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AUTUMN.

Leaves—only dead leaves
That autumn winds have scattered round;
Leaves—only dead leaves
That wither upon the ground;
Shrivelled by frost, and yellow and brown;
Trampled by feet of wayfarers down;
Drenched with rain by night and day;
Rotting, and turning to mire and clay.

Leaves—only dead leaves
That covered the trees in spring with green;
Leaves—only dead leaves
That darkened the summer's sheen;
Weighing down branches to the ground;
Flung their deep, broad shadows around;
Crowning with glory the forest fair,
As the glory of woman's flowing hair,

Hopes—only dead hopes
Torn from the heart by the storms of life;
Hopes—only dead hopes
Killed by sorrow and strife;
Withered and chilled by the cold world's
frown;
Crushed and torn and trampled down;
Like forest leaves 'neath the winter's sky,
The hopes of our young life wither and die.

Hopes—only dead hopes
That budded in life's spring fair and bright;
Hopes—only dead hopes
That make our young hearts light;
Spring will gladden the earth again;
Trees will bud and leaves be green;
Oh, heart! take courage—all nature cries,
Like faith and love, hope never dies.

DORA'S MISTAKE.

BY LAURA M'NALL.

"I AM going to marry you, Dora, and I take you home with me next summer. My pet, my own, we will be as happy all the day as the birds that warble in the woodland," and bending forward the speaker, a young man with blonde curls and grey eyes, gently clasped the waist of the girlish form by his side with his right arm, while his silken mustache swept her red lips with suspicious nearness.

He was a good looking young man, this Dalton Somers, and in spite of the vacillating lines around the mouth, which told of weakness and insincerity, there was a gleam of shrewd intelligence in his eye, giving indication of brain power sufficient to battle successfully with the world. Just now his feelings were concentrated on the object of his love making, and for the time being he was happy in the success of his suit.

Dora Hampton would have been in no wise remarkable to a chance observer. Hundreds of girls passing daily on the street were seemingly as fair and interesting. She had a good complexion, abundant brown hair, and quite pretty large eyes, which shone resplendent with love and trust as she gazed into her lover's face. Hers was a joy too deep for utterance, too sacred for words. Her heart was thrilled and filled with the ineffable sweetness of a first love, noble and true. Her girlish idea of manliness and perfection was realized in the person of the man who stood her avowed lover, and no shadow of future pain or anguish dimmed the sunshine of the moment, which lived in her mind as a pleasant memory long after she found her idol to be merely broken clay.

The sweet humility of her mien, the amiable acceptance of himself, gratified the vanity and conceit of the man. He knew that he had made a conquest which was all his own. A heart fresh and pure had gone forth to him. It was in his power either to crush it and throw it aside, bruised and bleeding, or to guard it with care through life.

To do him justice, he meant to be true to the trust reposed in him, and to be very good and kind to his "little Dora," as he called her; but alas, for good intentions, when not backed up by truth and constancy.

Scarcely three months after their engagements, a lady with a rosier cheek and more congenial mind crossed Dalton Somers' path, and Dora, if not forgotten, was neglected.

Happily the city of N——, in which they resided, was a large one, and there was room for both, even if their paths were divided, and Dora, who, if loving, was also proud, did not hesitate to tell him so, and gave him back his freedom. If her heart was nigh breaking with its load of anguish, when she found only the ashes where she had looked for the flower; if his falsity had turned her love into bitterness and gall, she did not tell him so; she only bade him go and be happy if he could. If she had waited for him to signify his wish to be released, and assented to it reluctantly, he would have been satisfied, no matter what the effect cost her; but to be coolly dismissed by the girl who, a few months before, seemed to love him so dearly, astonished and surprised him.

He indignantly protested against her conduct, and then inconsistently railed at her as being false and inconstant to him. He declared that she was jealous, stubborn and bad tempered, and he knew that she loved him, and always would, even if she married another man.

Dora listened to him quietly, and then repeated as her ultimatum her first decision.

He went forth angry and abashed. There was no apparent change in Dora's life, only she was a little quieter, and be-

gan to develop a taste for literature. People found out that she had not only a mind of a high order, but also sufficient intelligence and brain power to ballast it. She avoided Dalton Somers and seldom saw him, although he threw himself in her way whenever an opportunity presented itself. He seemed to be on the downward road, and rumor was busy with the story of his dissipation.

Dora grew very much ashamed of her love episode, and although her heart was empty and forlorn, congratulated herself on her escape. Her engagement had not been generally known, and her friends supposed it to have been only one of those common flirtations with which society is so fruitful. Now she carefully concealed from her circle of companions the fact that she had ever been acquainted with him.

One day Dora entered the drawing room of a mutual friend where a small party were congregated. Dalton Somers was the topic of conversation. A young man, a stranger to Dora, was addressing the group. He and Somers had been school-mates, and he emphatically declared that Somers was a man without a particle of principle; that there was no good in him, and warming with his subject, no good and pure woman would ever think of associating with him, and that she would degrade herself below the level of a lady in so doing.

A burning blush of shame rushed to Dora's cheek at the thought of the kisses he had rained upon her lips, and she sat miserably untidy even to remain in the presence of this man who had pointed out so thoroughly her own degradation.

But the stranger, Albert Barton, was unaware of the pain he was causing, and after an introduction to Dora, thought her a very lovely and interesting girl.

He was tall, dark and slender, with a heavy silken mustache, which concealed the pride and hauteur about the mouth. In conversation he was affable and agreeable, and well versed in the tender gallantries so acceptable to the ladies. There was, moreover, an air of the truth and earnestness about everything which he did which would convince one that he was no idle trifler in the field of life.

Dora felt drawn to him as by some magnetic power, and found his society a solace to her empty heart.

The admiration seemed to be mutual, and in a very short time developed into a warmer feeling. And it came to pass one beautiful evening, when the moon had silvered the earth with her shining rays, that Albert Barton repeated to Dora almost the same words that Somers had said to her a little more than a year before. Dora remembered with a little feeling of pain that other voice, and a thrill of shame at the weakness of her heart, which could be so emptied and filled again in so short a time crossed over her. She was sure that there was no mistake now, she had found an anchor safe and steadfast. She was proud even of her faith in him. Many women would never have trusted any one again, but she had learned to distinguish the gold from the dross. Her thoughts were interrupted by Barton who said, "Forgive me if I offend you. I do not doubt you, but I want your whole confidence. Have you ever loved before? I know you are young, still you may have had a girlish dream and fancied that you loved some one; tell me, darling."

For a moment Dora communed with herself, had she loved Dalton Somers? No, only her fancy had been touched; an impulse seized her to tell him the whole story, but it vanished instantly at the remembrance of his words, "No good and pure woman would ever think of associating with Dalton Somers, she would degrade herself below the level of a lady by so doing." No, a thousand times no; she could never tell him the disgraceful truth. Her head sank lower on his breast, and her voice was almost inaudible as she answered "no" to his query.

He pressed her closer to him and said, "I am so glad; I want you all to myself, and it is happiness to know that mine are the first lover's kisses that have been pressed upon your lips."

That night Dora's dreams were haunted with restless visions. Now Barton stood above her with uplifted knife, vowing vengeance on her for her deceit; again Somers gazed at her with reproachful eyes. But the morning light banished the shadows and her compunctions or conscience.

They were to be married in a year, and for six months Dora was as happy as a queen; than a shadow fell which nearly marred the happiness of her life. Barton expected some friends on the European steamer and reaching the wharf before time he stood idly gazing around when he felt a touch on his arm; looking, he beheld a man, whom, although seedy and forlorn, he recognized as Dalton Somers.

"How do you do, Barton," he said, holding out a hand which Barton grasped mechanically; "I want to congratulate you. I heard recently that you are going to marry Miss Dora Hampton. Government.

Miss Dora is a nice girl; old sweetheart of mine, you know, and if she hadn't gone back on me I wouldn't have been such a poor shiftless devil as I am now. But it is all in a life time! I suppose she told you all about our engagement."

Engagement! His Dora engaged to that man whom he detested! She had deceived him—promised to be his wife with a lie on her lips.

His first impulse was to knock Somers down, but he restrained himself, wrenched his hand from his grasp, and walked rapidly away.

Somers glanced after him, and muttered "what's the matter with him? He always was odd. I wonder now if she never told him; if she didn't I've had my revenge," and putting his hands in his pockets he sauntered to the nearest restaurant.

As for Barton, when he walked away from the wharf, it seemed to him as if the world had undergone a great change and suddenly become engulfed in darkness; that Dora should have loved this man above all others, and when she solicited her tenderest confidence told him a falsehood, seemed incredible; still he could not believe Somers. He loved Dora almost like his own life, but deceit in the woman he loved and would make his wife he could not forgive.

He was a proud and resolute man, and he mapped out a course which he determined to pursue to the bitter end. He returned to his lodging, packed his clothes and wrote two notes, one to his mother and one to Dora. He kissed Dora's photograph, and then burned it. The first train that went westward carried Albert Barton.

Dora was singing a gay song when his note was handed to her, but when she had finished reading it it fell from her nervous grasp, and she lay prone in a little heap upon the floor. The note ran thus:

DORA—I must say, first, how could you deceive me in regard to Dalton Somers? How could you—with your head on my breast—as my promised wife, deliberately tell me a falsehood; yes, look me in my very face and tell it? You have injured me in a way which I can never forget or forgive. I leave the city on the next train; henceforward we are strangers. May God forgive you; I never can.

ALBERT BARTON.

Dora's mother found her lying on the floor, and for days she was quite ill, but she was finally better. With her returning health she determined to find him even if she had to seek the world over, and on her knees to implore his forgiveness. Bitterly she wept over her folly in not telling him the truth—and if weeping could have palliated her crime her tears would certainly have wiped it out.

She had one clue to aid her in her search. She would go to his mother's. She easily found this good lady, and told her her whole history and the fault she had committed. While Mrs. Barton chided her for not telling the truth, she blamed her son for expressing himself too hastily. She greatly consoled Dora with bright pictures for the future, and promised every assistance in her power. For the present she advised silence. Albert had gone to San Francisco, but when his wrath cooled down and he had time to think, he would repent of his hasty action.

Dora returned home to watch and wait but it was only for a short time. A few weeks after her visit to Mrs. Barton she was surprised to find that lady at her door dressed for a journey. She had received a telegram stating that her son was lying very ill in San Francisco.

Dora begged that she might go, too, and at last wrung a reluctant consent from her mother and Mrs. Barton.

After days of weary travel they reached him, and found him in a situation of greatest danger. He was rapidly sinking, and the physicians said there was no hope. He was continually calling Dora in his delirium. He seemed to recognize her as soon as she took her place by his side, and her presence acted like a narcotic, for after passing her hand across his forehead a few times, he sank into a deep sleep for hours, and when he awoke it was to live.

When he grew strong enough to listen to her, Dora begged his forgiveness, which he readily accorded, calling himself a brute, &c. As soon as he was able to go out they were married. Dora has two children now, a boy and a girl, and above everything else she strives to teach them never to prevaricate in the slightest degree. As for mothers-in-law she says she does not know what other people think of theirs, but hers is the dearest in the world.

A Test of Merit—Tourist—"Are there any inns in this village, my little man?" Small native—"Ees, sir, there be the 'Fox and Lion,' in Middle street, and the 'Cobblers' Arms,' down in the Millend." Tourist—"Which is the best one?" S. N.—"I dunno, sir, but father allus gits drunk at the 'Cobblers.'"—London Fun.

A good place for match makers—The School of Design.

Mock-turtle—Kissing in company and fighting afterward.

MY PROMISE, AND HOW IT WAS KEPT.

THE FIRST time I saw Thornton Kirk I looked upon him as a quiet, middle-aged man, reticent and inclined to moroseness, perhaps, but one in whom I had no interest whatever.

He was the principal of a classical school, about a stone's throw from my father's door and of course quite engrossed with his onerous duties. I was house-keeper, daughter, and companion to my father, and quite as much taken up with my duties as the still man who passed and repassed our gate, every morning, noon and night, was with his.

I can hardly believe it myself, but had I heard, any morning, that Thornton Kirk was dead, that he had met with some sudden shock that had hurried him out of the world, I should only have said, "How sad!" and gone on steadily with my work, without even so much as one regretful sigh in my heart. This was at first, not when I knew him—heaven help me!—as I came to know him afterwards.

He had opened his school in the spring and when Autumn came on, and the evenings began to grow longer, he used to drop in and talk with my father upon all sorts of learned subjects, which I neither understood or cared to understand while I sat quietly at my work; and at last his occasional calls grew to be nightly ones, until my father would as soon have expected to see me missing from my accustomed place, as to have seen eight o'clock arrive without bringing our—to him at least—pleasant neighbor.

"A wonderful man, this Mr. Kirk," my father said to me, as we sat momentarily expecting his footstep in the porch one evening.

"Is he?" I answered quietly. "I am glad you enjoy his visits."

"He must have studied hard all his life, and such a memory as he has! I wonder he was never married."

"A queer wonder, I should think, when he is such a stern harsh man. One would be afraid to love him, lest he should wither one with a look," I answered, laughing.

It seemed so ridiculous to think of any woman smiling into his eyes, and to imagine him in the character of a lover.

"You don't know him then; that is all," my father answered shortly.

He was irritated to have his favorite so misunderstood, as he called it.

In a few moments Mr. Kirk entered; but we had no sooner settled for the evening, than a call came for my father, who was a physician, to visit a patient a mile distant. I thought of course that our visitor would go home; but my father urged him to remain, saying that he would be back in an hour, that he consented, and we were left alone.

I never was so thoroughly embarrassed, and I believe frightened, in my life, as I was to think of that man's being on my hands for an hour. I would sooner have faced a tempest. We had never exchanged a dozen words, apart from the courtesies of the day, and it was absurd to think of my attempting to entertain such a walking dictionary as he was. I could have cried, but I must not; or I could have laughed, but I dared not.

At any rate, I cared nothing for his opinion, which was a blessed comfort to me. So I broke the ice by saying, "I am afraid you will have a dull time of it, Mr. Kirk, for I am as stupid as an owl upon all your 'ologies' and scientific researches; but I can tell you how to make bread, or to knit stockings or anything in that line, if you like."

"And I can read to you a novel, if you like," he said, with an amused look upon his face; "so don't be vexed that I have remained."

My face flushed. He had read my discomfiture, then.

"Not if you will read what I like so much," I said; "but I am afraid you do it to please me, and not yourself."

"What pleases you will please me, and besides, if I can, I want to convince you that I am not a bear that eats people, however barish I may seem."

I laughed heartily.

"In truth I have taken you for one," I answered; "but I give you my hand as a proof that I will think differently after this."

Such a startled earnest look came into his eyes then! It made me tremble, it was so searching.

"If you will, with your hand, promise to be my friend, my true, never-failing friend—which is what I need more than you can dream of—I take it more gladly than I ever took a woman's hand before," he said solemnly.

With that look in his eye, though it half frightened me, I could not resist.

"I promise," I said faintly; "but you will get tired of me when you know me better."

"I have been studying you for months," he answered, as he pressed my hand in his.

That evening was the beginning of a new life for me; and I soon found that he was quite as well versed in the literature which a woman likes as in the more

abstruse which men delight in. He was, from the moment our hands crossed, my friend and helper, in the truest, deepest sense of the word; and I meant to be the same to him. I tried to keep it before my eyes, that it was to be his womanly friend, nothing more, that I was to stand by him always. And I remember of vaguely wishing that some disgrace might come upon him, that I might prove my sincerity by still keeping my vow; but by-and-by, something came into my heart for him which changed me wholly; and because I fought against it with desperate energy, it held me with a closer grasp.

I knew that I loved him. I knew then that, whatever his soul might answer, mine had found its manna, its bread of earthly life. I think I could have killed any one who should dare to come between us; and fear that I had a rival—for what did I know of his life?—was my torment, day and night.

He was so much above me, that I was sure he never would stoop to lift me up beside him; but with an insane hope that I might overtake him, I, too, with my woman's brain, began to climb up the dizzy mountain on which he stood. I pursued the studies which I knew he liked best, and with such energy that I was surprised at myself. A woman does not know what she is capable of doing until her heart wakes to love, and then, fire is not too much for her to walk through, if, in so doing she may reach the heaven which—at least in her imagination—lies beyond.

In the meantime, days, weeks, and months went by, and our lives were outwardly unchanged. I would not have had him know for a thousand worlds, what was in my heart; I should have felt disgraced for ever; and he seemingly did not. He was kind, thoughtful, and attentive, but not more; though sometimes, when our eyes met, there was a look in his which thrilled me through and through.

Of his early life or family I knew nothing; and I would not have asked to save my soul. And it was by the merest accident that I heard one morning in September, that he had been telegraphed for by some one in Lancashire.

"If it should be his intended wife," I said; and without giving myself time to think further, I hurried on my things, and went out for a walk. I was afraid to see him lest I could not keep a strong hand on my heart.

When I returned, I found that he had left a note for me, scrawled upon a piece of paper:—

"I cannot wait to see you, but if I send for you, don't fail me."

Whatever it meant, I had nothing to do but wait; and that I did, trying to keep my nerves steady for whatever might happen.

In a week this telegram came:—

"If you are not afraid, I want you come."

Then the directions where and how to find him.

"I am not afraid and am coming."

To my surprise my father did not object to my journey, but seemed to hurry me off, though he would not open his lips about Mr. Kirk.

The distance was only two hundred miles but it seemed interminable; and when at last I stood upon the Asylum steps, where he had directed me to meet him, I was too full of anxious fear to think of anything save my desire to see him, and know that he was safe.

The servant took me into the parlor, and he was sent for. He answered the summons in a moment; and though his face was white and worn, the thankful look in his eye as he saw me, quite repaid me for coming.

"I shall never forget this," he said, as his hand, closed over mine. "Come with me."

He led me through a number of dim corridors and up long flights of stairs, until he came to a sick ward, before which he stopped.

"If you love me as I pray heaven you do, be strong now," he said. And we entered.

There was a bed there, and fastened upon it lay a beautiful girl, her eyes wild and maniacal, so like and yet so unlike, the man beside me, that I started back in surprise.

"This is my child who has been motherless and here, for ten years. A week ago they thought she would die," he said huskily.

"Your child! Oh, why did you not tell me?" I cried, dropping on my knees beside her, and kissing the wild lips a hundred times. "She shall not stay here another day. Oh, thank heaven, I can help you at last!"

A week afterwards we started for home taking the poor girl with us; and as soon as we arrived, I found father had caused a room to be fitted up expressly for her home. Thornton Kirk had told him all his circumstances. Alice soon recovered, and now she is my daughter as well as Thornton's.

What part of speech is most distasteful to lovers? The third person.