—

"Chance?" she cried, the tears brimming over suddenly. "No, there's no chance; I know that. But do you suppose I'm—I'm faithful just because he might come back?"

"Well, if you had any hope," the young man insisted, "of course I would understand; but you haven't; and, oh, Mary, won't you just let me care for you?" "I'll be satisfied with that, if you'll just take me!"

"I'll never take you, Dick Wheeler," she said, panting and nearly crying, "and—and don't you ever say any such thing to me again!" As she spoke she flew suddenly ahead along the road, and left Dick looking dejectedly after her. He had meant to "see her home," but after such a rebuff he had to turn back or at least appear to turn back. He really skulked doggedly behind her, for he couldn't let her go down the lonely road in the darkness.

Mary's face was still flushed when she came into the kitchen, and found Mrs. Hayes trotting about, making biscuits for tea. The little old woman looked at her keenly for a moment; she had her suspicions and her hopes. Dick Wheeler had stepped in earlier in the afternoon to ask how she did—"to pass the time of day," Mrs. Hayes said; and in a casual way had asked when Mary would be in. "He wants to meet her, and walk home with her," she chuckled to herself; "well, well, that's right. That's how it ought to be. I hope the child will take him."

There was a curious inconsistency about Don's mother. She loved Mary for her faithfulness to Don, but—why should the girl lose a good chance? She had no small fears of any discomfort to herself, any neglect—she knew Mary! So, with the best will in the world, she tried to further Dick's suit. She talked about him a good deal; his money, his providence, his good heart, and the fine bow window he had built in his dining room.

"Dick, he's all for use and comfort, and his wife," she reminded Mary with vast significance, "will be more comfortable than most folks. She won't have to carry water in from the well, the way you do here; he's got it running in the kitchen!"

"There are worse things than carrying in the water from the well," Mary said, decidedly; and Mrs. Hayes said to herself, disappointedly: "There! well, she is set! Poor Dick, I guess there ain't no chance for him."

(To Be Continued.)

SMILE PROVOKERS.
Sweet girl—Papa says you can't afford to marry. Aunt Youth—Nonsense! I can get a preacher to perform the ceremony for you. How foolish Papa is!—New York Weekly.

The doctor had presented his bill and it was large. "Humph!" said Skidnint. "This is a pretty big charge." "No doubt," said the doctor, "considering the value of the life I saved; but it goes."—Harper's Bazar.

He—The Bible has some excellent reading in it, speaking from a purely literary standpoint. She—So I have heard; but the fact is, I am so busy all the time that I have never had the time to read it. Why, if you will believe me, I never read "Tribune" until last week.—Boston Transcript.

"What'll we do for news, with all the congressman at home?" said the rumor editor. "I don't know," replied his assistant.

AMONG THE FLOWERS.

Words by H. G. ALLAIRE.

HARRY A. STEWART.

Musical score for "Among the Flowers" with lyrics and musical notation.

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RAILROAD TIME-TABLES

Central Railroad of New Jersey.
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TIME TABLE IN EFFECT MARCH 23, 1895.

Del., Lack. and Western.
Trains leave Scranton as follows: Express for New York, etc. all points East, 1:40, 2:40, 3:40, 4:40 and 5:45 a.m.; 12:55 and 1:55 p.m.

LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD

Nov. 15, 1894.
Train leaves Scranton for Philadelphia and New York via D. & H. R. R. at 7:45 a.m., 12:05, 2:25 and 11:25 p.m.

DELAWARE AND HUDSON RAILROAD

Commuting Monday, day, July 25, all trains will arrive at New Lackawanna at 10:00 a.m.

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Trains leave Scranton for New York and intermediate points on the Erie railroad at 6:45 a.m. and 3:34 p.m.

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SMILE PROVOKERS.

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