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A Year Ago.

We trod the clover-blossoms under foot Beneath the hawthorn's scented summer snow We breathed the spicy air of balmy June A year ago. We stood, hand-clasped, beneath the orchid-boughs, While twilight silvered the soft, whispering wave; We watched the falling stars of summer nights A year ago. We saw the winter sunrise flush the skies And brighten all the crystal fairy-land; We saw the crimson sunset stain the snow A year ago. We saw the stars in winter splendor burn, While a pale crescent trembled in the west; And all the northern heavens were shot with fire A year ago. I walk the sodden autumn ways alone, While yellowing leaves fall sadly, Are they those Which robed with rose and gold the waving woods A year ago? I stand alone beneath the laden skies, Beside the millen waves. Did their blue depths And shining ripples give back mirth for mirth A year ago? Is Nature changed? or is the change in me? Or is all change summed in that word "alone?" Or that dead past whose requiem is the moan, A year ago? A year ago we faced the coming years Together—hoping—loving. I remain, Remembering love that ended, hope that died, A year ago? —Appleton's Journal.

MY MISS LAURA.

When twelve years old my mother's death made me an orphan, poor and friendless. Miss Laura De Neale found me one day, crying bitterly, took compassion on me and brought me to her home. Miss Laura's mother was an invalid and the care of the house devolved upon Miss Knox, the housekeeper. I had been a year when the Rev. Mr. Waldron, the rector of St. Paul's, became a frequent visitor, and at last Miss Laura's accepted lover. He was not handsome, but yet a man of splendid presence; and, because of his love for my mistress, and for his commanding figure and noble bearing, I came to look up to him with reverence, almost with worship. Four years slipped by. One day Miss Knox told me that Miss Laura's cousin, Philip Lansing, had returned from abroad. She also informed me that Miss Laura had once been lovers; that he wanted her to run off, but she refused. He was heir to millions and bound body and soul to his uncle Miss Laura was too poor to please this old man, and having a spirit of her own she refused to marry the nephew. The weeks passed on. I began to notice a change in Miss Laura. She had not been wont to sit brooding over her thoughts, but she did now. I noticed that her cousin often called in the early morning, and that she spent much time with him; that when he had gone, she was pale, preoccupied—in fact, entirely unlike herself. I also saw that she went oftener to her money desk, and something weighed upon her spirits; that now and then she went out in a sort of disguise; but I dared not even conjecture, though my mind was full of terrible misgivings. One night I sat up waiting for her till the clock struck eleven. I knew the rector had gone sometime before, and was wondering what had become of Miss Laura, when the door flew open and she came in. Her face was startlingly pale, and her eyes, unnaturally large, seemed to scintillate with quick fiery flashes. For a moment I was frightened, but at sight of me her countenance changed. She nodded and smiled in her own pretty fashion; then, going straight to the mirror, she suddenly gloomed again, and began, in an absorbed way, to pull the pins out of her hair. "Won't you let me do that for you, Miss Laura?" I asked. "Not now—I'm in a hurry; my hair is so heavy! it hurts me—my head has ached all the evening. You may do it up for the night—there! now, my dressing-gown, child—the easy-chair—that is comfortable. I don't often keep you up so late, Renie. How cold your hands are!" It was not that my hands were cold—it was that her head was hot, it throbbled heavily at the temples, and it almost seemed as if the thick, warm masses of golden brown hair that fell over her forehead, were in rich, unrestrained luxuriance. At length the long coil was combed and carefully fastened just above the nape of the shapely neck. "That will do," she said, almost impatiently, for I lingered. "I can get along myself now." Then I heard one quick, passionate sob, but her face was hidden from me, for she had thrown both arms over her head, and the drapery concealed her features. I left her reluctantly, feeling that trouble had come—trouble between my beautiful mistress and the rector of St. Paul's. Was it on account of her handsome cousin? Vainly I tried to sleep. The ghostly fancy that she was sobbing on the other side of the wall haunted me. What if she still loved Philip Lansing? The grave, proud face of Mr. Waldron seemed to lighten in its disdain as I caught myself acting the part of Miss Laura in an imaginary dramatic

episode, he learning the fact that the woman he loved had been wooed, almost won, and thrown aside, and that still her heart throbbled at sight of her old lover. On awaking the following morning, I found the sun shining broadly in my room. Miss Laura was an early riser, and must have rung for me. Hastily dressing, I hurried to her room. She was up, sitting in the great arm-chair listlessly, like one dreaming with open eyes. "Did you ring for me?" I asked. "I? Yes. I believe I did," she replied, with a start. "Dress me as quickly as you can," she added, with forced quiet; "I will have my breakfast brought up stairs. You can make some excuse to Miss Knox—say I am not well, and I really am not. I don't care at all about breakfast, but, as I am going out, I suppose I had better eat something." I dressed her, and had a tray with coffee and toast sent up. When she had finished, she summoned me again. "Renie, go put on your plainest wraps," she said, "and a thick veil, and wait for me in the library. I want you to go out with me this morning." Wondering at her manner, so quiet and self-contained, so almost humble, more than at the message, I arrayed myself in a waterproof cloak, and drew a thick veil closely over my hat, and waited for her as she had directed. She came in presently, habited almost like a nun. I could see how white her face was under the muffer she had drawn across it. Placing in my care a parcel and a small basket, she led the way, leaving word with a servant that she might not be back to luncheon. That her errand, whatever it was, was a secret one, I knew by her manner, for she was nervous, and evidently suffering from some inward agitation. For several squares we walked along silently, and, on turning the corner of an obscure street, she was joined by a gentleman whose face I did not see at first, but whose firm, elegant figure was unfamiliar to me. I heard Miss Laura say, in answer to some low-voiced remark: "I can trust her—there's no risk, Philip." So this was the handsome cousin! Oppressed with almost overpowering anxiety, I fell back a step or two, and followed slowly and unwillingly. On and on they went together, talking but little, and in low tones, till they had reached the lower plane, locally and morally, of the city. The house before which we stopped at last was somewhat different from its surroundings. It was flanked on one side by a grim, deserted-looking warehouse; on the other by an old Dutch church, whose few leaning, moss-covered headstones, in the small graveyard in front, seemed sinking with age into the yielding turf. The house was grim and faded, the paint dingy, and the front door full of seams and cracks; but it had the redeeming quality of seclusion, for it sat far back from the street, overlooking a narrow garden-plot. One window over the hall-door was draped with a scant lace curtain, and a pot of geraniums bloomed underneath on the sill. The young man, with a few eager, whispered words to Miss Laura, unlocked the door with a key which he took from his pocket, and we entered a long, cheerless hall, and from there the dreary parlor, in which there was no vestige of furniture save two wooden chairs. "Sit down, Renie," said Miss Laura, face and manner preoccupied; "I will take the things, and you will wait for me here; I shan't be gone long." My heart sank as she disappeared, leaving me alone with my thoughts. Already I had heard the tread of a man's foot up stairs, and soon, in addition, the closing of the door above, and a light footstep. Never had I so keenly experienced the dread of utter desolation as now while I sat in that deserted room. Doubtless children had played in it, and light hearts sung, for it had evidently been a cheerful home once, as the defaced ornamentation and faded frescoing gave evidence of former beauty. But now the plastering was broken, the walls were black with cobwebs, and the windows quite crusted with dirt. It was evident that the place had been long unoccupied. I had seated myself, when a step on the stairs and the opening of the door caused me to spring up in terror. Philip Lansing stood on the threshold, hat in hand, and his face absolutely lighted up the room. It was, as I had heard, radiantly beautiful, with haunting dark eyes all the more fascinating that their expression at that moment was intensely sad. "Come, Renie," said a voice outside. I met Miss Laura in the hall. She handed me a basket, that seemed heavier than the one I had brought. "Renie, this is my cousin, Mr. Philip Lansing," she said. "He has lately returned from abroad—and this, Philip, is the little protege I told you about." Mr. Philip condescended to touch his hat, and we went outside into the little yard. Mr. Philip accompanied us to the corner, and there stopped. "Had I not better get you a carriage?" he asked. "No, indeed, Philip. I had much rather walk," she answered. "Come up soon—mamma likes to see you," she added, with, I thought only an assumption of ease. We walked home rapidly, and in silence. Miss Laura seemed plunged in deep and painful thought. It was past lunch-time when we arrived, but a plate of cake, and a goblet of milk, stood

ready for Miss Laura on the table in her room. "Renie," Miss Laura said, "you will oblige me if you will eat my luncheon for me. My head aches, and I am going to lie down." I drank the milk, but was not hungry, and took the tray back to the kitchen. I fancied that even the under-servants looked at me suspiciously, and hurried back to my room. It was quite late when Miss Laura rose—almost dinner-time, in fact. I dressed her hair, and was just putting on the finishing touches when she spoke abruptly: "Don't you think my cousin fine-looking?" "He is handsome, Miss Laura," I said. "The handsomest man I ever saw." "That's the general verdict," she replied. "But," I added, eagerly, "I don't like his face; there are beautiful faces, I suppose, one can't like. Now, Mr. Waldron—" "You surely don't call him handsome?" she said, with a soft laugh, that I did not quite like; then, in an undertone: "Handsome is that handsome does. Well, poor fellow! poor Philip!" she added, with a sigh that I could not help resenting, and fell into a fit of musing. Just before the bell rang for dinner a servant came in with a note and a great armful of water-lilies. How lovely they were! Their fragrance filled the room. In an instant Miss Laura's eyes were sparkling. She tore open the note with eager fingers, read it once, twice—smiled, then came a burst like sunshine over her face. "Oh, the sweet, sweet things!" she cried, in an ecstasy. "I am so fond of them! Poor Philip! poor—" Her voice sank to a murmur. How could I think otherwise than that note and flowers came from her handsome cousin, as she placed the lilies in a basin of water, where, with their lustrous leaves and long, coiling stems, they formed a beautiful picture? Philip came after dinner on the following day. A bright, well-dressed, elegant and jubilant young gentleman—the change was great from Philip in a slouched hat to Philip in all the glory of a fashionable suit. His ease of manner, grace, beauty of form, red merrily laugh, made him almost irresistible. I sat in the little alcove leading from the general sitting-room, busy with some old lace I had been mending for Miss Laura, and I could see them both by inclining my head a little. They were a glorious pair, but it seemed to me that Philip had no right there—he was taking Mr. Waldron's place, and a sudden jealousy sprang up in my heart, which changed almost to terror when the door opened and the rector of St. Paul's stood on the threshold. That same light that had come into her face when she received the lilies, flashed over it again, for in the interim I caught one glance of her as she rose to meet Mr. Waldron. I fancied there was, also, a timid, beseeching look in her soft eyes as she came forward, with outstretched hand, to meet him, but the rector advanced slowly, and greeted Philip to whom he was presented, courteously but coldly, while Miss Laura divided her attentions between the two, and Philip addressed her with more than cousinly freedom. As for myself, I tried to think of manifold excuses for my mistress. I would not allow that the sweet girl at whose shrine I worshipped was a coquette; and still—at least so it seemed to me, who sat under protest—her manner grew colder and yet more distant toward the rector. He seemed to notice the gradual alteration, for an hour had scarcely elapsed before he took his leave. "So that is Mr. Waldron, the famous rector of old St. Paul's!" I heard Philip say when he had gone. "Yes; how do you like him?" Miss Laura asked with something like eagerness. "He must look imposing in his draperies," Philip replied. "Well, there's no accounting for tastes." The speech seemed to sting her, for she replied, in an altered voice: "That's what I thought yesterday." "Oh, come, now, Laura," he said, "don't be hard on me. If you could have seen Celeste in her tropical home, in her fleecy white muslins, her cheeks tinted with the rich glow of health, you'd alter your opinion. She is not looking at all like herself; in fact, this base climate is killing her. Besides, her face depends upon expression for its beauty. Such horrible chills would make the best complexion sallow." I was all ears. Celeste? who was Celeste? Should I listen unwittingly to some secret? Was I forgotten in my corner? Had I better go? I felt reluctant to face them, having heard so much. "Oh, I didn't mean to depreciate her, Philip—" "Only to punish me for not appreciating your rector—was that it?" interrupted Philip, with a laugh. "But what does a man want of beauty?" and I could see his conscious face, and read the vanity even in his voice. "Surely—but Celeste is pretty, of course, and I hope she will be well soon, poor little homesick stranger! I'm going to send her some lilies that somebody sent me yesterday—part of them, I mean—she came from a land of lilies. Just where did you find her, Philip?" "On the Island of Barbadoes, in one of the coziest nests you can imagine. Poor child! I don't doubt she longs for her native wilds—the orange-trees, the shade-faded bamboos, and her hammock. I was a barbarian to covet her."

"I must see her often," said Laura. "I will go as often as I can." "Thank you; you are so kind and thoughtful. I knew you would like the poor little wife. Sometimes I reproach myself sadly for bringing her here, but what could I do—starve? And we came pretty near it." "O Philip!" said Miss Laura, with a shuddering voice, "so poor as that!" I held my breath. Philip was married, then. It was his wife Miss Laura had been to see that morning. No need to fear for the rector's happiness now—my suspense and suspicion had been both foolish and groundless. "Poor, indeed!" he repeated, most savagely. "Do you know if it had not been for that fifty dollars you lent me, she would have suffered for the necessities of life? And when I went to my uncle, and told him I had lost my money coming over, and almost my life, he made me an allowance of ten dollars a week. What would he say if he knew I had married a woman not worth one penny? It would be total ruin to me if he knew of it; but I am sure, dear cousin, that you will never, by look or word, to your dearest friend whisper the intelligence. I would have kept it a secret, even from you—indeed I would—but that I feared the poor little creature would die if she did not see some friend. Above all, don't whisper it to the priest," he whispered; "I'm afraid of him," and I fancied he drew nearer. "You need not be; he is the soul of honor," and there was a slight shade of contempt in his voice. "But you have promised," he said, eagerly. "And I know how to keep my word," she answered, proudly. After that he was very gay, but I think his manner jarred upon her mood. She proposed that he should go up stairs and see her mother, who had asked for him, and together they left the room. It did not take long for me to gain my own room, where I sat down to revolve things in my mind, coolly and dispassionately. Mr. Waldron had sent her the lilies, and the accompanying note—that I did not doubt. There had probably been some misunderstanding the evening before, and the gift was a peace-offering. The lovers' quarrel, if it had taken so serious a complexion, had been caused in some way by this handsome cousin, who had burdened Miss Laura with his secret. The rector had evidently learned of her former attachment to Philip, and perhaps, being but mortal, was jealous. His brief visit in the afternoon had confirmed me in my opinion, as he generally staid to tea. "Now, Philip should certainly keep away," said Reason and Common-sense. "His place is beside his poor young wife, especially if she is sick; and Miss Laura ought to tell him so." But Philip chose to come, often—at all hours. Philip chose to attend St. Paul's, and show his beautiful Greek profile in Miss Laura's own pew, and I fancied that Mr. Waldron grew uneasy, for certainly Laura's cousin did not act like a Benedict. I am sorry that he gave me occasion to suspect, sometimes, that he was quite mean enough to pique the rector by his lover-like ways toward his cousin. One evening I came down the wide staircase on an errand for Miss Knox. Only the moonlight shone in the hall. Miss Laura stood by the door of entrance, her back toward me, and the words she said came distinctly to my ear. "If you cannot trust me, if you cannot take my simple word, Mr. Waldron, there can be no more between us. If you cannot trust me wholly—and there her voice broke. A low murmur came in response, and he was gone. I was back in Miss Laura's room some time before she came up. Oh, how pale she was, and her eyes wore such a strained, hard look! "Renie," she said, "are you here?" "Why, Miss Laura, don't you see me?" I asked, frightened at her pallor and the way she moved her hands. "No; my head is giddy; it is all dark; it is—my head. Where are you?" I caught and led her to the chair, but as I put her down, she fainted quite away. That was the commencement of a serious illness. For nearly five weeks I sat beside her, listening to her wild, delirious talk, and there I learned how devotedly she had loved the rector of St. Paul's, and that some of the meddling people of her congregation had told him of her clandestine meetings with her cousin. This, with other information of a like nature, and the foolish freedom of her cousin himself, had led to a total disruption. In her grief and anger at his want of confidence in her, she had forbidden him the house. Night and day I did not leave her bedside, till, quite through accident, I learned that Mr. Waldron had been sick also, and was on the eve of a journey to England. "He looks dreadfully; you'd hardly know him for the same man," said my informant; and I knew by her manner that the blame was all laid at Miss Laura's door. I inquired the particulars. If my informant was right, he was to start that very afternoon. My resolution was taken on the instant. Whether my mistress lived or died, whether I was violating a promise or not, I was determined to see the rector of St. Paul's, and tell him all. It took me but a short time to find the rectory—would he be at home? Yes; I was shown into the library. There were trunks and packages in the hall, and a general confusion pervaded the house. Presently Mr. Waldron came in. I was startled, indeed, by the change in his looks.

"I have just come from the sick-bed of Miss Laura De Neale," said I. He stared, made a gesture with his hand across his brow, as if to shade his eyes, and his lips worked. "I heard—that she was ill," he said, slowly; "I am just recovering from sickness myself." "I think, sir, from what I heard, you are laboring under a mistaken idea," I began, rapidly, for fear of my resolution giving way. "You have been wrongly informed with regard to Miss Laura, and in her delirium she revealed her secret. Her cousin Philip Lansing married a poor West India girl in Barbadoes. He is his uncle's heir, but, if the latter hears of this union, he will disinherit Mr. Philip, who is entirely dependent. So her cousin made Miss Laura promise to keep it a secret, and it was her, the poor homesick stranger, Miss Laura has visited by stealth—it was her she sent your lilies to. O sir! you are a minister, and I am a poor girl, but you never should have doubted my Miss Laura, I do dare say that." He stopped me with a quick uplifting of the hand. He did not say one word, but I never shall forget the face he turned toward me. I never saw a countenance change so often in a few seconds as his did. "My good girl, my good friend!" he said, at last, seizing my hand, and his voice was music itself. I knew then all was right. Joy had restored him to his old self; there was no need of that voyage to Europe. After a full minute of silence he asked: "How is she now? how did you leave her?" "They thought she was better," I said. "Thank God for that! When may I see her?" He was very humble now. "I will let you know," I said, and hurried home to her with a heart as light as a feather. And so it came to pass that one day, as she sat supported by pillows, white and shadowy, and more beautiful than she had ever been before in her brightest bloom, I told her that the rector of St. Paul's was below stairs, waiting to see her. A faint flush tinged her cheeks—a tender smile curved her lips. I left the room by one door as he entered by the other. I could not keep from crying, and yet I was very happy. When Miss Laura rang for me two angels could not have looked more blissfully content. And I knew what the pressure of his hand meant as he bade me good by. He will go abroad, after all, but not without Miss Laura. As for her cousin Philip, I trust years may make him wiser, but I pity the poor little stranger who married him for his handsome face. —Appleton's Journal.

Barbers always predict short crops. The gardener's ditty—Beet root to me. A first-rate article for the teeth—Food. "This must be looked into," as the young lady said to the mirror. "Will you love me when I mould?" as the loaf of bread said to the house-keeper. In winter, rugs; In summer, bugs; In sickness, drugs; In adversity, shugs. Somebody prints a book to show how to get "twenty-five cent dinners for families." Now let somebody print a book showing how to get the twenty-five cents. The old story about the little boy who wished that he was built like a hen-coop, so that the breeze could blow right through him, is again traveling the rounds of the press. Angle-worms do not suffer, a naturalist thinks, when put on a fish-hook. The twists and squirming and contortions are made by the hook. Queer case of optical illusion, you see. The man who takes the bitter pill, A very face clearly shows; But he who lingers at the still, Will soon show a rye nose. And if he reads while he imbibes, And knowledge fills his head, Himself and nose, like learned scribes, Will both soon be well read. —N. J. Republican. At Steklesley, Yorkshire, England, lives a man who once assisted in singing the whole of the 119th Psalm, and this is how it is said to have happened. The parson of a church had an invitation to attend a marriage breakfast, and so made his sermon very short in order that he might be punctual. The clerk, however, objected to this way of passing the Sunday, and when the time for singing came gave out the 119th Psalm. The clergyman did not at first notice what was going on, and when he did the musicians were fairly at work and could not be stopped. The air was never lost. The fiddlers wore out their bows and strings, the flute player blew out his front teeth, the clarinet never recovered its tone, and the singers all suffered more or less, but they kept it up to the bitter end and finished at three o'clock in the afternoon, after four hours' hard work. Many of the congregation went home to dinner, and returned in the afternoon to the finish, but the parson won much respect by sticking to his pulpit to the last, and at the conclusion of the dismal performance he dismissed the congregation without a word. Treatment of Sleeplessness. So many persons suffer nowadays from sleeplessness that every contribution to the literature of the subject is of interest. Dr. Ainslie Hollis, in the London Practitioner, maintains that, although the quantity of blood in the brain is diminished during sleep, this diminution is not the sole cause of slumber, for we may have the former without the latter. One of the most efficient means of inducing natural sleep is the application of mustard plasters to the abdomen. Freyer, of Jena, advocates the administration of a freshly made solution of lactate of ardo, or of some milk or whey, on the hypothesis that sleep may be induced by the introduction of the fatigue products of the body. The alkalies and alkaline earths are useful when acid dyspepsia is associated with the insomnia. Electricity has been used in the paresis of the vaso-motor nerves due to an overworked brain. In hot weather, sprinkling the floor of the sleeping apartment with water lessens irritant properties of the air, adding much to the comfort of the sleepers; possibly the quantity of ozone is at the same time increased. When sleep is broken by severe pain, opium or morphia is of value, not only by relieving the pain but by its action in producing anaemia of the cerebral vessels. In the wakefulness due to neuralgia, it is often better to inject a small dose of morphia hypodermically near the branch of the affected nerve, than to administer it by the mouth. It is doubtful whether the bromides possess hypnotic properties, although they undoubtedly act as sedatives on the nervous system, and as such may occasionally induce sleep. Fashion Notes. The new hunting for summer dresses has lace stripes. Yellow, in all its many ugly shades, continues in favor. Alsatian bows are worn in dresses, hats and slippers. Beige-colored net, worked with rosebuds, make pretty summer bonnets. A skillful imitation of a bee is used to decorate costumes intended for garden parties. Organdie muslin plaitings are used on shade hats to give them a dressy appearance. Seaside hats are trimmed with broad gallow, with a gay wing on the left side of the hat. Blouses are much worn, and one of the newest makes is called the "Carmen" blouse. The rough straw braids are very much worn for demi-toilet, and are extremely stylish. Extreme simplicity is affected this season for out-door toilets. Long trains and gay colors are reserved for garden wear. Swinging side pockets of velvet, with silver clasps, are suspended by silver chains to the waistcoat of a outdoor pocket costumes.